

# JAWS OVER EUROPE

## B-24 BOMBERS IN WORLD WAR II

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*"The destruction of Germany's great war industries was accomplished almost entirely from the air. No one can stand among their ruins without a feeling of awe for the devastating power of such attacks. The courage and skill of our pilots and their crews in these operations is legendary. They deserve the highest tribute of our people."* THE HONORABLE HENRY L. STIMSON, SECRETARY OF WAR.



# **DEDICATION**

**"LIBERATORS OVER EUROPE" IS DEDICATED TO THOSE MEN OF  
THE U.S. EIGHTH AIR FORCE WHO . . .**

**. . . PIONEERED IN DAYLIGHT BOMBING AGAINST THE ENEMY.**

**. . . PROBED FIRST THE DEFENSES OF THE REICH.**

**. . . DARED TO CROSS INTO THE NAZIS IMPENETRABLE SKIES.**

**. . . FLEW AGAINST THE GREATEST ENEMY ODDS OF THE WAR.**

**. . . PROVED TO A DOUBTING WORLD THAT DAYLIGHT BOMB-  
ING WAS THE ANSWER TO THE DEFEAT OF THE LUFTWAFFE — THE  
PRELUDE TO THE INEVITABLE SUCCESS OF THE GROUND FORCES  
AND TO ULTIMATE VICTORY.**

**AND . . .**

*ABOVE ALL, to those Airmen who died that these things might come to  
pass so that democracy again might be the guiding light of the world.*

**URSEL P. HARVELL**



The photographs in this book are from the collection of U.P. Harvell. Most of the photography was done by him or under his supervision, except the photos of the assault upon Norwich, which were taken under the supervision of the City Council of Norwich.

It may be interesting to note that the author's reputation as an aerial photographer started twenty years prior to World War II. At the beginning of the war aerial photographers were scarce and the Air Force was in need of skilled aerial cameramen. Although forty years old, in 1942 Harvell was offered a direct commission for his skill and services. He accepted. He was ordered to report for duty to the Air Force Intelligence School at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania for orientation, afterwards assigned to the Eighth Air Force as an Intelligence Officer. During his two and a half years with the Eighth Air Force in England his military occupation specialties were combat photo officer, air and ground, intelligence, photo interpretation and photo-radar interpreter.

Captain Harvell was awarded the Bronze Star and Air Medal for his combat duty, along with nine battle stars for the nine campaigns he served in overseas. After the war was over he remained in the Air Force Reserve and served as a commanding officer of a unit, retiring as a Lt. Col. in 1962.



# LIBERATORS OVER EUROPE







|                   |                 | 1942  | 1943   | 1944   | 1945  |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| <b>DELIVERIES</b> | <b>BOMBERS</b>  | 5,827 | 15,022 | 20,116 | 5,658 |
| <b>TO AAF</b>     | <b>FIGHTERS</b> | 5,213 | 11,766 | 18,291 | 5,842 |
| <b>GAF</b>        | <b>BOMBERS</b>  | 6,615 | 6,155  | 3,000  | 20    |
| <b>PRODUCTION</b> | <b>FIGHTERS</b> | 6,575 | 9,995  | 16,035 | 4,175 |

In any future war — and it is more realistic than pessimistic to face the possibility — the only certainty is that the weapons of the last war will be outmoded, and nothing becomes obsolete faster than an air weapon. Air fleets in being do not guarantee air superiority. Pre-eminence in research is just as important. To repeat a phrase from the beginning of this article, thinking — not material — is what wins wars. Boldness in discarding old weapons, ingenuity in devising new ones, and intelligent plans for using them are indispensable to national defense.

No one knows exactly what the laboratories of the future will bring forth in the way of new explosives, rocket projectiles, radar-guided flak, and so forth. At any time revolutionary weapons may revise all previous military concepts.

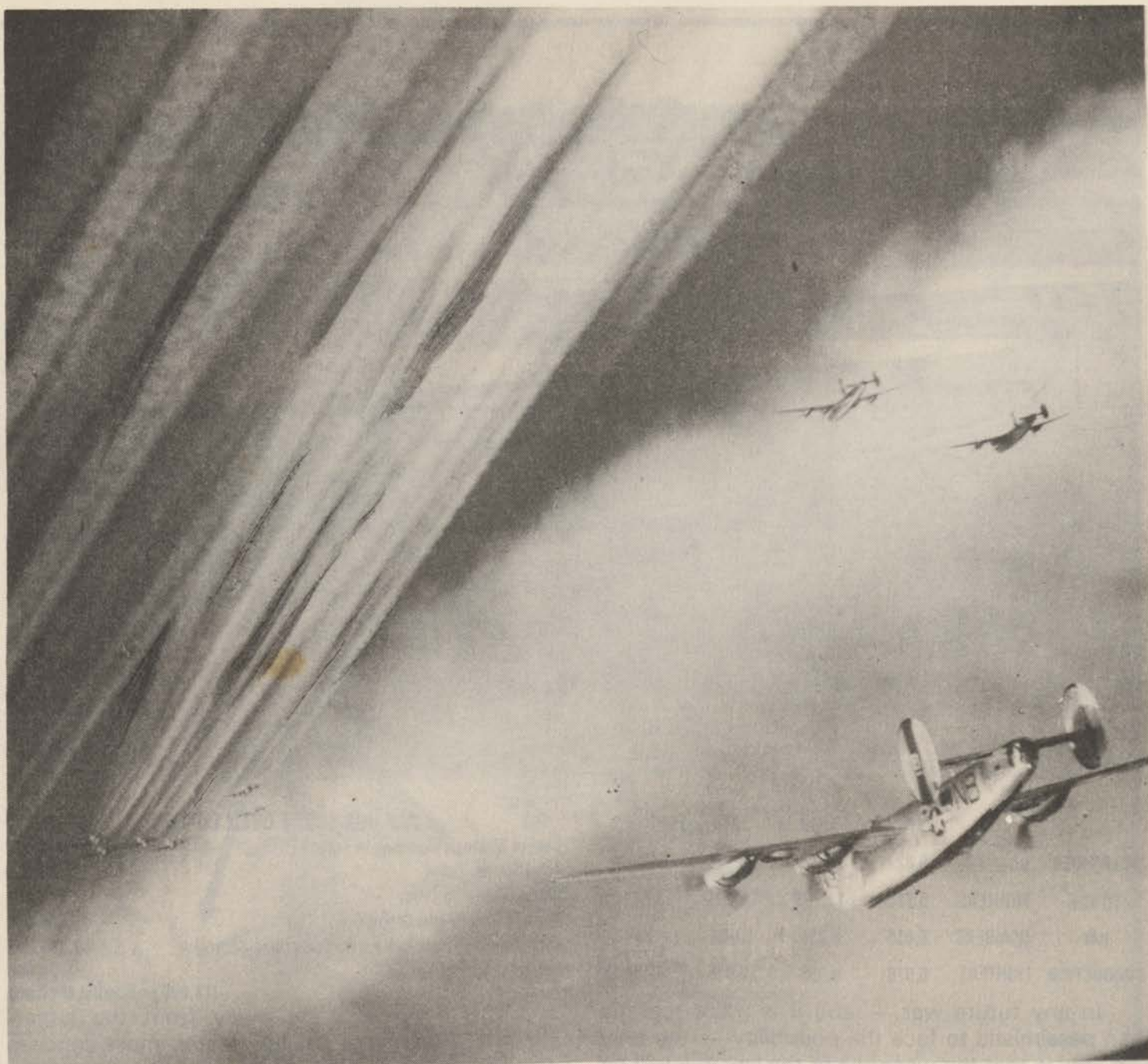
#### AAF BOX SCORE OVER EUROPE

|                                                  |                             |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Cost of Strategic Bombing in Europe              | \$27,639,000,000            |
| Total Sorties Flown                              | 1,689,000                   |
| Sorties Flown on D-Day                           | 9,984                       |
| Total Tons of Bombs Dropped                      | 1,555,000                   |
| Total Men Who Flew Against Germany (Man Sorties) | 7,235,562                   |
| Our Total Aircraft Losses                        | 26,000                      |
|                                                  | (18,000 on Combat Missions) |

The trend may be away from the super-airplane. Swarms of smaller, faster, more versatile planes capable of great range, considerable bomb-load, and a high degree of self protection, guided by radar, operating regardless of weather, by day or night, and augmented by various advanced types of V-weapons — this may be the shape of airpower in the future.

Whatever the future may hold, we would be foolhardy to rely on the protection of our surrounding oceans. To airpower already discernible, oceans will be no barrier. Nor can we be sure of finding, again, a natural airbase like Great Britain anchored to the flank of our deadliest adversary. We must maintain a force capable of instantaneous offensive action against any opponent anywhere at any time. The only power that can traverse land and sea overnight and put the enemy on the defensive is airpower.





The part played by American Airmen of the 8th Air Force, during World War II, cannot be told by the Generals, Military Analysts, War Correspondents or even the Historians. The story of the war must be told by the men who flew the missions over enemy territory and carried the bombs to blast the industrial might of Germany and lessen their ability to produce war materials to carry on the war. Words, written or spoken, by the 875,000 men who survived the war cannot begin to tell the true story as well as the cameras carried by the crews and the combat camera-men who flew with the crews. Memories fade, but once a photo is printed it becomes a document for reproduction for generations to come.

The photographic record of the 8th Air Force in action over Europe, taken from aircraft flown from bases in England, Libya, and Tunisia, does not pretend to be a complete historical record or an exact appraisal of what the entire Air Force accomplished, rather, it is a pictorial record of the combat achievements of the Bombers of the 8th Air Force.

The purpose of this book is simply to help the members of the Eighth Air Force to tell his story with assurance, accuracy and conviction and a reminder to his descendants the part he played in preserving a semblance of democracy in the world.





Photography is essential to the battle plans of a war. It is necessary to the intelligence section to evaluate the strength of the enemy and his location, to pinpoint his stronghold, his factories, his transportation facilities, his oil reserves and storage points and above all his oil refineries. Without oil a nation has lost it's mobility and without mobility an army is lost. All of these facts are found through the medium of photography. Cameras are the eyes of the commanding General and through this media his decisions are made.

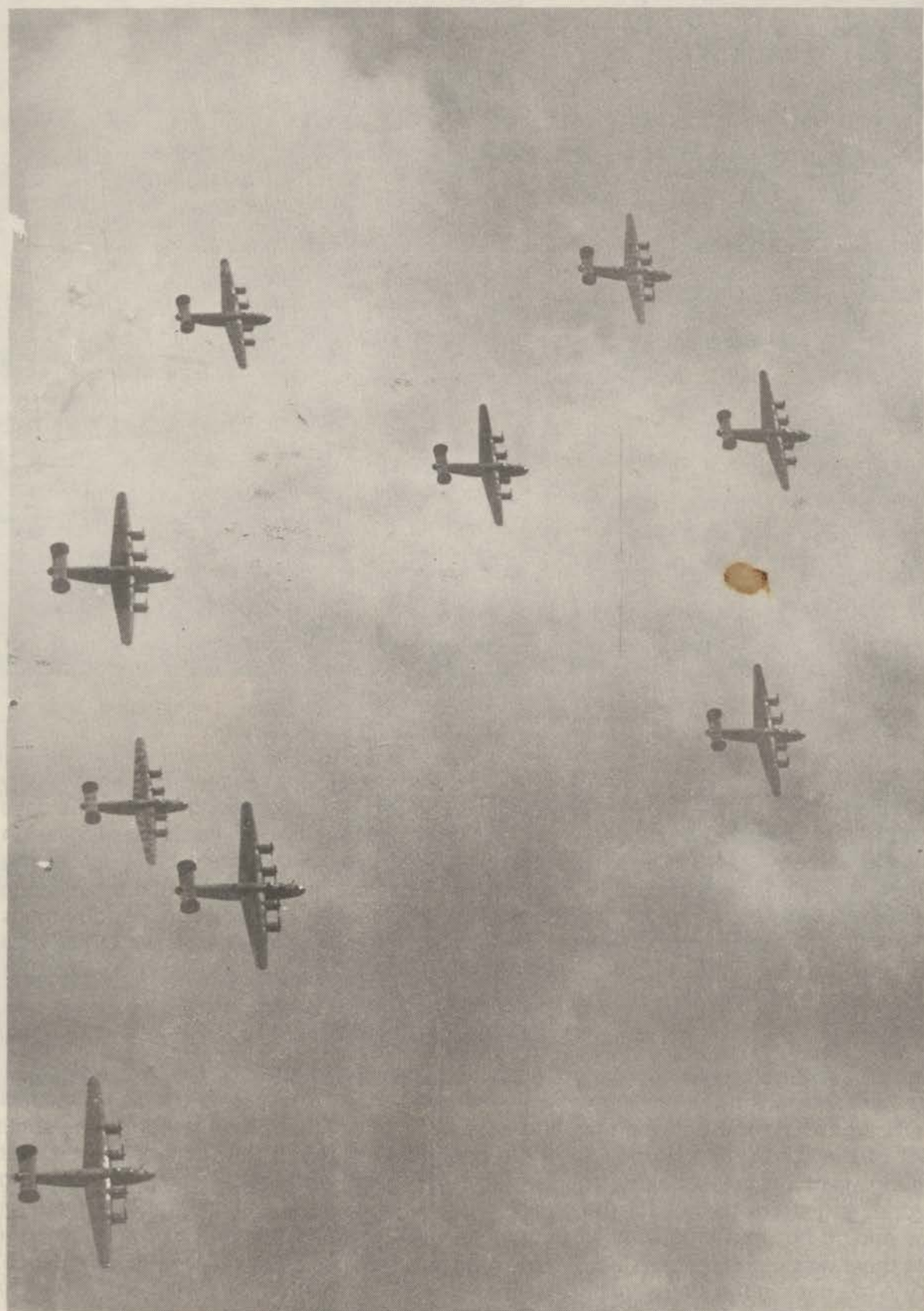




#### **CAPTAIN U. P. HARVELL**

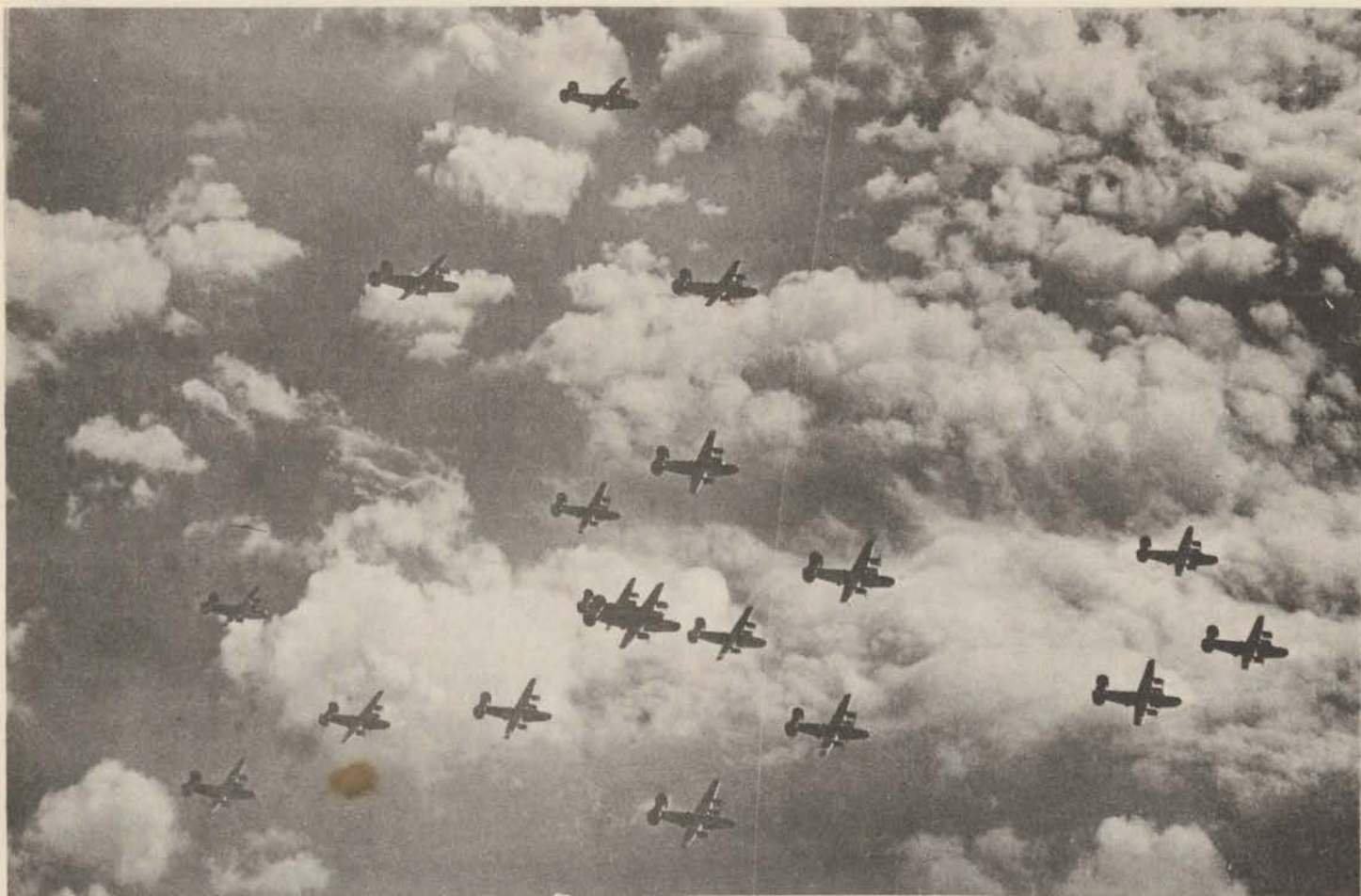
The photo interpreter evaluates these photos and passes on to the higher echelons the efficiency of the mission and the amount of damage to the target. The photo interpreter sets up a mosaic of the bomb-run photos and reports to the Group Commander how accurate the bomb run was and from the smoke markers where the bombs from each element landed. It was through this system that the efficiency ratings for groups was established.





well with a time rear, spinning, and a few of the B-29s were seen to be in the air, and the morning mist to clear the east and cherry territory.





October winds were blowing when U.S. Bomber Groups reached England. It was 1942. It was nearing the close of 1942, still a dark period for the allied nations. The days of the London blitzkrieg had gone, but the inaction was ominous. The threat of invasion was ever present as supplies to bolster the island defenders merely trickled into the eastern outpost of democracy. But soon came word from the Admiralty that the menace at sea was being met and defeated. Supplies of war began to arrive in greater quantities and more and more allied convoys docked in British ports. The tide of war at sea was turning and now the time was drawing near to turn the tide in the sky. As yet the 2nd Air Division was untried against the invincible Luftwaffe.

Training was hard under way. Mechanics in greasy clothing, oily and begrimed, toiled unceasingly in the chilling winds which swept the flat-lands, while planes droned overhead unseen through the mist and lowering cloud. There, men reared in the sunlit skies of the south, had learned to hurtle confidently through the restless clouds. But training went on down below, too; lectures for those who would carry the war into Europe, and strenuous toil for the grease monkey who would make it possible. October was ending but had taught many things. And this realization added to the knowledge that there was much more to learn, implanted into the men a feeling of grim confidence.

While back in the states trained bomber crews and new bombers were on the way to bolster the spirits and armament of the men of the 8th Air Force.





This, then was a typical American Bomber base in England, where in a field once rippled a sea of golden grain, now lie unfolded, broad ribbons of asphalt runway. The stone and scotch heather fencelines are no more and in their place, round bends and turns, winds a snakelike track where the bombers taxied. And on the summit of the gently rolling plain, like sentries in the mist, stood a number of sulky hangars. Liberators glided swiftly by in the cold morning murk, a cacaphony of sound and beauty and power, until with a final roar, spouting four tongues of flame, like a defiance, they vanished into the morning mist towards the east and enemy territory.







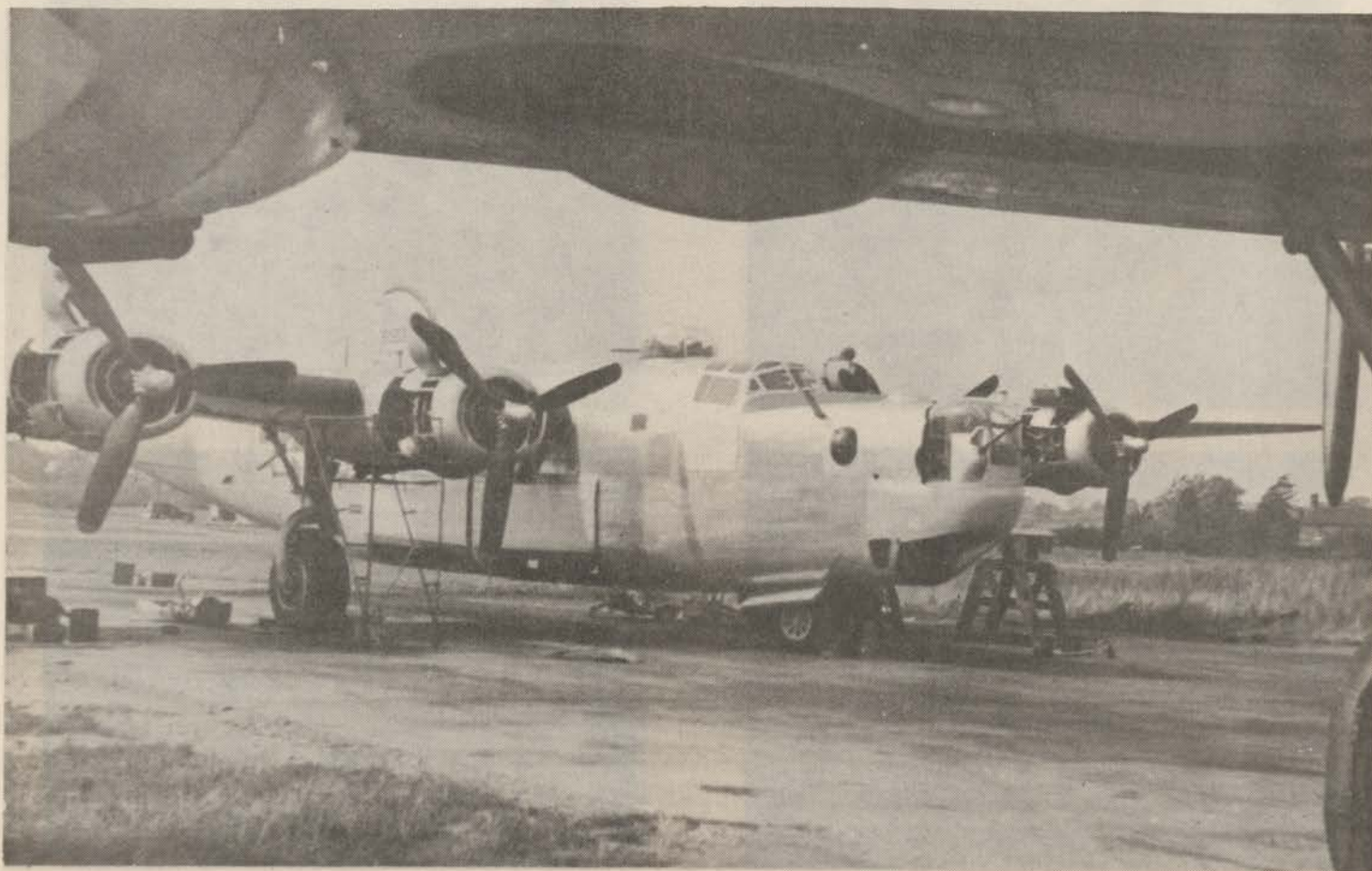






New replacement squadrons worked hard to bring the group up to combat efficiency standard.

The crew chiefs and maintenance men worked through sleet and snow day and night to put the **liberators** in fighting trim. To these men time or element meant nothing, everything was secondary to putting and keeping the powerful engines in perfect shape. Before missions began a dispersal area was a mechanics beehive.







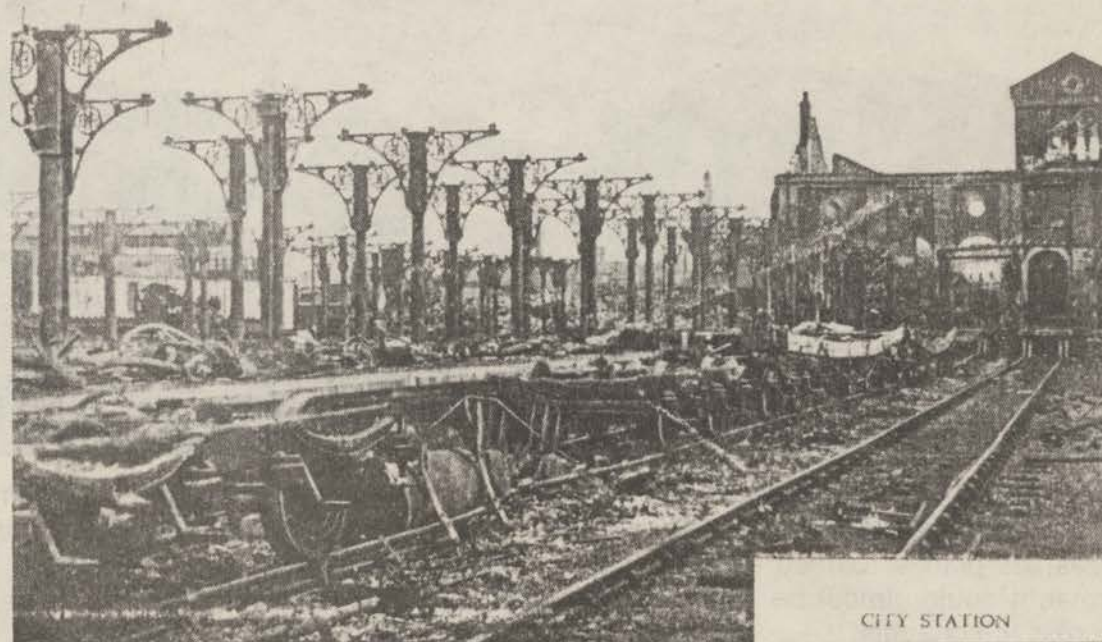
U.S. Bombers and supporting units began to reach England. The drums of German victory were still heard beating in the distance; its U-boats were disrupting shipping in all the seas; its planes roamed about virtually unchallenged, and the goose-step of the Wehrmacht could almost be heard clattering on the cobblestones of beaten countries just across the channel.





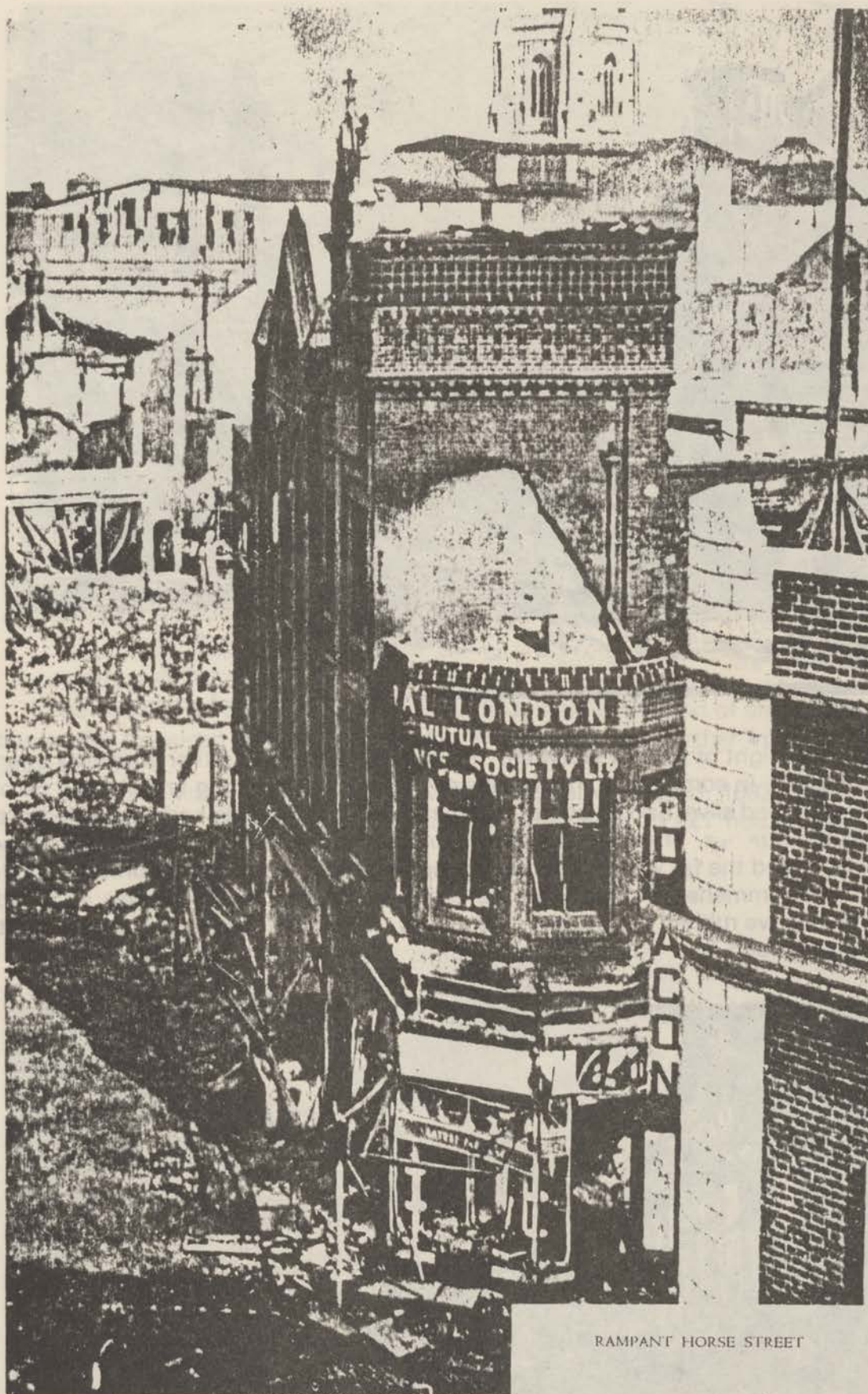
RAMPANT HORSE STREET

The bombing of Norwich, England prior to the arrival of the American Air Force groups. Norwich was the center of attraction for a number of the Airmen based nearby.



CITY STATION





RAMPANT HORSE STREET

During the period of July 1940 to August 1941, Norwich, underwent twenty-nine bombing attacks by the Germans, killing 81 citizens while 102 went to the hospitals, and 192 suffered minor wounds.





CORNER OF  
LOWER GOAT LANE  
AND ST. GILES STREET

It was no night of rest for Norwich, 185 heavy bombs, altogether weighing over 50 tons, had fallen. In some cases, mountains of rubble had to be dug and shifted, 84 persons were rescued alive, and 63 bodies recovered. In all 162 people had been killed out of nearly 6000 casualties. These figures seem puny now, compared with the vast numbers that London, and the far vaster that many a German town has since recorded. But Norwich is not so immense an area, and the centre is closely built-up. It was an anxious moment when we rubbed the dirt out of our eyes, to see that, so far, the Castle and the Cathedral still stood.



ORFORD PLACE





NORWICH THORPE  
GOODS STATION

The last raid on the city, November 6, 1943, marked the end of enemy offensive action as the American heavies were driving them further and further from their targets in England.

During the war, casualties in Norwich numbered 340 killed, 1092 injured and 2082 homes destroyed, 2651 homes seriously damaged with 25,621 houses being slightly damaged.

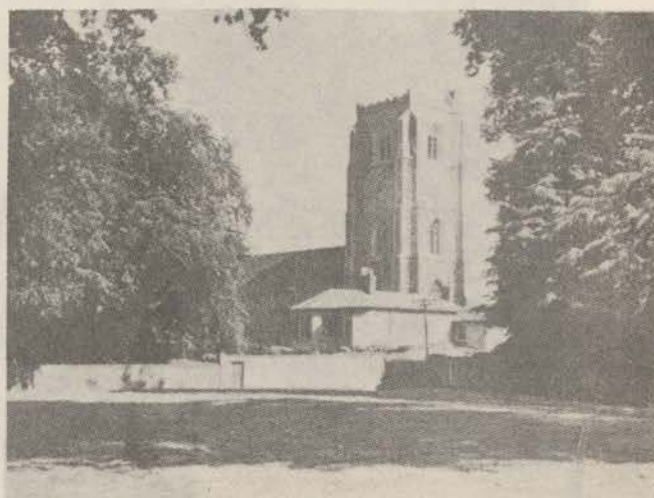
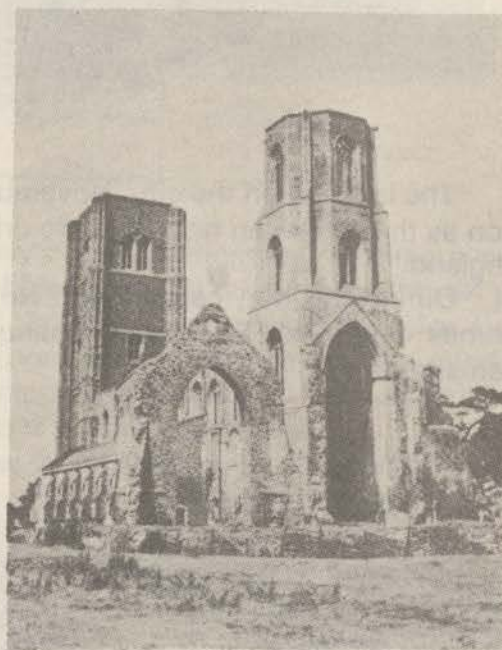
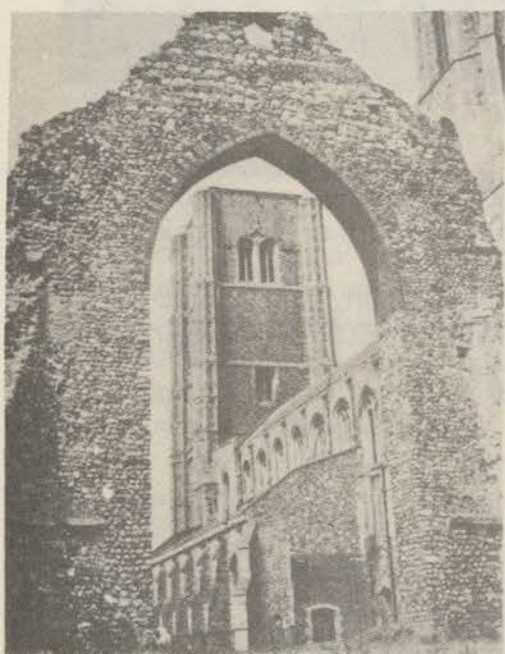


LOTHIAN STREET  
DEREHAM ROAD





## ENGLISH SCENES Near The Base







14TH COMBAT  
WING



SITE 3



HOSPITAL — SITE 1 AND SITE 3 IN BACKGROUND

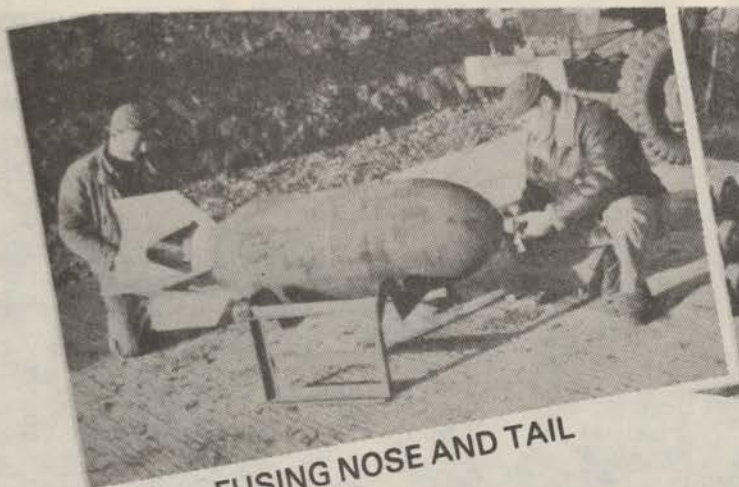




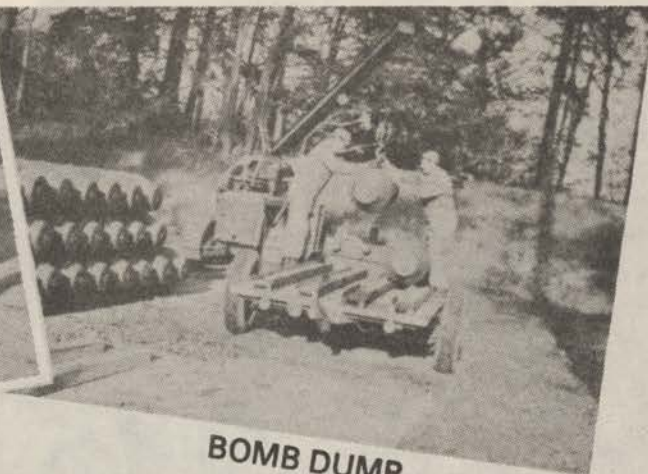
The city of Norwich, located within easy reach of several U.S. Airforce bases, will always be remembered for the friendliness of it's citizens to the men of the Eighth Air Force. The thousand year old city, in history and antiquity, was always a center of interest and hospitality for the Americans who had come to join forces with their men to crush the conquering hordes of Hitler's Nazis.







FUSING NOSE AND TAIL



BOMB DUMP

# Bombing Up

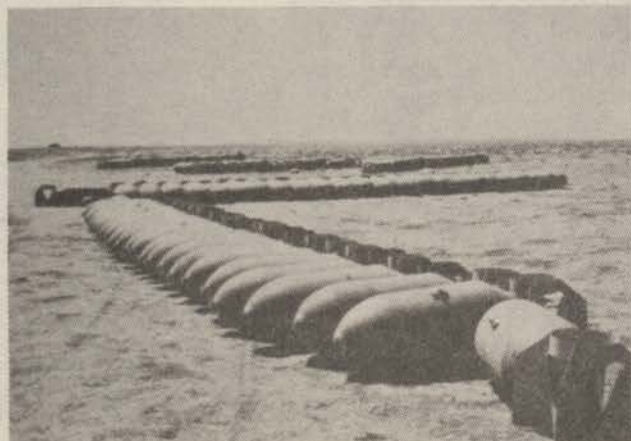
Ordnance men, responsible for installing the bomb load, worked almost entirely in darkness. For security reasons advance information on the bomb load was only a few hours before take off and the men invariably worked through the night with their lethal cargo.



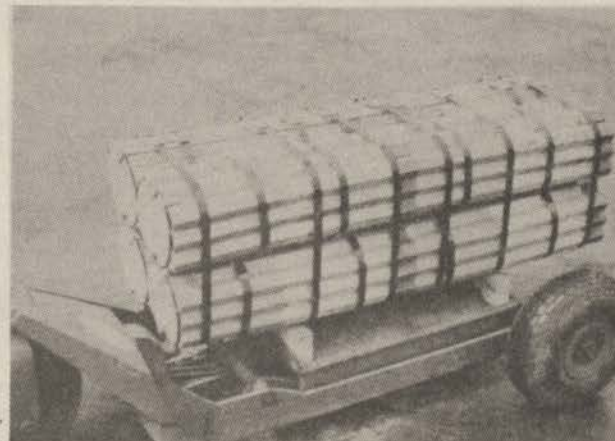
REMOVING BOMBS FROM CRASHED PLANE



BOMB TRAILER



DESERT DUMP



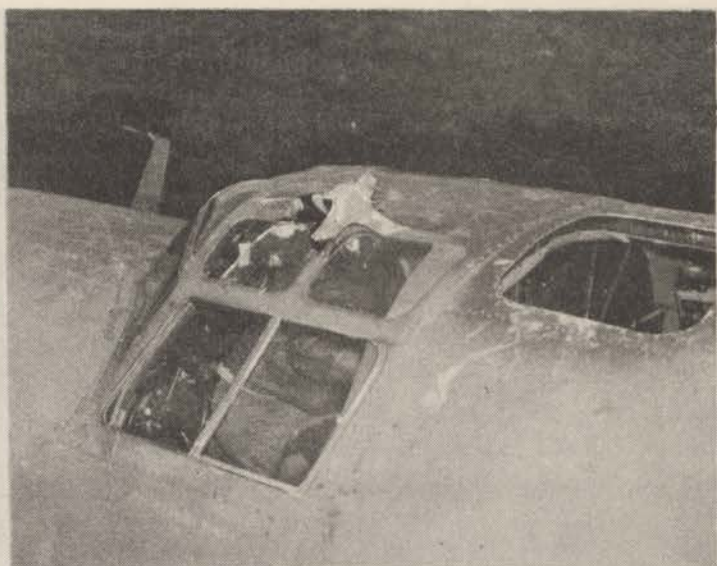
INCENDIARIES





Attaching the bomb fuse and tail fin was not the most desirable function of the ordnance officer.





The sixth of December 1942, was baptismal day for the Forty-Fourth Bomb Group. The target was the very den of the enemy, Abbeville-Drucat airdrome, home of Goering's dreaded and famous yellow nosed fighters. A recall of the mission was not received by the Sixty-Eighth Squadron which flew on alone as the Sixty-Sixth and Sixty-Seventh Squadrons turned back. Not knowing that the mission had been cancelled the Sixty-Eighth continued on to the target, battling alone without escort against the pride of the Luftwaffe. For the untried and inexperienced handful of Airmen, it was a nightmare, but out of this would come battlewise veterans bringing intelligence of the enemy's tactics, material and strength, to lay the foundation for future operations — Pioneers, writing the future battle plans of the Air Force in blood.

The Sixty-Eighth fought furiously to stave off the swarm of Messerschmitts and Folke-Wulfs. The Liberators were spitting streams of tracer and fifty calibre fire at the defenders and after running the guantlet of heavy flak over the target to bomb, the big heavies headed for home. On the withdrawal, Lieutenant Dubard and his crew, the Group's first casualty, battling to the last, bullet riddled and ablaze, was sent crashing into the English Channel. Lieutenant Tommy Holmes was seriously wounded at the same time by a burst of twenty millimeter fire in the cockpit just above his head. Though seriously wounded and his ship badly damaged, Lieutenant Holmes brought the crew safely home, for which he received the Group's first Distinguished Flying Cross.







At this time the number of American aircraft bombing enemy targets was exceptionally small. European skies were darkened with defending fighters and enemy ground defenses were numerous and powerful. Yet, into that inferno, and in broad daylight, hopelessly outnumbered flew the men of the bomber forces spreading accurate patterns of explosives wherever they went. Each man's silent prayer was for reinforcements, larger formations, but with each mission their numbers diminished, and replacements were no where in sight. Unquestioning, undaunted and courageously they flew on through the flak and cold and the hordes of "yellow noses", with the full knowledge that they gambled at odds. But it was never a question of life or death; it was the target at any cost and all else be damned.

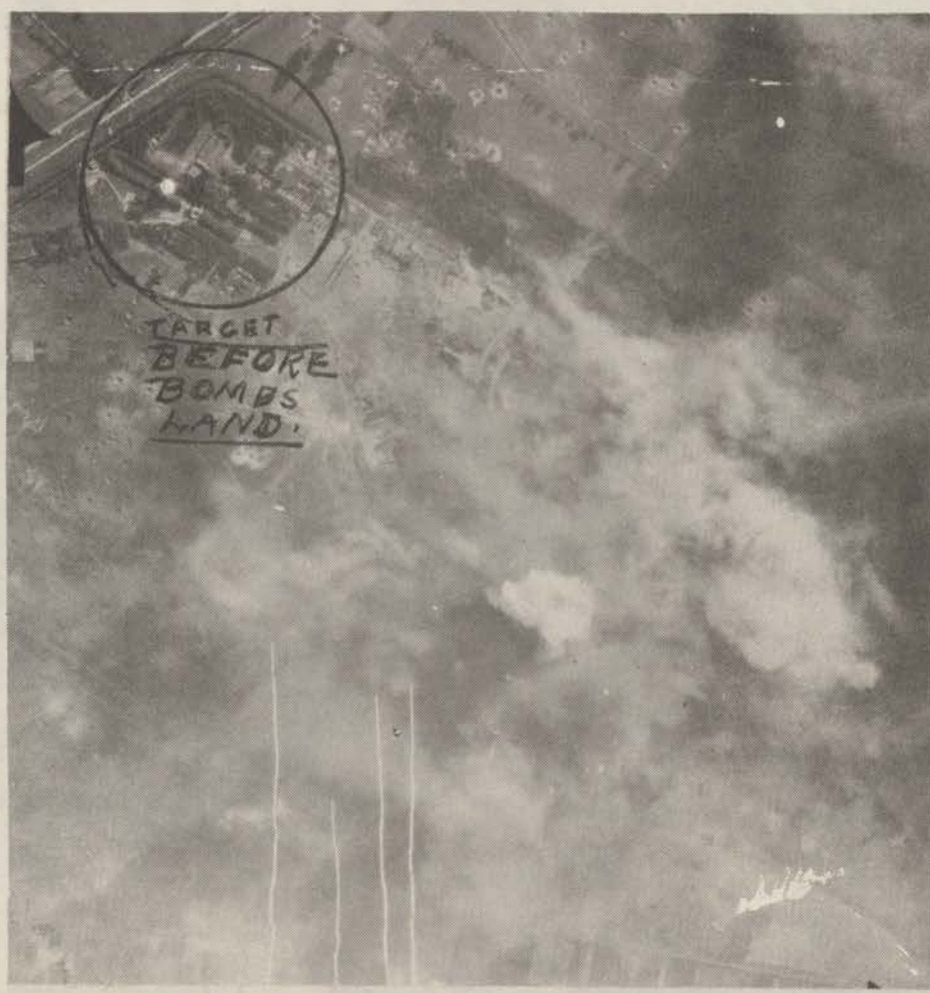
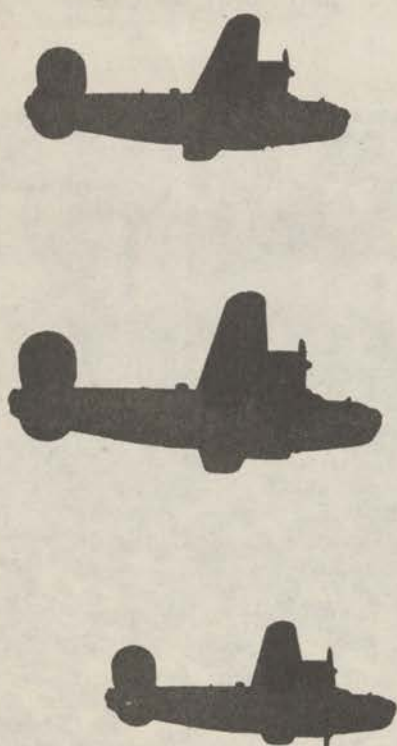




Some of the flak damaged bombers made it back to base in England only to lose some of their crew because of battle damage to their ship.











Excellent bombing results begins in the briefing room for the bomber crews. First, the target is explained regarding its value to the enemy. The main point of impact (MPI) is pointed out to the bombardiers. Usually this will be the heart of the complex and the hardest to replace. The initial point (IP), usually a point about five miles to the left of the target to allow the formation to make a 90 degree turn towards the target to give the bombers a chance to change from a spread formation to more of a bombing line-up and create a more concentrated pattern over the target. A smoke bomb is attached to the first bomb leaving the bomb-bay and is a signal to the rest of the bombardiers to release their bombs. A vertical camera installed in the ship of each element is automatically turned on. Every six seconds a picture is taken and since it takes forty seconds for the bombs to reach the target the camera is recording valuable evidence right on through the landing of the bombs.





The Flak Batteries consisting of 88 mm elevating guns and controlled by radar, was the most damaging to the allied bomber forces than any weapon of the German Army. It was well known to the bomber crews that if you stayed on course for sixty seconds the German Gunners could lay an 88 mm in your lap. Flak was unpredictable and was the cost of thousands of American lives and aircraft. The more important targets in Germany were ringed with radar controlled firing systems.







Captain K.E. Comer, Flight Surgeon, gives first aid to Sgt. Shelton, a member of Captain Smith's crew, after a raid on Germany.







Oil production, transportation and storage, wherever found became a prime target for the Eighth Air Force Bombers. The explosion of tank cars in the marshalling yards at Chalon-sur-marne shows as direct hits sends up clouds of smoke, rising here to 12,000 feet.





When the Bombers return to Base with dead and wounded aboard it is always a gruesome task to remove the bodies and wounded from the aircraft. The covered bodies in the above picture are only two of 38,185 Air Men killed or missing in action in the European Theater of Operation.



When a Bomber gets a direct hit in the gas tanks none of the crew have much chance of survival.



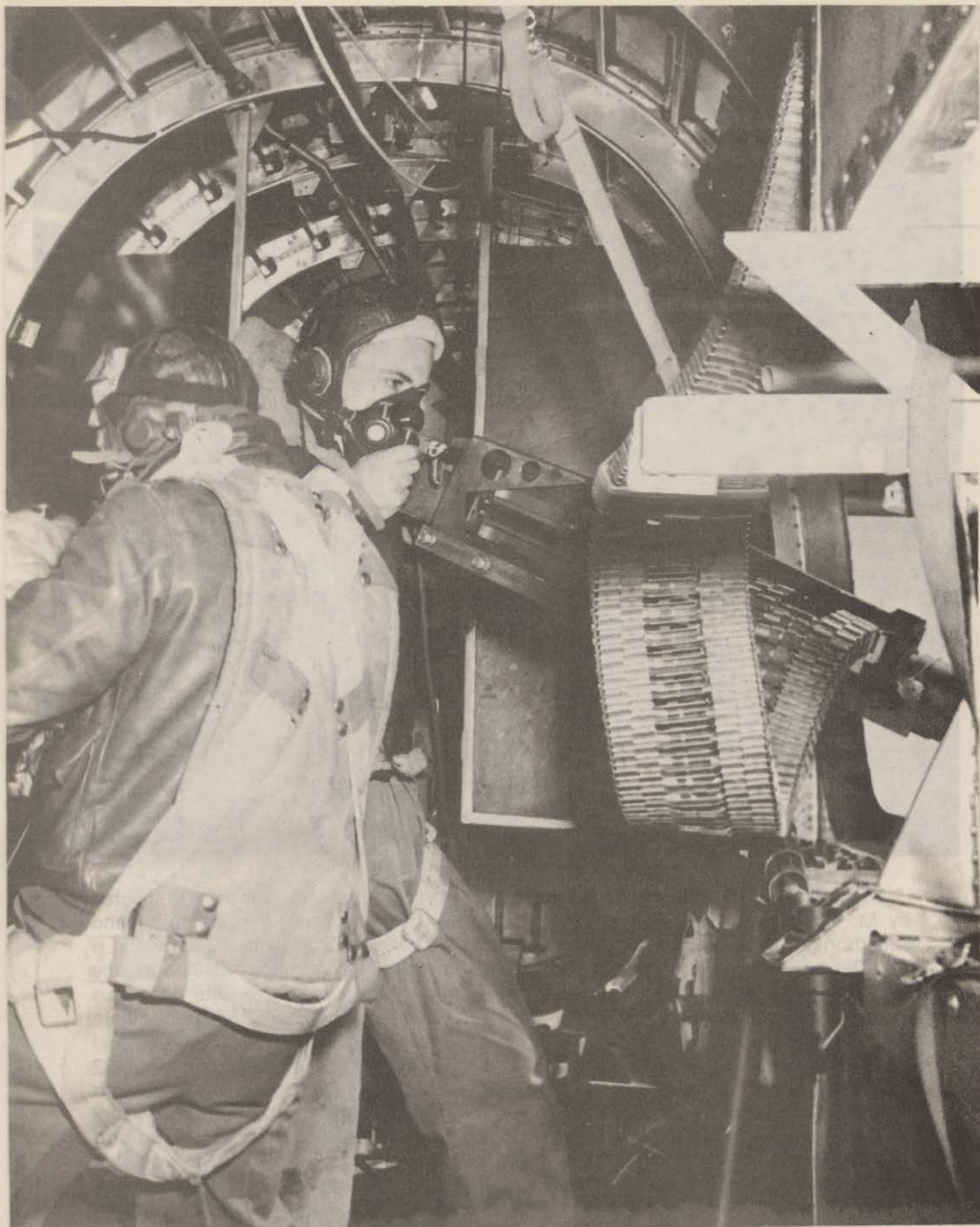
The same fate goes for the crew of a ship which crash lands back at the Base.





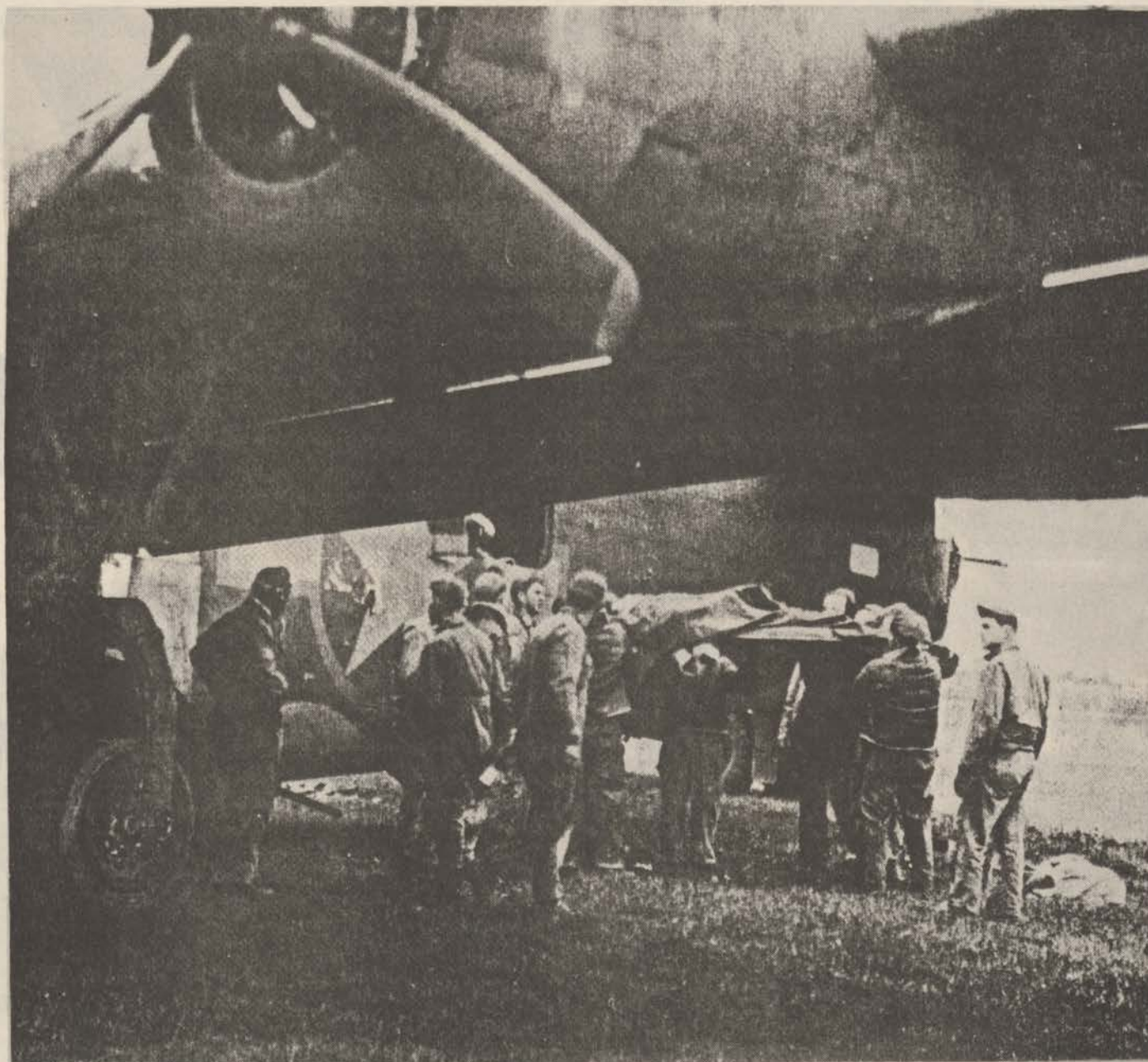
Precision formation flying such as the battle formation shown above reduces battle losses considerably. An enemy fighter would think twice before nosing into this formation.





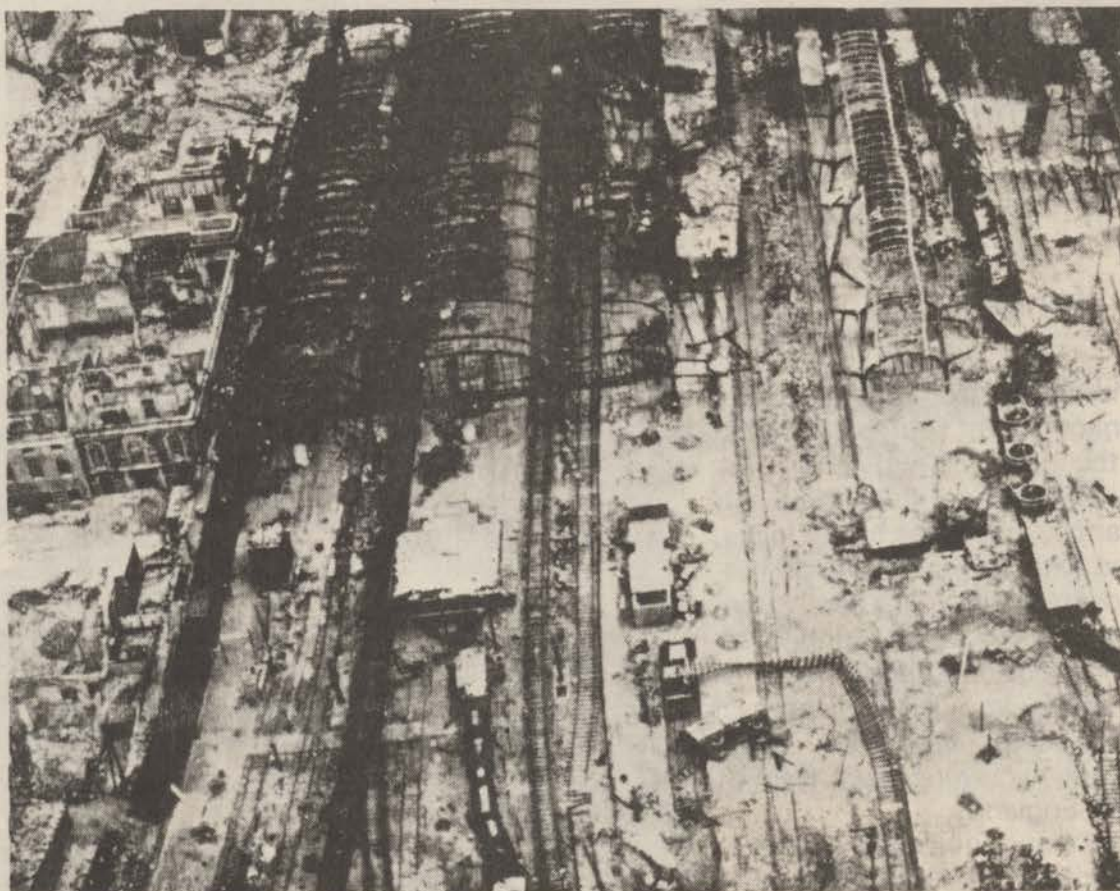
The two Waist Gunners on the bomber crew accounted for more enemy fighters than any of the other gun positions.





On a mission to bomb Munster, Germany, Peepsight, aircraft number 535, piloted by Lt. R.A. Parker took off at 1015 hours flying number 9 position in the second squadron, led by Lt. Richard D. Butler. The group leader was Lt. Shelby L. Irby with Lt. Col. Dexter L. Hodge as command pilot. Approaching the initial point at 1340 hours, the formation was engaged by approximately twenty enemy aircraft, despite continuous attacks a good bomb-run was made and the target was bombed at 1352. Attacks were resumed as the formation made the turn away from the flak covered target area and Peepsight received direct hits as the result of a vicious attack at approximately 1432 hours, which was half way from the target to the coast. Hits were sustained in the right wing, number four engine, right and left waist sections, top and tail turrets. Control cables and instrument panel were damaged and the oxygen system was knocked out. The ship had to fall out of formation and drop to lower altitude because of the wounded and lack of oxygen. The wounded were Lt. D.R. Simons, Co-pilot; Lt. E.L. Rutherford, navigator, T/Sgt. D. L. Lieck, radio operator; S/Sgts. Covane, Hardwick, and Sorrow, gunners. Lt. Parker was slightly wounded, but not too seriously to bring the battered bomber back to base and land it with a flat tire.





At Munster, total attack meant destruction of airfields . . . railway marshalling yards . . . and industries.

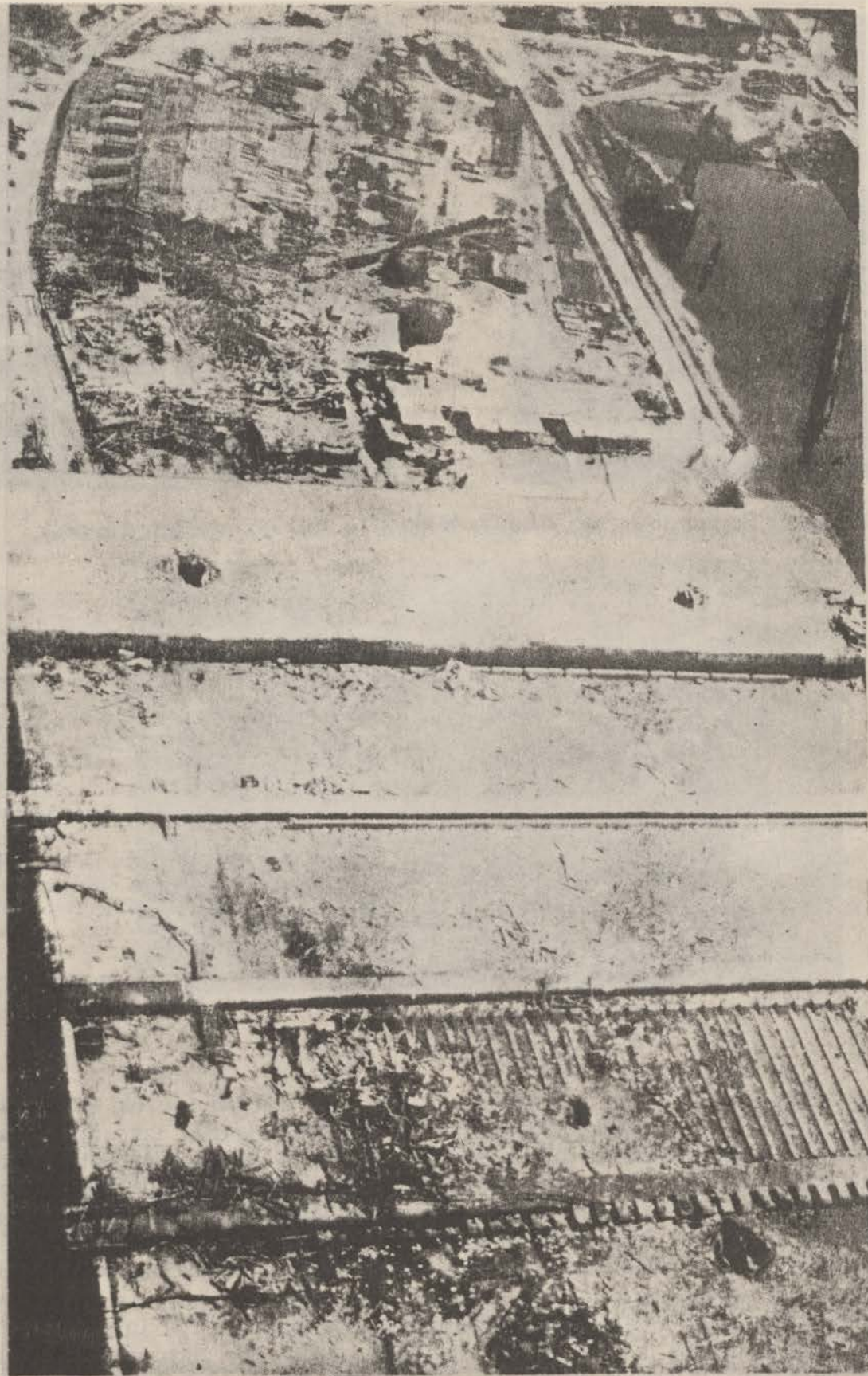




Continuing its effort to smash the U-boat menace at the source, the Libs went after the locks and sub pens at La Pallice May 29, 1943, on the southwest coast of France. The gates to the locks were blasted with one thousand pound bombs and the basin drained Subs were observed helplessly grounded in the mud and considerable damage to the repair sheds and supply depots. The mission, as the one a few days earlier to Bordeaux, were flown from a secret base in England.





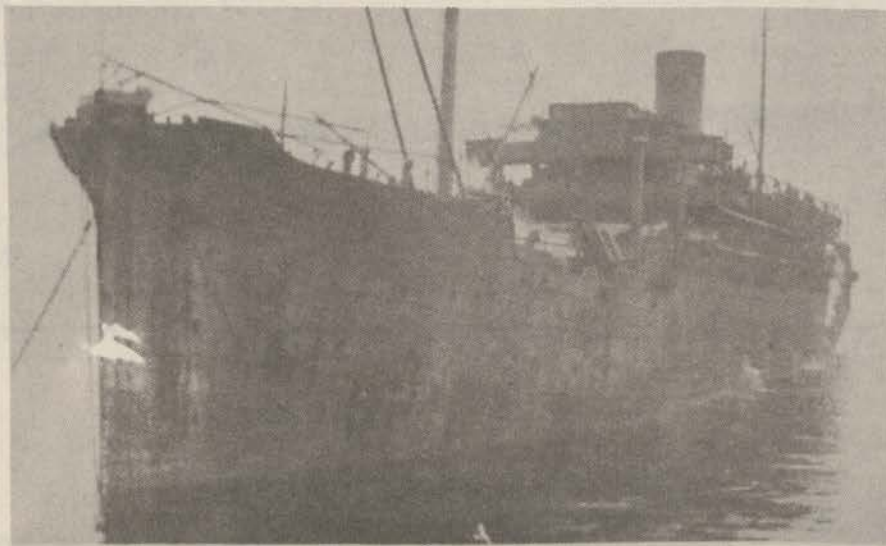


The submarine pens with their twelve foot thick coverings were too much for the American heavies. Battle tactics were changed to concentrate on bombing the locks to the pens which grounded the subs in the mud of the pens until the gates could be replaced.





"The 506th Squadron arrives to add new blood to the Fighting Forty-Four"



"S.S. Chantilly"

## C O N V O Y

The 506th Squadron was ordered aboard the S.S. Chantilly, an old British ship, returning to England from Africa to be mothballed. The Chantilly, carrying the only troops in the convoy was placed in the center of the convoy with two lines of freighters and tankers on either side of the ship to give the personnel carrier some protection in case of a U-boat attack. Ten days after leaving Halifax the escort carrier turned back on the afternoon of March 10th. At eighteen hundred hours that same day, in a very heavy, ice cold sea, one hundred miles south of Iceland, the wolf-pack of the Nazi Navy started their attack. All night long, in the fog and black-out, explosions first on one side then the other lit up the sky. As daylight came the losses were apparent. Two British corvettes showed up to escort us the rest of the way to Scotland. The personnel aboard the Chantilly were nervous wrecks by the time they reached the Firth of Clyde in Scotland. The losses during that night, listed by the Navy, on the next page, does not mention that the seas were so rough that only a few life-boats were launched successfully and personnel with life vests on could only live in that ice-cold water only a few minutes. The irony of the whole thing is that most of the ships that were sunk were on their way to Murmansk with supplies for the Russian Army.



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

Major Ursel P. Harvell, AFR  
120 Cayuga Street  
Fulton  
New York

IN REPLY REFER TO  
Op-29B/njl  
Ser 473P29  
11 March 1954

Dear Major Harvell:

*In answer to your letter of March 1, 1954 the information in the following paragraphs is furnished with the hope that it will be useful to you in the preparation of your lecture.*

*The convoy which you refer to left New York on 28 February 1943 for the United Kingdom via Halifax. It started out with 74 ships of which the SS CHANTILLY was one.*

*During the attack by the U-boats on 10 and 11 March the following ships were torpedoed and sunk, or damaged by explosions:*

*British Cargo TUCURINCA torpedoed and sunk March 10.  
British Cargo JAMAICA PRODUCER damaged by internal explosion March 11.  
Norwegian BRUMN COUNTY (or BRANT COUNTY) torpedoed and sunk March 11.  
U.S. Cargo LAWTON B. EVANS torpedoed and sunk March 11.  
U.S. Cargo ANDREA F. LUCKENBACH torpedoed and sunk March 11.  
U.S. Cargo HENRY WYNKOOP damaged by explosion March 11.  
U.S. Cargo WILLIAM C. GORGAS torpedoed and sunk March 11.  
HMS HARVESTER was damaged March 11 when she rammed a U-boat. She took on board prisoners from the U-boat, and afterwards she sank. HMS ESCAPADE then became the senior of the group.*

*It was reported by the German prisoners that there were 12 U-boats in the vicinity of the convoy. HMS ACONITE sank U-boats Nos. U-442 and U-432. There were many stragglers in this convoy, many were scattered because of high seas and fog, and many left the convoy and proceeded independently to their destination.*

*It is regretted that the name of the carrier escort is not readily available from our records.*

Very Sincerely,

Samuel G. Kelly, Captain, USN  
Director of Naval History

The shipment of skilled Air Force personnel, sorely needed as replacements in the 8th Air Force were ordered aboard the Chantilly, a condemned old English ship, the orders taking seventeen days to cross the Atlantic, was given by someone definitely irresponsible and came close to a disaster for the 8th Air Force.





An unbroken series of missions scrubbed at the last minute fell to the lot of the groups. Awakened in the early hours of the mornings time and time again, only to learn hours later that operations had been cancelled, the group's morale, ground and air crews alike, was reaching a low level, a lot of friendly faces were missing, and, the future was indeed dark. However, this was not to last long, as another squadron the 506th, after a rough crossing, was then on its way with fresh, new and eager replacements to give new blood to the fighting liberators.





The lead Bombardier, on the bomb-run, has his hands full. He is working his bomb sight as well as guiding the bomber by remote control. This is the most dangerous moment of a mission as it gives the enemy time to line up his radar controlled 88 mm. Flak guns.





Schwabisch airdrome and Supply Base was bombed from 20,000 feet with excellent results.





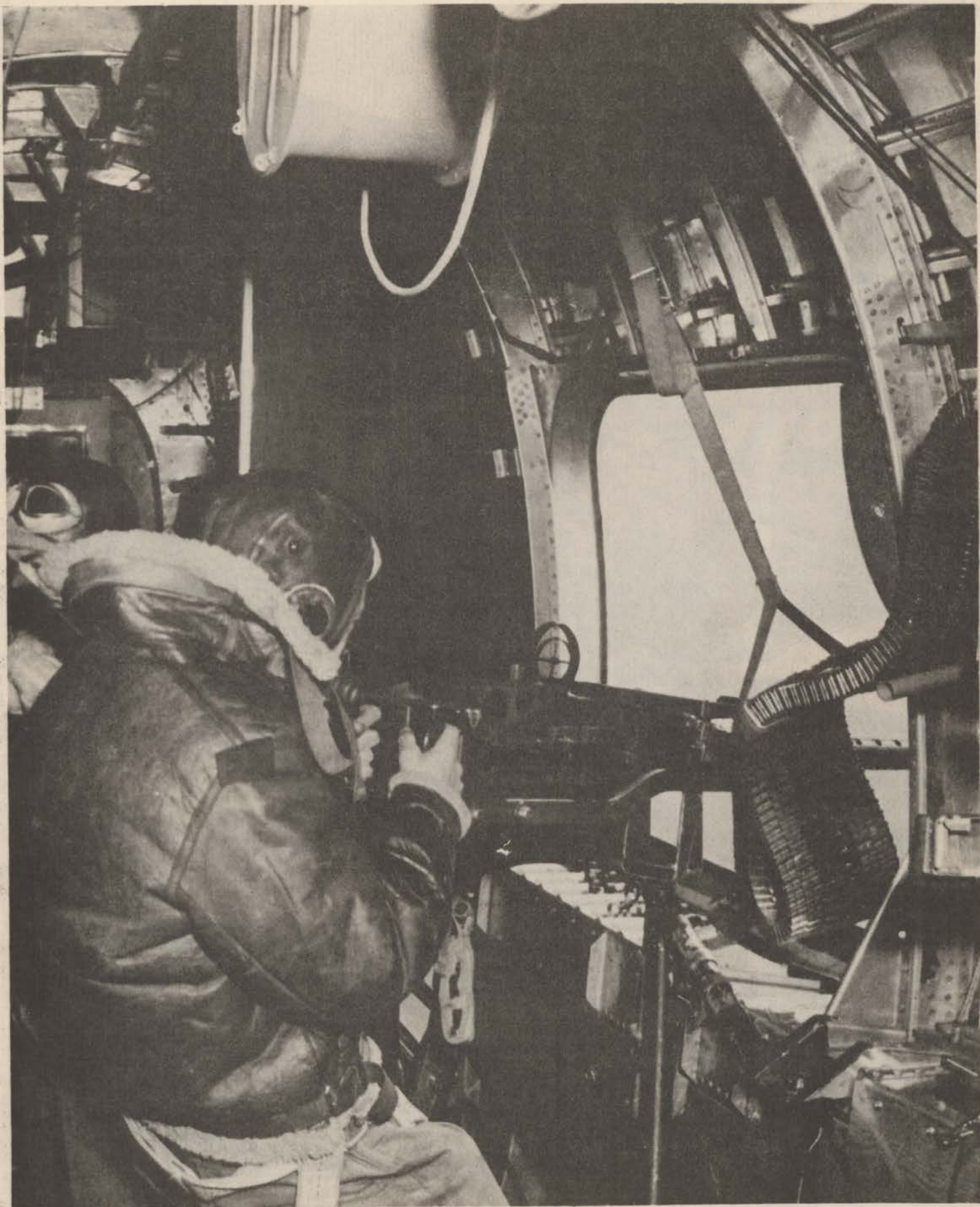
Lechfeld was bombed from 20,000 feet with 500 lb. bombs, scoring an almost perfect pattern.





When vertical camera ports were not used machine gunner used the ports for gun mounts to protect the belly of the bomber.





Fifty caliber machine guns, mounted top, bottom, left and right waists, front and rear poured a deadly stream of tracer, steel jacket and incendiary bullets linked in that order, into the enemy fighters as they made their attack.





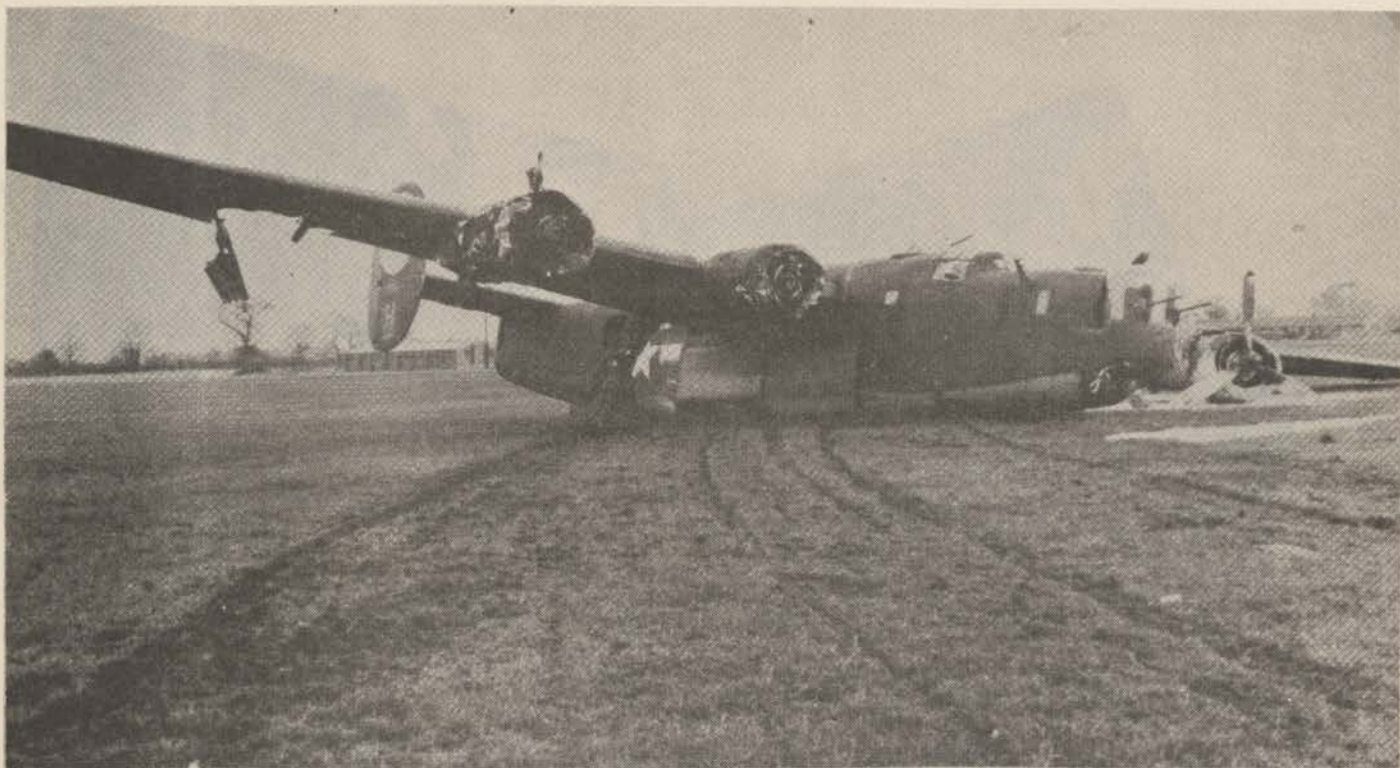
into the enemy fighters as they made their attack.  
 left showed a deadly stream of tracer, also in fact and incendiary bombs landed in that  
 and City center machine guns provided too. Bottom, left and right wings. Top and





(SAV-4-1/959-1X16-8-44X733-7-22000 XKÖTHEN





Returning from an attack on the Oslo-Kjeller Airdrome in Norway, 1st Lt. R. C. Griffith switched his Liberator over to AFCE to conserve gasoline for the long trip. As the southern tip of Norway slowly faded from view, Lt. Griffith's Liberator, which had fallen slightly behind the formation, was suddenly subjected to a surprise attack by a formation of approximately fifteen ME-109's and JU-88's.

For almost one hundred and eighty minutes Lt. Griffith alternately babied and bullied the huge ship along on one good engine and three uncertain ones.

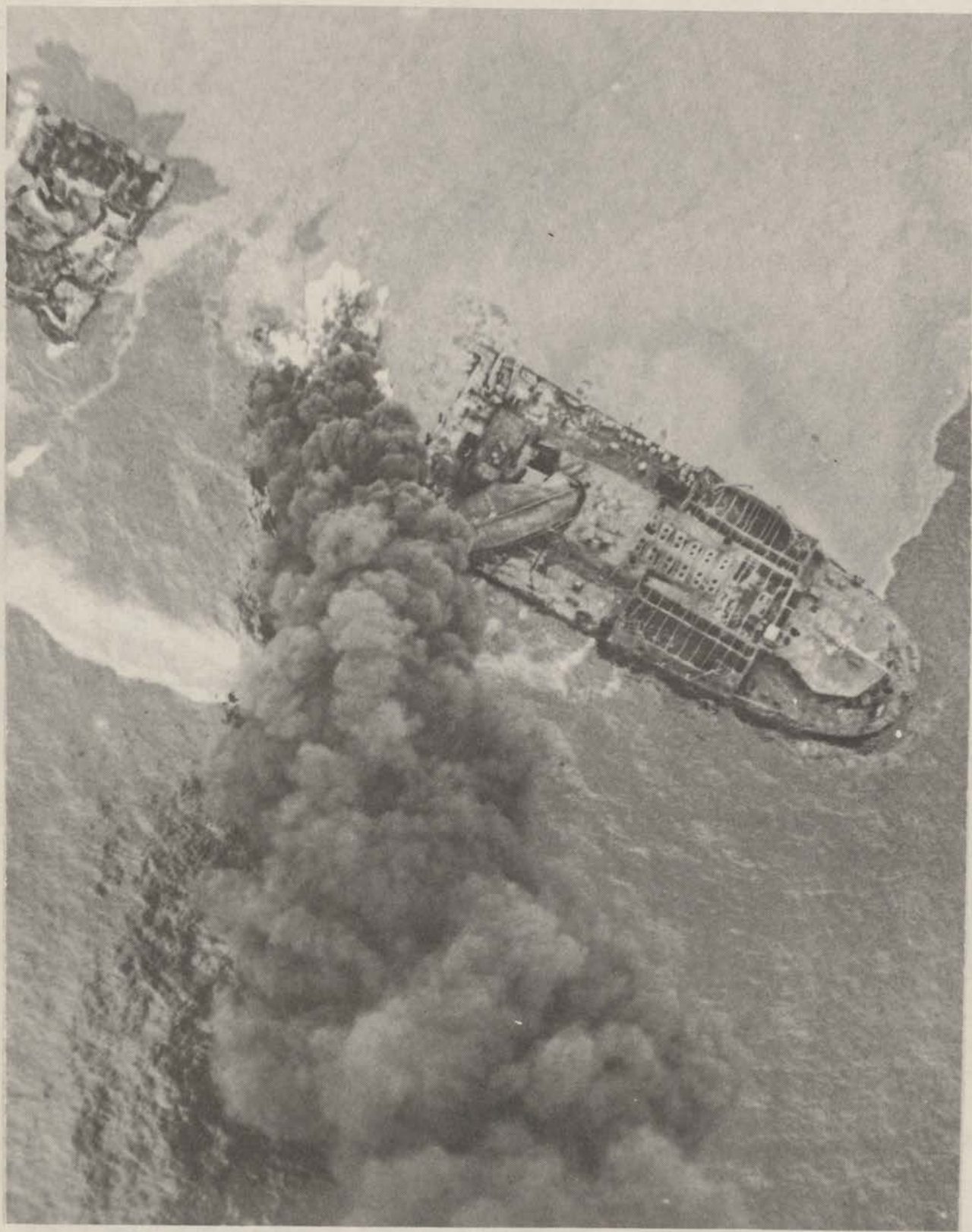






Flak and fighter damage was plentiful but the weather on the way back was even worse. Aircraft running low on gas, and some with engines out, caused emergency landings to be reported from all over England; some crashed and a number of dead were reported. Higher headquarters stated that the mission was very successful, however daylight bombing still did not have the support and confidence of all concerned. The technique had not yet been proven, the force was not sufficient in strength, and the future of daylight bombing was hanging in the balance.





Every gallon of German oil destroyed, on land or sea, brought the allies that much closer to victory.

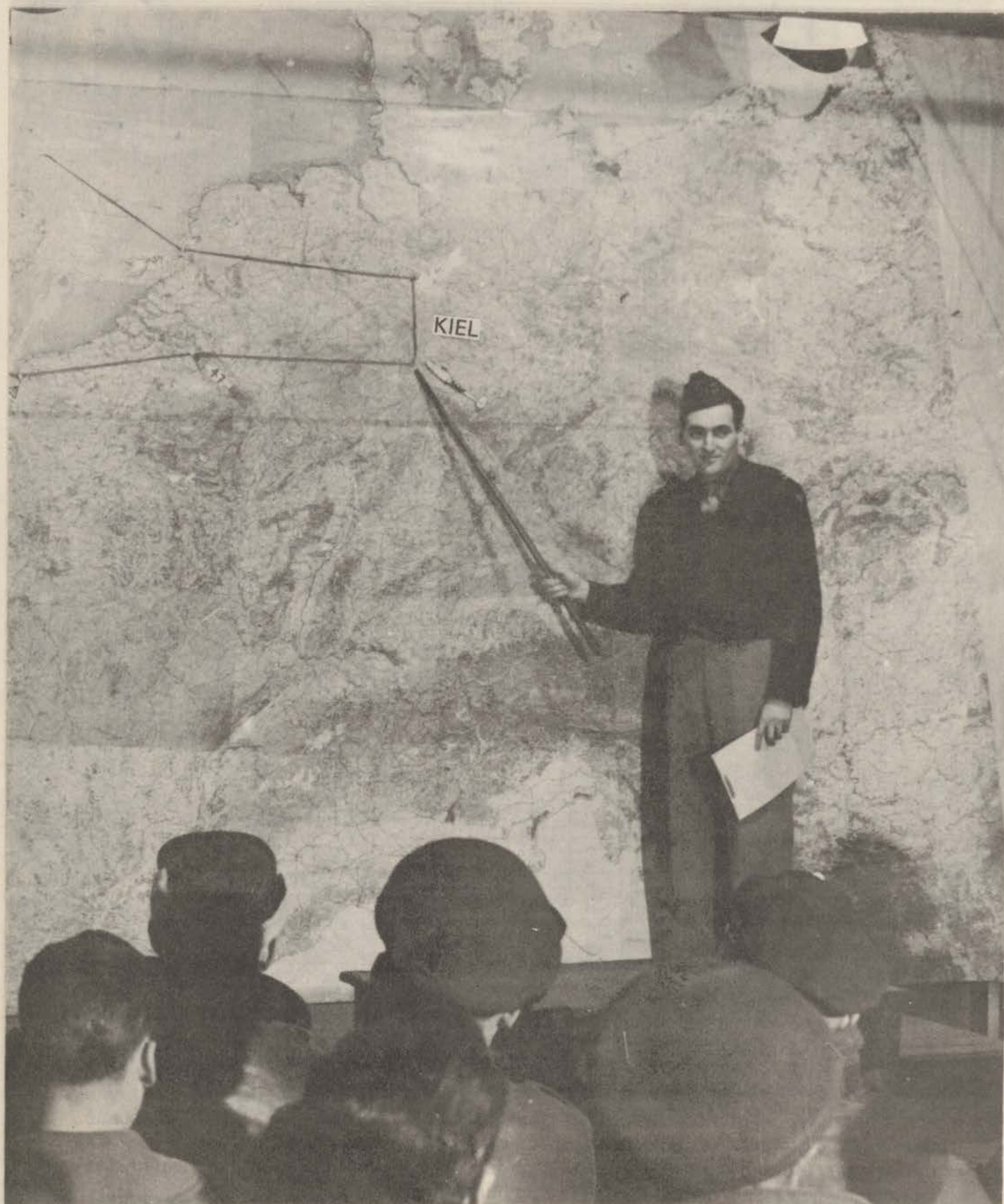




One of the main reasons was that our fighter-bombers began to paralyze rail traffic within the Reich itself. Coal trains leaving the Ruhr dropped to something like eight percent of normal. General Pelz, the Luftwaffe's fair-haired boy, was not exaggerating when he said, in the autumn of 1944, that unless the Allied fighter-bombers were driven away, there would be no coal for Germany's industries. Dispersal of industry to escape our strategic bombing made this transportation problem even more acute. But it is worth noting that until bombing of transportation facilities became heavy and sustained, the German railways were able to absorb terrific punishment.

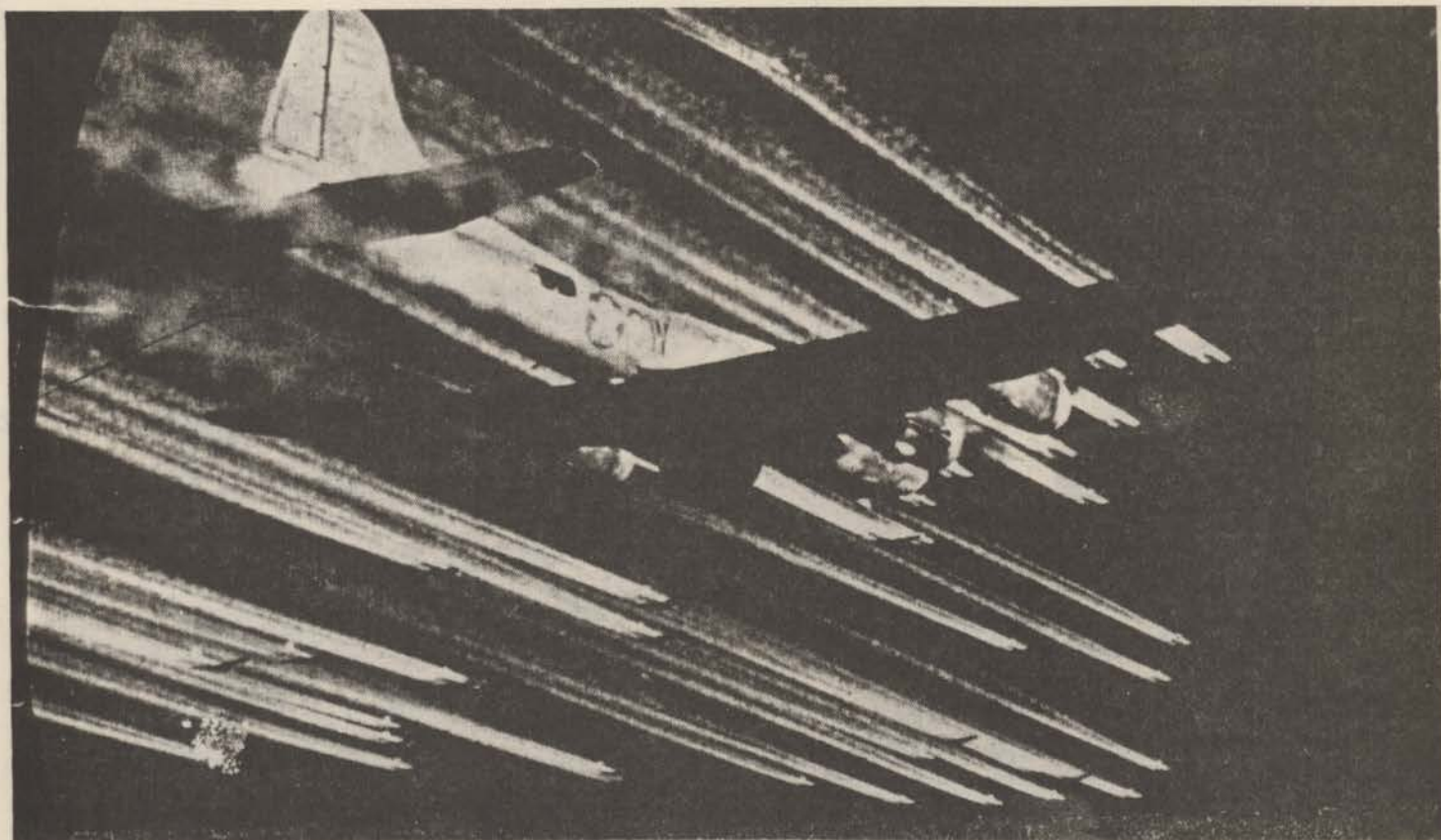
In the last analysis, the mission of Allied airpower was to hasten the collapse of the enemy. It achieved this mission partly by crippling his war production, partly by denying him mobility.





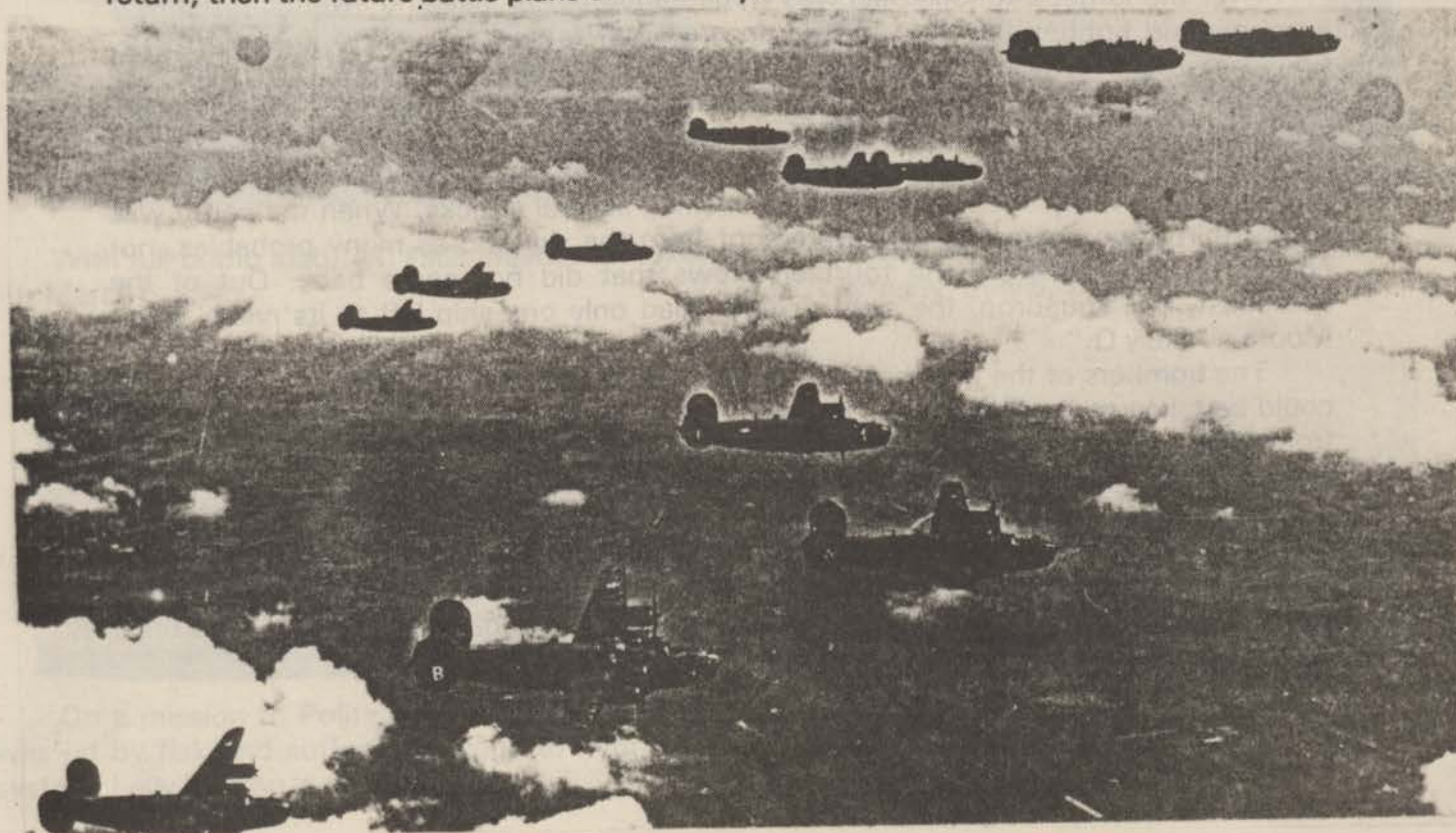
In the last analysis, the mission of Allied strategy was to defeat the enemy by cutting off his war production, partly by sending him to sea, and partly by cutting off his lines of communication.





The battle of Kiel, the first major attack in daylight of a heavily defended city of Germany. The date of the attack was May 14, 1943, and will go down in history as the turning point in the air war against the invincible Luftwaffe.

This mission was the supreme test for the policy of daylight bombing. Allied bomber commands were waiting breathlessly for the outcome of this battle and the answer to the crucial question if the powerful defenses of Kiel could be pierced and some of the force return, then the future battle plans of the Army Air Forces could be drawn.







Over the target a furious duel was waged amid terrific flak and swarming fighters; bombers and fighters fell from the sky in great white balls of flaming fuel and metal. Enemy fighters were queueing up for passes through the formation and in twos and threes picking off the bomber out of position or unfortunate enough to have been left without a wingman. The enemy fighters picked up the formation at the coast and kept it under constant attack all the way to the target and back again. The group estimated one hundred and twenty enemy fighters each making several attacks. When the count was taken, thirty-two enemy fighters were shot from the sky and as many probables, not counting the score from the fourteen crews that did not come back. Out of the holocaust, one squadron, the sixty-seventh, had only one ship left to its name, Major Moore's "Susy Q."

The bombers of the eighth Air Force had proven to a skeptical world, that the war could be taken to the heart of the enemy. Though hampered by circumstances ranging from weather to sickness, and overwhelmed at times by the powerful Luftwaffe, they nevertheless carried the war unrelentingly into territories regarded invulnerable. They pierced the best planned defenses, hurdled barriers of hanging flak, and though unmercifully pummelled time and time again, pricked for once and always the bubble of Luftwaffe invincibility. Many lives had been lost and planes, but the lessons they had taught the world would live on and be handed down to other men, until Germany was once again on her knees and the Reich, this time, a mass of rubble.





Aircraft #314 lands with section of nose turret door imbedded in stablizer.



Aircraft #594 lands with collapsed gear, February 17, 1945.



Aircraft #124 lands on one wheel November 29, 1944.



Aircraft #189 lands in nearby field as engines cut, September 5, 1944.



With full bomb load, AC #965 crashes on take off, March 6, 1945.



Aircraft #367 lands in field on a mission from Kiel, Germany, July 6, 1944.



On a mission to Politz oil refineries, AC #328 was hit by flak and suffered damage to hydraulic system, belly landing in nearby field.



Aircraft #309 lands with collapsed gear.





Railroad marshalling yards were prime targets, along with the vast network of canals. The Germans estimation of the importance of the marshalling yards at Hamm can be measured by the 4000 regular railroad men employed there. In addition 8000 laborers attempted to keep the yards in repair. In 1943, Fritz Knickenberg, rail transportation nazi, complained that the repair gangs couldn't keep up with the Allied bombings. The 44th bombed Hamm on four occasions — April 22, 1944, September 26, 1944, September 30, 1944, and October 2, 1944.

Bombing transportation facilities directly saved lives "D" Day. Captured German documents revealed that German troops were constantly delayed in reaching fighting fronts. The German divisions ordered from Bordeaux to the Normandy front were fourteen days in making the trip, mostly on foot, and horse-drawn vehicles.









Weather at times was a greater menace than the Messerschmitt and Fockwulfe fighters.





At times when the visibility was bad or darkness was setting in flares were sent up to pinpoint the Air Base for the bombers.





Misburg, Germany — oil storage and processing plant. Bombed June 20, 1944 from 20,000 ft.

The persistent effort by the AAF and RAF paid off in astounding dividends as the flow of war energy became a trickle by the end of July. The production of gasoline in Germany dropped from 182,000 tons in March, 1944, to 39,000 in July, 12,000 in August, and less than 5,000 in September. Obviously, the German war machine could not carry on very much longer. The panzer divisions were stranded for lack of fuel, the pilot training program was curtailed, and the submarine activities were at a standstill. However, the unqualified success was not achieved without cost to the bombing forces. What the Germans lacked in the way of air defense, they made up for with concentrations of heavy flak. Every oil target was ringed solid with heavy flak, showing desperation in defending their dwindling supplies.





At Misburg, the oil refinery was almost completely destroyed.

Every intelligence source indicated and the Germans have since agreed unanimously, that the results substantially hastened the end of the war. Conservative estimates showed that the loss of output at the 66 separate plants attacked between May and July was in excess of 400,000,000 gallons. By August, gasoline production had been reduced to 20 percent of German's minimum requirements. By V-E day the oil industry was down to seven percent of pre-attack level.





Three groups from the Eighth Air Force in England, the 44th, 389th and the 93rd, were on their way to Libya in North Africa to join the 98th and 376th Africa based groups, already there. These five groups were destined to destroy the life blood of the German war machine — the Ploesti oil fields and refineries in Rumania.







Lemon Drop is on her way to Libya — and the bombs are for Italy and Ploesti.

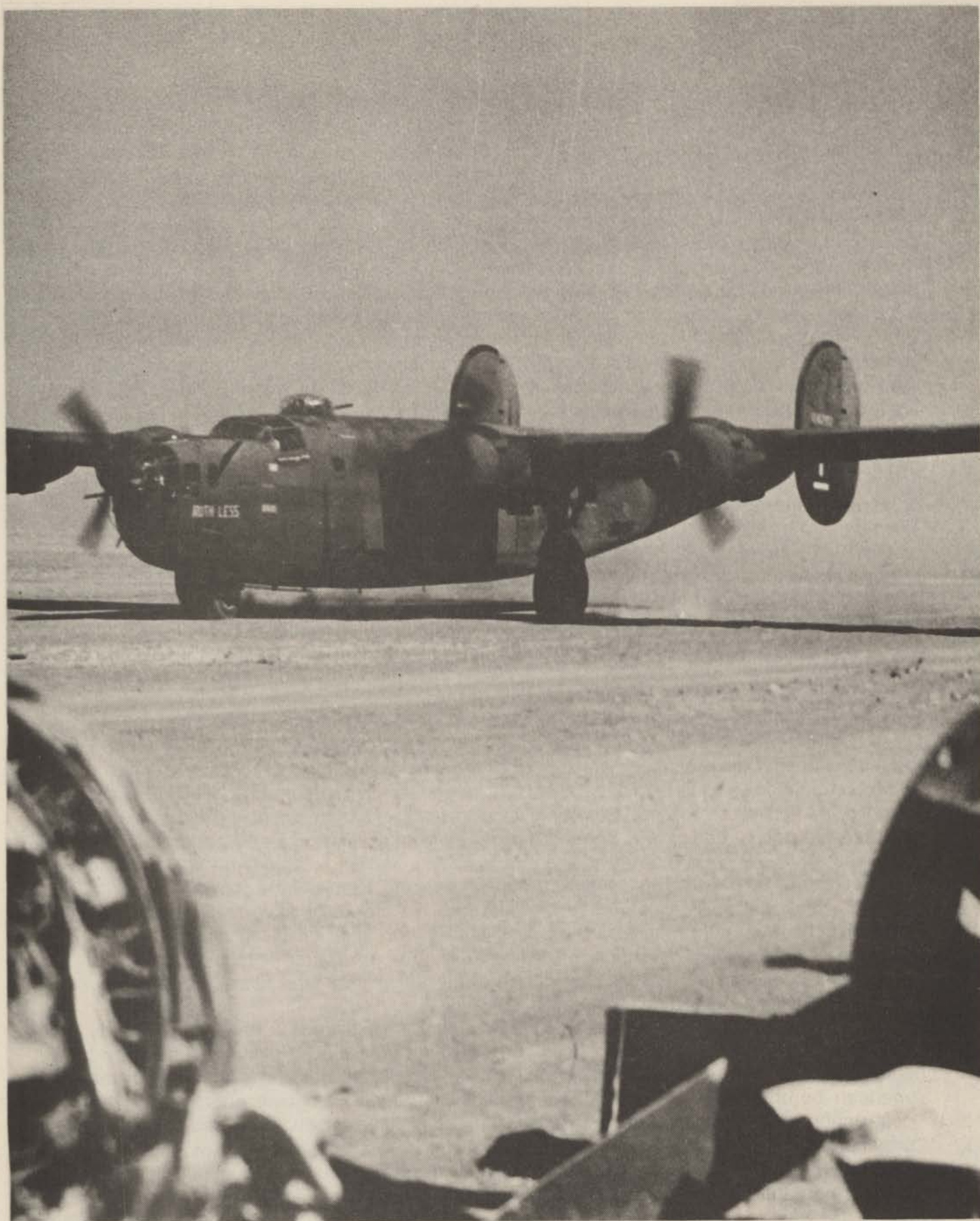






The heat of the desert sun created havoc to the running parts of the bombers due evaporation and refueling was a major operation, sometimes it had to be done from five gallon cans.





Based in the desert of Libya, the sand and dust was a constant hazard to the engines and tires of the Liberators.



## ROME (1)

The first bombing attack on Rome was made 19 July, 1943, by a strong force of Liberators operating out of the desert. This was no ordinary mission, the like of which were being run with deadly monotony into other Italian centers, but one morally hazardous and the results of which would be focused on the Christian world. Advocates of all out bombing had long deplored the fact that Rome, within easy reach of Allied bombers, had alone among the belligerent capitols, been spared the terror she deserved. On the other hand stood those to whom the culture and background of the Italian capitol appeared a righteous detriment to the mutilation which necessarily must come from bombing. However, the pressure of military expediency forced the issue to a climax. Though Rome had been declared an open city, its great Littoria railway yards had nevertheless continued as the chief supply distribution center for the Axis troops in Italy and as threat after threat to bomb Rome brought from Italian officials only denials of Littoris's operations, it became only necessary to act.

Briefing for the mission to Rome's Littoria Yards was the most detailed and concise combat crewmen had ever heard. Covering every point from all angles, with emphasis on accuracy and precision, Lt. Col. Posey concluded with: "And for God's sake, if you don't see the target, bring back your bombs!" The city of Rome itself was to be spared. There would be no indiscriminate bombing; there would be no near misses; all bombs would be laid squarely on the target, and if not they would be brought back. Such were the instructions for the crews who had been selected for this historic raid. Col Johnson offered the devout Catholic crew members an opportunity to excuse themselves from going on the mission, however, not one single member took advantage of the offer.

Occupying her usual spot, Suzy-Q with Capt. Cameron at the controls, led the formation of the 44th to Rome. Approaching the city, eager crewmen, craned necks for a view of what had been described to them as the "Cradle of Christianity" and each, knowing that this was a great chapter in his personal history, searched for Littorias. But the crews had been briefed well, and with neither flak nor fighter to stem their course, the planes pushed on steadily toward their target. The first bombs fell precisely at 1204, and then followed a cascade of explosives and incendiaries which tore into fragments the warehouses and oil stores packed alongside the tracks. The adjacent airfield crowded with axis aircraft came in for a good share of the bombs. Hangers and parked aircraft were blasted to bits. In a moment the entire yard was a mass of flames and debris, and The Liberators, now with their noses turned away from Rome, were leaving behind a mass of wreckage, spilling columns of smoke into the cloudless sky. The mission had been carried out with unprecedented success, each bombardier of the Group having sent his bombs exactly where prescribed. Of the entire number of aircraft taking part in the raid, it was later learned that one bomb from another group "got away" and slightly damaged a Basilica located near the yards.

Whether the raid on Rome was the direct cause for the turmoil in Italy which shortly thereafter deposed Mussolini is not known, but the repercussions throughout the world reached a phase unprecedented in warfare. Until all details regarding the accuracy of the American bombs were released, condemnation was heard from all quarters for the "destruction of a Christian City." Christians sincere in their sorrow, deplored the act as "unnecessary," while Axis propaganda agents ranted and shouted of American barbarism. With the release of the entire picture of the bombing, came a wave of relief, and from German quarters utter silence. So closed the first chapter of American warfare over Italy.

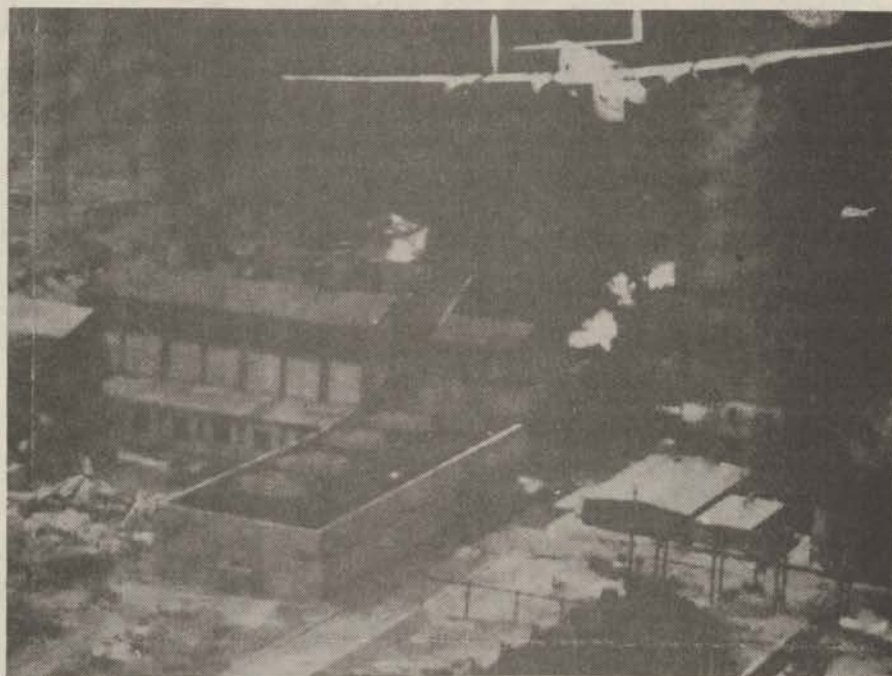




Littoria marshalling yards — Rome, Italy.



# AIR FORCE GIVES PLOESTI HELL



## 200 Liberators Write Air History in Smashing Raid

On Sunday, August 1, 1943, nearly 200 Liberator bombers of the Ninth United States Army Air Force, in a 2400 mile round trip, staged one of the most spectacular raids in war history. The target was the great oil refinery plant at Ploesti, Rumania, one of the most heavily defended areas in the world, and a major Axis petroleum source. Seven hours after the take-off the tall smokestacks and the huge storage tanks were a mass of flames and black smoke.

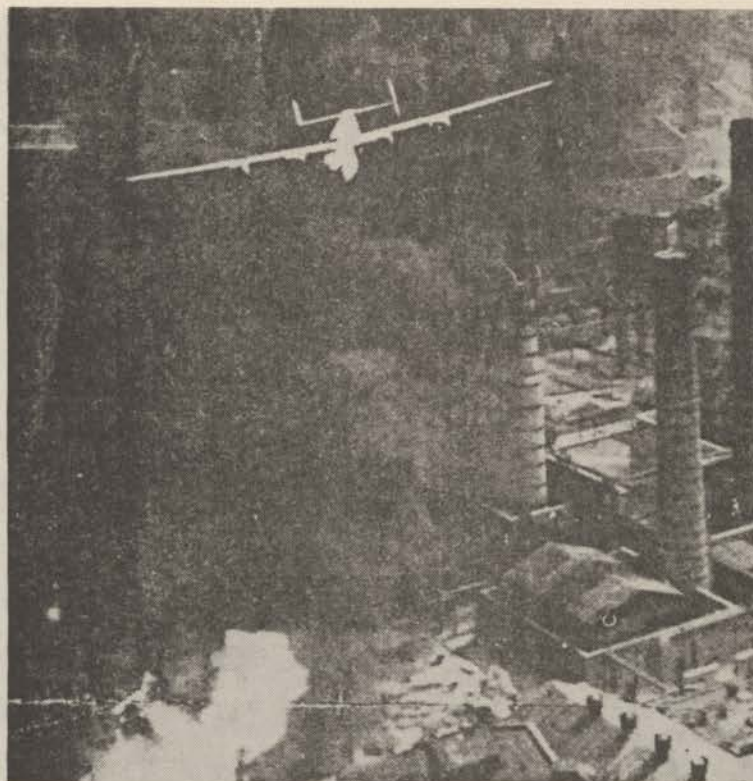
To the men who flew the bombers, the Ploesti raid was the most important mission of their Army life. As the planes droned over the Mediterranean, over Greece, over Bulgaria, they remembered the long months of painstaking study that had gone into the planning of the raid. Three times before, Ploesti had been bombed, twice by the Russians and once by the Ninth Air Force group in the early days of its formation. Targets had been hit, but not sufficient damage was done to cause any considerable delay in oil output.

### CAREFUL PREPARATION

General U. G. Ent, Ninth Bomber Chief, and his advisers planned the fourth raid on the element of surprise and meticulous study of objectives. A full sized skeleton model of the refineries was constructed on the sands of the Libyan desert. Every tank, building, and railroad line was clearly outlined. Day after day, the Liberators swooped down and released their dummy bombs. Finally on the last day, before Air Force officers who had analyzed every angle of concentration bombing, the planes came over again, and this time dropped real 200 pound delayed action bombs. When the smoke cleared away the shadow city of Ploesti lay in ruins.

Now, with every detail memorized, and the real objective getting closer, the men remembered Col. John R. "Killer" Kane's words the night before, "It would take an entire army to fight its way up there and smash this target. We are going to do it with 2,000 men in a single day."





Just how close the U.S. Liberator bombers came to the refinery smokestacks is shown in these photographs. This congested portion of Rumania is a main nazi source of oil, and its loss would be one of the worst nightmares Hitler could experience.

#### **HAYSTACKS SPOUT FIRE**

Flying over Rumania, Bombardier Herbert Light of Ames, Tex. looked through his binoculars and watched some villagers enjoying an open air festival. Fifteen minutes later, the planes neared the targets and the peaceful looking countryside suddenly started to spout shrapnel. The ridges around Ploesti bristled with anti-aircraft. Gun barrels jutted out through hay stacks and cottages fell apart revealing concealed high powered guns. Then the signal to attack came from Gen. Ent's plane and the raid was on.

Coming in as low as 10 feet the B-24's released 600,000 pounds of delayed action high explosives, and hundreds of clusters of incendiaries.

"It was the closet thing to Dante's 'Inferno' I've ever seen," said Group Commander Col. Leon Johnson. "Enemy flak over the target was very thick. Hedge-top flying made the mission doubly hazardous, but the boys had eyes only for the refineries and fat storage tanks. Every time one of the incendiaries struck home, there would be a roar followed by a sheet of flame and belching black smoke."

#### **ENEMY FIGHTERS DOWNED**

"As we passed over our ship filled up with smoke and it was quite a while before it all cleared out," added Engineer James E. Cailliar of Seattle, Washington.

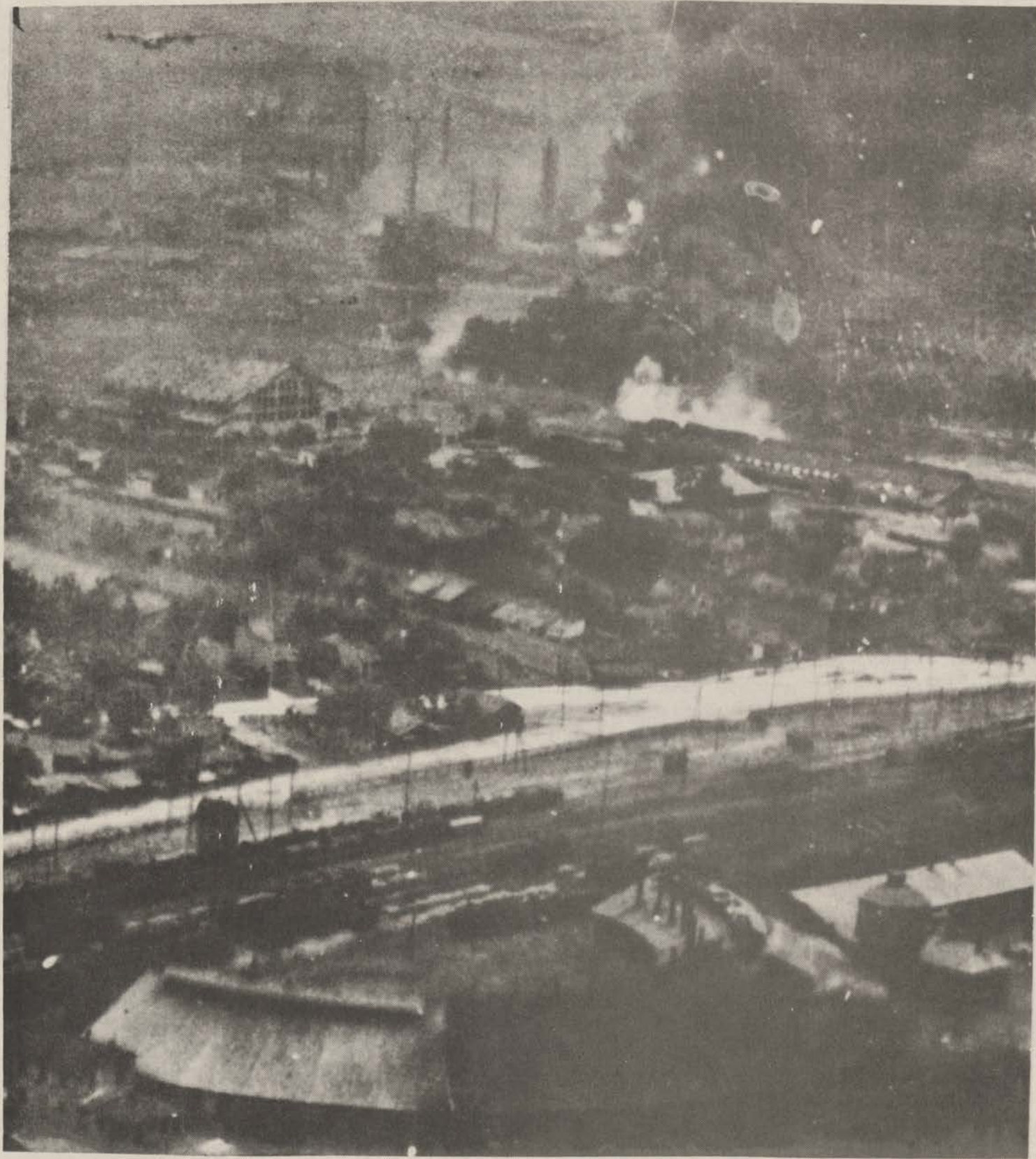
From the Ploesti airfields enemy fighters arose in swarms, but S/Sgt's George L. Kelsey of Bennington, Oklahoma, Patrick H. McAtee of Henderson, Ky. and all the other equally straight-shooting gunners knocked down 51 of them.

"But it was hell to see some of our own ships get it," said Pilot James A. Bunce, Jr. of Statesboro, Ga. "That's what took all the kick out of it."

But that was the price of the Ploesti raid. "Mission successful," radioed back Gen. Ent.

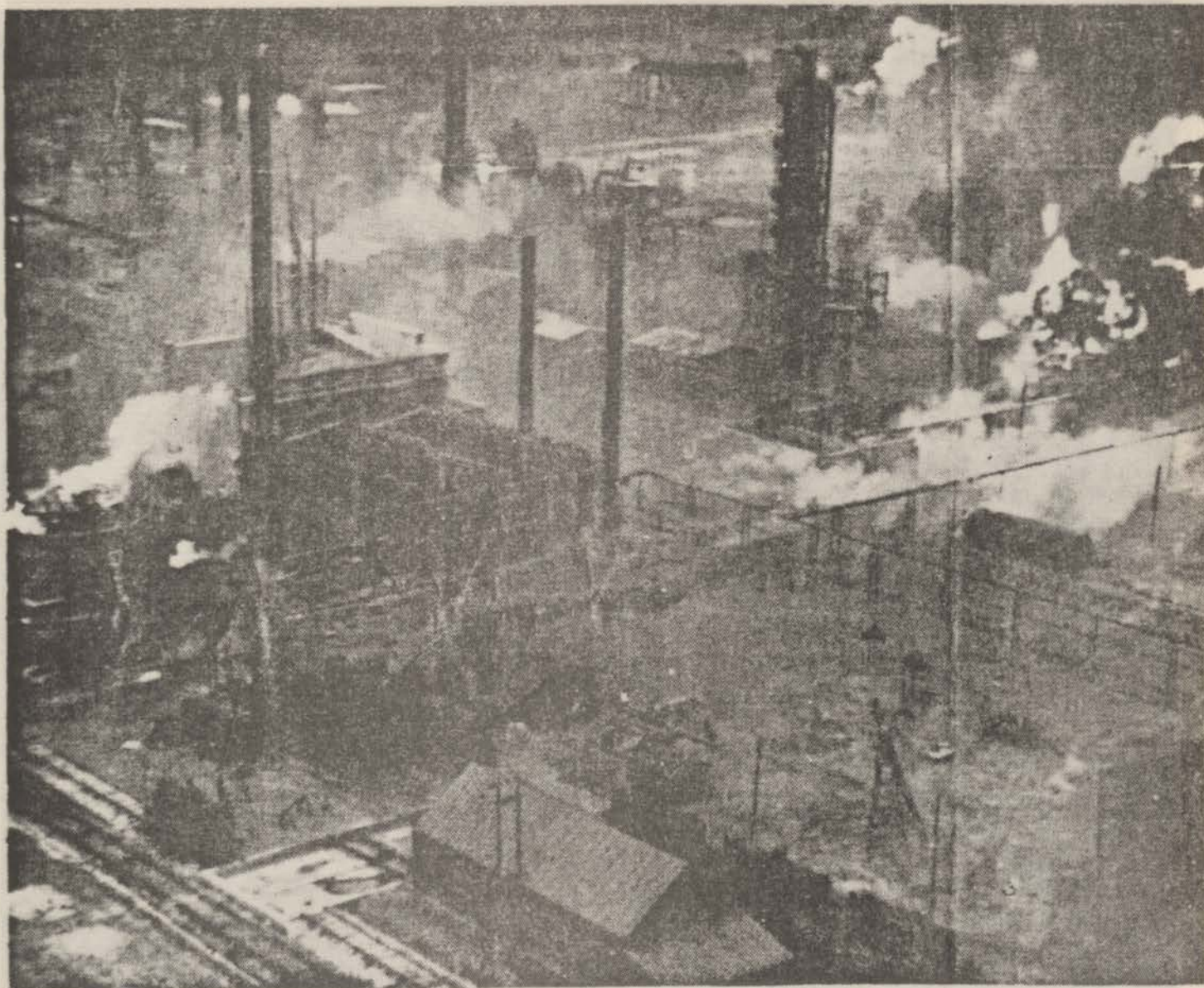
How much effect the raid will have on the Axis cannot yet be estimated. But one thing is certain. The German war machine was dealt a heavy blow. Ploesti's refineries turned out 90 per cent of the total Rumanian oil output and supplied over  $\frac{1}{3}$  of Germany's demands. To continue the war on all fronts. Germany must have oil. Much of it went up in smoke at Ploesti.





Except for stories of individual daring which would come later, and stories of heroic escapes, the mission was done. Colonel Leon W. Johnson was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, and all men participating both officers and enlisted men, were decorated with the Distinguished Flying Cross. The contribution they had individually made to final victory still stands unparalleled in aerial warfare.





This great picture taken from a plane which participated in the Ploesti raid, shows some of the damage caused by the incendiary bombs, which spread fires over a wide area of the target.

The interrogation of crews returning from the Ploesti Raid brought out details of the bombing and pertinent information for the intelligence, however, many interesting stories also were related, such as, the farmers throwing pitchforks, how the fighters dived into the ground, how another group converged on their course and the scramble to cross over or under, how a crew belly-landed and jumped out to wave the formation on, how the grain shocks opened up to reveal every imaginable type of gun firing point blank, how the tree-tops scraped on the bottoms of the ships, how the tracers of the waist gunners set the railroad tank cars on fire, how one of the group's ships was hit and went right straight up in front of the formation and fell off to the left instead of in front of the bomber stream — and how damn glad they were to see the blue Mediterranean Sea once again.





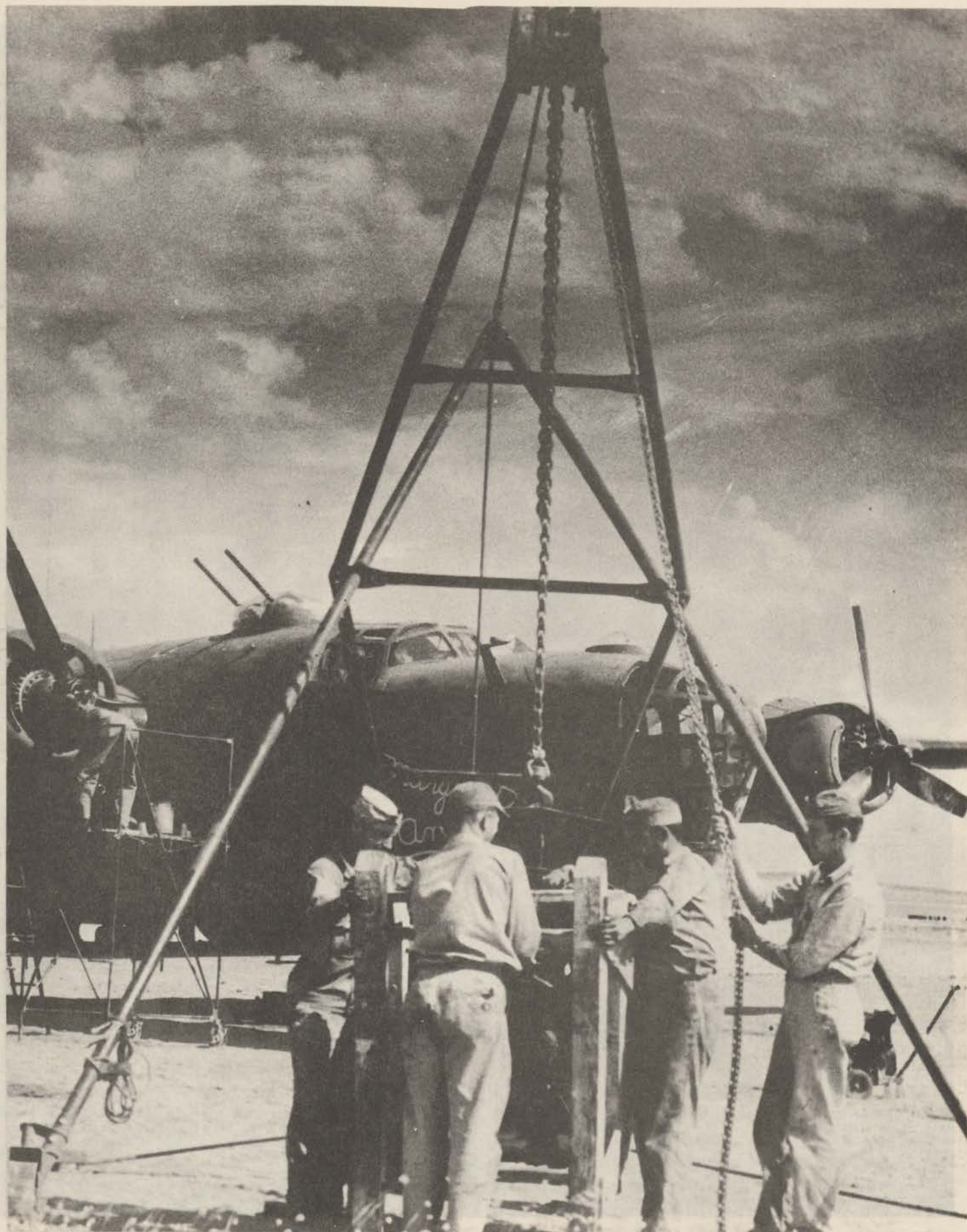
After the Ploesti mission and the battle damage to the ships was taken care of, the crews were called in for briefing. Everyone expected to get orders and route information for the return trip to home bases in England. A hush fell over the briefing room when they were told that they had one more mission to fly before going home. The target — the main manufacturing plant of the Messerschmitt-109 German fighter plane. Groans could be heard all over the briefing room. The flight to Wiener Neustadt Austria was over 2000 miles up and back, without any fighter escort. The attack coming from Africa instead of England, caught the Defenders flat-footed. Losses were very light.





Repair to the bomb bay was made for the night of 10-11-44.





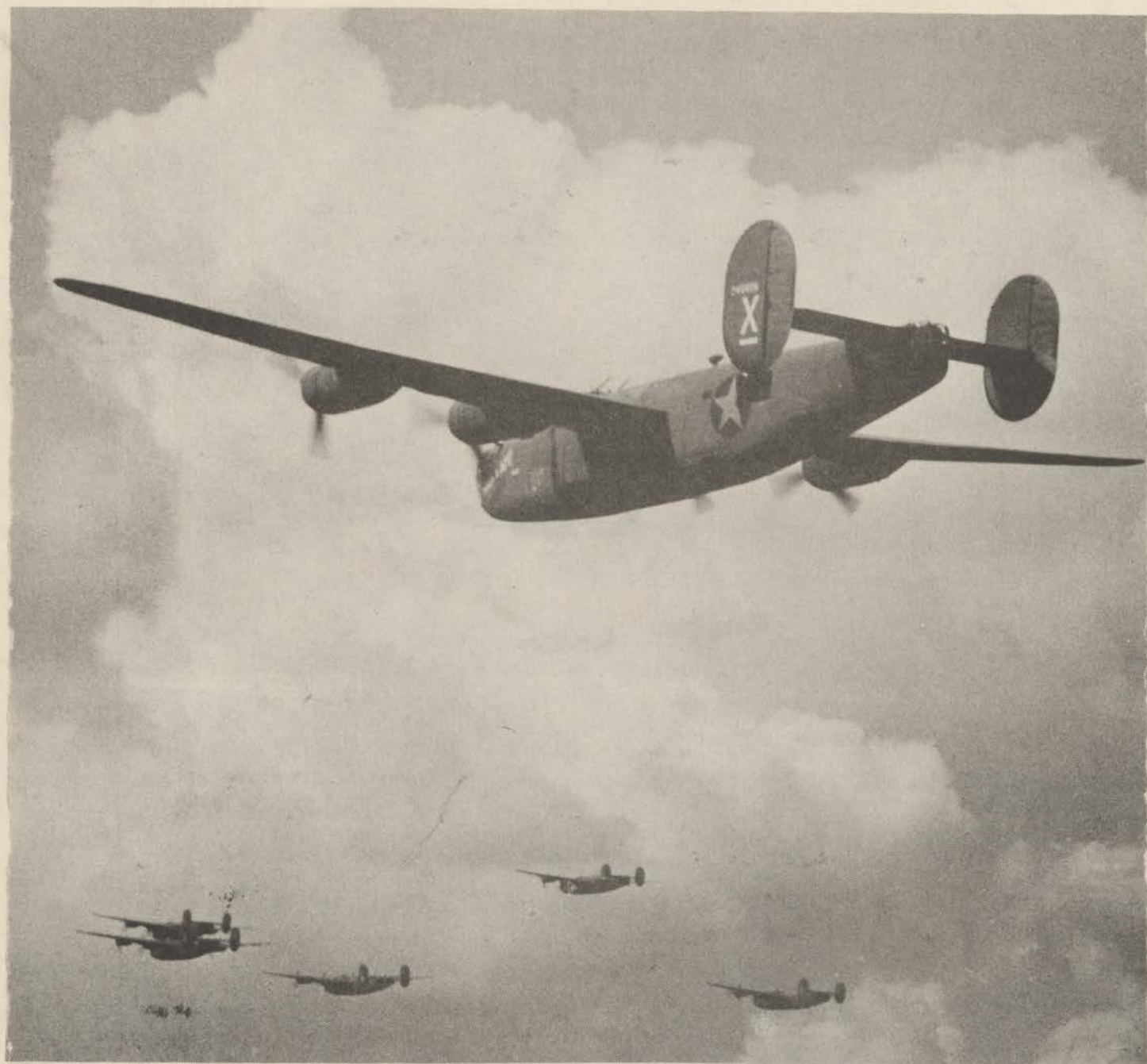
Repairs to the bombers were made for the long flight back to England.





And we were on our way, hoping never having to return.





Hamburg — Moorfleth

24,000 feet. 10-6-44, A.C. 894







The gravest error made by any group of the 8th Air Force was the bombing of Schaffhausen in Switzerland on April 4, 1944. The 44th Bomb Group was briefed to bomb Fredrickshaven on that day with explicit orders to bomb only if the target was clearly visible and to bring back the bombs if it was cloud covered as we were short of bombs. The target was not clear and the group turned for home with their bomb load. The lead navigator got off course, on the way back, and crossed the western tip of Switzerland. Naturally, the Swiss fighters came up to investigate. Their planes were built by the Germans and looked like Messerschmitts. The Command Pilot, Major Frank Slough ordered the group to get rid of their bombs and prepare for an air battle with the fighters coming in. Little did the group know that the drop point for the bombs was over the city of Schaffhausen in Switzerland, just across the Danube River from Germany. Almost immediately Washington was informed about the error by the Swiss and shortly thereafter Bomber Command had us on the line back at the base. Since I was an Intelligence Officer of the Group and in charge of photography, I was ordered to set up for emergency interpretation of the vertical camera films of the bombing as soon as the planes returned to base. The bombers carrying cameras were ordered to land first and were speedily processed. The interpretation of the bombing indicated that the Swiss claim was legitimate. The amount of damage to property and personnel could not be judged from the photographs. The 8th Air Force considered the matter as human error in navigation and that was the last of the mission we heard until Axis Sally came on the air from radio Germany calling us something else.





A Crew Chief waves a farewell and prayer as his ship leaves for Normandy Beach.





The waist gunners were ready and waiting over Normandy Beach.





## D-DAY

The softening of the French coast for the invasion was a master stroke of deception and strategy. Targets were selected all the way from Bordeaux to Denmark, the RAF concentrated on the enemy's radar facilities and the stage was set.

The morning of June 6th, before dawn all groups were a bee-hive of activity. Two missions were set up on the board, one set for a pre-dawn take-off, and the other to follow before the first returned. The mission was briefed to bomb the shore line of Normandy and pictures afterwards showed how well the job was done. Craters started 200 feet in shallow water from the shore line and carried back to the hedgerows inland. The second mission continued the carpet pattern back as the first contingent of troops hit the beach at six-twenty eight in the morning. One thousand and seventy AAF heavies laid down this pattern just before and after the zero hour on D-Day.



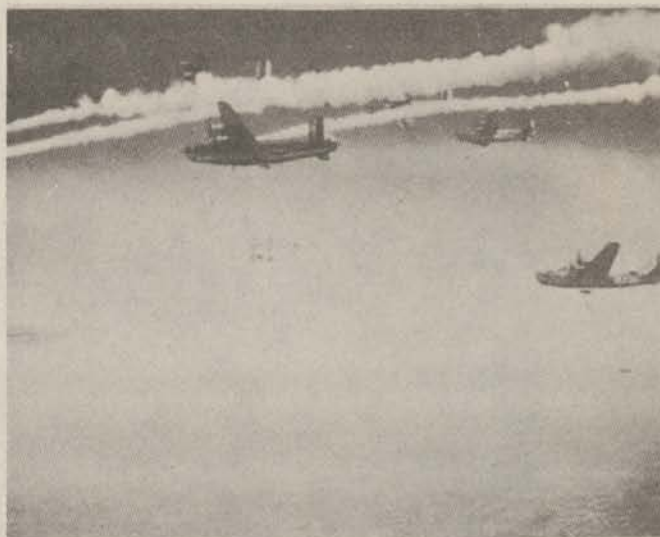




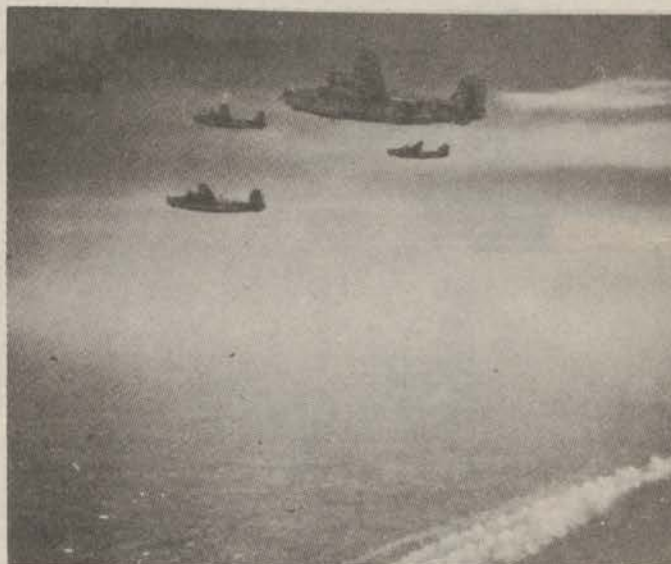


While some of the most terrific air battles of the war were fought during 1943 and certainly the most heroic and spectacular engagements had taken place, however, the decisive battles were yet to be fought. The year 1944 started out with both sides lined up on either side of the English Channel with the ultimate defeat for the side putting up the losing air force. The first round was fought on January 11, 1944, when 750 heavy bombers with their escorting fighters went to the big game targets of Meppen, Oschersleben, Halberstadt, Brunswick and other aircraft factories. As expected the defenses were heavy both in flak and scores of improved FW-190s and ME-109s. The Air Force lost fifty bombers and five fighters, however, the guns of the fighters and bombers knocked down nearly three hundred of the Luftwaffe interceptors. Though these battles were not decisive, the fighter escort not only proved itself to be the method of whittling down the opposition but served as a tremendous morale builder to the bomber crews who had been for so long, the lone gunners of the enemy skies.





Royan Estuary, France, April 15, 1945.



April 15, 1945, the Royan Estuary, north of Bordeaux, proved to be an example of how a motionless enemy in a fixed position can be almost impervious to air attack. This Atlantic Coast area resisted all efforts of dislodgment until the 44th used bombays loaded with jelly-bombs in the last weeks of the war.

This twenty mile area was so well dug in by the Germans that the Americans bypassed it and left the job to the Free French of the Interior, (the FFIs) to take it. The task was too much for them so the Air Force was called in to soften the area. Almost immediately after the saturation bombing of the area with fire bombs and frags, the Germans began to surrender to the French.





SAY-44/641-1X 25-5-44X 001-7 21000 X BELFORT

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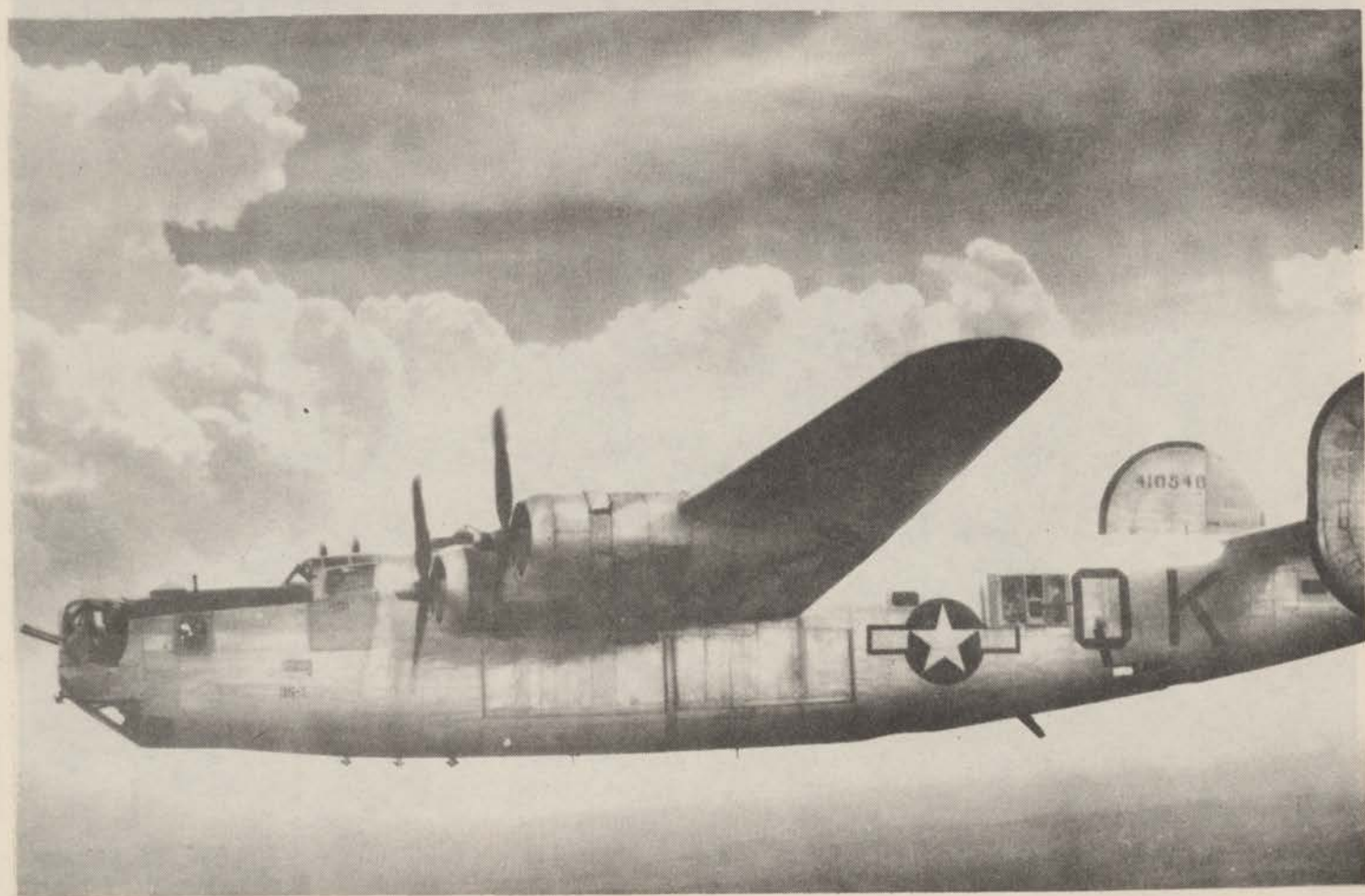
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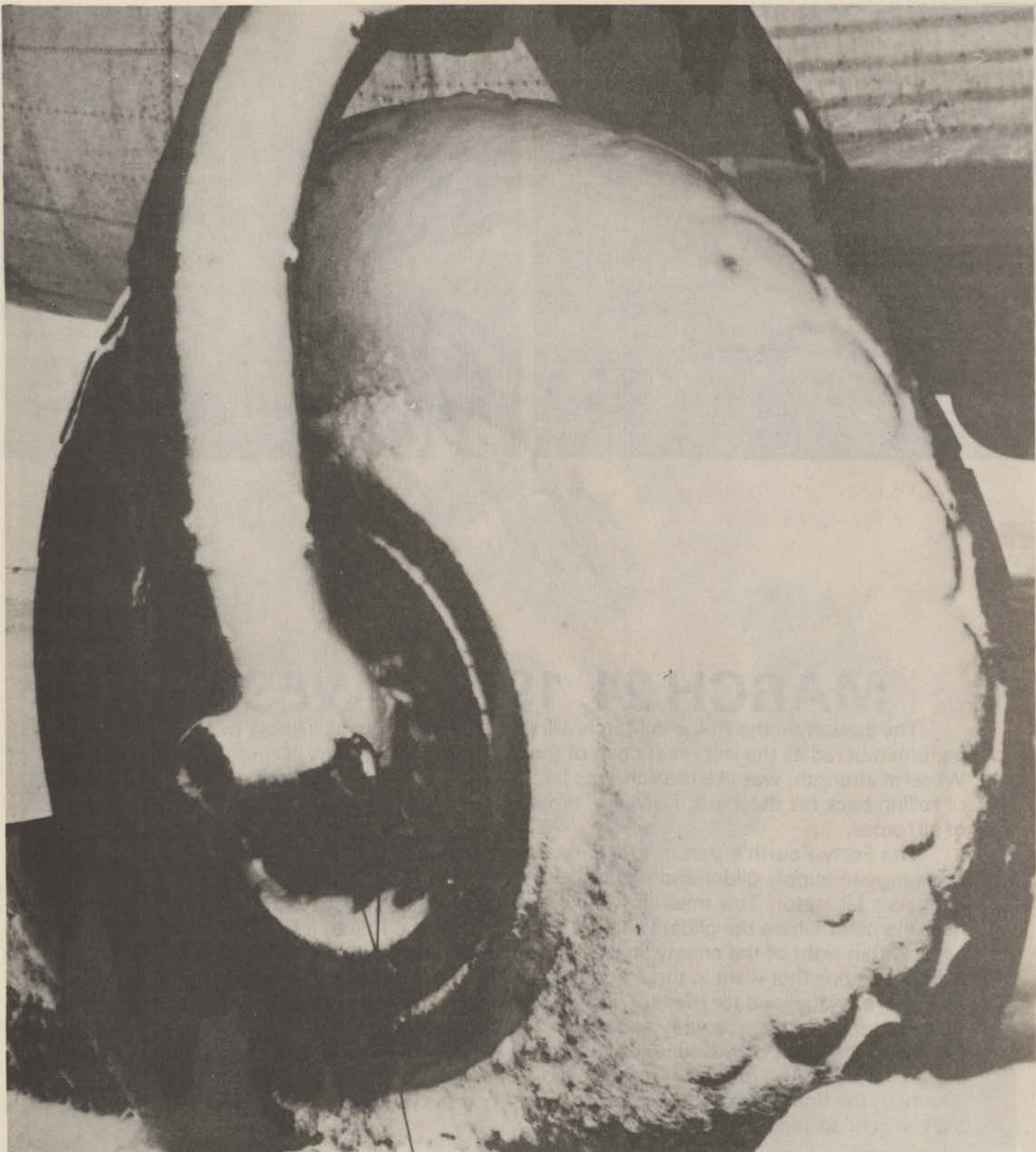












At the Battle of the Bulge, the first four days of Von Rundstedt's desperate counteroffensive — an offensive designed to buy a little more time at any costs — the weather was unflyable. The Liberators and other combat aircraft were snowbound back in England. After two weeks the weather mercifully cleared and around December the 23rd mediums and heavies dropped more than 100,000 tons of bombs in a gigantic interdiction effort. The Germans, obstructed in their narrow corridor by the heroic stand of the ground forces at Bastogne and St. Vith, were unable to supply themselves under the ceaseless rain of bombs. By December 27 they began to pull out. Within a month, the Bulge was hammered flat.





## MARCH 24, 1945 — WESEL

The assault on the Rhine in March will go down in history as "Rhine Day" but it will be remembered as the last great push of the War against Germany. Crossing the river at Wesel in strength, was like breaking the back of the enemy, from then on it was a matter of rolling back his defenses, however, crossing the big ditch was a combined operation of all forces.

The Forty-Fourth's part in this great operation was not an easy one. Flying within rifle range to supply glider and paratroops is always a dangerous mission for aircraft as large as a Liberator. This mission was no exception to the rule. The dropping zone was near the point where the gliders had set down beyond the Rhine, a few miles east of the river, within sight of the enemy lines. The supplies were necessary to the success of the airborne troops that went in three hours earlier and were battling with light equipment to establish a bridgehead for the crossing in force by the ground forces. The drop had to be at low level to assure accuracy and minimize the effect of enemy ACK-ACK, preferring to run the gauntlet of machinegun and small arms fire to the heavier German anti-aircraft. Supplying the ground forces proved to be very costly to the American bombers, however, the final defeat of Germany, began when the Rhine was crossed supplied, and the bridgehead secured.









Dear Col. Harvell:

I did have an extra of Myrtle the Fertile Turtle. I don't know who the mechanics are, but you may be able to identify them.

This old boxcar was a real scarred up mess by the end of the war. I often wonder what happened to her in May, 1945.

As a matter of fact, you got quite a few holes in her old sides when you took the pictures of the March 24, 1945 mission. If I remember correctly, this is the plane you were flying that day. In any event, it was pretty well shot to hell.



The following information is designed to supplement, in detail, the fantastic story of supplying the paratroops and glider troops, who were battling to establish a bridge-head across the Rhine River at Wesel, Germany, March 24, 1945. It supplements the movie film of the action taken by Capt. U. P. Harvell, Intelligence and Photo Officer of the 44th Bomb Group, who was on the mission.

The 44th B.G. dispatched twenty-seven B-24's, loaded with 540 (60 tons) of critically needed supplies for the airborne troops, who had gone in earlier that day. The crews were carefully briefed to drop supplies on previously pinpointed positions from 100-200 feet above the tree tops. The turn from the drop zone was to begin immediately after the drop, to minimize the time over the enemy lines. The turn was estimated to take about fifteen minutes. The mission on the board looked to be a milk run. However, almost immediately after the drop the B-24's began to sustain hits from every type of weapon the Germans had in the field, especially when the bellies of their ships were exposed to the enemy as they were making tight turns to get back to the Rhine.

The first B-24 to be seriously damaged was AC#42-100314, piloted by 2nd Lt. Max E. Chandler. The left wing was seen to drop down and the ship began to lose altitude. The wing tip touched the ground and the plane bounced back into the air momentarily and then nosed into the field and exploded. The camera does not show any of the crew surviving this crash. However, a few days after the crash the advancing American forces overran the area and liberated two airmen from AC#314 who somehow escaped this fiery crash and explosion. One was the waist gunner Sgt. Robert D. Vance and the other was Sgt. Louis J. DeBlasio, tail gunner. Neither one of the men could remember how they got out of AC#314.

A second ship, AC#50896, piloted by 1st Lt. Leonard J. Crandell was picked up by cameraman Harvell, in a vertical dive and exploded near the spot of the first ship. None of the crew escaped from that aircraft.

Due to the low altitude of this mission and the fact that a cameraman was on the mission, this scene of two bombers being shot down in close range of the camera, is probably unique in the film record of World War Two air battles.

Supplying the airborne troops on Rhine Day proved to be a major operation for the U.S. Air Force, second only to the Ploesti Mission in losses for a low level mission.

Other scenes in the film, such as the shooting down of an enemy fighter coming in, is also an unusual scene to be taken from a bomber.

On the way down the Rhine River Valley to the drop zone at Wesel, scenes of bomb damage to the city of Cologne and other cities along the river, as well as their bridges and barges are apparent. On the way back to base, Amsterdam and the Albert Canal are visible as the battle damaged bombers head for home.

Watching the landing of the damaged B-24s at the base is a thrill in itself. One ship had to land on one wheel and tore a wing off right in front of the camera; another landed without a nose wheel; another with a flat tire and engine out, and finally, two planes landing at the same time, perform a near tragedy race down the runway. All are actual scenes taken during the war and will go down in history as the most devastating weapon ever sent against the enemy in World War Two, The B-24 LIBERATOR.

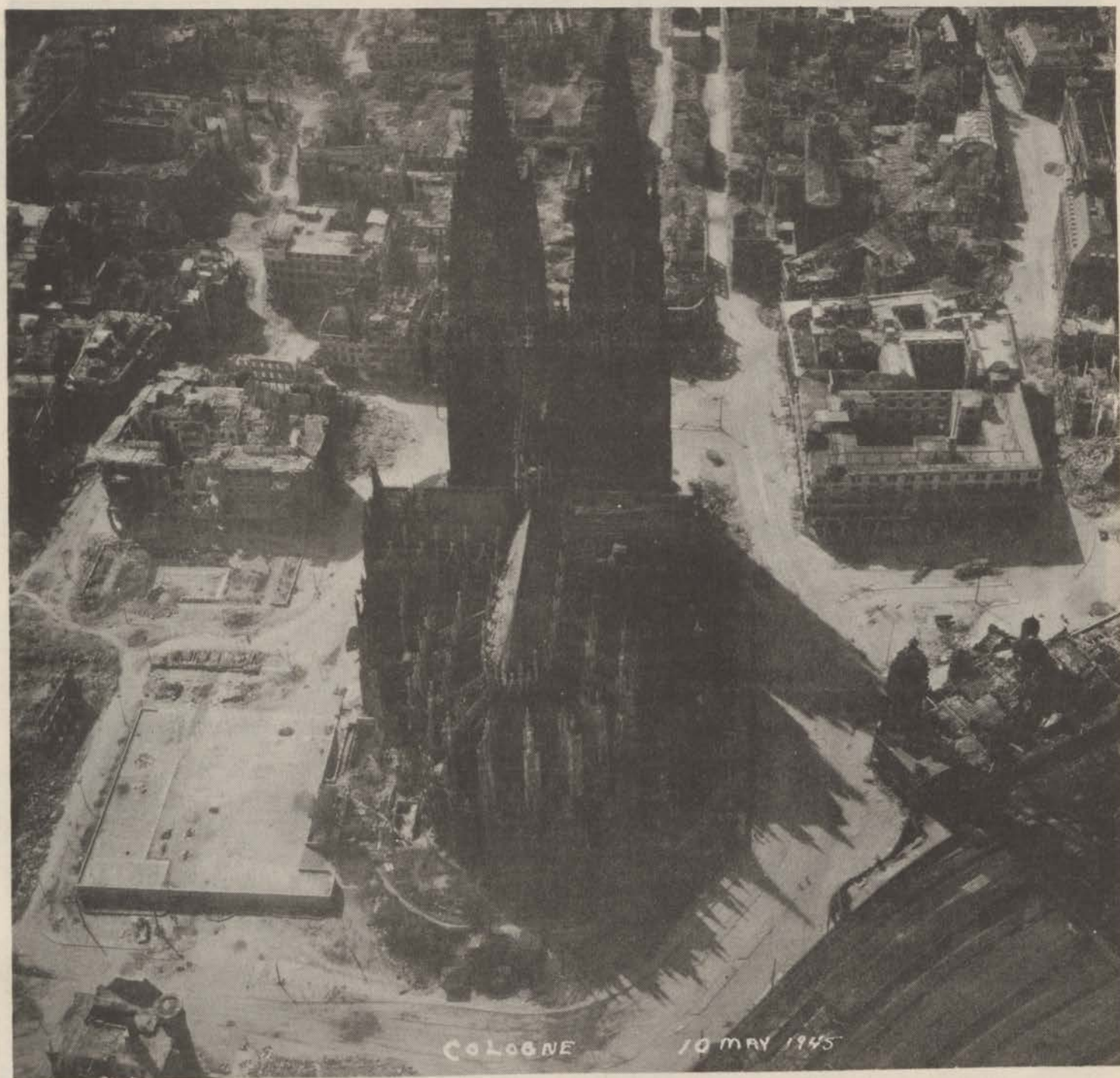




Other scenes in the film, such as the shooting down of enemy fighters, are also included. The film is a historical document of the war and the destruction of Cologne.

The Saturation bombing of Cologne, Germany was carried out on the night of May 31, 1942, by the British Air Force. The mass raid was made up mostly with Lancaster bombers. The reason the British stuck to night bombing was that the Lancaster was a fairly slow ship and was an easy target for the German fighters. The American B-24s and B-17s with their six 50 caliber gun positions were better suited for daylight missions. Also the precision bombsight and daylight gave the bombardier a chance to concentrate on targets which furnished materials for the German war machine. After all, war strategy is to deny the enemy materials and transportation to wage war and the battle is over.





Cologne, with its famous old cathedral, was the subject of repeated attacks. When the American troops finally arrived in that city after a tempestuous crossing of the Rhine they found the structure of the revered old shrine almost intact, although the city itself had practically relinquished its existence.



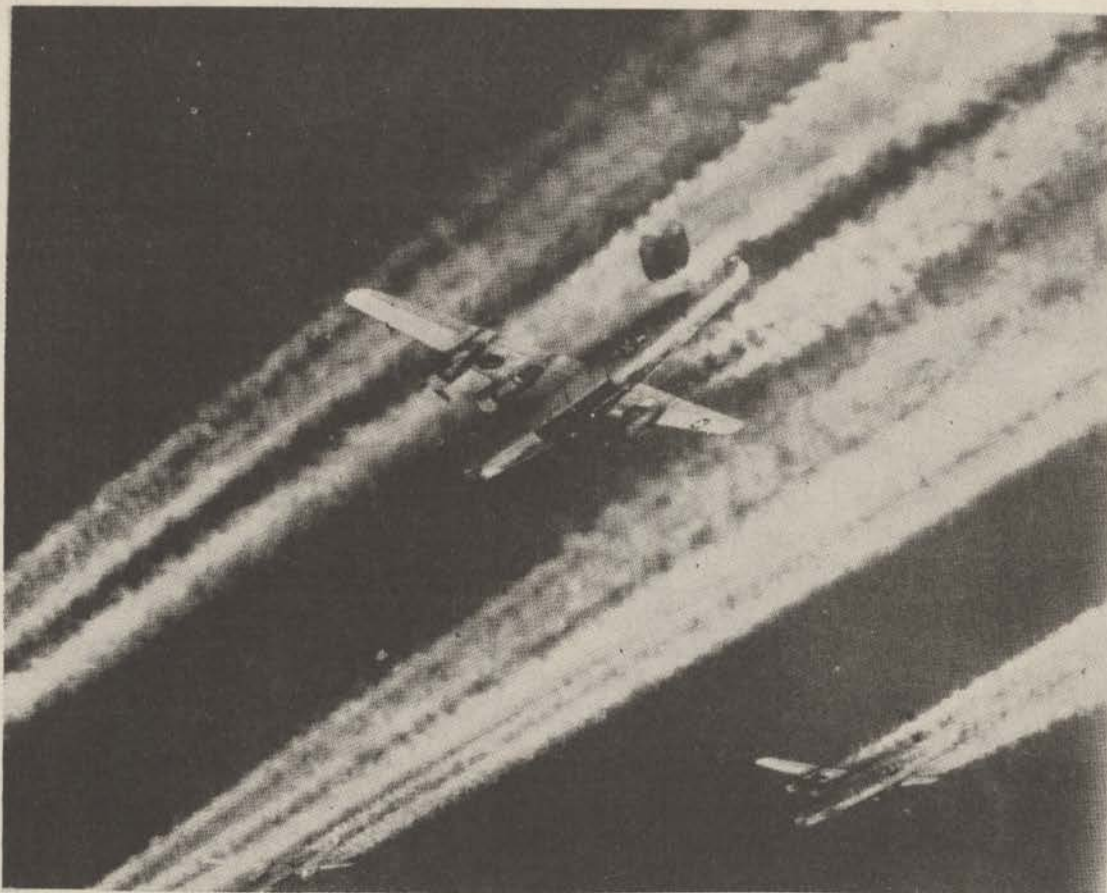


The stepped up operations in 1944 bore out the predictions and optimism of the commanders of the American heavy groups and brought a great deal of satisfaction to the proponents of daylight bombing. The critics were conspicuously silent as reports came through of the uncovering of the Russian Armies by the Luftwaffe, the withdrawal of air support from Rommel. The fighter production of the GAF had progressed in spite of the opposition from England. Goering had stepped up the fighter output from 1200 planes per month in 1942 to 3000 per month, the goal for December, 1944. The Luftwaffe had reasons to be confident of their ability to meet the bomber threat, however, they did not reckon with the fact that some day fighters would accompany the bombers all the way to the targets and back again.









For two and a half years prior to VE Day, Liberators have been going in to bomb runs.

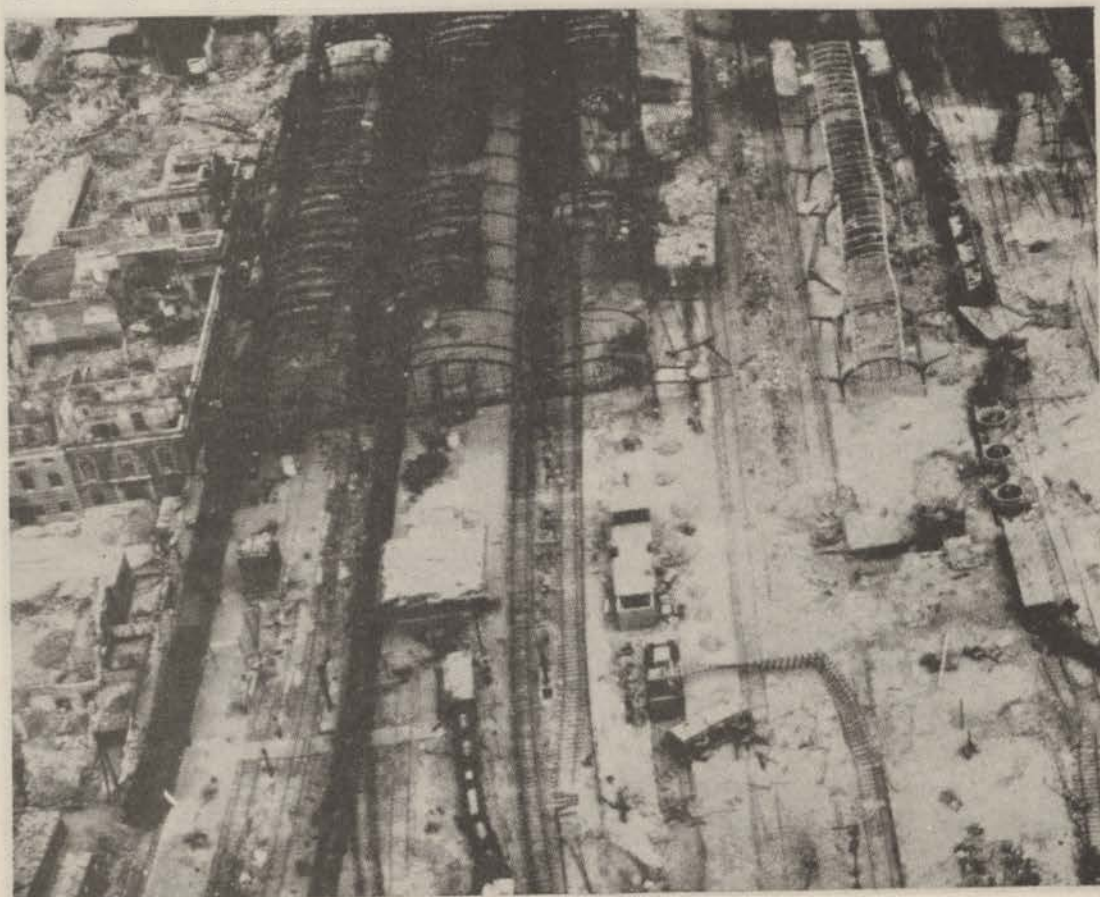


Experiencing intense enemy anti-aircraft attacks . . .



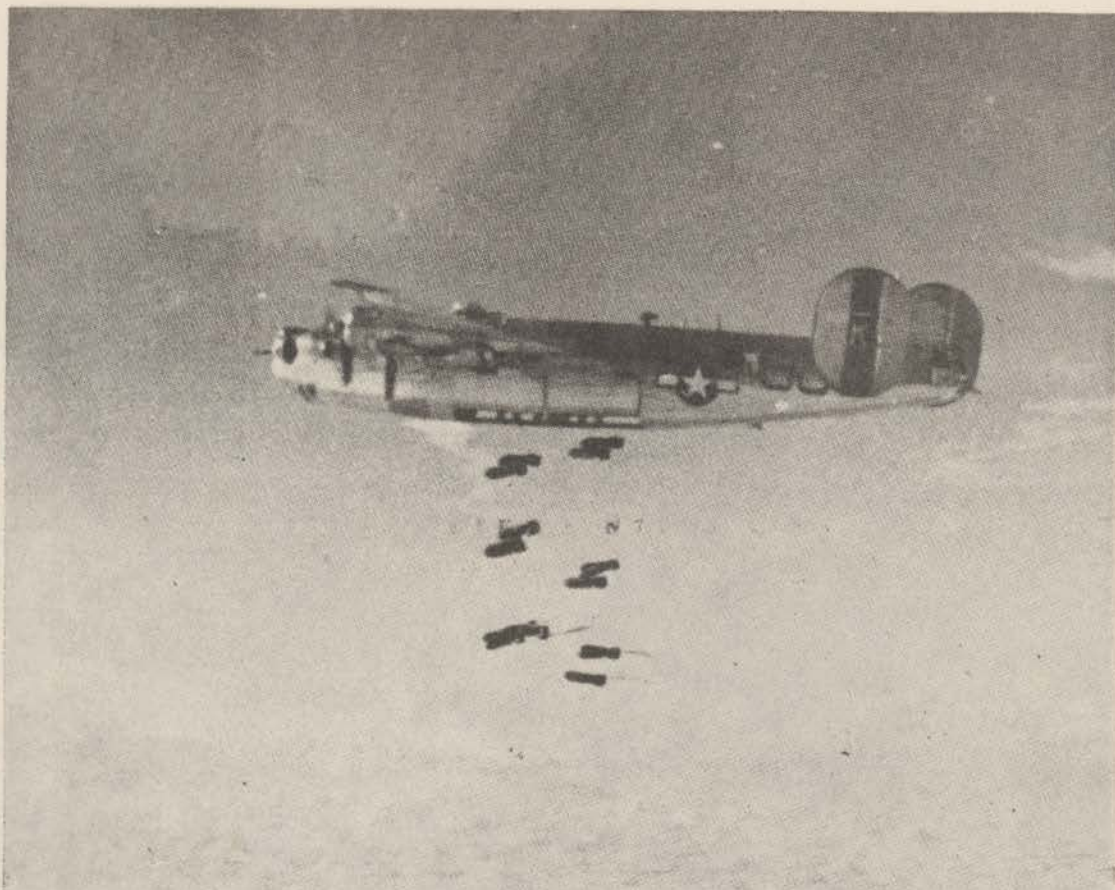


but always dropping bombs . . .



and getting results . . .





At Munster, total attack meant destruction of airfields . . .



railway marshalling yards . . .  
and industries . . .





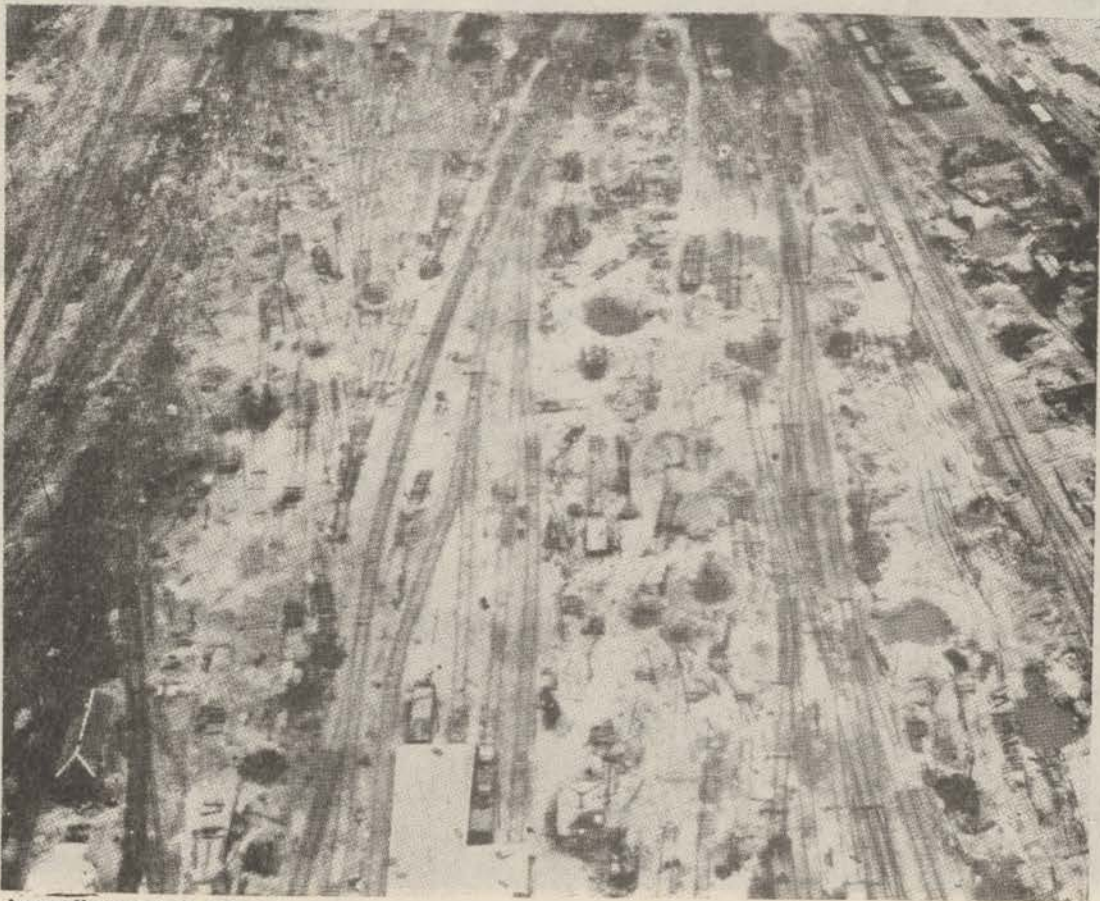
MUNSTER

While Bremen's sprawling dock area was battered again and again, the city's center was left almost untouched.





Osnabrück, too, had its inners torn . . .



its rails smashed . . .  
while Bremen's sprawling dock area was battered again and again . . .





DOCK AREA BREMEN





Attacks on Hamburg . . .



added to the devastation of the harbor . . .





At Harburg, across the river from Hamburg, the oil refinery was rendered ineffective . . .





while Brunswick was reduced block by block . . .



Hanover became a ghost city of battered walls . . .





#### HANOVER

German production actually increased from 1942 to 1944 despite the terrific bombing the Ruhr and other industrial centers received during that period. The reason for this was that up to that time German industry was keeping pace with the rising tempo of the bombing, more and more of the manufacturing facilities were being pressed into war production and the undamaged plants were being goaded to higher production output. July, 1944, began to show the production curve start downward. The Luftwaffe was knocked out of the air and precision bombing was being applied ruthlessly by the Allies.





#### HANOVER

The rail transportation system, Marshalling yards and engine repair sheds were being bombed relentlessly. Coal from the Ruhr dropped to eight per cent of normal, actually starving the furnaces of the steel industry. The Germans waited too long to attempt the dispersal of their more vital factories, as the move came at the time the bombers were concentrating on transportation and the valuable equipment was trapped in the bombed up yards or destroyed completely. Without fuel and transportation the plight of the German war effort was fast becoming a nightmare.

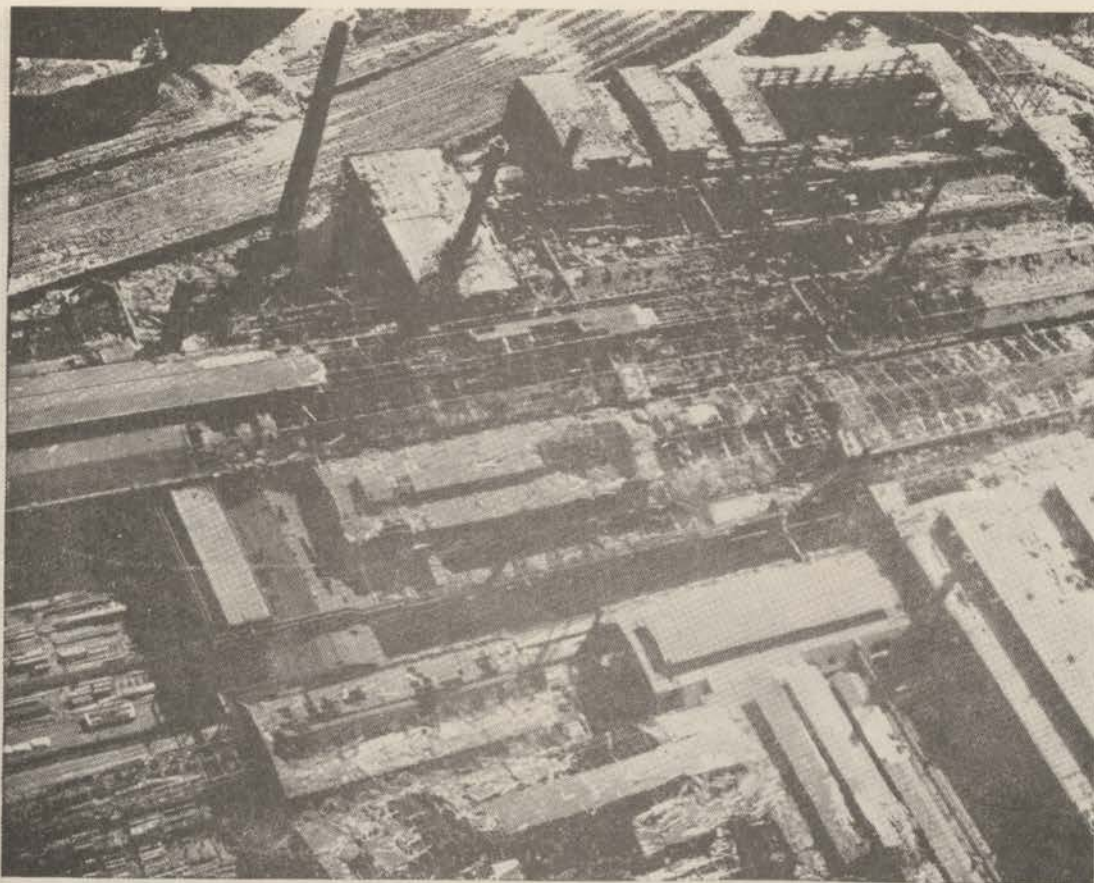




Bielfeld Viaduct (above), owing to its almost complete inaccessibility, was the subject of numerous efforts. Finally, after concentrated endeavors of the USAAF and the RAF, direct hits by the "Ten-ton Tessies" of the RAF removed the target from the priority list. Persistence and determination had paid off . . .

While the enemy's forces were engaged in the Bielfeld Viaduct, the RAF's "Ten-ton Tessies" were also engaged in the Bielfeld Viaduct.





Dortmund's giant industries were riddled with high intensity bombs and incendiaries . . .



While the enemy frantically endeavored to keep the Dusseldorf engine repair sheds in operation . . .





MOSEL RIVER BRIDGE AT COBLENZ





At Coblenz, bridges across the Moselle were natural targets which caused U.S. Engineers to effect quick substitutions after its capture. Frankfurt (above) and Ascaffenburg (below) were not spared from aerial attacks, either.







The bridge at Manheim soon led nowhere but to the sea . . .  
and Coesfeld was reduced to a particularly fine grained rubble . . .

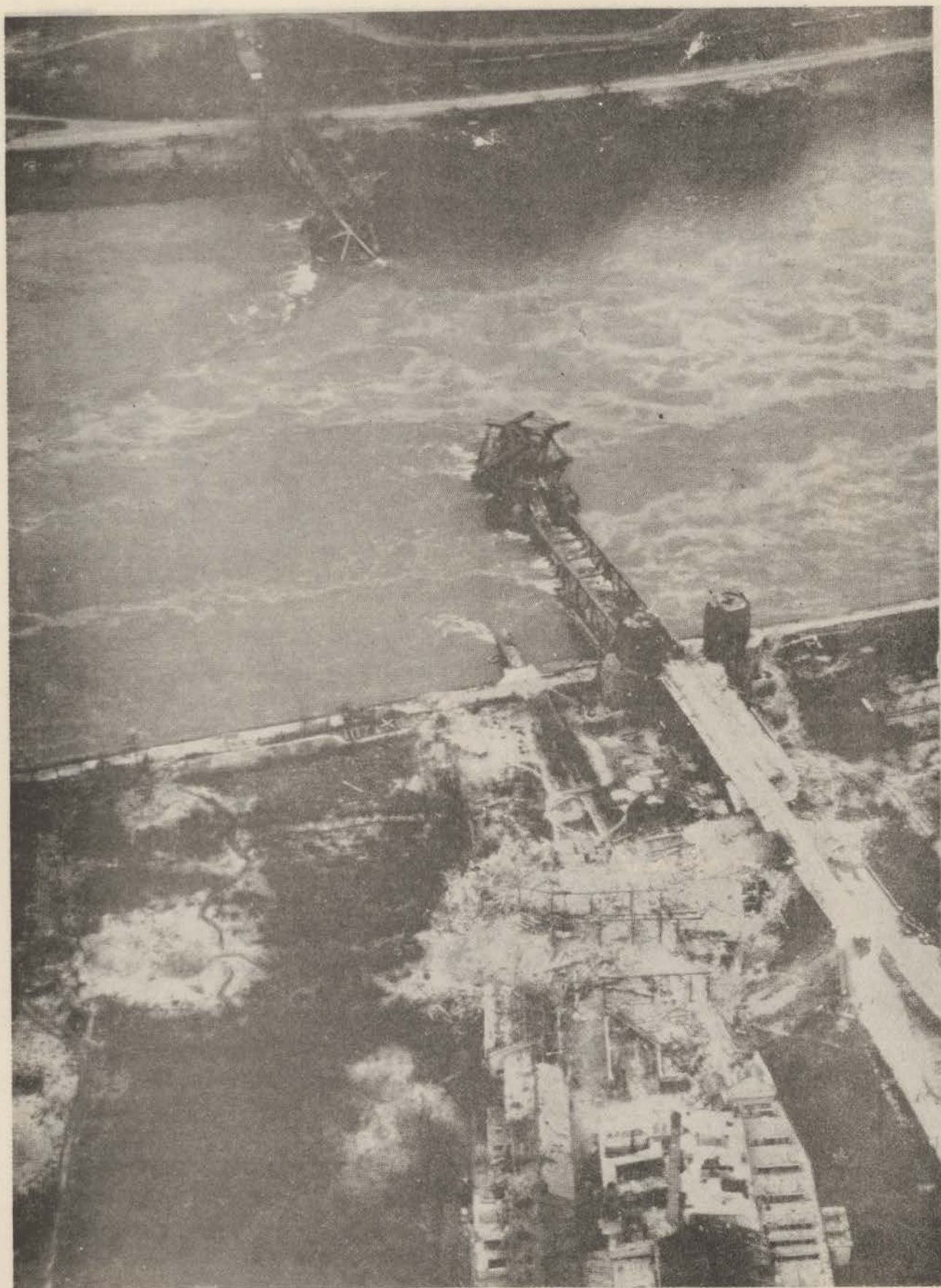






One of the greatest chemical plants in the world, the I. G. Farben Plant at Ludwigshaven, was a favorite target of Allied bombers. Finally it became so unimportant, thanks to precision bombing, that it was completely neglected.





Probably the bridge that played the most important part in the final subjection of Germany was the Remagen, which collapsed from weakness rather than bombs or explosives. Across it first, however, crossed enough American troops to make the final defeat of the Nazis certain . . .





The Infantry, Field Artillery and Engineers — in fact, every man who ever participated — could lay claim to final victory. And deservedly so. But for sheer destruction of enemy installations the heavy bombers had no peer. Precision bombing, as exemplified by the Bombardment Groups, paid off.





In the West the Luftwaffe was through. In March, when the great airborne assault across the Rhine took place — an effort involving some 14,000 troops carried in transports and gliders — not one of the carriers was lost to enemy air action.

There is no need to elaborate here on the final weeks that saw the airfields of the shrinking Reich jammed with aircraft which had neither fuel to fly nor place to go. In the first three weeks of April, our air forces destroyed more than 3,000 planes, most of them on the ground. This slaughter coincided with USSTAF's announcement that it had run out of strategic targets. Strange by-products of our bombing appeared, such as the bitter assertion of one prisoner that the Volksturm, the German civilian army, was nothing but an unemployment scheme made necessary by the destruction of German industry from the air.





A good example of precision bombing of the Wesuwe Locks, near Meppen, Germany. The mission was flown on January 1, 1944 and the bombing was from 20,000 ft.



The Infantry, Field Artillery and Engineers in fact, every man who ever participated could lay claim to final victory. And deservedly so. But for sheer destruction of enemy installations the heavy bombers had no peer. Precision bombing, as exemplified by the liberators paid off.





Much has been learned in three years over Europe about the stunning impact of bombing, especially when concentrated against two or three vital targets. But much has also been learned about countermeasures. Any aggressor nation, given the opportunity that Germany had before this war, will certainly disperse and conceal its key industries in such a manner that the power of strategic bombing to inflict fatal damage will be greatly lessened. The moral is too obvious to stress: the time to stop aggression is before the aggressor is ready to strike.

The time has passed — or should have passed — when people argue heatedly about whether or not airpower, unaided, can win wars. To date, it never has. This does not mean that it never will. But the question is almost academic in the face of two certainties that have emerged from the war with respective fates of Japan and Germany as final proof:





The result of the successful crossing of the Rhine paid off in captured enemy territory . . .and enemy soldiers. Not far from Ludwigshaven are a few of the thousands who fell into the hands of the American doughboy . . .

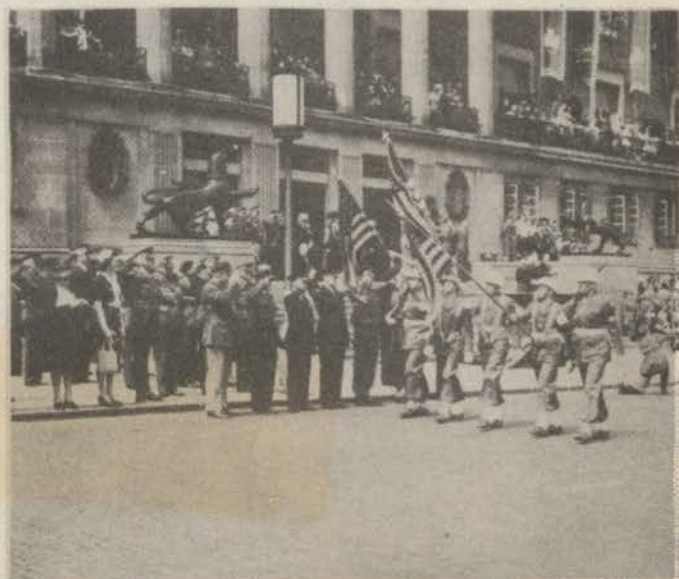
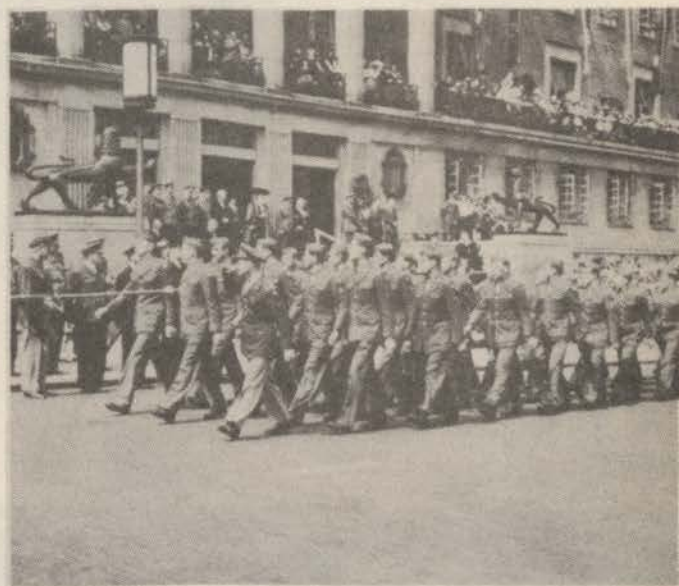
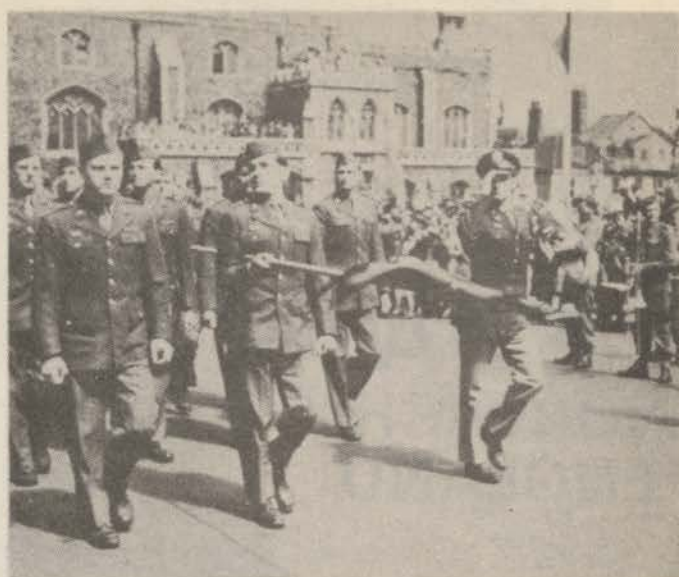
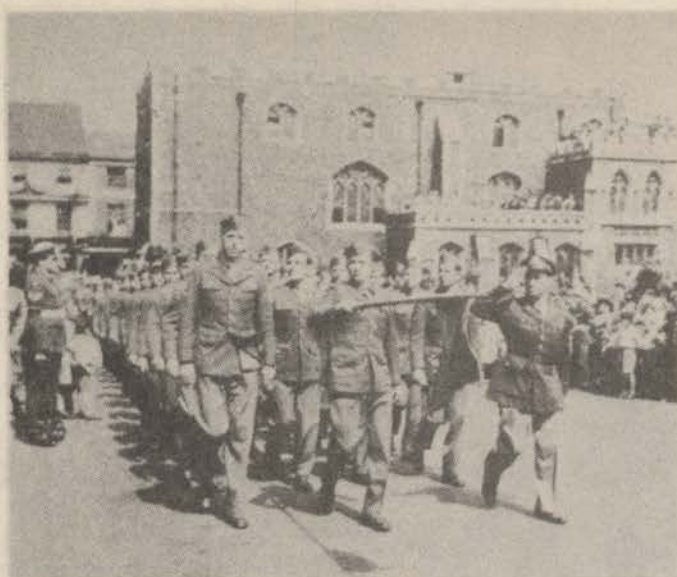


# V-E DAY NORWICH, ENGLAND

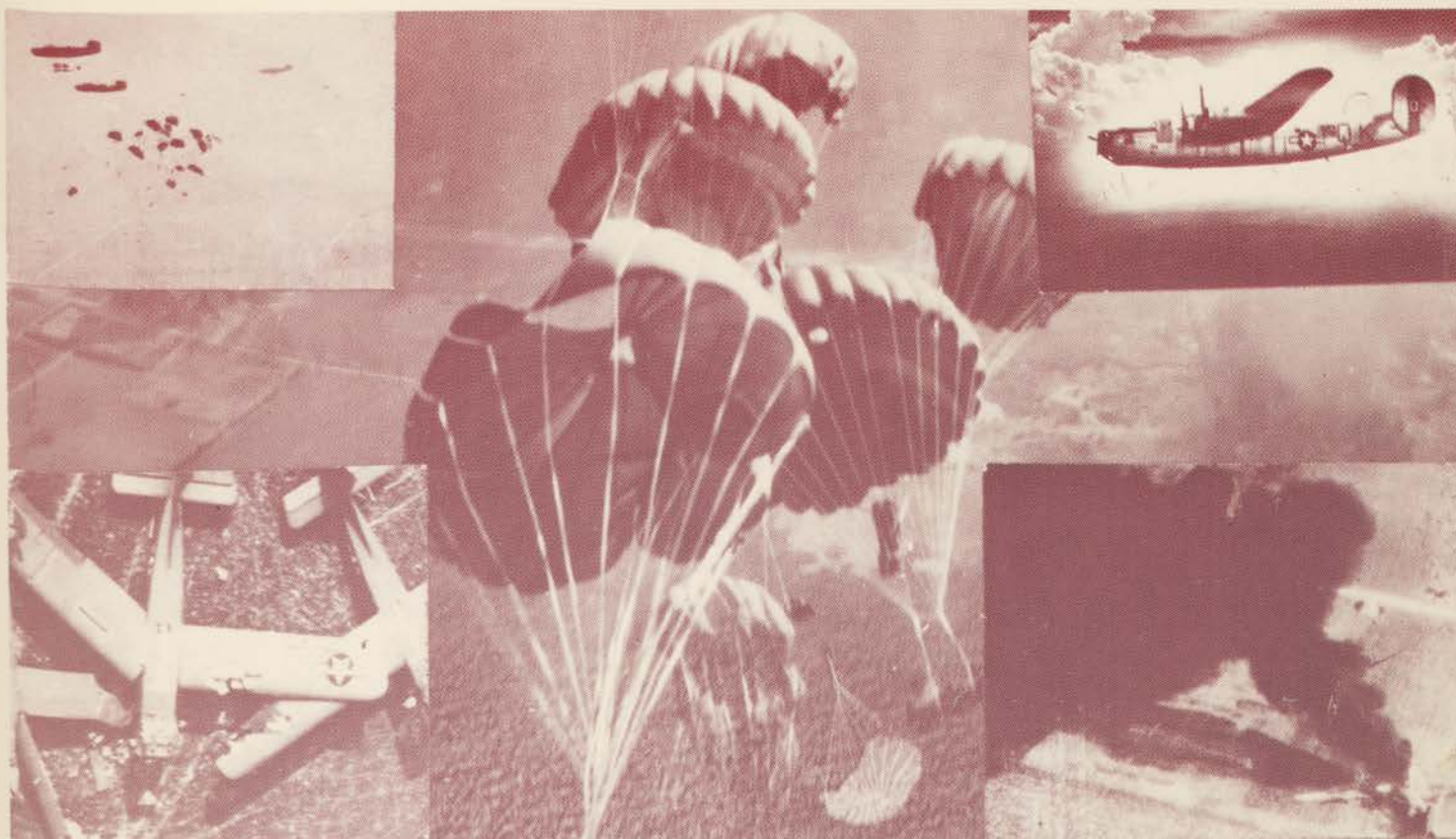


GENERAL JOHNSON,  
LORD MAYOR









Scenes from the film "The Crossing of Rhine" on March 24, 1945 — Supplied by aircraft from the 2nd Bomb Division, as part of the New Color Super 8 film now being released by U. P. Harvell.

This new film was taken, March 24, 1945, on the mission to Wesel, Germany to re-supply the paratroops and glider troops on the east bank of the Rhine River, who had gone in earlier that day to secure a bridgehead for the crossing in force of the British Second Army and the American Ninth Army.

The mission cost the Second Air Division twenty-two aircraft that day. Two of the B-24's were shot down and exploded in range of my camera. Scenes of devastation along the Rhine and the spectacular landings on return to base in England will serve to perpetuate the contribution, every member of the 2nd A.D., and the members of the Liberator club who built them, made in bringing the war to a successful conclusion.

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