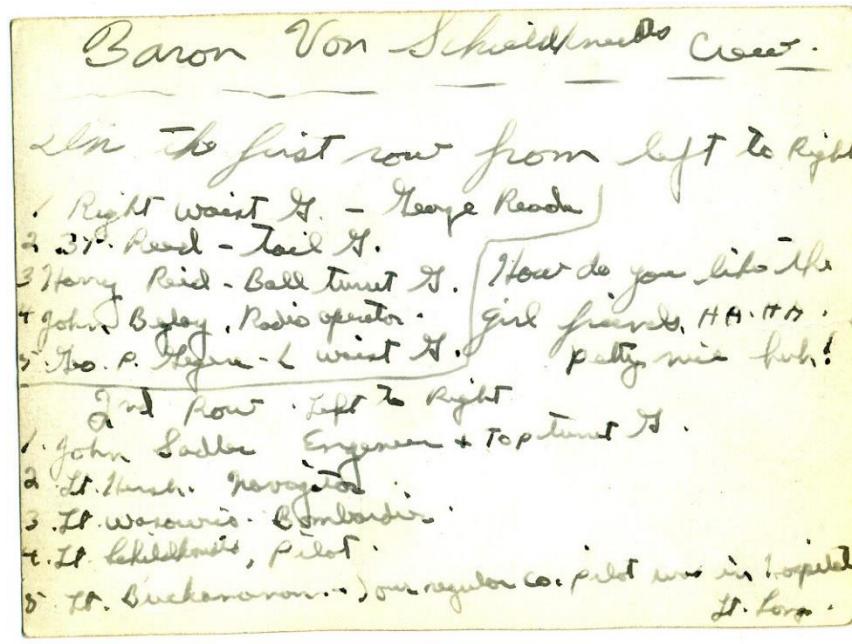


"DOUBLE TROUBLE" MISSION NOTES

A firsthand account by S/Sgt. George J. Reade, Waist Gunner (19 yrs old)

Dec. 22nd, 1943 through April 22, 1944

8th Air Force, 392nd Heavy Bomb Group, Squadron 578 based out of Wendling, England



From the Reade Family Archive

FIRST MISSION - DEC. 22, 1943 WED.

MUNSTER - RAILROAD CENTER

Started out in Rainy weather and couldn't find our formation so we went with another group. We got plenty of flak on both sides of us but it didn't touch our plane (lucky.) Sky was full of enemy fighters and our tail was attacked four times by ME-109's. They didn't touch our tail and we didn't hit them. I didn't fire a shot. There was an overcast and I didn't see our bombs drop.

SECOND MISSION - DEC. 24, 1943 - FRI.

FRANCE - Rocket Emplacement.

Was a beautiful day and the target was clear. We didn't see any flak or fighters. The sky was full of bombers and plenty of fighters escort. The target was in flames and smoke when I looked out of the waist. I wish all our missions was like that.

JAN. 4, 1944 TUESDAY

KIEL

Started out ok but when we reached the German coast we had to turn back because we had a oxygen leak. We were mad at first. But we found out we were lucky we did turn back. We lost seven bombers out of our group. They were hit heavy with flak and fighters. One of my friends crashed landed in England but is all right now.

THIRD MISSION - JAN. 5, 1944 - WED.

KIEL

Got us up at 3:30 and was briefed at 4:30. We took off at 7:20 after having a lot of trouble with my gun. We got our first sign of flak off the coast of Germany. We didn't see any more till we got over the target and then they through everything up. The sky was full of flak and I thought we'd get

IT
ANY MINUTE. THE FLAK WAS ACCURATE. THEY SENT
UP ALL KINDS OF FIGHTERS AFTER US AND KEPT
US VERY BUSY. I DONT KNOW WHERE OUR FIGHTERS
WERE. B.P. GOT A ME-109 AND I MISSED A F.W.190.

FOURTH MISSION. JAN. 6, 1944 - FRI.

LUDWICKSHAVEN

ROUGHEST MISSION FOR OUR CREW YET. THOUGHT
MY NUMBER WAS UP WHEN FLAK STARTED
BUSTING OUTSIDE OUR WRIST AND OUR WING.
HAD GOOD FIGHTER SUPPORT OVER A THOUSAND
B47-38-S1'S WHICH MADE ME VERY HAPPY.

ME-109'S WERE FLYING IN THE OVERCAST ABOVE US.
WE HAD OVER TWENTY FLAK HOLES IN THE SHIP. ROUGH.

FIFTH MISSION - JAN. 11, 1944 TUES.

BRUNSWICK

FLEW WITH ANOTHER CREW TODAY AND WAS /
SCARED OF THAT TARGET, IT WAS TOO NEAR BERLIN
TO SUIT ME. WE SAW VERY LITTLE FLAK AND
ABOUT SIX ME-109'S. THE MISSION WAS CALLED

off but our group didn't turn back. We
didn't bomb the right target, thank God, we
blow that town off the map I think. found
out latter it was an ammunition dump that we
bombed.

SIXTH MISSION - JAN. 12, 1944 - WED. FRANCE - ROCKET IMPLACEMENT

Another milk run. Didn't see any flak
going in or coming out of France. Saw
a few enemy fighters but our escort
took care of them.

SEVENTH MISSION - JAN. 29, '44 ~~Get us up~~ FRANKFORD

Got us up at 4:00 to fly with another crew to
Frankford. We took off at eight o'clock. We were
flying over England getting into formation when
two planes in our group collided together. It was
a mess. Lost two planes over England. Four got
out safely out of twenty-one. We went

ON TO THE TARGET AND GOT ATTACKED BY ENEMY
FIGHTERS. THERE MOST OF BEEN 40 OR MORE fighters.
They HAD A PICNIC UNTIL OUR EXCORT GOT THERE
AND THAN MOST OF THEM RAN. OUR FIGHTERS HAD
A FIELD DAY. TWO P-38'S WENT AFTER A ME 110 AND
IT BLOW UP RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME. WHAT A SIGHT.
The target was overcast so we HAD to bomb
by PATH FINDER planes. THERE WAS PLENTY OF
FLAK BUT IT WASN'T ACCURATE. THANK GOD. IT
WAS A RECORD RAID.

EIGHT MISSION JAN. 30, '44 BRUNSWICK

GOT ME UP AGAIN AT 4:30 THIS TIME TO FLY WITH
MY OWN CREW. WE TOOK OFF AT 9:00. WE HAD A
HARD TIME KEEPING UP WITH THE FORMATION. WE
GOT TO THE GERMAN COAST AND FLAK STARTED
BURSTING IN FRONT OF US. WE WAS 5 MINUTES IN
GERMANY WHEN WE DECIDED TO TURN BACK. WE
HAD TO FEATHER NO. 2 ENGINE BECAUSE OF FLAK.

DIL LEAK. I thought it was going to go up in FLAMES BUT WE MADE IT BACK TO THE FIELD.

NINETH MISSION FEB. '44

TOURS FRANCE - AIRFIELD IN SOUTHERN ^{PAH}

Got us up at 4:00 AND WENT TO BRIEFING
WE TOOK OFF AT 8:30. IT WAS TO BE A LONG
RAID. THE SKY WAS CLOUDY IN SPOTS BUT
WE COULD SEE THE AIRPORT CLEARLY. THE
BOMBS HIT THE HANGERS BLOWING THEM
SKY HIGH. THEY THROUHT UP A LITTLE FLAK
ON OUR WAY BACK. SAW ONLY ONE ENEMY
FIGHTER. VERY GOOD ESCORT.

TENTH MISSION FEB. 13, '44 SUNDAY

FRANCE

WE TOOK OFF A 12:45 AFTER MISSING A CHICKEN
DINNER. FRANCE ISN'T LIKE IT USED TO BE. THEY
MUST BE MAD AT US. THERE WAS A LOT OF FLAK
BUT NOT TOO CLOSE TO US. IT WAS VISULLE BOMBING
AND WE HIT THE TARGET. GOOD ESCORT AGAIN

ELEVENTH MISSION FEB. 20, '44 ^{SUN.}
LUFTWAFFE PLANT.

TOOK OFF VERY EARLY FOR A VERY LONG RAID. PIRE ESCORT WASN'T ON THE BALL AND WE WERE HIT PRETTY HARD BY ME-109'S. THE SQN. BEHIND US WERE GETTING IT WORSE THOUGH. A ROCKET JUST MISSED US BELOW OUR WING. WE DIDN'T SEE VERY MUCH FLAK. WE BOMBED THE WRONG TARGET. IT WAS A CITY AND WE HIT IT HARD. THE CITY LOOKED LIKE A CHRISTMAS TREE WHEN WE LEFT.

TWELFTH MISSION FEB. 22, '44 ^{TUES.}

MUNSTER - AIRFIELD

TOOK OFF VERY LATE AND I DIDN'T LIKE THAT. WE DIDN'T SEE ANY FIGHTERS BUT WE RAN INTO A LITTLE FLAK ON THE COAST. THE TARGET WAS TO BE VISIBLE BUT IT WAS CLOUDY AND WE

COULDN'T SEE THE TARGET. WE
SAW ANOTHER AIRFIELD AND SOME BOMBED
IT BUT OUR SQDN DIDN'T. IT WAS A EASY
MISSION. SIGHT SEEING GERMANY.
THIRTEENTH MISSION-FEB. 29, 44 TUES.
FRANCE

WAS WOKE UP AT 4:30 AND WAS BRIEFED AT
5:00. WE WERE BRIEFED TO BOMB AN AIR-
FIELD IN NORTHERN GERMANY BUT IT
STARTED SNOWING AND IT WAS SCRUBED, THEY
CALLED US OUT AGAIN FOR A MISSION BUT
THIS TIME TO FRANCE. IT COULD OF BEEN
A ROUGH MISSION BUT IT WASN'T. WE DIDN'T
SEE ANY FLAK OR ENEMY FIGHTERS, IN
FACT, WE HARDLY SEEN ANY OF OUR ESCORT.
WE DONT KNOW WHAT WE BOMBED, IT WAS
OVERCAST. IT WAS NICE RAID FOR MY THIRD-
TEENTH MISSION.

FOURTEENTH MISSION - MARCH 2, 44 THURS FRANKFORT

GOT UP AT 4:00 AND TOOK OFF AT 9:10. IT WAS TO BE VISIBLE BOMBING BUT IT WAS OVERCAST. WE DIDN'T SEE ANY ENEMY FIGHTERS. THANK GOD. WE GOT OUR FIRST SIGNS OF FLAK IN FRANCE. A B-24 HAD ENGINE ON FIRE AND WENT INTO A SPIN. I SAW EIGHT SHUTS BUT OTHERS SAW NINE AND TEN. FRANKFORT WAS OVERCAST SO WE DIDN'T TRY TO BOMB IT. WE BOMBED SOMETHING ELSE AND MISSED. WE WERE LEAVING AFTER WE DROPPED THE BOMBS AND WE GOT PLENTY OF ACCURATE FLAK. THE NOISE WAS ENOUGH FOR ME. AFTER THAT WE CUT THROUGH BELGIUM. THEY WAS WAITING FOR US AND THEY GAVE IT TOO. I HAD MY FLAK SUIT OFF AND DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO PUT IT ON. I SHOT PLENTY OF PRAYERS TOO. I COULD OF SPOKE THAT OUR SHIP WAS RIDDLED WITH HOLES

OVER

CONT. FRANK FORT

ONE PIECE OF FLAK JUST MISSED THE OTHER
WHIST GUNNER. I WAS GLAD TO SEE THAT NORTH
SEA AGAIN. NEVER AGAIN, I HOPE.

Fifteenth Mission - MAR. 3, FRI. BERLIN

Got us up at 3:30 and I felt like going
on sick call when I seen what the
target was. Every body was going on sick
call. It was 52° below and I got frost
bitten on the face. It was a long ride over
the North Sea. We saw a little flak off
the coast of Germany. The whole group
had to come back when we were only
30 minutes from Berlin. The ceiling was
27,000 and we couldnt climb over it. Was
very happy that we turned back. We
lost Smith's crew on it.

SIXTEENTH MISSION MAR. 6, '44 MON.
BERLIN. - 

TOOK OFF AT 9:30 FOR A LONG MISSION. SIX HOURS UNDER OXYGEN. WE WERE BRIEFED FOR ONLY 44 RR GUNS OVER TARGET BUT WE FOUND MORE. MUST HAVE BEEN ABOUT 150 GUN AND IT KEEP THE SKY VERY DARK. I thought we would never reach england after seeing all the flak. ENEMY FIGHTER DIDN'T BOTHER UP BUT THE GROUP BEHIND US WAS GETTING HELL. WE COULD SEE THE TARGET BUT THEY SAY WE DIDN'T HIT IT. SOME LITTLE TOWN WAS REALLY SMOKING AND I THOUGHT WE DID IT. THE FLAK WASN'T ACCURATE BUT THEY THROW ENOUGH OF IT UP AT US. THE R.A.F. OUGHT TO GO OVER IN DAY LIGHT. (THEY WOULDN'T GET BACK.

SEVENTEENTH MISSION-MAR.8,44 WED
BERLIN (AGAIN)

GOT US UP AT 5:00 AND WAS BRIEFED AT 6:00 AND TOOK OFF AT 9:20. WAS WORRIED CAUSE THEY WERE SURE THAT IT WAS CLOUDY OVER BERLIN AND WE WERE TO BOMB THE CITY IF CLOUDY. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN MURDER I THINK. WE GOT A LOT OF FIRE ON THE WAY TO THE TARGET AND ONLY SAW ABOUT TEN FIGHTERS. WE HAD VERY GOOD FIGHTER ESCORT, OVER A THOUSAND. THE TARGET WAS VISIBLE AND WE DIDN'T DO A BEAUTIFUL JOB OF HITTING IT. IT WAS JUST SMOKING TO BERTHELL. THE CITY OF BERLIN LOOKS VERY GOOD. WASN'T AS BAD AS MONDAY'S. I Thought it was going to be bad. Eight more to go.

EIGHTEEN MISSION-MAR. 12, '44 SUN.

FRANCE

Took off in very bad weather. We carried eight-one thousand pound bombs but it was cloudy over target and couldn't see if we hit the target or not. They throw up a lot of flak at us. We got a hole in our left wing. They must have been mad at us. We had very bad weather on our way back and we had to land at a R.A.F. field. We had a lot of fun there with the WAAFs. We took off the next morning and we were glad to get back at our own field. Ran out of cigarettes and had to smoke limey cigarettes. They stink?

MARCH 14, '44

FURLOUGH

Another crew flew our plane and it got hit by .20 M.M. and flak. It's a mess. We got another plane but not as good as "Double"

TROUBLE.

NINETEENTH MISSION MAR. 23, '44 THURS.
OSNABRUCK

Got us up at 2:00 and I thought it was going to be a long one. We were to lead one of the elements but we never found our wing planes. We got over the Belgium coast into Germany and we had to abort. Four superchargers burned out and it looked bad for us. We thought we'd run into enemy fighters but P47's escorted us back to the English coast. We got a mission out of it.

TWENTYTH MISSION - MAR. 24, '44 FRI.

FRANCE - ST. DAZZI - AIR FIELD

Got us up again at 2:00 but this time deep into France. It was a long one. We got fire going into France and going out. That's all we got at us. It

WAS A BEAUTIFUL DAY FOR BOMBING AND
WE HIT THE AIRPORT ON THE NOSE. IT WAS
SMOKING TO BEAT HELL. I'LL TAKE EIGHT
MORE LIKE THAT.

TWENTY-FIRST MISSION MAR. 25 SAN
FRANCE - PAS DE CALAIS

Got us up at 3:00 to go to an air-
field deep into Germany but it was
scrubbed at the last minute and we went
to France. It was the roughest one I've
been on yet. No enemy fighters but plenty
of large FLAK. We had flak from the air
to over the target and I mean flak. Their
flak gunners are experts. We didn't
drop our bombs the first time and we
had to go over the fire again. I thought
the flak had my name on it. I never was so
scared in all my life. The noise of the fire
alone scares me. We had so many holes

IN OUR SHIP THAT I WOULDN'T COUNT THEM. WE HAD OVER TWENTY FOR SURE. FIRST TIME I EVER SAID SO MANY PRAYERS IN A SHIP IN ALL MY LIFE. NO BODY HIT.

TWENTY-SECOND MISSION MAR. 26, SUN.
FRANCE - MONT-DE-MARSAN

Got us up again at 4:00. It was foggy and I thought it would be scrubbed but it wasn't. It was a long tiresome raid. I had a lot of fun taking picture. It was beautiful spring weather in France. Didn't see any enemy fighters and only a little flak, thank God. We plastered hell out of the airfield and I got some picture out of it. The weather closed in and we had to land at a R.A.F. field and than went by trucks to a G.I. camp to sleep. It was a lot of fun but it felt good to get back to

OUR OWN FIELD. WAS A LONG EASY MISSION.
TWENTY-THIRD MISSION-APRIL 8 SAT.
BRUNSWICK

Got us up at 3:00 and we took off at 8:55. We were to lead one of the elements. I thought it was going to be easy but I was very wrong. We had plenty of escort but the Luftwaffe outnumbered them 3 to 1. There was plenty of dogfights. Our guns got a work out today. B-24's were going down like flies. We got hit by plenty of flak.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT WE HIT. IT WAS A ROUGH ONE.
TWENTY-FOURTH MISSION APRIL 11 TUES.
BERNBURG

Got us up at 2:15 and took off at 7:00. We got flak going over the coast of Germany. The target was visible. We were attacked by ME-109's and was busy for a while. We were hit heavy by fire and

SAW TWO B-24'S GO DOWN IN FLAMES. SAW
PLENTY OF PARACHUTES OVER TARGET. IT WAS
A ROUGH ONE.

TWENTY-FIFTH MISSION - April 12, 1944 ^{WED} ~~Fri~~

SCHWEINFURT

Got us up at 2:30 and was briefed
for some airfield in Germany. It was going
to be very rough. But the weather held us up
on take off. They changed the target and
we were to follow the 17's into Schweinfurt.
(Rough.) We were to lead one of the elements.
The weather was very bad. We got over
the Belgian coast and the group up in
front had enemy fighters. They finally
called us back. One of our engines went
out and we had to feather it. We got a
mission out of it.

TWENTY-SIXTH MISSION - April 13 THURS

LECH FIELD - Southern Germany

Got us up by 5:30 and thought it was going to be a short easy mission but found out it was a long hard one. It was down by Switzerland. The weather was very bad. Took off at 10:30 and suppose to return at 6:30. We had a nice trip going. Didn't see any enemy fighter till we got over the coast of Germany and they only attacked the group ahead of us. We only got flak over the target and we got it in two engines. Coming back the crew was sweating to bail out or ditch. We had two engines feathered on one side and than we lost altitude. The other planes thought we went down in the drain. We really had a tough time. Three engines were out. Was dam glad to see Eng. again. Our pilot did a swell job. Our Nav. went to the hospital. He passed out from to much work. NEVER AGAIN I HOPE.

TWENTY-SEVENTH - April 20 THURS.
FRANCE

Got us up at 4:30 and took off at 10:00. Thought it was going to be rough but it was easy. It was supposed to be visible but it turned out cloudy. We made two bomb runs and still didn't drop our bombs. We saw very little flak and no fighters. One more to go.

TWENTY-EIGHTH - April 22. SAT.
LAST MISSION.

HAMM - RUBBER PLANT
I HATE TO PRINT THIS RAID DOWN CAUSE IT WAS NEAR OUR FINISH.

GOT US UP AT 4:00 AND TOOK OFF AT 10:30. Thought it was going to be easy for my last one. The target was visible and we could see the target clearly.

STILL SMOKING FROM THE B-17'S ABOUT
10 MILES AWAY. WE MISSED THE TARGET
though. When we were leaving around
the target Harry said only half a
mission to go. Just than our pilot
started yelling something about
one hundred fighters attacking
our group. Our nose and top turret
opened up, shooting like hell. I felt
piece of air hitting me so I knew we
got hit some place. A .20MM hit the
window by our pilot and pieces hit
him, our co-pilot and radio man. An-
other .20MM hit under me and Jiggs
and splashed all over not hitting
me or Jiggs. Pieces scratch Harry's
leg. A .20MM hit right along side
of B.P. .30 CAL. holes hit No. 2 engine
and we had to feather it. Our pilot
OVER

WAS HIT PRETTY BAD AND WE HAD TO
GIVE HIM A SHOT OF MORFINE TO EASE
THE PAIN. OUR FIGHTERS SCARED THE
ME-109'S AWAY - THANK GOD. IF THEY EVER
COME BACK AT US I WOULDN'T BE HERE.
WE JUST ABOUT MADE IT BACK TO THE
ENG. COAST AND LANDED AT A R.A.F. FIELD.
ALL WE COULD SEE AFTER THE FIGHTERS
HIT US WAS B-24'S IN FLAMES AND PARA-
CHUTES. IT WAS A ROUGH ONE FOR MY
LAST MISSION AND IT WAS NEARLY MY
LAST THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

"THE END" (THANK GOD)

STARTED MY FLYING MISSIONS DEC 22,
FINISHED " " " . . . APRIL 22, '44