

HISTORICAL REPORT

1 February thru 26 February 1945

The month of February started off with a bang. February 1 saw the 29th bomb at SINGAPORE again - this time at the Floating Drydock, and the results saddened the Japs no end. But that's the end of the story. The beginning was when the 10th Group dispatched 20 aircraft to attack the Floating Drydock in accordance with XI Bomber Command Field Order #33, dated 27 Jan 45. The 20 aircraft were airborne in 45 minutes with the first aircraft off at 1707Z and the last at 1752Z.

Of the 20 aircraft airborne a total of 22 bombed the assigned primary target. Bombing was accomplished from 17,000' to 19,500' and weather over the target varied from 3/10 to 8/10 cloud cover. All bombing was accomplished visually, and numerous direct hits on the primary target were revealed by strike photos. Anti-aircraft from shore and naval installations ranged from meager to moderate but was reported accurate by most crews. Fighter opposition ranged from weak to moderate but few attacks were closely pressed. Group aircraft claimed three enemy aircraft destroyed and five damaged. Of these the 14th laid claim to one destroyed and one damaged. Ship 503 flown by Capt J S LYONS claimed T000 destroyed and plane 541 flown by 1st Lt MARRHAM claimed a VAL damaged.

Ships in the vicinity of the target endeavored to lay a smoke screen, but it was entirely ineffective.

Aircraft 589, a 25th Squadron airplane, flown by Capt ANNAK J KENNARD, was hit by an enemy fighter and developed a fire between #3 and #4 engines. This aircraft was last reported going in the direction of the rescue site east of MALAYA in order to ditch.

Aircraft 587 of this Squadron, flown by Lt Col H R SULLIVAN, Deputy Group Commander, developed fuel transfer trouble shortly after take off and was forced to turn at 11°30'N-92°00'E and return to CHAKULLA where landing was made with a full bomb load.

While enroute to the target, aircraft 729, flown by 1st Lt CLAY, had #3 engine out. CLAY turned at 12°00'N-91°00'E and proceeded to bomb the last resort target, the railroad yards at SINGAPORE. Results and then returned to CHAKULLA.

photos attached
The following
1945

SECRET

Historical Report, Feb 45, 44th Bomb Sq, APO 611, 9 Mar 45 (Cont'd)

Commanding General of the XI Bomber Command commented, "This is the finest bombing of the war."

Of the 28 aircraft airborne, the 44th contributed 10 planes. The following participated:

Aircraft 503

P IRONS, W S, Capt
CP BROWN, W L, 1st Lt
B O'CONNOR, S, 1st Lt
B TAPLIN, R, 1st Lt
S THOMP, F T, 2nd Lt
R Lamb, C W, Sgt
V Jorgenson, R C, S Sgt
RG Cyr, H T, S Sgt
LG Heyden, F C, S Sgt
TG Smith, H, T Sgt
CFC Moffitt, J H, Pvt

Aircraft 527

P BUCKNER, G L, Capt
CP CHENNER, G R, 1st Lt
B WILLEY, S B, 1st Lt
B RANSON, C H, 2nd Lt
E DRINGSBACH, R, F/O
R Dwyell, J J, Sgt
CFC Coleman, H R, S Sgt
RG Cressman, H A, S Sgt
LG Anthony, S J, Sgt
V Williams, W C, S Sgt
TG Davis, R, T Sgt

Aircraft 530

P BROWN, F L, 1st Lt
CP BURGESS, G W, 2nd Lt
B JELLOS, L, 1st Lt
B GILMAN, R E, 2nd Lt
E HARRIS, L A, 1st Lt
R Brooks, W H, T Sgt
V Honerick, L R, S Sgt
CFC Hall, H L, S Sgt
LG Tappan, R J
RG Nygaard, F J
TG Moore, H S, S Sgt

Aircraft 541

P BARKER, W G, 1st Lt
CP DAVIS, G S, Capt
B ALBANI, T P, 2nd Lt
B WARD, B, 1st Lt
B KILPATRICK, J G, 2nd Lt
R Chase, I L, Pvt
CFC Moore, J H, S Sgt
RG Wagon, J E, Col
LG Gillford, S A, Sgt
TG Steer, L R, Pvt
V Lavallo, R F, S Sgt

Aircraft 587

P BUCKLEY, E W, 2nd Lt
CP STEVENS, H R, Lt Col
B BAKER, J W, 2nd Lt
B SAUNDERS, H S, 1st Lt
E STEINBERG, H, 2nd Lt
R Hays, T, Sgt
CFC Gardin, G A, Sgt
RG Brown, G V, Sgt
LG Jones, I J, Sgt
TG Hall, A A, Sgt
V Dwyer, J, S Sgt

Aircraft 620

P DWYER, J R, Capt
CP DUNN, P G, 1st Lt
B LITTLE, G H, 1st Lt
B HARTZ, R H, 1st Lt
B HUNT, A J, 1st Lt
R Price, W T, T Sgt
V Galle, A T, Sgt
CFC Swan, H, S Sgt
RG Jones, J T, S Sgt
LG Burgess, V J, S Sgt
TG Stands, H A, S Sgt

Aircraft 655

P BIRKMAN, J C, Major
CP DAVEN, J H, 1st Lt
B BRADSHAW, W L, 1st Lt
B SMITH, W D, 1st Lt
E KREZEWICH, H, 1st Lt
R Disbarneth, L T, S Sgt
V Kocher, L E, S Sgt
S Jensen, J H, S Sgt
G Legoy, J F, Sgt
C Reed, I O, S Sgt
G Bell, S A, S Sgt

Aircraft 729

P Clark, J H, 1st Lt
CP FURBER, D H, 1st Lt
B MONTGOMERY, L B, 1st Lt
B DORFNER, G F, 2nd Lt
E ARTHURSON, R V, F/O
R Haynes, R B, T Sgt
CFC Rogers, E O, S Sgt
RG Rutledge, F R
LT Douglas, W L, Col
TG Robertson, E L, T Sgt
V Polansky, S Sgt

Aircraft 804

P DE WILKINS, J W, Maj
CP FANELL, H L, 1st Lt
B SWANSON, R L, Capt
B MC KIMM, F W, 1st Lt
E COX, J T, F/O
V ALBERS, F W, 1st Lt
V GIBB, R E, 2nd Lt
R Underhill, L, S Sgt
G Slapak, C E, S Sgt
G Lemo, L D, S Sgt
G Hunt, J H, T Sgt
G Young, E W, S Sgt

Aircraft 812 (Cont'd)

P [illegible], [illegible]
CP [illegible], [illegible]
B [illegible], [illegible]
S [illegible], [illegible]
R [illegible], [illegible]
V [illegible], [illegible]
CFC [illegible], [illegible]
RG [illegible], [illegible]
LG [illegible], [illegible]
TG [illegible], [illegible]

Aircraft 812 (Cont'd)

P [illegible], [illegible]
CP [illegible], [illegible]
B [illegible], [illegible]
S [illegible], [illegible]
E [illegible], [illegible]
R [illegible], [illegible]
V [illegible], [illegible]
CFC [illegible], [illegible]
RG [illegible], [illegible]
LG [illegible], [illegible]
TG [illegible], [illegible]

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Historical Report, Feb 45, North Bomb Sq, APO 631, 9 Mar 45 (Cont'd)

Aircraft 227

P	WILSON, W E	1st Lt
CP	WILSON, J D	Major
"	WILSON, G W	1st Lt
"	WILSON, W S	1st Lt
"	WILSON, W	2nd Lt
V	WILSON, P A	1st Lt
A	WILSON, F	Sgt
G	WILSON, G R	Sgt
V	WILSON, I V	Sgt
V	WILSON, C J	Sgt
G	WILSON, A A	Sgt

Aircraft 541

P	WILSON, J F	Capt
CP	WILSON, W C	1st Lt
"	WILSON, W E	2nd Lt
"	WILSON, B F	1st Lt
"	WILSON, J A	1st Lt
"	WILSON, F H	S Sgt
V	WILSON, H U	S Sgt
CPG	WILSON, J F	S Sgt
LG	WILSON, I Jr	S Sgt
RG	WILSON, D W	S Sgt
TG	WILSON, C A	S Sgt

Aircraft 269

P	WILSON, R A	Capt
CP	WILSON, J D	1st Lt
"	WILSON, G P	1st Lt
"	WILSON, E K	1st Lt
"	WILSON, F	1st Lt
V	WILSON, D L	Capt
R	WILSON, E A	S Sgt
CPG	WILSON, A	S Sgt
G	WILSON, D L	S Sgt
G	WILSON, R G	S Sgt
G	WILSON, H	T Sgt

Aircraft 538

P	WILSON, O S	1st Lt
CP	WILSON, H	2nd Lt
B	WILSON, K	1st Lt
N	WILSON, H L	1st Lt
E	WILSON, R V	N/O
R	WILSON, S	S Sgt
V	WILSON, A M	S Sgt
CPG	WILSON, A F	S Sgt
LG	WILSON, L L	T Sgt
RG	WILSON, A C	S Sgt
TG	WILSON, J J	Sgt

Aircraft 542

P	WILSON, A D	Capt
CP	WILSON, H J	2nd Lt
B	WILSON, J W	2nd Lt
"	WILSON, J H	2nd Lt
E	WILSON, R C	2nd Lt
R	WILSON, H J	REC
G	WILSON, B H	Cpl
G	WILSON, S W	Cpl
G	WILSON, W W	Cpl
V	WILSON, L R	Cpl
G	WILSON, D S	Cpl

Aircraft 752

P	WILSON, R A	Capt
CP	WILSON, R W	1st Lt
"	WILSON, V	1st Lt
"	WILSON, J L	1st Lt
"	WILSON, G H	N/O
R	WILSON, A M	S Sgt
V	WILSON, S C	T Sgt
CPG	WILSON, F H	S Sgt
RG	WILSON, J D	S Sgt
TG	WILSON, J	S Sgt
TG	WILSON, F F	T Sgt

Aircraft 462

P	WILSON, W	Major
CP	WILSON, L A	1st Lt
"	WILSON, R L	Capt
B	WILSON, B A	1st Lt
E	WILSON, S	F/O
R	WILSON, G T	T Sgt
V	WILSON, J F	S Sgt
G	WILSON, A G Jr	S Sgt
G	WILSON, A P	T Sgt
G	WILSON, C W	T Sgt
G	WILSON, B R	T Sgt

Aircraft 674

P	WILSON, W R	1st Lt
CP	WILSON, D B	1st Lt
"	WILSON, M	1st Lt
"	WILSON, O P	2nd Lt
"	WILSON, H	1st Lt
R	WILSON, R H	T Sgt
V	WILSON, S	Sgt
G	WILSON, F F	S Sgt
G	WILSON, F S	Cpl
G	WILSON, S	S Sgt
G	WILSON, B	T Sgt

Only four days after knocking out the bridge at HANNOVER, the 752nd went out again. This time to attack Camp 45 in the HANNOVER - HANNOVER area. This was an important camp. The 752nd was ordered to attack on 8 Feb 45. Fifteen aircraft from the group were dispatched, with 10 aircraft being airborne at 0800 and low level to 0815.

The aircraft was forced to return to the base because of a low ceiling. The aircraft was forced to return to the base because of a low ceiling. The aircraft was forced to return to the base because of a low ceiling.

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Historical Report, Feb 45, 44th Bomb Sq, APO 631, 9 Mar 45 (Cont'd)

Weather at the target was CAVI and bombing was unobscured visually by dropping on the leader. The target had been previously bombed by another formation before the 40th Group formation arrived at the target and a column of black smoke was observed to the northeast of the target, rising to a height of 10,000'. The majority of the bombs dropped by the 44th Group formation landed in the northern part of the target area and in the central hospital across the road.

Several crews reported seeing one of our own bombs detonating in mid air, about 300' below aircraft 541, flown by Col W H BLANCHARD and 1st Lt MARKHAM, shortly after "bombs away." It fell towards the ground leaving a red trail as it went down.

Antiaircraft fire was encountered shortly before "bombs away" and increased to moderate intensity. The fire was very accurate as is seen from the fact that about half of the group's airplanes suffered flak damage. Three of the five airplanes in this Squadron incurred some sort of flak damage. Aircraft 541 had one piece of flak enter 3 nacelle, just forward of the starter handle access door hinge, going in and out. It was not known whether the supercharger had to be changed or not. Another piece of flak entered #2 nacelle 2 1/2 inches out of the wheel well door. Skin repair was required.

Aircraft 547 required skin repair as a result of a piece of flak entering the upper forward part of the aft nose bay.

Skin repair was also required on aircraft 542 as result of a flak hole in the inner skin of the left forward bomb bay.

The Group suffered no casualties, nor was any claim or claim made for enemy fighters destroyed or damaged.

The following planes and crews from this Squadron participated in this mission:

Aircraft 249		Aircraft 541		Aircraft 542	
F	HAPPEL, E B	2nd Lt	F BLANCHARD, W H Col	F	PAPSON, A G Capt
CP	RIGENMAN, J C	Major	CP MARKHAM, J S	1st Lt	CP LOUG, R J
N	DOWSE, C	2nd Lt	N ATTARAY, E E	2nd Lt	D MILLER, D W
B	HECK, V W	2nd Lt	B BAKSEN, H	2nd Lt	N MURPHY, J E
V	STUMPF, D N	Capt	E ELLIARD, J C	2nd Lt	R KATZSOCK, A O
E	BAHN, D M	T Sgt	R CHASE, L L	Pvt	V GILBERTSON, R M
K	MILLER, V I	Cpl	CWG HOOVER, E A	S Sgt	U ALBERT, E M
CFC	Herr, G	S Sgt	RO Unger, W B	1st Lt	G ALLEN, S M
RO	Falcois, A F	Cpl	LO WALLFORD, S A	Sgt	R HILL, S J
LO	Grant, F M	Cpl	TG Sklar, E M	1st Lt	G O'NEILL, S J
TP	...		V L...		

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Historical Report, Feb 45, 44th Bomb Sq, APO 631, 9 Mar 45 (cont'd)

Aircraft 587

F DUBOIS, P. 1st Lt
 OF WALKER, C. 1st Lt
 M BOWEN, P. 1st Lt
 B HATHORN, P. 1st Lt
 E STRAIN, P. 2nd Lt
 G Martin, C. 1st Lt
 R Kline, P. 1st Lt
 V Polonski, S. 1st Lt
 G Cronan, C. 1st Lt
 G Pagan, L. 1st Lt
 G Hall, A. 1st Lt

Aircraft 604

MC WILLIAMS, J. V. Major
 OF PATRICK, A. 1st Lt
 STRAIN, P. 1st Lt
 MC KIMMEL, P. 1st Lt
 Cox, J. T. 1st Lt
 ALBERS, P. 1st Lt
 SEAR, P. 1st Lt
 Underhill, P. 1st Lt
 Slava, P. 1st Lt
 Hunt, J. 1st Lt
 Lemos, L. 1st Lt
 McCann, P. 1st Lt
 Jordan, L. 1st Lt

Soon after the mission of the fifth wave filtered through that two crews from the Squadron were going back to India Sugar Able. Speculation as to who was to go was rampant, but the rumor existed that it would be the men with the most "over the target" time. One evening, Major W. F. FLE called the officers in for a meeting and announced that the two lucky pilots to go home were Major J. V. MC WILLIAMS and Capt. P. E. HOWARD. Announcement of who would crew the planes was left till a later date. The later date came and with it the announcement that three and not two crews were to be favored.

The following men were the lucky ones, and they deserved their "luck," for they had participated in more combat missions and had more combat hours than other men in the Squadron:

Major J. V. MC WILLIAMS	Capt. W. F. HOWARD	1st Lt G. P. T. III
1st Lt H. I. FARRER	1st Lt P. J. DEWIER	1st Lt D. A. SCOTT
1st Lt P. E. STRAIN	1st Lt D. V. LORER	1st Lt E. R. O'BRIEN
1st Lt P. V. MC KIMMEL	1st Lt R. A. RUTZ	1st Lt D. A. JA. ASAK
1st Lt F. A. ALBERS	1st Lt L. H. KROVING	P/O R. V. ARRLINGTON
P/O J. T. COX	S Sgt J. J. GURGES	S Sgt W. W. Bissett
T Sgt J. A. Hunt	S Sgt J. R. Pacilla	S Sgt H. C. Jorgenson
T Sgt M. Shala	S Sgt H. A. Staudt	S Sgt F. C. Hoggdon
S Sgt C. I. Slava	S Sgt J. Swan	S Sgt J. K. Jensen Jr
T Sgt P. E. Brooks	S Sgt H. V. Galley	Sgt D. F. Lagoy
S Sgt L. C. Lemos	S Sgt J. T. Hayes	S Sgt C. A. Bell

The above men took to the air on the early morning of 23 Jan 45 taking with them two combat weary aircraft of the 44th Squadron, namely, 587 (San Antonio Rose) and 603 (Nippon Kipper II), and one combat weary aircraft of the 25th Squadron.

On or about the 10th of February, Capt. EDGAR D. VAROFF, former world's pole vault champion, and his entire crew returned to the Squadron after an amazing walk out of Jap held territory in CHINA. The story began on December 7, 1941 when Capt. VAROFF in plane 363 gave the order to his crew to bail out after a successful strike at HONG KONG, HAN HUA O. Aircraft 363 had been hit by fighters and VAROFF brought it back as far as he could.

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Historical Report, Feb 15, 1945, 14th Bomb Sq, APO 631, 9 Mar 45 (Cont'd)

When still behind enemy lines Capt VANDER gave the order to bail out after it was seen that one of the props was about to come off. All 12 men made a successful jump with only one injury being sustained - that by Lt JOHN S. TINKER, who chipped a bone in his foot as he came down with a jolt. The landing was made only 10 miles from the Japs, but despite that and with the help of the Chinese, which was graciously given, the entire crew "walked out" in a period of 62 days. Upon return to CHANGLIA the men were almost unrecognizable in that they all had short haircuts on top and no haircuts on their faces. As a result, long beards were the order of the day.

The crew was interrogated by a representative of MIG-X at Headquarters in Xiamen on 2/15. As yet the complete information has not been received by the 14th group, hence it is not possible to present the complete story at this time. However, as soon as received the whole story will be incorporated in a later resume.

A few days after the crew's return to CHANGLIA, a Race Escape and Evasion board was held with a view toward determining whether or not the escaped crew should be returned to the States. It was unanimously decided by the board that the entire crew be returned to the Zone of the Interior on grounds that a retention of the crew in this theatre would generate evasion and escape routes that had been set up in CHINA and also would have a bad effect on morale in the entire command.

The report of the board was sent to AF Hq, Hester Command; two days later orders were put out and on the 24th of February Capt VANDER and his crew boarded a B-29 flown by Major "Buddy" SWANSON of the 25th Squadron en route for Uncle Sugar Able. The escapes or returns were:

Capt - GEORGE S. VANDER
1st Lt - JAMES A. HIGG
1st Lt - JOHN S. TINKER
1st Lt - EDWIN A. WALKER
1st Lt - JAMES BEAUFORT
1 Sgt - JOHN F. SMITH
3 Sgt - PAUL J. GARDNER
3 Sgt - BOB L. SMITH
3 Sgt - ...
Sgt - ... (25th Sq)

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Historical Report, Feb 45, 4th Bomb Sq, APO 631, 9 Mar 45 (Cont'd)

Of the remaining 26 aircraft a total of 27 successfully bombed the primary target from 20,000 to 25,000'. All crews reported from good to excellent results with the exception of average tendency toward excellent. The first formation flew in the area of the assigned aiming point at the southeast corner of the dock area. This area was quickly obscured by smoke and other formations were forced to shift to the northern section of the dock, which area was obscured. It was reported being able to see a column of dense black smoke rising to 25,000' which was still visible as much as 300 miles from the target.

Weather at the target ranged from OAS to 5/10 cloud cover.

Fighter opposition at the primary target was weak and there were no enemy aircraft claims nor were any of our aircraft damaged by fighters.

Heavy AA fire was encountered by all formations of the 49th Group, over the primary target. Bursts of AA fire were rather inaccurate but aircraft 330, flown by 1st Lt F L BROWN of the 49th, sustained major damage from either a direct hit or a very near miss. A gaping hole of about 12' x 31' was made in the trailing edge of the wing behind #3 engine. The right wing, Sgt S J KYGARD was injured by fragments which entered the fuselage near his position. The fragment entered the back of Kygard and fast nicked the lung. The fragment was later removed and the Sergeant is resting at this writing at the 2nd General Hospital in CAMBODIA. He has been awarded the Purple Heart.

Aircraft 330, flown by major S M WARD, and aircraft 620, flown by 1st Lt J A THOMAS, after bombing the primary target, returned along the briefed route until the vicinity of the COCOS ISLANDS, thence to UTTAR-GONG for fuel and to CAMBODIA. Aircraft 729, flown by 1st Lt J H DANIEL, on returning from the primary, landed at KUALA LUMPUR to replenish a depleted fuel supply and then returned to CAMBODIA.

Strike photos of the primary target substantiated the observed results and it is believed that very serious damage was inflicted on the assigned target.

The following planes and crews from the Squadron participated in the mission:

Aircraft 729		Aircraft 269		Aircraft 542	
P. DAVEN, P.H.	1st Lt P. HARTS, R.A.	Sgt	F. BARR, H.M.	1st Lt	
C. PARRON, A.C.	Capt. G. SERRA, G.H.	1st Col	C. RICHARDS, V.L.	2nd Lt	
H. HUNT, A.L.	1st Lt N. WALTERS, W.W.	Sgt	S. BERRY, W.P.	1st Lt	
B. HARRIS, I.	1st Lt E. APPELBAUM, G.P.	1st Lt	E. KATZBERG, A.S.	1st Lt	
R. HUNT, A.W.	1st Lt B. LEE, H.C.	1st Lt	H. HARRIS, V.	1st Lt	
S. HARRIS, A.W.	Sgt R. LEE, H.C.	Sgt	H. HARRIS, V.	1st Lt	
S. HARRIS, A.W.	Sgt R. LEE, H.C.	Sgt	H. HARRIS, V.	1st Lt	
S. HARRIS, A.W.	Sgt R. LEE, H.C.	Sgt	H. HARRIS, V.	1st Lt	

SECRET

Historical Section, Feb 25, High Bomb Sq, APO 631, 4 Mar 45 (cont'd)

Aircraft 541

F KERRY, F E Capt
CP BRADSHAW, J C 1st Lt
B WUJIPKA, B F 1st Lt
H BRANDELL, J R 1st Lt
E BALLEW, J A 1st Lt
A Brennan, P M S Sgt
V Larson, R V S Sgt
CFC Barton, J F S Sgt
LG Penn, I Jr S Sgt
Lt Grof, D J S Sgt
TG Endicott, C A S Sgt

Aircraft 094

F DEAN, H R 1st Lt
CP FURBERT, D 1st Lt
H MATHIAS, H B 1st Lt
B DONAHUE, O P 2nd Lt
E DEAY, E W P/O
R Maynes, R B P Sgt
V Polonsky, S S Sgt
CFC Rogers, E O S Sgt
MG Luedtke, F E S Sgt
LG Douglas, W L Col
TG Robertson, E L T Sgt

Aircraft 538

F BROWN, F I 1st Lt
CP BROCKERT, G W 2nd Lt
H JOLLS, L 1st Lt
H YLAKI, R P 2nd Lt
E MORRIS, L A 1st Lt
R Underhill, F L S Sgt
V Loncrain, L R Sgt
G Hall, R L S Sgt
Gopper, R J S Sgt
G Moore, H E T Sgt
G Rygaard, E J Sgt

Aircraft 620

F THOMAS, L A 1st Lt
CP KING, J C 2nd Lt
H KELLY, R B 1st Lt
H LACKO, A V 1st Lt
E BARD, R L 1st Lt
A Brennan, M L C Sgt
G Rinser, B B S Sgt
B Gleason, J F S Sgt
G Gregorio, V A S Sgt
G Wampler, G A S Sgt
V LaVallee, J T S Sgt

Aircraft 662

F COVER, H H 1st Lt
CP EISENMAN, J C Major
H JOHNSON, E K 1st Lt
B MCINTYRE, B A 1st Lt
E LINDAN, S P/O
R Price, G T T Sgt
V Laycat, J F S Sgt
CFC Beck, A H S Sgt
LG Pawluk, A P T Sgt
TG Westberg, R W T Sgt
TG Houghton, B R T Sgt

Aircraft 605

F HAY, G F Capt
CP HADDOX, J D 1st Lt
H LOBBING, E H 1st Lt
B BOSTON, C E 1st Lt
E HANLEY, F E 2nd Lt
R Houlton, L G S Sgt
G Cannon, W R S Sgt
G Helling, A L S Sgt
G Bosley, J T S Sgt
G Urbancic, A A T Sgt
V Reichart, A M S Sgt

Aircraft 752

F FROST, A A Capt
CP REBER, R W 1st Lt
H SWANSON, R L Capt
B GUR, J L 1st Lt
E BRADLEY, C H P/O
R Carrigan, A M S Sgt
V Sill, S C T Sgt
LG Cohen, J S Sgt
MG McNoll, J B S Sgt
TG Hoffman, P E T Sgt
SG Bremen, P R S Sgt

Aircraft 567

F BISHOP, G H Capt
CP WINDGAR, G H 1st Lt
H WILKAY, S R 1st Lt
H RANSON, C R 2nd Lt
E BRIDGES, R P/O
R Lytell, J J Sgt
CFC Coleman, W F S Sgt
RG Glassman, H H S Sgt
LG Grant, S M Col
V Neilands, W C S Sgt
TG Davis, R T Sgt

Aircraft 326

F SEER, C H Major
CP LIVER, I L 1st Lt
E H WALS, P A 1st Lt
H ALFORD, J R 1st Lt
H BRAN, J L 1st Lt
V BEHRENS, H F 1st Lt
R Lamb, G W Sgt
CFC Kramer, F S Sgt
TG Hanson, H W Sgt
RG Helrn, G M Sgt
LG Anthony, S J Sgt

On February 26, 1945, there was enacted a drama involving the crew of aircraft 804 that probably has no parallel in the annals of the Army Air Forces.

The day started out normally enough. It was a four ship photo mission to SIMAPORE. The planes proceeded on course and succeeded in obtaining the photographs they were after. Enroute back the crew of 804 were rained on and dry at 21,000 when suddenly part of the crew came a little closer to home. The plane was shot down and the crew was killed. The plane was shot down and the crew was killed.

SECRET

Historical Report, Feb 45, 14th Bomb Sq, AFD 63L, 9 Mar 45 (Cont'd)

pit, severely burning the bombardier. The pilot, Capt JAMES B. HIGGS, the Co-Pilot, 1st Lt W. HALE and the Navigator, 1st Lt W. GEBERTS suffered minor burns. Capt HIGGS succeeded in putting the fire out with the fire extinguisher and a jug of water. At this time the plane had lost altitude down to 11,000'.

Lt KENTIS was stretched out and given morphine, morphine, and burn ointment by Sgt J. DIBOCK, the radio operator. Lt KENTIS was in a very serious condition.

During all this, the flight kept making passes and only late when 27th, flown by Capt MILLER of the 55th Squadron caught up.

Aircraft 004 was in dire straits. #1 engine lost so much oil it could not be feathered and the left wing was burning. It was decided to feather #2, because it was thought that in some manner or other #2 was feeding the fire in #1. Feathering of #2 did no good and 1/2 hour later it was unfeathered. The plane kept losing altitude slowly. About this time it was discovered that the bomb bay doors were on fire so an attempt was made to salvo them. The rear bomb bay hung up and had to be chopped out. An attempt was made to close the bomb bay doors, but they were hanging, hence it was decided not to ditch. Ditching with the bomb bay doors open would be almost certain death for the crew in the aft part of the plane.

The crew parried the plane clear in an attempt to keep it in the air as long as possible.

At about 0513 a terrific explosion coming from between #1 and #2 engines shook the aircraft. It was thought that a fuel tank had exploded.

Lt HALE, who by this time was flying in the pilot's seat said, "It's now or never." Capt HIGGS replied, "It's now." The bomb bay was opened as well as the rear door and Capt HIGGS gave the signals to bail out. 1st Lt W. GEBERTS, Navigator, was the first man out of the plane, then came Lt HIGGS, the flight engineer and then the pilot, Capt HIGGS. Sgt DIBOCK, the Radio Operator, planned to jump with Lt KENTIS in order to bail him when they landed. They bailed out of the forward hatch; Lt KENTIS pulled his rip cord and the chute opened, but KENTIS was still in his harness. Apparently, it had taken his last ounce of strength to pull the rip cord. Sgt DIBOCK's chute opened he drifted away from KENTIS and did not see him again.

Six men, namely, Pfc J. V. ROBERTS - GND Engineer, 1st Lt W. HALE - Pilot, 1st Lt W. GEBERTS - Radar Operator, 1st Lt W. GEBERTS - Co-Pilot, 1st Lt W. GEBERTS - Navigator, 1st Lt W. GEBERTS - Bombardier, 1st Lt W. GEBERTS - Tail Gunner, and 1st Lt W. GEBERTS - Tail Gunner, all bailed out of the plane and survived.

It is noted that the plane was in a very bad condition when it was ditched.

The following is a list of the names of the crew members who bailed out of the plane:

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Historical Report, Feb 15, With Bomb Sq, APO 631, 9 Mar 45 (Cont'd)

pit, severely burnin the bombardier. The pilot, Capt JAMES E LYONS, the Co-Pilot, 1st Lt L. BALE and the Navigator, 1st Lt W. WYLLICK suffered minor burns. Capt LYONS succeeded in putting the fire out with the fire extinguisher and a jug of water. By that time the plane had lost altitude down to 11,000'.

Lt KIMMIS was stretched out and given morphine, sulpha, and burn ointment by Sgt J Dimock, the radio operator. Lt KIMMIS was in a very serious condition.

During all this, the fighter kept making passes and only left when 274, flown by Capt SILVER of the 45th Squadron came at it.

Aircraft 004 was in dire straits. #1 engine lost so much oil it could not be feathered and the head ring was burning. It was decided to feather #2, because it was thought that in some manner or other #2 was feeding the fire in #1. Feathering of #2 did no good and 1/2 hour later it was unfeathered. The plane kept losing altitude slowly. About this time it was discovered that the bombbay tanks were on fire so an attempt was made to salvo them. The rear bombbay burnt up and had to be chopped out. An attempt was made to close the bombbay doors, but they were burning, hence it was decided not to ditch because ditching with the bombbay doors open would be almost certain death for the men in the aft part of the plane.

The crew started the plane down in an attempt to keep it in the air as long as possible.

At about 0515Z a terrific explosion came from between #1 and #2 engines shook the airplane. It was thought that a fuel cell exploded.

Lt BALE, who by this time was flying in the pilot's seat said, "It's now or never." Capt LYONS replied, "It's now." The bombbays were opened as well as the nose wheel and Capt LYONS gave the signal to bail out. 1st Lt W. WYLLICK, Navigator, was the first man out of the plane, then came Lt MORSE, the Flight Engineer and then the pilot, Capt LYONS. Sgt Dimock, the Radio Operator, planned to jump with Lt KIMMIS in order to aid him when they landed. They tumbled out of the forward bombbay; Lt KIMMIS pulled his rip cord and the chute opened, but KIMMIS was limp in his harness. Apparently, it had taken his last ounce of strength to pull the rip cord. When Dimock's chute opened he drifted away from KIMMIS and did not see him again.

Six men, namely, Sgt J. J. Morris - GPO runner, 1st Lt B. W. Lyons - CO, 1 Sgt Supolski - Radar Operator, 1 Sgt L. I. Sanderick - Left Gunner, and the right Gunner - 5 Sgt A. Poloski went out through the rear door, as did Sgt J. J. Carney - the tail gunner. The plane exploded 30 seconds after the last man left and dived into the water.

1st Lt WYLLICK tells what happened after they hit the water:

"I had a feeling of relief after I left the plane. It was the first

SECRET

Historical Report, Feb 45, Wata 1000 50, APO 631, 9 Mar 45 (Cont'd)

In that ship. As I drifted toward the water I unhooked the parachute straps and when I hit the water I got out fairly easy. One of the shroud lines got caught in a hook on the Mae West but I got that free and inflated the Mae West and just floated around. About 1/2 hour later I saw Lester and Dincock in the distance. They called, but at first we couldn't get together. We finally drifted together. We saw SILCOX (27h) and some things but we couldn't get going toward it. Two hours later Dincock saw an object in the water! He swam toward it, leaving Lester and I to suffer (Lester could swim only slightly). What Dincock saw was a raft. He inflated it, but it inflated up side down. He finally succeeded in righting it. He got in and started paddling but he couldn't locate us. We finally got together by yelling at each other and Lester and I got in the raft.

"We took inventory of our equipment and used the whistle in an attempt to contact others, but we were unsuccessful.

"That night (26 Feb) we tried sleeping but it was difficult. At about 12 midnight we heard a plane, but it was just a faint drone.

"About 8 a.m. on the 27th we saw two B-29's about 20 miles north and east of the raft. We shot a flare and Lester used the mirror but the planes didn't see us. Later on we heard another plane overhead but we couldn't see it.

"We knew we had drifted to the south and southwest so we set up a sail in an effort to get back to where we had bailed out.

"At about 3 p.m. we spotted a hulk ship which we found out was flown by Major C. H. BAKER. Lester used the mirror and that's what attracted their attention. They dropped a Gibson Girl and a one-man life raft, which we picked up. At about 5:30 p.m. we saw something in the distance that turned out to be a sub. The sub pulled up at 6 p.m. and we climbed aboard. We suggested that the sub go northeast to find the other men. They did and about 1/2 hour later we found Tomolski. He was exhausted, having stayed in the water alone for about 36 hours.

"The British treated us really swell. We stayed on the sub till noon the next day and then a PHU picked us up and took us into CALCUTTA. When we got to the Hospital we found that BYONS, MORSE, BALE, Sanderick and Polackis had beaten us in having been picked up the day before by a PHU."

The five men mentioned by L. TRULICK had gotten together soon after hitting the water and after spending 19 hours in the water in a Mae West were picked up by a British PHU and flown to CALCUTTA.

Three men were never found, despite continuous searching for four days on the part of B-29's and PHU's. The following are "missing in action": 1st Lt. WERLICK - Bombardier, Sgt. J. J. Carney, and Pfc. J. E. Moffitt.

At the present writing six of the men have returned to home base.

SECRET

1.1. Vertical Report, Feb 15, 1945, 1st Lt. Sg. APC 631, 9 Mar 45 (Cont'd)

and three of the survivors are in the Hospital at MESEA, recovering from their experiences.

PERSONNEL:

Since the word was passed around in January of an impending move, preparation had been made and the men who were to leave were put on the alert. Whereabouts of the new base was known by only a few men and they guarded their secrets closely.

Personnel were divided into "A", "B" and "C" elements. "A" and "B" were to go by ship and to different destinations. "C" element consisted of combat crews and a few ground officers and enlisted men who were to stay.

"A" element departed on the 24th of January and "B" element left on the 25th. Only a skeleton force remained to carry on missions during the remaining days in MESEA. All the messes were consolidated into a group mess and the fifth messhall was used for that purpose.

Replacement crews received during February are:

1st Lt	ALLEN E. WILKINS	2nd Lt	FRANCIS W. WOPWENS
2nd Lt	EDWARD F. BRUGER	2nd Lt	HARRY E. SMITH Jr
2nd Lt	RAY E. L. WILSON	2nd Lt	GILBERT C. LEWIS
2nd Lt	CARROLL E. GIBBS	2nd Lt	JAMES C. WALSH
Sgt	Walter H. Meenan	2nd Lt	JOHN G. HADEN J.
Cpl	William L. Blinnor	Sgt	Luke Thompson
Cpl	W. E. Rink	Cpl	Carl H. Sutohan Jr
Cpl	James F. Volk	Cpl	John F. Blain
Cpl	Ralph S. Hasbarn	Cpl	Willard H. McLean
2nd	George H. Miller	Cpl	Charles K. Chase
Sgt	Frederick A. McJowell		Donfield

TRAINING

Ground:

During the month of February, ground school was considerably reduced due to a number of missions having been cancelled and preparations for moving. However, there were some classes in the following subjects: bombardier and navigator SOP; target, aerial, and aircraft recognition; flight engineering practices; radio electronics; weather; camouflage; and the Japanese soldier. The usual daily schedule for book work, gunnery training was maintained. Also classes were held for map reading and checking out of replacement crews, and for maintenance of the B-24's.

SECRET

Operational Report, Feb 43, with Feb 43, AFM 831, 9 Mar 43 (Cont'd)

1. 3 hrs Formation flying
2. 12 hrs Instrument flying
3. 7 hrs Night flying
4. 10 Instrument take offs
5. 3 Long range navigation missions
6. 30 Practice bombs dropped

SQUADRON STRENGTH

	Officers	Enlisted Men
February 1	126	504
February 28	124	520
Present on Base February 28	106	417

Quincy L. Cooper
Quincy L. COOPER
Captain, Air Corps
Historical Officer