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20 THY-FIFTH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H) EARLY AIR FORCE

Army Air Field,
Pratt, Kansas,
27 September 1943

Squadron History for Period 15 August 1943, through September 1943.

1. The last week of August 1943 marked the break-up of the 45th Bombardment Squadron (H). This was the result of a decision of Higher Headquarters to divide the personnel of the 40th Bombardment Group so as to provide the experienced nucleus for two B-29 groups rather than one.

2. Approximately one-half of the men and officers of the 45th Squadron were transferred to the 395th Bomb Squadron per Assignment Memorandum No. 65, Headquarters 40th Bombardment Group (H), dated 24 August 1943. This transfer was made to replace the men and officers of the 395th who were to form part of the nucleus of the new B-29 group. (Copy of Assignment Memorandum No. 65, Headquarters, 40th Bombardment Group (H), AAF, Pratt, Kansas, dated 24 August 1943, is attached).

3. The key personnel of the Squadron at the beginning of September included:

Major	OSCAR R. SCHAAF	Commanding Officer
Captain	JOHN M. SKELEY	Operations Officer
Captain	MARVIN W. GOODBYN	Asst. Operations Officer
First Lieutenant	HARPER B. MILLER	Executive Officer
First Lieutenant	CHESTER B. GAUGH	Engineering Officer
First Lieutenant	WILLIAM A. ROONEY	Intelligence Officer
First Lieutenant	JOHN C. IVORY	Navigation Officer & Training & Schools Officer

4. The entire month of September saw a gradual influx of personnel into the Squadron, including both enlisted men and officers. This trend is clearly shown by a comparison of the strength section of the morning reports for the first day of September and this date of writing (27 September).

	Officers Assigned	EM Assigned
1 September 1943	34	195
27 September 1943	58	260

5. Despite this marked increase in personnel, the shortage of manpower in practically all classifications continued throughout the month of September to be one of the outstanding characteristics of the organization. This situation was indicative of the Squadron's fundamental problem, namely, to build from an experienced nucleus, a well organized, well trained and efficient combat organization.

6. As more new personnel joined the squadron, the task of training them to assume their full duties, increased in importance. Train-

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Squadron History for Period 15 August 1943, through September 1943.
Continued.

ing was carried on locally under Group directives and coordinated by First Lieutenant JOHN C. TERRY. Other men and officers were ordered on detached service to other stations for specialized training. The local program included Bombardiers' and Navigational training so as to have all of the Bombardiers' and Navigators' qualified in both of those classifications. The men and officers going on detached service attended schools that varied from B-29 armament specialization, and supercharger specialization to intelligence. Pilots continued at transition training on B-29's and B-26's. A general Squadron orientation program was begun under the direction of the intelligence section with a series of lectures dealing with current affairs.

7. Squadron flying operations were limited not only by shortages in personnel but also in planes. The B-29's still being in the experimental stage, replacement of parts was often a time consuming process. Several officers and enlisted men of the Squadron were ordered to Salina, Kansas, to take part in the Accelerated Service tests on the B-29.

8. Events of interest occurring outside the regular Squadron program included participation in the Third War Bond Drive for \$15,000,000,000 and in a review at which a few enlisted men of the Group were decorated by Brigadier-General KENNETH B. OLPE, Commanding General of the 58th Bombardment Wing (H).

For the Squadron Commander:

Norman Blenheim
NORMAN BLENHEIM
2nd Lt, Air Corps
Historical Officer

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FOURTY-FIFTH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (C) ARMY AIR FORCE D-1

Wing Air Field
Pratt, Kansas
1 November 1943

COMMOBUREAU REPORT FOR PERIOD 1 TO 31 OCTOBER 1943

1. Flying training in the B-29 airplane was given increased attention during the month with emphasis placed on checking pilots out. With 901 1/2 hours for the month and 21 1/2 hours total the 45th's B-29 is reported by the squadron commander to have the most flying time of any B-29. Moreover, with seven officers checked out as B-29 pilots, the 45th became the first to have that many on the checked out list. Officers now rated as B-29 pilots are:

Major OSCAR A. SMITH	Captain CHARLES T. MALLORY
Major JOHN W. SHERRY	Captain MARVIN W. GOODWIN
Major ROBERT E. MASS	Captain IRA V. MATTHEW
	Captain WILLIAM S. HENFRO

2. Number of promotions among the officers were announced during this period. Names of these officers with their new grades follow:

Major JOHN W. SHERRY	1st Lt JAMES H. WOODEN
Major ROBERT E. MASS	1st Lt J. T. DILLON
Capt JOHN C. IVORY	1st Lt CLARENCE P. LOUIS
Capt HARPER B. MILLER	1st Lt JOHN G. MARTIN

3. On Thursday 21 October flying of B-26's ceased and planes were turned over to the engineering section for final maintenance before being transferred out of the squadron. Flying time for the remainder of the month was done in the B-29 and in two B-17's that had previously been assigned to the squadron.

4. Athletic activities included the establishment of enlisted men's and officers' basketball teams to compete in the Base basketball tournament. Tentative starting lines were:

T Sgt Alex Egan	1st Lt MARVIN STOCKETT
Sgt Nicholas Felony	2nd Lt IRVING L. BELLOS
Cpl Raymond W. Wilkins	2nd Lt THOMAS S. BLANKLEY
Pfc JACKSON T. MCCREARY	2nd Lt HARRY N. CHAGNON
Pfc Peter Fagan	2nd Lt FRANK E. NELSON

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Squadron History for Period 1 thru 31 October 1943, Cont'd.

6. Strength of the squadron was nearly complete toward the end of the month as newly assigned personnel arrived. The roster on 31 October showed 85 officers and 305 enlisted men.

6. In the Group personal inspection held Sunday 24 October the 45th placed first.

7. Nearly all members of the squadron moved areas with special care during the last two weeks of the month, the medics having been busy with their needles inoculating the squadron against typhus and cholera.

William L. Rooney
WILLIAM L. ROONEY
1st Lt. Air Corps
Historical Officer

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FORTY-FIFTH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H) ARMY AIR FORCES D-1

Army Air Field
Pratt, Kansas
1 December 1943

Squadron History for Period 1 thru 27 November 1943

1. One of the squadron officers, Lt. James H. Cowden, enjoyed the distinction of serving as copilot for the Hon. Robert Lovett, Under Secretary of War for Air, on a flight from Salina, Kansas to Colorado Springs, Colorado on 7 Oct. When a C-47 carrying Mr. Lovett and his party was forced down at Salina, Lt. Cowden, with other officers and enlisted men, flew the party to Second Air Force headquarters in a B-17.

2. "Old 954" (YB-29 41-36954), the first B-29 to be assigned to any squadron, was transferred out of the 45th 6 Nov. and flown to the Fisher plant, Cleveland, Ohio where it will undergo new changes and experimental testing including the installation of liquid cooled engines.

Major Robert K. Moss, Lt John G. Martin, 1 Sgt Harry C. Miller, 1 Sgt Walter E. Miller, 3 Sgts Albert F. Eberts and Louis J. Pepin flew the plane to Cleveland.

The story of 954's visit to Cleveland was recounted in the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

3. Squadron colors were assigned to squadrons of the 40th Group this month. Of the four colors yellow, red, white and green, yellow was assigned to the 45th.

4. Uncontrovertible evidence that the 45th is the best squadron in the Army Air Forces came to hand this month. Evidence was in the form of figures on Army General Classification Test score distribution. With the averages obtained by 713,000 selectees in a survey completed 28 February 1942, the following comparisons are made:

CLASS	I	II	III	IV	V
General Army Distribution	8.0%	29.0%	30.0%	21.0%	12.0%
Total 45th EM - - - - -	7.7%	40.8%	35.9%	13.5%	1.2%
45th EM Combat Crews - -	4.1%	50.7%	40.8%	4.1%	.0%
45th EM Ground Personnel-	9.2%	41.4%	34.1%	13.3%	1.3%

5. Firing for qualification in arms took place this

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Squadron History for Period 1 thru 27 November 1943 (Cont'd)

month. Both pistol and carbine tests were run off. With the carbine T Sgt Francis M. Pederson made the highest score, 181. Four other men qualified as experts using the carbine. They were: Pfc Stephen J. Weitlauf, 180; Sgt David M. Moore, 178; Cpl Claude L. Bolin, 178; and Pfc George R. Bissay, 175.

Six enlisted men and four officers qualified as sharpshooters on the pistol, caliber .45 automatic. Seventeen men and twelve officers also qualified as marksmen. High scorer among the officers was Lt Charles Creelius. "Dead Eye" among the enlisted personnel was S Sgt Jack Halpern. Both scored 85.

G. Basket-ball teams carrying the banner of the 45th held that banner this month in the two basket-ball leagues on the field. The officers team won four and lost one. In three games the enlisted men won two and lost one.

The officers' team included:

Capt Jack C. Ledford
Capt Boyd L. Grubaugh
1st Lt John G. Martin
1st Lt George A. Hadley
1st Lt Marvin M. Stockett
2nd Lt Harry M. Chagnon
2nd Lt Thomas S. Blankley
2nd Lt Irving L. Belloc
2nd Lt Hennie C. Fontham
2nd Lt Mannan C. Hill

The enlisted men's team was composed of:

T Sgt Alex Baran
S Sgt William R. Trace
Sgt Nicholas M. Pelegy
Cpl Raymond M. Wilkins
Pfc Sumner Bloom
Pfc Peter Penasa
Pfc John M. Wall Jr.
Pfc Tully Jordan
Pfc Ian Stewart

7. Radio operators were given an extensive first aid training course during November. Carried out by the group dispensary, the course included administration of blood plasma, assisting in surgery, assisting in hospital wards, fundamentals of anatomy, wounds, fractures, administration of injections, use of dry blood plasma, use of first aid kits, carrying of patients on litters, ambulance procedure, and field sanitation.

Squadron History for Period 1 thru 27 November 1943 (Cont'd)

This month also saw the transfer of Capt Olfert Topp, Squadron Surgeon, who served with the organization at Puerto Rico, Panama, and the Galapagos Islands. Capt Topp was assigned to the base hospital, Mac Dill Field, Tampa, Fla.

8. Interesting personalities recently assigned to the 45th include Capt William G. Renfro and Capt Jasper W. Woodruff. Capt Renfro was National All wrestling champion in 1939, winning the title in competitions held at the San Francisco Golden Gate Exposition.

Capt Woodruff holds the Distinguished Flying Cross with Oak Leaf Cluster. He may truly be called a "hard luck" man. Assigned to a pursuit squadron at Wheeler Field, T. H., he was unable to get off the ground when Pearl Harbor was attacked and Wheeler Field hit by the Japs December 7th.

Next on the list of tough breaks came 26 January L-43 when on a flight back to Espiritu Santo Islands, New Hebrides from Guadalcanal, his plane was forced down. To add to his misfortune he had Maj Gen Twining, Commanding General of the 13th Air Force aboard. The crew and six passengers were adrift for six days before being picked up. Sent to New Zealand to recover, he successively caught Malaria and Yellow Jaundice before finally being discharged from the hospital and sent back to the United States

9. Members of the squadron Ordnance section began attending daily classes on Ordnance subjects as part of the ground personnel training program.

10. A new B-29 was assigned to the squadron 11 Nov. and two new B-17's were added on Nov 17 and 19 respectively. "Hanger Queen" of all squadron planes was 012, B-17 assigned on 17 Nov.; only 25 minutes of flying time was accomplished in this ship.

Total B-29 time flown by the squadron from 1 thru 27 Nov. was 162:40; B-17 time flown was 543:45.

11. Strength of the squadron as of 27 Nov. was:
officers - 110, enlisted men - 346.

2 incls -

Incl 1 - Newspaper Article (true copy)

Incl 2 - Set, 10 Photos, 45th Orientation Program, 28 Oct 43

William A. Rooney
WILLIAM A. ROONEY
1st Lt., Air Corps
Historical Officer