

CONFIDENTIAL

Sheet No. 1 War Diary, 306 Bomb Gr., (B3) sqn. THURLEIGHMonth of MAY 1943 Prepared by Capt. Wiley W. Glass

DAY

EVENTS

- May 1 Eighteen of our A/C led by Col. Putnam, took off on our seventh mission to St. Nazaire. Three A/C aborted and fifteen A/C released their bombs over the target with poor results due to heavy overcast and clouds. On the return trip, our Group, through error in navigation, mistook Brest for Lands End and at 500' altitude, absorbed violent barrage of heavy and light flak, with result that three ships; Lt. Luby, 307th, and Lts. Fapp and Lagginton, 423rd, were lost. Remaining ships, escaping from this mess, proceeded across Channel. Lt. Johnson, of 423rd, was attacked by several FW190's, which set fire to his plane. Three gunners bailed out in the Channel. Due to heroic effort of Sgt. M.H. Smith, the fire was brought under control and ship landed at S.W. England. Lt. Kiss-ebertu, who was aboard this ship, was wounded. Score for the day was 0 destroyed, 0 probably destroyed and 0 damaged.
- 13 Twenty-four A/C, led by Lt. Col. J.M. Wilson, took off for the airplane factory at Meaulte, France. Two A/C aborted. The remainder, with good weather, Spit and P4/ cover throughout, bombed with excellent results. Score was 0-0-0.
- 14 Twenty-six A/C, led by Major Raper, took off and successfully bombed naval installations at Kiel, Germany. Light opposition over the target was probably due to fact that three other targets were attacked about the same time by U.S. Bombers. All ships returned to base safely. Daily score was 11-1-3.
- Following message received from Admiralty through 8th Air Force.
"Please accept our congratulations on the heavy and remarkably accurate bombing of Kiel on 14th May."
- 15 Twenty-four A/C, led by Major Terry, took off to bomb docks at Wilhelmshaven. Heavy clouds covered the target, forcing our Group to drop their "eggs" on Heligoland and adjoining Dune Islands, with hits registered on several good military targets. Heavy opposition was met from ground and more than 100 fighters attacked us around the clock with guns, cannon and bombs. Three of our A/C, Lts. Clemons, Mann and Ratians, from 307th, were lost and tail gunner, M.B. Standley, from Robinson's crew of both, was killed. Our score for the day was 14-7-10.
- Commendation from our Group Commander, Col. C.E. Putnam, extending "harmest congratulations to every member of 306th Bomb Group for outstanding accomplishments achieved during the first fifteen days of May. During this period we have continued to deliver our full quota of heavy blows to the enemy, both in occupied territory and

DAY

EVENTS

in his homeland. In addition to this, we have made one half of a newly arrived Group fully operational and have carried them through their intensive training period and their first three operational missions without a single casualty. This feat is all the more remarkable when it is considered, that well over one half of all crews who have been lost in action in this theatre were lost before they completed their first five missions."

17 Twenty-four A/C, led by Col. Putnam, took off for the sub pens at Lorient. Two of our A/C aborted, putting 22 over the target with good bombing results. Flak and fighter opposition only moderate. Our score for the day 2-1-0.

19 Twenty-two out of 21 A/C dispatched, led by Major Lambert, bombed ship building yards at Lorient with incendiaries with fair results. Moderate flak and about 50 inexperienced fighters gave little trouble and all planes returned to base. Our score for the day was 3-0-1.

Robert A. Lovett, U.S. Under-secretary of War for Air, Brig. Gen. H.S. Mansell and Newton Longfellow talked with crew members upon their return.

21 Seventeen out of 21 A/C dispatched, led by Lt. Col. J.W. Wilson, dropped bombs on Wilhelmshaven. Because of haze, a good smoke screen and fierce fighter opposition by about 100 E/A the bombing results were not good. Lts. Jonas and Fields, 30th, went down in the target area. Lt. R.W. Smith, who was hit by flak over the target and had two engines out, was then jumped by enemy fighters continuously until well out to sea. With fires aboard and only one engine left Smith and crew had to ditch and were picked up after 30 hours by British Air-Sea Rescue. This crew was credited with destroying 1 E/A, a record for this theatre of operations. Our total score for the day was 22-1-3.

22 St. Nazaire, Trip No. 8. Twenty-four A/C took off, 2 aborted, and 22 bombed. This mission, winding up the busiest month of our stay in England, was led by Major Raper. Moderate flak and few E/A encountered. Bombing results fair. No losses, no casualties. Our score for the day --no claims.

List of Awards and Decorations attached:

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Sheet No. _____ War Diary, 306th Bomb Sqdn. THURLEIGH
Group (H)
Month of MAY 1943 Prepared by Capt. W.W. Glass

DAY	LIST OF PROMOTIONS EFFECTIVE THIS MONTH EVENTS
May 3	Major John B. Wright promoted from Captain AUS to Major AUS this date
5	Capt. Robert C. Williams promoted from Captain AUS to Major AUS(AC) this date.
10	Lt. Col. Claude E. Putnam, Jr. promoted Captain (AUS) to Major (AUS) effective April, 1943.
	Lt. Col. Claude E. Putnam, Jr. promoted from Lt. Colonel AUS (AC) to Colonel AUS (AC) this date.
20	Major John M. Regan promoted from Captain AUS (AC) to Major AUS (AC) this date.
23	Major James W. Wilson promoted from Captain AUS to Major AUS this date.
22	Lt. Howard W. Kelly promoted from 2nd Lt. AUS(AR) to 1st Lt. AUS this date.
25	Capt. Rex D. Stutznegger promoted from 1st Lt. (ORC) to Captain AUS this date.
27	Capt. William S. Raper promoted from Captain AUS to Major AUS (AC) this date.

Sheet No. 1 r Di ry. 306th Bomb Co (H)
Month of May, 1941 Prepared by Capt W. C. Van Norman

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DAY	
3	2nd Lt William W. Peterman assigned to organization as Assistant Flying Control Officer.
11	Lt Colonel Claude E. Putnam Promoted to Colonel.
17	Capt Robert C. Williams promoted to Major.
19	Mr. Robert A. Lovett, United States Under Secretary of War for Air, Brigadier General H. S. Hansell and Brigadier General Newton Longfellow visited and inspected the station.
21	Capt Frank D. Yaussi assigned to organization as Group Bombardier.

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