

## NOTHING MOVES ON THE ROADS OR RAILS

The Group dispatched 25 ships on a mission to the marshalling yards at Hamm, Germany on October 2nd. We led the 14th Combat Wing. All aircraft bombed with unknown results. After making a second run on the target the bombs were dropped visually, but the target was completely obscured by clouds. Flak was moderate and accurate; fighter support was excellent. We incurred no losses, but some of the returning planes had slight battle damage. The 506th furnished eight of these raiding aircraft.

Records kept by Gene McMahon and Michel Yuspeh indicate the Thomas Waters crew was on this raid. Another crew that made this trip belonged to Paul Durett according to records kept by Delmar Fox. It is possible that the Homer Still crew was on this raid according to John Lord.

Ray Marner wrote in his Diary on October 2nd:

Lt. Irwin came back from Switzerland. Capt. Cardenas is back too. They went down in March.

The George Beiber crew was on a raid on October 3rd according to records of both Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni. Uvanni wrote:

Last night Hal Hannon (friend from another crew) and I went to Hingham, a little town near the field. We bought some scotch in a local pub and had quite a celebration. This morning when I awoke I had to have Perry Morse help me out of bed. My left foot was swollen so much I couldn't get my shoe on. Perry practically carried me to breakfast and briefing. He took care of me as though he were my mother.

Our target was Gaggenau in south western Germany. I felt pretty good while we were waiting around to take off and had to tell the crew about last night and its episode. Lt. Boensch didn't think I should go on the mission, but rather to the infirmary. Lt. Beiber told me to take it easy on the mission and to let Lt. Boensch open and close the bomb bay doors. (So I wouldn't fall out, I guess!!)

Gaggenau is located in mountainous country and I was figuring how much more accurate the flak would be because of it being closer to us than usual. (You remember that I

served a year in an antiaircraft outfit before entering the Air Force.)

For some reason we took the secondary target today. It was a hydroelectric plant in the mountains. I opened and closed the bomb bay doors as I felt better in the cold air. There wasn't any flak and we dropped our bombs while Lt. Folsom was catching a cat nap. About 10 minutes after dropping them he woke up and told our pilot that we should open the bomb bay doors as we should be at the target soon!!! We all got a kick out of this.

The cold air was a great help and I recommend a flight at high altitude for "the morning after"! I went to the flight surgeon after the mission and he said I had sprained my foot and wrapped it good and tight. He observed that I must have been anesthetized when it happened or it would have hurt like heck!!

The Lorry Works at Gaggenau, was the ordered primary for October 3rd. The Group was the second group in the "B" wing, echeloned to the right of the 491st, with the 14th Wing leading the Division. Thirty aircraft were dispatched on this mission. Due to a bomb sight malfunction in the lead ship on the bomb run, the formation ended up to the right of the target. However, the second and high squadrons broke away to bomb the primary with excellent results. The first and third, lead and low left, squadron headed for Pforzheim, the secondary, but were cut off by another wing. They then went on to choose a target of opportunity, the Offenburg marshalling yards, with fair to good results. We encountered no flak or enemy fighters. Seven aircraft from the 506th took part in this attack. Captain Hal S. Kimball was flying lead ship of the Group, but had to abort due to mechanical problem.

Kenneth Adrian's notes indicate that they had to make an emergency landing at Rheims after attacking a target at Appgnheimer. He was probably with Louis Wimsatt. Lewis Robinson reports that he flew with Ray Ciesielski on this raid. It is possible that the Homer Still crew was on this raid according to John Lord.

Lewis Robinson recalls:

My escape boots--those black issues to be attached to the parachute harness in case of bail out over enemy territory--never saw our ship. They were exchanged for

cash in Brighton, where our crew was sent for a week rest and relaxation.

The Group sent 30 aircraft to bomb an airfield at Lippstadt, Germany, on October 5th. Fighter support was good through the mission. Neither flak or enemy aircraft were encountered. The results were good for the first and second squadrons, but poor for the third. They were carrying fifty-two 100-pound bombs.

The Thomas Waters crew was on this mission according to records maintained by Michel Yuspeh and Gene McMahon. Also, Paul Durett and his crew were there according to the Delmar Fox records.

On October 6th James Clements was Group Deputy Lead on the trip to the Aero Engine Works at Hamburg, Germany. He was flying in A/C #644, -H. His copilot was Joseph Kodaj and Wade Huggens was the tail gunner. Lt. Loyd W. Hare was also aboard. They were carrying four 500-pound bombs. They dropped at 1207 hours from an altitude of 25,000 feet. His notes indicate that they dropped visually through a slight haze. The flak was intense and bombing results were excellent. There were seven ships from the 506th that were with them.

Records of both William Uvanni and Gerald Folsom show that they were on this raid. Another of our crews that made this mission belonged to Ray Ciesielski according to records kept by Lewis Robinson.

October 6th was the first day back to duty for Major McAtee after returning from home leave. Major Middleton will be in charge of Squadron Operations with Lt. Horne as his assistant.

On October 7th the 506th sent ten aircraft to Kassel, Germany. Two of our aircraft failed to return.

John Lord was with Homer Still on this raid. They were flying in aircraft #789, *Lakanookie*. Lord recalls:

We flew on the oldest wreck of a B-24 in the Group since we were the last crew in the Squadron. On the way to Kassel we lost an engine and soon after lost the Group. Before John Wilson could get a return heading, we lost the other engine on the same wing.

Still continued on course, flying into Germany, while John was looking for a new heading to an emergency landing in France. Suddenly we heard a loud pop! We were hit and the bomb bay was on fire.

I immediately got out of the ship. I landed in a plowed field near Bielefeld. I was immediately captured by a German soldier who was with a group training nearby. He took me to the airfield that shot us down. I was visited by the flak gunners who did the job while I was in a bed in the field infirmary.

I was burned on the hand and around the eyes while getting out of the plane. Several days later we were taken to Dulag Luft in Frankfurt for questioning and assignment to a permanent camp.

By that time my burned hand was seriously infected and I was in great pain. On arrival in Frankfurt they put me in a holding barracks with a large number of British para-troopers that were taken at the bridgehead at Arnhem. They gave me morphine to help with the pain. A British doctor, captured with them, saved my hand in the infirmary at Dulag Luft.

I still love those British guys!!

After I was able to travel I went by train to Stag Luft IV at Kiefheide (about 50-to-60 miles east of the Oder river in what is now Poland).

I stayed there till February 7, 1945. We then started to march. First it was west across the islands at the mouth of the Oder. Then to the north of Berlin (Wittenberg). Early in April we moved by train from near Hannover to near Magdeburg. This was a huge tent camp that primarily held troops from the British 8th Army that were captured in 1942. Among them were Sikhs and Gurkhas.

On April 12th, the day Franklin Roosevelt died, we went back east and heard our guns for the first time. We moved to around Torgau. On the 21st the Russian drive to Berlin started and the Germans got us back west in a hurry. The Russians were so close that we could hear small arms fire. Eventually we were marched into the U.S.A. lines near Halle on the Saale river. We were lousy, dirty and hungry but HAPPY!

In Will Lundy's 44th Bomb Group Roll Of Honor And Casualties John Dahlin told:

Our plane was hit by flak and set on fire. Seven of us bailed out. The plane broke into pieces soon afterwards. I met the other six men who bailed out safely, but none of us ever again saw Sgt. Hibbs. Later a German Major told me that three bodies were found in the crashed plane. He had a correct list of names of the missing crew members.

With Lt. Homer E. Still (POW) were Lts. Francis C. Welborn (POW), John E. Wilson (POW), and Henry Strunc (POW). The enlisted personnel were Helge E. Wessman (KIA), John B. Lord (POW), Leo R. Hibbs (KIA), John C. Wyant (POW), John K. Dahlin (POW), and Vernon Buhl (KIA).

The other aircraft that we lost on this day was #187 flown by Lt. William Salfen.

In the previously cited work by Will Lundy, Salfen's copilot, Donald B. Iden stated:

We had just closed the bomb bay doors after releasing bombs over Kassel when our plane took two bursts of flak. One hit the wing and the other went into the tail section. The hit in the wing took out the #1 and #2 engines, so that made it impossible to keep a heading without complete cross-control of ailerons and rudders. Needless to say, loss of altitude was very rapid.

We rode it down to 1,500 feet, at which time we bailed out and soon were captured. After Salfen and I bailed out, the aircraft entered a flat spin, crashed and burned.

Leo Suszek was captured by the Germans as were the rest of us. Somehow he was badly injured on bailing out. When we last saw him on the ground, he was unable to converse and appeared to be in extreme pain. I thought he had internal injuries of some kind. We gave him an injection of morphine before he was taken away.

We were told that Robert Doherty's parachute failed to open. Apparently Francis Buckley went down with the aircraft. I can only assume that he was unable to bail out. Possibly the flak hit in the rear could have injured him or damaged his chute.

With Lt. William S. Salfen (POW) were Lts. Donald B. Iden

(POW), Edward F. Vetter (POW), and Morton Bauman (POW). The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Carney W. Baggett Jr. (POW), Robert L. Doherty (KIA), Leo C. Suszek (POW), Norman L. Sinclair (POW), and Francis X. Buckley (KIA).

There was another casualty suffered by personnel of the 506th on this October 7th strike at Kassel. Aircraft #849 was badly hit by flak and landed at Brussels, Belgium. Its pilot John W. Jones Jr. received severe wounds in the left leg which required amputation below the knee.

Will Lundy's work reported the memories of Clement R. C. Holcomb, copilot on this ship:

The mission was to Kassel and the target was the Tiger Tank Factory. We were hit on the bomb run before dropping our bomb load. Lt. Jones was injured and I was hit in the back of my left shoulder, rendering my left arm useless.

Sgt. Kirkland, engineer, also was hit, but fortunately his flak suit protected him from serious injury. The right wing fuel tanks were punctured and both #1 and #2 engines were damaged and we lost normal power. The radio was damaged. I learned later that we were transmitting all right but could not receive. Adding to our problems was our compass which was malfunctioning and would not indicate correctly. The #4 engine caught fire briefly, but was blown out because we lost a few thousand feet in a hurry.

When I finally got the plane straightened out, the formation was gone. I got Sgt. Kirkland to help Lt. Jones out of his seat and had the Sgt. sit in Jones' seat to handle the throttles and help me with the rudder pedals. With my injured left arm I could not manipulate the throttles and other controls which were on my left side. The plane was "crabbing" due to the uneven power output between the left and right sides, making straight flight most difficult.

We salvoed our bombs to help hold altitude and tried to contact our "little friends", but were not able to contact any of the fighters. Since Jones was hurt badly, and we were losing fuel steadily, I was afraid we might have to ditch if we continued towards England, and probably couldn't get Jones out of a ditching situation.

Lt. Westtensiser, navigator, found that Strip B-58, near

Brussels, had very recently been taken from the Germans, so we decided to try to land there. With the compass screwed up, we just plain lucked out, finding it on the first pass.

I followed a B-17 in on the final approach, but he did not make it and crashed just short of the runway. There were bomb craters everywhere, but enough had been filled in to make a landing possible.

With Sgt. Kirkland handling the throttles, I got the plane down OK. Jones and I were taken to the hospital. A day or so later I was able to walk around with my arm in a sling. Our crew hitched a ride back to England in a C-54, but we hit bad weather and had to land near Dover. Next morning the C-54 dropped us off right in front of the control tower.

Lt. Holcolm was recommended for the Silver Star medal for his remarkably safe emergency landing under the most trying of conditions.

The 44th sent 39 aircraft on this mission. Flak in the target area was intense and accurate.

Delmar Fox reports that he was with Paul Durett on this raid. Also, Lewis Robinson's records show that the Ray Ciesielski crew was there. The Firman Mack record shows that he was part of this attacking force. Another 506th crew that made this mission belonged to Thomas Waters according to the Gene McMahon and Michel Yuspeh records.

Ray Marner recorded on October 7th:

We lost Lt. Salfen's and Lt. Still's crews today. Lt. Jones' crew went down in Brussels. Jones' leg was shot off and Lt. Holcomb flew and landed the ship with one arm. Two engines were out. He was wounded in the arm by flak.

On October 7th, Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

Last night when I jumped off the truck it was right into the arms of Major Strong. Yes, Major McAtee is also back. I think that in the month that he was home he put on more weight than you have since I left home. McAtee told me, "Norm you will never know how good my brogans looked next to her mules at the foot of the bed".

On October 9th thirty-two ships from the 44th went on a mission to the marshalling yards at Koblenz. Captain Gossett led the Group with Major Middleton as Command Pilot. We were the 3rd group in the Wing and the 14th Wing led the Division. The primary target could not be found through 10/10 clouds so the secondary was bombed on PFF. Flak in the target area was light and inaccurate and no enemy aircraft were encountered. Fighter support was excellent throughout the mission. All of our ships returned safely to base.

The Louis Wimsatt crew went to Koblenz. Kenneth Adrian's notes show that they were in A/C Bar Z and were carrying six 1000-pound bombs.

Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni were on this mission.

The Paul Durett crew continued their every other day raid schedule by flying this day, per the Delmar Fox record.

For October 12th Achmer was the primary (visual) and the Osnabruck marshalling yards the secondary if PFF was to be used. The 44th flew a split formation with the first squadron being high right on the 392nd Bomb Group and the second squadron was high right on the 491st. The high right squadron bombed the secondary with poor results, because of human error, with the bombs six miles west of the MPI. The other squadron's results were unobserved because of bomb smoke. There were no enemy aircraft and flak was moderate and inaccurate. Fighter support was good. There were no losses in the Group. The 506th sent five aircraft on this mission. However, two of them aborted as a result of mechanical problems. It appears that we bombed the marshalling yards at Osnabruck.

The record of Gene McMahon shows that he went to Osnabruck. Michel Yuspeh also reports that the Thomas Waters crew went to Achmer on October 12. (Note: Roger Freeman in his *Mighty Eighth War Diary* indicated that the primary target was Achmer. However, because of weather the 2nd Bomb Division hit the secondary at Osnabruck by PFF.)

On October 13th Ray Marner wrote:

A couple of buzz bombs came right over our site. They landed out a way, but shook us up some. They were so low that they vibrated the barracks.

Records of William Uvanni and Gerald Folsom show that they



were on a mission on October 14th. Uvanni wrote:

Last night when an alert was posted my name showed up on another crew's list, Lt. Ryan a lead pilot. As I had flown all my missions (29) with my own crew, I was quite put out. I ran over to headquarters to talk to the Major.

I explained my desire to stay with my own crew, but he said I had to go with Ryan as he was a deputy lead ship on tomorrow's mission and had to have an experienced radio operator to send bomb strike messages to Division Headquarters.

The air was cloudy and the target fairly well covered. After bombs away I sent the bomb strike message to Division Headquarters. I worried about being with this unknown crew as I did not have the feeling of security that I had with my own. However, I worried more about my crew mates and kept my eye on their ship, which was in the same part of the formation, as often as I could.

Everything went OK for both crews, but I hope I don't draw anymore of these screwy assignments.

Thirty ships from the 44th were on this October 14th mission to the rail yards at Kaiserslautern. Our Group was the only one from the Wing that participated. We were the third wing in the Division. All aircraft reached the target and bombed by G-H with result unobserved. There was no flak. All ships returned to base. The 506th sent seven ships on this trip. Lt. John J. Ryan flew as deputy lead. Lt. Raymond J. Bennett completed his combat tour. Another 506th ship that made this mission was flown by Thomas Waters according to the Michel Yuspeh records. Lewis Robinson reports that he was with Ray Ciesielski on this trip.

On October 14th Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

In my letter last night I sent another name for your Christmas card list. He is the crew chief that worked on our ship while I was flying. Jackson told me that his wife will soon be out of uniform. She is a British girl in the WAAF. From what he said I take it that there is a baby on the way.

Ray Marner reported on that day:

We got another battle star for the Western European

Campaign. That makes five Bronze Stars. We can wear one Silver Star now.

Mid-month, October 15th, was marked with the Group launching 38 aircraft on mission to Cologne, Germany. The target was the largest motor transport works at Cologne. Our ships were broken into A and B sections to lead the 14th Combat Wing. We were the third wing in the Division. All aircraft reached the target and bombed by PFF. The A section bombed the Gereon marshalling yard at Cologne with unobserved results. At the IP the PFF in the lead ship of the B section was jammed and the order to bomb was not received by the others. Committing to a visual run, the B section went on to bomb Dormigeon, a target of opportunity just north of Cologne, with good results. No flak or enemy fighters were in the target area. Flak on the route out was only meager and inaccurate. Fighter support was excellent and there were no losses. There were nine aircraft from the 506th in this attack on the Ford Motor Company plant. All of our aircraft returned to base. This was the first mission for Lt. Thomas Williams.

Firman Mack's notes show that he led the Squadron on this raid. There was no rest for Michel Yuspeh on the 15th since the Thomas Waters crew was out for the second day in a row. Gene McMahon was with them. Also, Ray Ciesielski crew was up two times in as many days. Lewis Robinson was with him.

Fred Marzolph recalls while he was with the Squadron:

We had a good-looking T/Sgt. that had completed his first tour and stayed overseas to be a navigator and hopefully get a commission. He didn't really belong on our crew, but he flew one or two missions with us. The navigator we brought overseas with us was returning for a second tour and was a Major. He flew six missions with us and then returned to his original Group to be Group Navigator for the bloody 100th.

When we were made a Lead Crew, we received a radar navigator that was a Flight Officer and definitely on the "outs" with Colonel Snavelly. I don't remember hearing any name other than FX for our new crew member. For some unknown reason, he was definitely an anti-saluting man when it came to Colonel Snavelly. Probably for this reason, Snavelly, would not put him up for 2nd. Lt. To the best of my knowledge, the navigator returned home from the ETO as a Flight Officer.

Our bombardier once had visions of a monstrous statement of charges for causing our Squadron's and another's bombs to drop 20 miles from the target. We were leading the Squadron this day and had to go through a front. When we came out the sky was almost clear of any airplanes. We finally got some of our Squadron together, plus some from several other squadrons. Then a squadron from another group pulled alongside and said their bomb sight had gone out and asked if they could drop bombs when we did. Our pilot signaled them an OK.

Just about when we hit the IP, I heard our bombs crunch out of the bomb bay and saw the other ship's bombs drop. I notified the pilot all bombs away. He immediately said not yet since we were still on the bomb run. I said they were all gone as I was looking in our bomb bay. He had the radio man check and he confirmed it.

Then the question of what had happened was addressed. Our bombardier was rather tall. While moving around in the nose of the ship he somehow sat on the salvo lever, releasing all the bombs. The remaining ships in the formation released when they saw the smoke bombs go.

At that point, our bombardier thought Sweden looked so inviting. He was certain that all of the top brass and our pilot would look on him as a German agent. No one in his right mind would do something so dumb. However, during debriefing, General Johnson saved the day when he came up to the battered bombardier, put his arm around him and said once it had happened to his crew also. This calmed all the rest of the brass. We later said it was a peace offering to some German farmer as we sure took care of his spring plowing. I don't remember if we got credit for a mission or not.

On October 15th Major Frank Slough returned to USA. Frank was one of the pilots that flew overseas with the 506th.

Ray Marner reported on October 16th:

Danny Bitzell came back from Ireland. It is very nice there. Harry Davis is in Paris now.

Thirty-one Group aircraft were out on October 18th to attack Leverkusen, Germany. We led the 14th Combat Wing, the second wing in the Division. The target was the Chemical Works. Gee-H was used for bombing and the results were unobserved.

There were seven crews from the 506th that were with them. Equipment failure in a PFF ship resulted in 11 aircraft not dropping. The Group lost three aircraft with only two survivors.

One of those crews that received sortie credit belonged to Ray Ciesielski. However, the Lewis Robinson notes show the target to be Cologne (a short distance away). Also, the Kenneth Adrian notes show that the Louis Wimsatt crew carried six 500-pound and six incendiary bombs to Cologne on this date. Michel Yuspeh recorded that the Thomas Waters crew chalked up their 20th mission by going to Leverkusen, Germany.

The Group dispatched 16 ships on a mission to attack the diesel works at Gustavsborg, Germany, on October 19th. They formed the "A" wing of the 14th Combat Wing. The target was struck with unobserved results. No enemy aircraft were observed and flak in the target area was moderate and accurate. Fighter support was excellent and the Group had no losses. There were five 506th ships in the formation. Lt. Harold B. Waldorf, and Sgts. Hulton Thurston and Kenneth F. Coles completed their combat tours.

Records of both Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni indicate that they were on this mission. They were probably with George Beiber. Uvanni does not remember why he made no notes for the raids on Hamburg, Koblenz, and Gustavsborg. All I remember is that on our last several missions that I had trouble clearing my ears on descending from high altitude and it resulted in headaches. I can think of no other reason as I did not write it down.

The Thomas Waters crew also made this raid according to Michel Yuspeh and Gene McMahon.

On October 20th an Oak Leaf Cluster to the Distinguished Flying Cross was awarded to Captain Dowsett.

Ray Marner took a break on October 23. He wrote about it:

I left on furlough. I went to Peterborough and then up to Edinburgh. I spent the night there. I met Don Wombacher at the Palais. He said Wes Pogge went home. We went to Aberdeen and spent our furloughs there. We had a swell time dancing, etc. We also swam in the municipal pool, the best in Briton, roamed around the harbor, Hazelhead Park, College and etc. All houses there are made of

granite. We came back on London train. Sir Strafford Cripps was on it.

George Beiber probably made a raid on Gelsenkirchen, Germany on October 25th. At least the records of William Uvanni and Gerald Folsom show that they were there. Uvanni wrote:

Today we were briefed to hit the key steel city in the Ruhr Valley. Up to now it had been considered suicide to go into this valley in daylight. The RAF had been trying to knock out the Ruhr at night, but hasn't been successful.

The Valley is approximately 100 miles long and is Germany's most prized area. There are 2,700 permanently located flak guns in it and no telling how many on flat cars. (Flak guns mounted on railroad flat cars and moved about by rail so intelligence can't brief airmen on what to expect.)

There were clouds between our formation and the ground until we hit the target area. We were thankful for this as we were in flak for 30 minutes. Due to the clouds it wasn't as accurate as it could have been.

There was a break in the clouds over Essen and we bombed visually. Our results were good. Flak over Essen was not too heavy, but up through the Valley it burst in clusters of six shells all around. (I've been told each six guns are fired electrically and simultaneously which is why they burst in these clusters. I know now why they call this "Flak Valley"!!!!)

The 44th dispatched 35 aircraft on this mission. They were the second wing in the Division. Bombing was on Gee-H through 10/10 undercast with unobserved results. There were no enemy fighters. Flak in the target area was intense and accurate. All aircraft returned to base. The 506th sent twelve ships in this strike at the synthetic oil plant. Captain Kimbal led the Squadron.

The Louis Wimsatt crew was on this mission according to notes maintained by Kenneth Adrian.

For the second day in a row, William Uvanni and Gerald Folsom were in the Ruhr Valley. This time, October 26th, the target was Bottrop, Germany. They were probably flying with George Beiber. Uvanni wrote:

We didn't feel so good to see Essen as the target today. We only lack three missions to finish our tour and we could think of better places to go.

The mission was similar to yesterday's with a little less flak in the sky.

There were 21 ships from the 44th on this mission. They were the only ships from the 14th Combat Wing to participate and led the Division. Bombing was executed by Gee-H through 10/10 cloud cover with unobserved results. Flak was intense and accurate in the target area. No enemy aircraft were observed. No losses were incurred. There were five aircraft of the 506th that was with them. Lt. Richard Wynes led the Group.

The Lewis Robinson notes show the target to be Essen (10 miles south of Bottrop). Lewis was with Ray Ciesielski.

Crew reports reveal that Robert L. Hosington flew this mission in A/C #896, R, Southern Comfort III. With Lt. Hosington were Lts. Victor P. Lousa and William A. Lohr. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Charles E. Pursley, John A. Striegel, Frank B. Collins, Alvin B. Breeland, Jack J. Warner, Harold L. Shockey, and Clint J. Fuller Jr.

William Uvanni was on his last trip on October 30th. He was flying with George Beiber. Uvanni wrote:

Our Group went to Harburg which is near Hamburg this morning. We couldn't get up over 14,000 feet due to engine trouble. All the others were at 19,000 feet and approximately four miles ahead of us.

"Woodie" checked everything possible and told Lt. Beiber that whatever was wrong with the engine could not be fixed from within the aircraft. With this fact staring us in the face, we turned back. (Our first abortion in 34 missions.)

Lt. Bentcliff went down near Brussels on the way back. Gene Maschmeyer, a friend from Biggs Field Training at El Paso, was the radio operator. He was a fine young man, exceptionally clean in his living habits.

Subsequent findings about our plane's engine revealed a defective crankshaft which couldn't possibly be fixed from within the plane. "Woodie" was right again.

To the best of my knowledge, I believe that our crew was the first in the 506th to complete 33 missions without an abortion.

The Group dispatched 30 aircraft on the mission of October 30th. We led the 14th Combat Wing. Due to weather conditions at the IP and interference by preceding wings, our formation integrity was broken, forcing 19 aircraft to bomb the Hamburg Oil Refinery by PFF and eight others to attack Uetersen, Germany. No enemy aircraft were encountered, flak at the target was heavy, but inaccurate. The 506th furnished eight of the attacking aircraft. Lt. Bentcliff's ship, #523, was lost in action. Immediately after bombing, at 1318 hours, in the vicinity of Hamburg, this aircraft went into a very steep bank. Heavy flak was encountered at this time. The aircraft came out of the 90-degree bank and was last observed flying apparently under control on a heading of 180-degrees. Poor visibility, due to high clouds, made further sightings impossible. No chutes were seen.

In Will Lundy's *44th Bomb Group Honor Roll And Casualties* Lester Griffin, engineer aboard the craft, was quoted:

Three men survived: Fuller, Capps and myself. We were a radar crew and flew only in bad weather. We were on our 23rd mission. The plane exploded, knocking or blowing me out and I came down by parachute after regaining consciousness.

Griffin died in the V.A. Hospital before further information could be obtained. This information was added to by Clint Fuller:

Bentcliff, Gempel, Fiskum, Barefoot, Celentano, Maschmeyer, Downey, and Garza went down with the plane. Ralph N. Capps and I bailed out over Hamburg.

We flew into a heavy front while leading the high, right squadron. Soup was so thick that we had to fly on instruments. Someone crossed over in front of us with the prop wash flipping us over. The plane spun into the ground from approximately 28,000 feet.

I do not believe that the plane exploded. I was on the flight deck flying in the top turret. The radio operator, Maschmeyer, froze, apparently from shock, and would not bail out. I had to climb over him in order to get to the catwalk in the bomb bay. Both Barefoot and Garza were new

to our crew. Barefoot was riding the nose turret in order to complete the final mission of his tour. He was killed.

We did drop our bombs, but only to get rid of them. We saw no fighters or flak!

The three of us were sent to Dulag Luft, Frankfurt, Stalag Luft IV; moved to Stalag Luft I and liberated by the Russians in the first week of May, 1945.

With Lt. Clifford L. Bentcliff (KIA) were Lts. Charles L. Gempel (KIA), Lowell A. Fiskum (KIA), and Louis S. Celentano (KIA). The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Charles L. Barefoot (KIA), Lester A. Griffin (POW), Gene E. Maschmeyer (KIA), Clint J. Fuller Jr. (POW), Ralph W. Capps (POW), Raul Garza (KIA), and John J. Downer 3rd (KIA).

After a 10-day break Lt. Thomas G. Waters was back in combat on October 30th. With Lt. Waters were Lts. Alvin R. Rockman, Robert L. Daniels, and Amandus J. Boyle. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Michel Yuspeh, James S. Gray, Patrick Colucci, Charles C. Walsh, Eugene M. McMahon, and Alfred G. Hawkins. In the target area they lost the formation in a cloud bank. They rejoined the formation in a different position after bombs away.

Another crew that returned to combat after a long break belonged to Paul Durett. Delmar Fox was on the crew. Crew reports show they were flying A/C #896, R, Southern Comfort III.

Lewis Robinson was flying with Ray Ciesielski on this mission. Lewis's record also shows the target to be Harburg.

Bill Hahn reports:

I trained as a Sperry Turret Gunner, but when we became a Radar Crew, the radar dome replaced the turret and my job was winding it up and down.

During the month the following personnel received promotions from 2nd Lt. to 1st Lt.: Jones, Hosington, Plutick, and Young;

The following not previously mentioned additions were made to the Squadron duty roster: New crews included Wendell C. Irwin and Richard R. Pedersen; Lt. Durett and crew returned from detached service, Scotland; Lt. Thomas P. Williams Mickey



Operator/Navigator.

The following deletions, either permanent or temporary, were made to the Squadron duty roster during the month: Captain John F. King assigned to the 67th Squadron; Captain John McCaslin returned to the States; Captain Sherman N. Dowsett assigned to the 489th Bomb Squadron; Lt. Tyree and crew on detached duty to Loch Katrine, Scotland; Other reassignments included Captain Meiner (Lt. Rada assumed command of the Engineering Section), and Lt. Albert E. McCloud. At some time during the month Lt. Harold M. Reynolds completed a tour of duty.

During the month of October Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

"On the way back from the movie tonight, I stopped in to see Dick Wynes. Did I tell you that he moved? He is now a Capt. and living in the quarters with McAtee. They fixed an egg sandwich for me"---"Do you know what a couple of days will bring? No, I haven't forgotten. About a month and a half ago I made arrangements for some flowers to be sent to you. I hope they get there on time. They wouldn't assure me of the correct date of delivery this time." (Norm was telling his wife that he had sent flowers for their wedding anniversary)---"The biggest share of the evening I spent in the Officer's Club. It was just about the only warm place that I could find."---"I think that tomorrow night I am going to go stepping out on you. Sgt. Edwards (Radio instructor from another sqdn.) wants me to go to an ATS dance with them. I think that I will go. I haven't been off the base for nearly a month."---"Dick Wynes stopped in today and we talked for a while. After that I had to go up to the Censors Office and censor mail. That is the last time this month. I must close for tonight. Yes, it is now night. You see, I was disturbed right in the middle of this letter." (I had started the letter while on duty. Raid information, for the next day, started to come over the teletype and I had to start preparing briefing material.)

When November rolled around, the Louis Wimsatt crew had been with the Squadron for a little over four months. During that time they had qualified as a Lead Crew. However, Wimsatt turned down flying as a regular Lead Crew. Starting in November he did fly a few Group leads.

Also by early November Glenn Hall was well along on his second combat tour after completing a tour of 28 missions and

returning to the States on furlough. When he went home for furlough, it was aboard the *Ille de France* and then it was back to England aboard the *Queen Elizabeth*. On his second tour he flew 15 missions. Hall remembers:

On the second tour I was not assigned to any special crew so I flew waist gunner on one mission, nose turret on four missions and engineer on 10.

On one of the missions when I was in the nose turret I saw two Me-109's try to shoot down a straggler from some other group. Just as the fighters were ready to fire the tail gunner opened up and put the lead fighter out of commission. The other fighter decided not to take on the B-24.

The new month opened with an attack on the oil refinery at Gelsenkirchen, Germany. The Group furnished nine aircraft to the third group in the Wing which was the second wing in the Division. The bombs were dropped on PFF through a 10/10 cloud cover with unobserved results. Flak in the area was heavy, but inaccurate. Fighter protection was excellent. The 506th sent three ships in this effort. Lt. Richard Wynes led the Group.

The records of both William Uvanni and Gerald Folsom show they were on this raid. Uvanni wrote:

Essen, Germany! IT COULDN'T BE!!! Knocking out the Ruhr is mighty important. The flak seemed a little heavier and more accurate today.

On the next day, November 2nd, some members of the Beiber crew found the day they had been looking for. On this raid on the oil refinery at Castrop/Rauxel were Gerald Folsom and William Uvanni, probably flying with George Beiber. Uvanni wrote

Essen, Germany! Some other name would have had a more pleasant sound this morning.

We hoped and prayed the Valley would be cloud covered and it was!! All the way in there was only an occasional break in the cloud formation below.

There were only two missions I can remember when I was freezing and sweating at the same time. On our first, to Bernberg, and on our last, to Essen. This may seem

humorous, but believe me, it is not!! The temperature at high altitude was usually extremely cold and accounts for the freezing, but it was tension that caused the sweating over the target.

We returned home without further incident and it was a good feeling to have completed our "Tour Of Duty"!! We withheld any extreme emotional exuberance as two of our crew must fly three more missions.

The Group sent 34 ships to this target which is northwest of Dortmund. Bombs were dropped on PFF through 10/10 clouds with unobserved results. Vapor trails were heavy. Flak was slight and inaccurate. Fighter protection was good. Five of those aircraft receiving sortie credit were from the 506th. Captain Kimball led the second squadron. Three of our aircraft aborted due to mechanical reasons.

This raid was made by Herbert L. Bayless flying in aircraft #209, Bar W, and Robert E. Meagher flying in aircraft #894, Bar N.

With Lt. Bayless were Lts. James W. Wood, James T. Westenhiser, and Edward A. Baier. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Robert Kirkland, Elwood A. Van Epps, John Flynn, John P. Haggard, Mitry K. Hage Jr., Robert E. Simon, and Marvin L. Moerbe

With Lt. Meagher was Flight Officer Edward H. Cousin. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. James P. Crawford, Anto J. Cavalieri, Raymond J. Snape, Edward J. Stusovsky, Robert S. Mitchell, Gordon W. Fulmer, and Joseph E. Johnston. This crew aborted and brought their bombs back.

Squadron members who completed their tours of duty on this raid included Lts. Beiber and Folsom; Sgts. Woodruff, Uvanni, Maggard and Morse. (Note: Folsom's records show that this was not his last mission.)

William Uvanni noted in closing out his diary:

An 88-mm flak shell travels approximately 1,000 feet per second when fired vertically at an aircraft. Evasive action at 19,000 or 20,000 feet called for a slight change of direction each 18 seconds which theoretically would take us away from the location of the shell burst. This type of evasive action cannot be taken on the bomb run as the plane must be a steady platform for the bombardier who

is actually flying the plane at this time. Sometimes after dropping our bombs we will descend rapidly under power and make a drastic turn to throw off the flak gunners who have had us on a steady course for the time of the run. This always felt good to me.

As an observation of the German flyers and flak gunners I might note that their flyers were good and had plenty of courage. They often came into their own gunner's flak to attack our formations. Their flak gunners were rated as equal to the world's best. (They could certainly put a lot of flak up there.)

**Fred Marzolph recalls:**

On one mission, we were going to bomb a bridge, I believe. Over the target we dropped two of the three 2000-pound bombs we carried. The third one just wouldn't fall out of the shackle. I was in the bomb bay with screw drivers, pliers and my body thrown against it and it just wouldn't budge.

We flew our plane over the dispersal area in the North Sea until gas became a problem and the pilot told me to wire the fuses the best I could to keep the props from spinning and we would try to land at the base with it. We notified the base of our problem and they got ready for us. The pilot lowered the flaps and wheels.....naturally, that was all it took to open the shackle all the way and down went the bomb.

A passenger train was passing underneath us, but we missed it. The bomb landed in an open field where a farmer kept circling it. It made a hole about 8-10 feet deep. It never exploded.

After we were down I remembered what really happened during those hectic moments in the bomb bay with the bomb hanging there. It was like a tourist attraction. I had the engineer come out to see it, then the waist gunner, then the bombardier and navigator and finally the pilot.

Several times we flew with an enlisted navigator and on this flight I didn't know who the navigator was. When one of the persons came down to watch, I saw he was wearing navigators wings and thought it was the T/Sgt. I told him to get the hell out of the bomb bay, which he did very promptly. It wasn't until I got back on the ground that I

found that I had ordered a Major out of the bomb bay. I apologized.

On November 4th the oil refinery at Gelsenkirchen was visited for the second time this week. There were 34 ships from the Group leading the Wing on this mission. The target was the Nordston Refinery. Bombs were dropped on GH through 10/10 clouds with results unobserved. Flak was moderate to intense with high accuracy. Fighter protection was accurate. The 506th furnished eight aircraft that received sortie credit. Captain Hal S. Kimball, flying in aircraft #797, led the Group.

John L. Ryan Jr. led the Squadron on this raid flying in A/C #081. The Michel Yuspeh record shows that the Thomas Waters crew was on this mission. Gene McMahon was with them. Records maintained by Lewis Robinson show that he went to Essen on this date. He probably was with Ray Ciesielski. Lt. Paul, formerly of the 506th, flew his 34th mission as copilot on a 87th ship. T/Sgt. William J. O'Neil completed his tour of missions.

On November 4th Ray Marner wrote:

There were more buzz bombs again tonight. One really shook us up. There were no broken windows however.

The records of Kenneth Adrian show that the target was Karlsruhe on November 5th. He probably was with Louis Wimsatt. The bomb load was four 2000-pound bombs.

Our Group sent 33 aircraft on this support mission for a new ground drive in the Metz area. The 506th, flying low left squadron, became separated from the rest of the formation and dropped visually on Landau railroad. We furnished eight ships with Lt. John L. Ryan leading. Flak was moderate and accurate. Fighter support was good.

The Ray Ciesielski crew made this raid according to records kept by Lewis Robinson. Robinson's record shows the target to have been Karlsruhe.

It was some time in early November that the William D. Edkins crew joined the 506th. With Lt. Edkins were Lts. James Whittle Jr., R. J. Wilson, and Ed Smith. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Charles K. Jones, Frederick J. Huso, William Heyburn 2nd., Victor Czarnecki, Charles B. Austin Jr., Lavar Godfrey, and Edward E. Walsh.

On November 6th the 44th bombed a target at Sterkrade, Germany. The 32 ships that the Group dispatched formed the 14th Combat Wing and were third wing in the Division. The target was an oil refinery. The target was covered with 10/10 clouds with unobserved results. 506th A/C 44-40071, O, Sweat Box, crashed on return. The 506th sent eight ships to Sterkrade. Lt. Richard L. Wynes led the second squadron. The Thomas Waters crew made the mission according to the Michel Yuspeh and Gene McMahon records. Also, records maintained by Delmar Fox show that the Paul Durett crew were over Hamburg on this date. Gerald Folsom made this mission but it is not known who he was with. S/Sgt. Gerald M. Campbell completed a tour of duty.

For November 6th Ray Marner wrote:

Golubock's crew came back from Sweden. Killian and Smith came in tonight.

In a recent letter Ralph Golubock related:

Regarding the time that I spent in Sweden, there is not a great deal to tell. We were at a summer resort called Locka Brun. The quarters were OK and the food was not too good. There was a lot of pork belly and I gained a few pounds while I was there.

About the most interesting thing that happened was when we left Sweden. We were all taken by bus to the Stockholm airport where American planes were to pick us up. I remember that it was a cold, rainy night in November.

We were taken out to an all black B-24 that had seats in the bomb bay. The bomb bay was sealed. I remember talking to the pilot because he had been in the 506th. He had completed his tour and had volunteered to fly these Carpet Bagger Missions. I am very sorry, but I do not remember his name. I think that it might have been Capt. Duffy.

The flight back was long and extremely cold. All we had were light rain coats. Riding in the bomb bay was hell. We finally arrived back in Scotland after an uneventful trip.

You will recall that we were flying in *Princess* when we landed in Sweden. I last saw the *Princess* in 1945 when I was stationed at Scott Field. It had been repaired and

flown home. I inspected the aircraft carefully because I had left a Zippo lighter on the flight deck. No such luck!. I sure missed that Zippo.

Also on November 6th Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

Do you know where I was last Saturday? I went to a wedding. Capt. Sandoval, one of the Communications Officers, was married. I have known for a long time that I was going to the wedding, but it just kept slipping my mind to tell you about it. There were sixteen of us there. Included were Major Neri, Captains Clements and Coppens and Lts. Barry, Crucher and Griffen.

The wedding took place in the Catholic Cathedral in the city of Norwich. It was a good deal different than ours in that they didn't celebrate the mass. It took place at 2:30 in the afternoon.

You are probably wondering what the bride wore. All that I can tell you is that it was a white dress, with veil and long train. There was one bridesmaid and three flower girls.

After the ceremony, we marched out and formed a column on both sides of the church door. We then went to a pub across the street where they held the reception. They had a good deal to drink and a nice big bridal cake.

In the next few months I may be a little lax about writing to you and Mom. The reason is that I have just had a big job tossed in my lap and I am apt to be very busy. This is in addition to my regular job and it is going to take a lot of time. I hope that you will understand and bear with me.

I recall after I was commissioned:

My primary responsibility was standing watch at night waiting for the next day raid information to come in by teletype. I would then prepare for briefing the radio operators. After the raiders were dispatched or the raid was cancelled, I was free to return to my quarters.

I was introduced to my new responsibilities by Capt. Neri. He asked me to go for a walk with him down to the Tech Site. As we were walking he explained that there was a big problem in the distribution and storage of

communications supplies. Nothing could be found when it was needed. He thought that I could straighten out the problem.

By that time we had reached a large Nissen Hut. When the door was unlocked we walked into a room that was piled with communications equipment. The pile literally reached to the ceiling. I was told that I would be given a sergeant from the 68th Squadron to work with me. We would also have three privates so that supplies could be drawn on a 24-hours basis. We then went to meet Sgt. Lillard. He and I were then given keys to the Hut and we went back to stare at the job that was stacked in front of us.

On November 8th the Group sent 11 aircraft to bomb the marshalling yards at Rheine, Germany. Our briefed position was low group in the Wing, second wing in the Division. Assembly was confusing because of weather conditions and heavy vapor trails. The formation proceeded on the briefed course to the target. Personal error and misinterpretation resulted in the railroad at Enschede east of the Rheine being attacked through 10/10 clouds with poor results. There were three crews from the 506th that participated in this effort. The Kenneth Adrian record shows that he was with Louis Wimsatt on this raid.

Elwood Matter went on a ground support mission in the Metz area on November 9th. It is believed that he flew with Capt. Burns. This was Matter's first mission since being wounded on the low level supply mission to Arnhem.

This mission was flown by 34 ships from the 44th. Bombs were dropped just ahead of Patton's troops by GH with unobserved results. There were no shortfall drops. Flak was light and there were no enemy fighters. Lt. Richard L. Wynes led the Squadron with Major Middleton as the command pilot. Lts. Charles N. Atkins and Gerald Folsom as well as Sgts. Daniel W. Underwood and Harrel L. Gardner completed their combat tours. Michel Yuspeh's record shows that the Thomas Waters crew was on this raid. Gene McMahon was with them. Also, the Paul Durett crew was there according to records maintained by Delmar Fox. However, that record shows the target to be Duisburg, Germany. In his records, Lewis Robinson shows that he was on this raid and probably was with Ray Ciesielski.

On November 10th there were 21 ships from the 44th leading the 14 Combat Wing on a raid on the airfield at Hanau,



Germany. We were fourth wing in the Division. Group Lead was flown by O.K. Hill of the 506th. Bombing was on GH through 10/10 clouds. Results were thought to be excellent. Flak was moderate and accurate in the Koblenz area. Fighter support was excellent. Hill was flying one of the five Aircraft that the 506th sent on this mission. Sgts. William K. Bechtold, James P. Griffin Jr., William J. Rebham, and Garnell W. Myers completed their combat tours. The combat records of Gene McMahon and Michel Yuspeh indicate that the Thomas Waters crew was on this mission. It shows the target to be Hanau/Langendiebach. Another crew that made this raid belonged to Louis Wimsatt. Kenneth Adrian was with him. Adrian's notes show the target was Frankfurt. They were carrying forty 100-pound bombs. Paul Durett was on a raid on this date. Delmar Fox's record show that he was with him. The record shows the target to be Metz, France.

On November 11th Lt. Clement R.C. Holcomb was submitted for the award of the Silver Star in connection with the military operations against the enemy on October 7, 1944. Lt. John W. Jones and S/Sgt Robert E. Kirkland were submitted for the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross for that same action.

In letters mailed on November 14th the author wrote:

Slowly, but surely I am beginning to see some progress in my office building project and the new job. We now have all the frame work and one wall done. It is surely going to take a lot of headaches and work to get these things straightened out. However, it is better than sitting at one desk all day long in Headquarters.

On top of that, the job presents me with another challenge as to my abilities and an opportunity to gain experience.

After Sgt. Lillard and I were given the assignment of straightening out the communications supplies problem, we agreed that the first step was to make some sense out of the pile. However, there had to be some place to put the material as it was sorted out. That's when I found out that Lillard had a number of skills that I needed.

First off, he knew his way around and could get things done. Secondly he knew how to cut and nail wood. He scrounged wood to build a counter across the front of the building, shelves to store things on and an office for me, including a desk that he built with top and side drawers. When he finished we had facilities that I was really proud of. So was Major

McAtee. He was always bringing people around to see what we were accomplishing.

On November 15th I wrote to my wife:

I met a boy from Flint last night. He knows Kate, Bud Berry and John Evert. His name is Delmar Fox and he lived in Civic Park.

Enclosed you will find some more pictures. Now with some of them you are going to have to be broad-minded and use discretion as to where you show them. (Note: The pictures in question were taken of some of the boys while swimming in the Mediterranean. Since a swimming suit is not standard government issue and we did not have any to bring with us from England. We went without! Privately owned film was developed in our Group Photo Lab.; therefore there was no censorship of these snapshots.)

On November 16th the Group scheduled 34 aircraft to takeoff in a ground support effort. The target was in the Aachen area. The weather was bad at take off time and continued to worsen. Only 11 of the Group ships got off the ground, one from the 506th. Then the field was closed. The airborne ships took their position as the second group in the Wing leading the Division. The target was bombed with excellent results. Flak was moderate. Fighter support was good. Since Shipdham was closed down by weather, our returning ships were diverted. There was only one ship from the 506th on this mission. Captain Kimball flew with Colonel J. G. Merrel as the command pilot.

In Will Lundy's works Sgt. Chaffin of the 67th was quoted, "We bombed enemy ground troops and installations a short distance northwest of Aachen. The big push by our ground forces, into the area we bombed, started right after."

On November 16th Norm Kliefer wrote to his wife:

How would you like to hear a little about the office. It is coming along nicely. Of course it doesn't look like much right now, but in a couple three months everything ought to be set up and running smoothly. I am hoping that by the first of next week we can be moved out of here and over into our own place. It is just too congested in the place that we occupy now.

Do you know what you did in your letter of Sept 26th? You

were telling me about Bill Everette and Warren Colby writing to you and you hadn't answered. Then you wrote, "Gee! I can hardly wait until they get home. They are so cute!" Now what I want to know is just who were you talking about???

No we still haven't heard from Joe Young. Maj. McAtee sent him a letter the other day.

For November 18th the airfield at Leipheim, Germany, was the briefed target. Weather closed in before takeoff. The mission was canceled.

The next day, the 20th of November, five of our aircraft were dispatched to bomb a target at Bottrop, Germany. All planes were recalled on assemble because of weather.

The Lewis Robinson record shows that he was on this recalled mission. In all likelihood he was with Ray Ciesielski.

On that day the author wrote to his wife:

Did I tell you that I have been put in charge of the Squadron Communications Section? That will mean a little more work for me. Captain Sandoval transferred to the 67th Squadron

Lewis Robinson remembers:

Paydays!! By pay day some of us had already borrowed more than we earned. It was sometimes difficult to slip off base without paying our debts. I recall 10% or was it 50% usury charges. The tailor at the latrine also charged a reasonable (?) rate for a haircut.

Tail gunners had to pull safety pins from bombs before the bomb run and learn to keep the pins in their pockets. In case of a recall or abortion those pins had to go back in order to safely land.

It was my experience on a pin pulling trip, to also pull a piece of flak from the upper turret gunners thigh (Clarence Unger), slap on a bandage, and give him a shot of morphine. Unger returned to fly combat in a few days, but he had missions to make up.

On another occasion, I had pulled the pins and stuck my head into the cockpit. Starting to return to the waist

and tail turret, I noticed a "hole" from bottom to top, through the catwalk, where a "105" had passed without detonating. Imagine the ground crew's surprise when we returned to base.

On November 21st the Group sent 30 aircraft to hit the oil refinery at Harburg, Germany. We were leading the 14th Combat Wing on this raid. Bombing was on PFF. In the target area the flak was intense and accurate with both barrage and tracking techniques being used. Many planes suffered flak damage. There were eight ships from the 506th in that intense flak.

Elwood Matter's records indicate that he was on this raid. He probably was with Burns. Kenneth Adrian and Louis Wimsatt were both on this mission. Their ship was carrying twenty-four 250-pound bombs

The diary of Ray Marner shows:

November 21---A man in 66th was killed today by flak. (This incident is confirmed in Will Lundy's works.)

November 22---A Liberator from Rackheath cracked up in Norwich and killed the whole crew. It hit near the City Station. (Note: Today, on a building near the crash site, there is a plaque commemorating this accident. The pilot probably sacrificed his crew to avoid crashing in a highly populated area of the city.)

After a three day lull, the Group dispatched 25 aircraft to attack Bingen, Germany, on November 25th. Bombing was on GH with unobserved results. Flak was light and fighter support was good. There were five aircraft from the 506th on this mission. Captain Hal S. Kimball led the Group.

The next day, November 26th, the Squadron was again in action when the 44th sent 32 aircraft to Bielefeld, Germany. The target was a railroad viaduct near Munster. There was no flak in the target area and fighter support was excellent. Eight 506th crews received sortie credit on this raid. Bombing results were rated fair-to-poor as a result of malfunction of bomb racks and bomb sight on the lead aircraft.

James Clements flew as Command Pilot on this mission leading Section B of the 14th Combat Wing. He was not with his usual crew. They were carrying four 1000-pound bombs. Bombs were

away at 1222 hours using GH.

This appeared to be the first mission for the William Edkins crew. A newspaper article that was kept by Charles Jones read:

8th Fighters  
KO 110 More

For the second time in six days the Luftwaffe yesterday took to the sky in force and according to the preliminary reports, Eighth Air Force fighter/pilots recorded another banner day by shooting down at least 110 of the enemy fighters.

Another 12 Nazi craft were shot down by the heavies gunners. The pursuits destroyed another seven enemy planes on the ground in a strafing attack.

Last Tuesday Eighth fighters shot down 73. The record bag of 134 Nazi craft was established on Nov. 2.

In two large-scale operations over the weekend more than 2,100 heavy bombers of the Eighth hammered oil and rail objectives in the Reich.

Yesterday over 1,100 Fortresses and Liberators, escorted by about 700 Mustangs and Thunderbolts, struck at a large oil refinery at Bielefeld, rail yards at Hamm, and other targets in northwest Germany.

Saturday's assault on the synthetic-oil plants at Leuna and Lutzkendorf, near Merseburg, and rail yards at Bingen, a communications center west of Mainz, was carried out by more than 1,000 Forts and Libs, shepherded by over 1,000 Mustangs, Thunderbolts and Lightnings of both the Eighth and Ninth Air forces. There was no enemy opposition.

The Eighth's losses in Saturday's operations were 12 bombers and five fighters. Yesterdays U.S. losses were 37 heavies and 13 pursuits.

The records of Elwood Matter show that he was on this raid, probably with Burns. Also, Louis Wimsatt was on this raid with Kenneth Adrian as the navigator.

For the third day in a row, weather permitted operations. On this November 27th raid to the marshalling yards at

Offenburg, the 44th sent 24 aircraft. We were leading the 14th Combat Wing. The target was bombed visually with the aid of GH. Results were excellent. Flak was light and fighter support good. The 506th furnished seven of the attacking aircraft. Major McAtee was the command pilot.

Kenneth Adrian was on this mission, probably with Louis Wimsatt. This was their last combat mission. Adrian's notes show it was an eight-hour trip. A newspaper article that Adrian kept read:

#### 98 NAZI PLANES BAGGED BY 8TH

Eighth Air Force fighter pilots dealt the German Air Force another staggering blow yesterday, shooting down 98 more enemy fighters for a total of 208 in two days.

Approximately 500 Mustangs and Thunderbolts carried out offensive sweeps over northwest Germany and encountered the Luftwaffe in strength for the second day straight.

Another force of more than 250 Mustangs escorted about 500 Fortress and Liberators of the Eighth in an assault on rail yards at Ossenburg, ten miles southeast of Strasbourg, and Bingen, west of Mainz, which was hit for the second time in three days.

The heavies met no enemy fighter opposition.

Early reports indicate 14 fighters and one bomber were lost.

The 357th Fighter Group, a P-51 outfit led by Maj. Joseph E. Broadhead, of Rupert, Ida. bagged one-third of the day's toll, shooting down 30 Nazi craft in the Magdeburg area.

For November 29th the Group sent 24 ships on a mission to hit the railroad viaduct at Altenbecken, Germany. Bombing was on GH through 10/10 clouds with unobserved results. There was no enemy opposition. Five aircraft from the 506th were with them. Lt. Clyde M. Housley aborted due to mechanical trouble. Elwood Matter was probably flying with Burns when he made this mission. Also, the Thomas Waters crew was there per records kept by Michel Yuspeh. The Gene McMahon record shows the target to be Paterborn. Firman Mack's records also show the target to be Paterborn on this date. Mack was

flying Squadron lead. Records maintained by Delmar Fox show that the Paul Durett crew made a raid to Limburg on this date. This may have been the second mission for the Edkins crew. A newspaper clipping that Charles Jones kept reported:

**1,000 HEAVIES BOMB OIL, RAILS;  
LUFTWAFFE REFUSED CHALLENGE**

The Luftwaffe refused the challenge yesterday when more than 1,000 Fortresses and Liberators of the Eighth Air Force, escorted by over 1,000 Mustangs, Thunderbolts and Lightnings of both the Eighth and Ninth, bombed the oil refinery at Misburg, railroad yards at Hamm and other targets in northwest Germany. Four bombers and no fighters were lost.

This was the Eighth's tenth attack on the large refinery at Misburg, near Hannover, over which area German fighters were encountered in force on Sunday, when fighter/pilots shot down 114 enemy craft and the heavies' gunners bagged 16 more.

Some of the pursuits carried out strafing attacks and reported shooting up 11 locomotives, 28 rail cars and six barges. Bombing was done in adverse weather.

The month ended by going to the marshalling yards at Neunkirchen, Germany. The Group sent 23 aircraft to fly with the 392nd Bomb Group. Flak was light and fighter support good. Lt. Bayless of the 506th led the Group to the target. Bombing was on GH and the results were unobserved. The Paul Durett crew made this raid with Delmar Fox aboard. This may have been the third mission for the Edkins crew. A newspaper article kept by Charles Jones read as follows:

**1250 U.S. HEAVIES  
HIT REICH AGAIN**

Following up the previous day's terrific assault on rail objectives in the Reich, more than 2,000 U.S. heavy bombers and fighters for the second straight day hammered rail objectives in the Frankfurt area Tuesday, as well as the Leuna synthetic-oil plant at Merseburg.

Meantime, it was disclosed that all of the synthetic-oil plants in the Ruhr now had been knocked out of production by Allied bombing.

Upward of 1,250 Fortresses and Liberators of the Eighth Air Force, covered by approximately 900 Mustangs, Thunderbolts and Lightnings of both the Eighth and Ninth were dispatched Tuesday.

In addition, an unspecified number of Forts and Libs of the 15th Air Force, based in Italy, carried out an attack in bad weather on the Blechhammer oil refinery in southern Silesia.

Early unofficial reports indicated the Eighth lost nine bombers and 11 fighters, some of which were believed to have landed in friendly territory. There was no enemy fighter opposition.

This completed a very successful month for the 506th. We experienced no operational losses.

During the month the following not previously mentioned promotions were given: From 1st Lt. to Captain Carlton R. Horne; From Flight Officer to 2nd Lt. Harry Faigneblat.

The following additions, not previously mentioned, were made to the Squadron duty roster: Captain Robert C. Schmidt was assigned; Lt. Confer and crew assigned; Lt. Boykin returned from Sick Quarters status.

The following either permanent or temporary removals from the duty roster were made: Captain Gossett and crew to 8th AF rest home; Lt. James A. Walsh assigned to 1st Air Force, Mitchell Field, New York; PFC Wirck transferred to 8th AF Service Command Station A-3, France.

During the month Norm Kiefer wrote the following to his wife:

"Today I am Group Officer Of The Day. No, that is not some type of honor. Instead, it is a somewhat dirty job. That means that today I am the law and you had better watch out. I spend most of the time in the Guard House with the M.P.'s. Tonight there was a dance in the Combat Officers Club. I had to be there, wearing side arms, but could not participate in the festivities. The girls were brought to the base by truck from Kings Lynn. When the trucks left it was my job to see that no Officers were leaving on the trucks. There were one or two that were on the trucks and they were very upset that I forced them off. I had two M.P.'s to back me up."..."Last night I went to a U.S.O. show. It wasn't very good."..."When I



went to London last week, I rode down with a couple of enlisted combat men. We couldn't find rooms in the same hotel, but we met at the American Bar later on and spent the evening together."... "The next day I went to the Red Cross to see if I could find out where Howard Benner is. As near as I can determine, he is in France."

On the first raid of the month, December 2, the Group dispatched 11 aircraft to strike the marshalling yards at Bingen, Germany. They were leading the 14th Combat Wing. Lt. Bayless of the 506th, flying in A/C #766. D+, was leading the low left squadron of the 392nd. Bombing was by Gee-H with unobserved results. Flak was meager and inaccurate in the target area and enemy fighters were observed. There were four 506th ships in the formation. Lt. Lowe aborted with an oil leak in the #3 engine. Lt. Bayless was lost in action.

In Will Lundy's work titled *44th Bomb Group Roll Of Honor And Casualties*, Joseph B. Dosmann reported:

There were four survivors from this aircraft.

Although this aircraft was leading an element of the formation, they did not have PFF equipment. When their aircraft came out of the clouds, they were separated from the other planes and were soon under attack by enemy aircraft. His first indication of an attack was hearing the top turret firing, so he looked out of the small window in the radio compartment and saw Me-109's attacking from about 4 o'clock, a bit high. One or more 20-mm shells exploded just under the flight deck, hitting either the gasoline in the "putt-putt" or the hydraulic fluid reservoir as flames immediately erupted.

Joseph Dosmann said that his instructions were for him to leave his radio and go to the waist position to man a gun there when and if they were attacked. Upon hearing the top turret firing, he snapped on his parachute and was on his way toward the bomb bay when the explosions and fire occurred.

At this time Robert L. Moore, engineer, seeing the fire and feeling the heat, dropped down out of his top turret in order to determine the extent of damages and attempted to extinguish the fire. Finding the situation hopeless, he opened the top hatch next to the top turret, but decided against that exit, preferring to attempt to open the bomb bay doors. Sgt. Dosmann stated that the last he

saw of Bob Moore was when Bob jumped down to the catwalk in an attempt to open the doors and at that time he was waist deep in flames.

At that moment, the pilots lost control of the ship and it flipped upside down and provided a miraculous escape for Joseph. He was thrown completely out of the plane through that open top hatch! It is believed that the copilot, Lt. Victor P. Louisa exited from this hatch, but for him it was a real struggle as by then the plane was in a flat spin, upside down. As a result, centrifugal force made movement difficult. Every time he tried to push away, the falling plane would catch up with him. But, at about 2,000 feet, he finally managed to free himself and barely got his chute opened before he hit the ground. This ended mission number 23 for him, but his first with this crew. He had volunteered for this mission as this crew was short and his regular crew was not scheduled.

Lt. Louisa recalled that his hearing was damaged for several days. Nonetheless, he took evasive measures to avoid capture. He stripped himself of all identification and began working his way back to Allied lines. Along the way he was subjected to barrages of artillery, which he later learned was our own. He was captured on December 12th while hiding along a river bank. Had he found a means of crossing, there was a good possibility that he may have made it to the nearby Allied lines. He was sent to Stalag #1 until liberated by the Russians.

Bombardier, Lt. Francis W. Brennan said he never saw the planes attacking us, but when I was coming down in my parachute I saw radial-engine fighters. They had to have been Fw-190's.

The cannon fire did hit the auxiliary power unit and the gasoline from it started the fire. With that fire between us and the bomb bay, our only way out was through the nose wheel doors. I opened the doors, then Alfred Jolovitz and I put on our back-type chutes and got ready to bail out. Jolovitz was first out and I was next. Just as I was about to jump I looked back at the nose turret gunner, Thomas Passantino. He was snapping on his chest type chute. I jumped, but never saw Passantino again. I don't know why he did not make it.

Records show that Passantino was the right waist gunner on this mission, but he actually was the nose gunner. This

explains why the radio operator was on his way to man a waist gun. The crew was flying one man short. Robert Crawford had been granted a leave about two weeks earlier and had never been replaced.

With Lt. Herbert L. Bayless (KIA) were Lts. Victor P. Louisa (POW), Alfred W. Jolovitz (POW), and Francis W. Brennan (POW). The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Robert L. Moore (KIA), Joseph B. Dosmann (POW), Thomas J. Passantino (KIA), William H. McBryde (KIA), and William A. Beggs (KIA).

On December 2nd Ray Marner wrote:

Lt. Bayless and crew went down today. Other groups lost a lot of ships. Cause--fighters.

After completing his combat tour, Louis Wimsatt remained with the Group in a number of capacities. These included Group Air/Sea Rescue Officer, Link Test Pilot and ILS Instructor. He also flew as weather Pilot and Group Withdrawal Support Ditch Monitor.

For December 4th, the 44th sent 27 ships on a mission to the marshalling yards at Soest, Germany. The leading group of the Wing was forced to make a right turn on the bomb run due to a collision course with the preceding combat wing. The 44th was able to get on to the Gee-H bombing trace, but was forced to avoid another collision course. The lead aircraft turned left and the PFF Deputy Lead took over to bomb a target of opportunity at Wetzlar (?) or Kolschhausen. Results were unobserved. Fighter support was excellent. Six crews from the 506th received sortie credit on this date. The Microfilm History indicated that the credit was given for a mission to Giessen, Germany.

The Thomas Waters crew was on this mission according to records maintained by Michel Yuspeh. His record shows the target to be Kolschhausen, Germany; while the Gene McMahon record shows Koblenz.

On the next day, December 5th, the Group launched 13 ships going to the marshalling yards at Munster, Germany. We led the 14th Combat Wing. There was 10/10 cloud coverage and bombing was by Gee-H. Bombing results were unobserved. Flak was moderate and fighter support was excellent. Three aircraft from the 506th were with them. Records maintained by Delmar Fox indicate the Paul Durett crew was on this mission. Another raiding ship was flown by Burns according

to records kept by Elwood Matter.

Captain Gossett led the Group when they bombed the secondary target of Bielefeld on December 6th. There were only 11 ships on this raid. Thirty seconds before bombs away, it was decided to bomb visually. As a result, the bombs dropped to the right of the aiming point. Bombing was rated as fair to good. Enemy opposition was light and fighter support was good.

**Fred Marzolph recalls:**

Then there is the mystery of the "hanging down bomb bay doors". Most of the time we had a crew chief from Montana named Iverson. He maintained a plane called *Tinker Belle* which we flew a lot. He was getting pretty flustered about us bringing back his ship with the bomb bay doors wired up after we had dropped our bombs through them. *Tinker Belle* was a silver plane that seemed to always have a new pair of olive drab bomb bay doors.

I don't remember who or when we solved the problem, but it had to do with the use of the relief tube in the back of the ship. At altitude it would freeze and back up. The fellows would then use the bomb bay for relief. This resulted in the rollers being frozen over the target.

For the 10th of December the Microfilm History indicated that there was no mission. However, the Squadron Histories of the 67th and the 68th show that the 44th was in combat on this day. Also, Firman Mack's combat record shows that he went to Bingen on December 15th. He flew as Group Lead. Another crew that went to Bingen on this date belonged to Thomas Waters. Both the records of Gene McMahon and Michel Yuspeh show they were out.

Perhaps the confusion resulted from the chain of events that accompanied the mission. Our ships started on the bomb run and picked up tracking and release signals at the Initial Point. Three miles from the target the signals faded and the release signal was not received. The lead ship passed over the target and then decided to make a 360 degree turn to bomb on the smoke markers of the following wings. It soon became obvious that the smoke markers had drifted too far from the target for accurate bombing. Weather scouts were requested to assist in finding a target of opportunity. There was no response. It was then decided to return to base with the bombs.

On December 10th the author wrote to his wife:

After the movie last night, I went to the Communications Party. I didn't stay very long, but we surely had some good fried chicken. The beer wasn't very good. Do you know how much that party cost me? Just \$26 is all. That is just one of the bad parts of being an officer. Everyone feels that you are flush with money and should part with some of it.

On December 11th the Group sent up 45 aircraft on a ground support mission. The specific target was the railway and road bridge north of Karlsruhe, Germany. Bombing was on Gee-H and results were unobserved. Flak was meager and fighter support was good. The 506th sent 10 aircraft. Major Middleton was the command pilot. Ten of our crews received sortie credit for this raid. Lt. Hal C. Tyree aborted with #3 engine throwing oil and vibrating.

Probably this date will always be remembered by the crew of Lt. Jack C. Thorne. On returning from the mission, their aircraft was drawn into a cumulo-nimbus cloud at an altitude of 9,000 feet. Upon entering the cloud the aircraft went into a steep bank to the right, losing altitude. All the gyro instruments, except the needle and ball, tumbled. By bracing his feet against the rudder pedals and with the assistance of the copilot, they were able to regain level flight at an altitude of 500 feet.

With Lt. Thorne on this day were Lts. Walter W. Wilson and Kenneth J. Schoh, and Flight Officer Jesus Martinez. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Ben M. Samuels, George C. Economski, Frank J. Sullivan, James E. Vaisey, George W. Lewis, and Leon Runions.

The Firman Mack record shows that he flew Squadron Lead on this raid. Also, Elwood Matter was on this mission, probably flying with Burns. Records kept by Lewis Robinson show that he was on this ground support attack. He was probably with Ray Ciesielski.

The Group sent 29 ships, representing the 14th Combat Wing, on a mission to Aschaffenburg, Germany on December 12th. The target was attacked visually. There was no enemy opposition. Fighter support was good. The 506th Squadron sent nine of the total aircraft dispatched. Lt. O. K. Hill led the Squadron. Ray Parshall was the bombardier on Hill's aircraft. The Paul Durett crew made this raid according to

records kept by Delmar Fox. Another ship that made this raid was flown by Thomas Waters according to records kept by Michel Yuspeh and Gene McMahon.

During the next couple of days, the author wrote to his wife:

December 13th--"Here I am again after a little trip and roaming around. Where have I been this time? Well I will only say that I was in France. I went over with Dick Wynes. When I got back I found that I have six packages to open on Christmas."

December 14th---"Enclosed is the marker for my place at Lt. Saladick's wedding dinner."

Major Wayne H. Middleton was reassigned to the 67th Bomb Squadron on December 15th.

During the next few days the author wrote:

December 18th--"Tonight I saw the first lit-up Christmas tree, outside, that I have seen in two years. You can't imagine how funny it seems to see lights outside.

"I went along with our truck after supplies today and had it stop in a little town long enough for me to buy some electrical parts. I needed them in order to build a bed lamp for my room."

December 20th--"Do you know what I spent the afternoon doing? Shoveling gravel for a road. That's right, I was doing a little work, or at least trying to. I get a kick out of some of the enlisted men. Whenever I would get my hands on a shovel they would want to take it away from me. They don't think that an officer should be doing that kind of work. There is one old Sgt. that I can't quite figure out. I mean that he tries to wait on me just a little too much. If he is doing what I think he is trying to do, he is going to be badly mistaken. He won't get any favors out of me."

December 22--"How would you like to have a little fog? We have a whole lot more than we can use. I wish that we could get off from the ground! The boys in France sure could have good use of us and our ships right now. (Note: This letter was written during the Battle Of The Bulge and Bastogne. The Germans were making an offensive move to Antwerp. They penetrated the Allied lines and were

seriously damaging our troops. The battle was taking place in deep snow and heavy fog.)

"Yes, I did forget mother's birthday. I was very sorry about it, but I didn't even know that it was Halloween. That is how I usually remember that date."

The author remembers:

For quite a number of days, we would get up in the morning and the ground, trees, and buildings would be covered with heavy frost. Briefings would start because it was crystal clear. However, when the sun rose and its heat reached the frost, it was changed to a dense fog that lasted all day. Our men wanted to take off to bomb in support of our ground forces. They would take their chances on finding a break in the fog on their return. However, higher command would not allow this. This condition changed in the next few days.

We were able to get into the air on December 23rd. As expected, the target was selected that would provide relief for our besieged ground troops. Four 506th aircraft joined with 11 other ships from the 44th to attack a road and choke point at Ahrweiler, Germany. Bombing was carried out using GEE-H. (Note: For a newspaper account of this raid see December 24th) Delmar Fox's records show that the Paul Durett crew made this mission. James Clements was also there. However, he was flying lead for the 392 Bomb Group which was leading the Division. He was in A/C #644, Bar A. He carried his usual crew except for Lt. R. F. Seymer, a GH operator. Maj. M. J. Tileman was the Command Pilot. They bombed visually at 1250 hours from 20,000 feet. They were carrying four 500-pound bombs. Flak was slight to moderate and fighter support was excellent.

On the morning of Christmas Eve, December 24th, there was a near maximum effort with 61 of the 44th's aircraft dispatched. This was a new record for the Group. It was only marred by one abortion. Our targets were located at Ruwer, Pfazel, Wittlich and Eller. There was some flak, but no enemy aircraft. Hits were made on all targets. Fighter support was good.

Flying that day were Hill, Burns, Ciesielski, Smith, Durett, Edkins, Rockman, and Waters.

With Lt. Rockman was Lt. Nester L. Werkstein and Flight

Officer George Jeanos. The enlisted personnel were Sgts. Chester J. Kryszozuk, Charles H. Hickman, Reginald C. Nichols, Milton F. Bailey, Robert T. Schram, Clark T. Harmon, and Frank R. Lafazia.

With Hill were Sgts. Warren, Buechler, Hahn, and Friedman.

With Burns were Sgts. Kennedy, Caldwell, Toy, Sirup, J. Gray, and Truslow.

With Ciesielski were Sgts. R. L. Beauchamp, Unger, R. Turner, and Louis Robinson.

With Smith were Sgts. C. A. Jacobsen, F. J. Marzolph, E. G. Babek, and M. W. Jones.

With Durett were Sgts. Nesbitt, Fox, Cash, Burton, and Smith.

With Edkins were Sgts. C. K. Jones, L. Godfrey, C. Austin, and E. E. Walsh.

With Waters were Sgts. Yuspeh, Colucci, Hawkins, McMahon, Funke, and Walsh.

The Delmar Fox and Lewis Robinson records show they hit Eller.

According to some notes in the possession of Fred Marzolph they were flying in *Down De Hatch*.

The following is a newspaper article kept by Charles Jones:

#### RECORD BOMB BLOW 8TH AF'S YULE GIFT TO NAZI

Over 2,000 Heavies-Biggest Single Mission  
Unload on Christmas 'Eve'

While the weather closed in again yesterday to curtail air activity against the enemy; the Eighth Air Force was still counting up the results of its Christmas present to the Nazis, delivered Sunday by more than 2,000 heavy bombers and 900 fighters, the largest force of heavies ever flown on a single mission.

Sunday's big air attack was part of a weekend pattern, which continued yesterday, designed to pound the hell out of all communications lines supplying and reinforcing the German armies in their current counter-offensive. It was



in direct support of the U.S. First Army forces which have been rolled back into Belgium by the weight of the German drive.

Taking advantage of clear weather, the Dec. 24 mission started for Germany in the morning and the first bombers were entering Germany as the tail of the tremendous column was leaving England.

The Eighth started its Christmas blow last Saturday when a force of more than 400 heavies, protected by some 700 fighters, struck at airdromes in the Frankfurt area from which the Germans had been operating tactical aircraft in support of their offensive. At least 11 airdromes attacked were rendered unserviceable.

Marshalling yards at Coblenz and rail centers near Trier, close to the Luxembourg border, Kaiserlautern and Homburg were also hit. The Luftwaffe came up to meet the attackers and lost 77 planes in the resulting dogfights.

Sunday's big attack continues the pounding of the airdromes at Frankfurt. These lie across the Rhine just opposite the bulge the Germans have driven into the 1st Army line. The heavies dropped 100, 250 and 500-pound bombs on the hangars and fields.

Most of the targets the heavies went for were tiny road junctions, railroad crossings and bridges. Clear weather enabled crews to see the targets and to bomb visually. Reports were that the bombing was all "good".

On Christmas Eve Ray Marner wrote:

The Eighth Air Force pulled the largest raid in the world today. Lt. Hoisington was forced down in Brussels. Fog had held up planes from helping against the drive by the "Jerries".

On December 24th Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

I thought that we weren't going to have a white Christmas this year, but I was wrong. For the last few days it has been very foggy and early today it turned cold. Now almost all of the fog has been condensed and everything is covered with about a quarter of an inch of frost. Thus, we have a white Christmas.

I have been working all night and I don't think that I am going to get a chance to get to bed. I won't complain as long as it will help the boys in France.

I opened my Xmas packages just before I came down here. I thank you very much for the shirts, your wings, and the other things that you sent to me. Mother sent me a nice scarf and a pair of gloves. Thelma Long sent a box of candy and there were pictures and so forth. The glass frame of your picture was broken.

On December 25th, Christmas Day, there was an early morning briefing to bomb the marshalling yards at Bebra, Germany. An hour after the briefing the mission was scrubbed.

On the day after Christmas Ray Warner wrote:

Coldest days we've ever had over here. It has hit 19 degrees two days in a row.

We were back in combat on December 27th with Homburg as the objective. Our Squadron sent five ships. The 44th sent 23 aircraft on this mission. There was haze in the target area that affected the bomb run. Flak was accurate, but moderate. Fighter support was fair. The Thomas Waters crew was on this raid per the Michel Yuspeh and Gene McMahon records.

On the morning of December 28th James Clements was briefed to bomb a road and a rail junction near Kaiserlautern, Germany. His records show he was flying in A/C #644, Bar A. He was flying lead for the 2nd Air Division and the Eighth Air Force. He had his usual crew. In addition, Colonel Eugene H. Snavelly, and Lts. Harry W. Alexander, Loyd W. Hare, and Raymond F. Seymer were aboard. Bombs were dropped by Gee-H with very good results. There was meager, inaccurate flak on the bomb run, but none in the target area. Fighter support was good. The Group dispatched 36 ships on this target. Paul Durett and crew were on this mission according to the Delmar Fox record.

On December 28th Ray Warner wrote:

The 68th lost two ships on the marshalling yard raid today. They also had a ship abort and it cracked up on the landing. One of the 1,000 pounders exploded killing the whole crew. It really shook us up down here, which is about 2 miles away from Shipdham Road. (Note: Will Lundy's works reveal that one of the 68th ships that Ray

Marner reported as lost was able to land on the continent.)

On December 28th Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

Now the fog has pretty much lifted, but we still have the frost and it is plenty cold.

The 44th sent 33 ships against enemy communications centers at Stadtkyll, Germany, on December 29th. Briefing materials for this mission consisted of some map coordinates. This resulted in a poor choice of bomb run and poor bombing results. Meager, but accurate, flak was encountered from the battle line to the target. Fighter support was good. The 506th sent nine crews on this raid. Captain Insley led the Squadron. Lt. Robert L. Hosington aborted with the #1 engine out. The record of Firman Mack shows that he went to Neuweid on December 29th flying as Group Lead. Also, the Thomas Waters crew was on this raid according to the Michel Yuspeh and Gene McMahon records. McMahon's note shows the target to be "front lines". A third ship on this mission was flown by Ray Ciesielski per the Lewis Robinson records.

On the morning of December 30th the Group dispatched 34 aircraft to a road and railroad junction at Altenahr. There seemed to be some confusion regarding the city that was bombed. Scope photos showed that Stadtkyll was hit even though the Gee-H equipment was set up to hit Ahrweiler. After the mission the Gee-H equipment checked out correctly on the ground. There was no enemy opposition and fighter support was good. There were eight aircraft from the 506th in that formation. Lt. Firman B. Mack led the Group. Delmar Fox was with the Paul Durett crew on this raid. Fox's record shows the target to be Ahrweiler. Another of our ships that participated in this raid was flown by Thomas Waters. Michel Yuspeh was with him. Yuspeh's records also show that the target was Ahrweiler.

To close the year out the Group furnished 35 aircraft in a ground support mission to Neuwied, Germany on December 31st. Specifically they were to hit a railroad bridge. Once again, due to equipment failure, the lead ship assumed they bombed the primary target. However, they actually hit a railroad junction at Dorsel. Bombing was through cloud cover and results were unobserved. The Squadron sent eight crews with Captain Clements leading the Group. The James Clements records also indicate that he was leading the 14th Combat Wing on this mission. He had his usual crew. In addition,

Major C. Hughes was Command Pilot. They released their bombs at 1125 hours from an altitude of 22,000 feet. Fighter support was excellent and they encountered moderate inaccurate flak after the target. For the second day in a row, the Paul Durett crew was in combat. Delmar Fox was with them. Another of our ships that was out on this day was flown by Burns according to the Elwood Matter record.

Lewis Robinson recalls:

During the Battle Of The Bulge the weather finally cleared and we were able to fly a number of days in a row. Our Flight Surgeon issued Benzedrine tablets and we remained awake.

A newspaper article that was kept by Charles Jones summarized the year 1944 as follows:

450,000 TONS UNLOADED  
BY THE 8TH AF IN 1944

In 1944 the U.S. Eighth Air Force flew 357,272 combat sorties-196,314 by heavies-160,958 by fighters-striking with nearly 900,000,000 pounds of high explosives and incendiary bombs at the enemies industrial sources of war power and at his armies and communications in the field. (the figures include operations through Dec. 30.)

More than 7,000 enemy aircraft were destroyed by fighter pilots and bomber gunners, not including any which were destroyed on enemy airfields that were attacked. Bomber gunners shot down 2,234 of the total.

During the month the 506th Bomb Squadron was given special recognition when Lt. Joseph R. Bumbica received credit for two outstanding jobs of bombing during the month. The bombing of the road and rail choke point on Christmas Eve was specifically mentioned.

Special awards of the Distniguished Flying Cross were made to John A. Hess and Harry Fagenblat. Oak Leaf Clusters to the Distinguished Flying Cross were given to Victor F. Mikko, Hal S. Kimball, and Charles T. Closs. Finally, an Air Medal was awarded to Eugene H. Hawley.

During the month promotions were given to: Flight Officer to 2nd Lt. Murray G. Margolis; 2nd Lt. to 1st Lt. Alvin R. Rockman and Edward A. Baier.

Additions to the duty roster were: Lt. Bennett returned from detached service; Lts. George Bakanic, (and crew) and Captain Donald L. Ackerman (and crew) were assigned;

Separations, either permanent or temporary, from the duty roster were: Captain Kimball and Lts. Kenneth C. Adrian, Charles A. Hersh, Alfred R. Wilson, Eugene C. Bedkerstedt and Rudolph A. Cirou were assigned to the 70th Replacement Depot; Captain Ernest S. Gossett and Lts. Sam Miceli and Willis A. Edgecomb were reassigned; Lts. Lowe and Benkert went to rest home.

S/Sgt William H. Peiffer and Sgt. Arthur E. Adams were reclassified.

During the month Norm Kiefer wrote to his wife:

"I just came back from a movie. We saw "The Night Is Falling". It is a good propaganda picture. Maj. McAtee went with me."...After supper tonight, Maj. McAtee and I sat down and started to play cards. We were playing a game called "Pip". I didn't know anything about it. It wasn't very long before Capt. Clements and Lt. Horne were playing with us. McAtee and I beat them, but they said they would get even.