

Lt. Ernest Anders Erickson
Thirty Five Missions flown
March 27 thru August 26, 1944
334th Squadron - 95th Bomb Group - 8th Army Air Corps
13th Combat Bombardment Wing - 3rd Bombardment Division
Horham Air field – Station 119 – Suffolk County – England

Piloted Twelve B-17s
Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)
Taint A Bird II (42-30342) * Fireball Red (42-31876) * Able Mable (42-31920)
Mirandy (42-31992) * Gen'ril Oop & Lili Brat (42-31993)
Ten Aces (42-38178) * Smilin' Sandy Sanchez (42-97290) * Paisano (42-102450)
Stand By / Goin' My Way (42-107204)
The Doodle Bug / What's Cookin'? (42-107047) * To Hell Or Glory (42-38123)

Lt. Ernest Anders Erickson's Air Corps Biography available to be read:
http://markerickson.com/Family_History/Ernest_Erickson/Bio-Ernest_Anders_Erickson.pdf

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Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)

Lt. Ernest Anders Erickson & Navigator Lt. Conrad W. Roellchen before a mission

The 95th Bomb Group Campaigns:

Air Offensives:

Europe; Normandy; Northern France; Rhineland; Ardennes - Alsace; Central Europe

Royal Air Force Horham is located near the village of Horham, England, 4 miles Southeast of Eye in Suffolk. The large air field straddled the parishes of Denham, Horham and Hoxne. Planned for RAF use, Horham air field was provided to the 8th Air Force Eighth in 1942.

Squadrons:

334th - 335th - 336th - 412th (1942-1945)

Commanding Officers:

General Alfred Kessler - Commanding Officer 95th Bomb Group

Colonel Carl Truesdell - Command Pilot 95th Bomb Group

Colonel Chester Gilger - 95th Bomb Group

Colonel Jack Shuck - Commander 95th Bomb Group

Colonel John Gerhart - Wing Commander/Group Commander Pilot 95th BG

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Stuart - Group Commander 95th Bomb Group

Stations (Airfields):

Barksdale Field, Louisiana - June 1942

Pendleton Field, Oregon - June 1942

Geiger Field, Washington - August 1942

Ephrata, Washington - October 1942

Geiger Field, Washington - November 1942

Rapid City Army Air Corps Base, South Dakota - December 1942 - March 1943

Framlingham, England - May 1943

Horham Airfield, England - June 1943 - June 1945

Sioux Falls Airfield, South Dakota - August 1945

Memphis Municipal Airport, Tennessee - May 1947 - June 1949

Lt. Ernest Anders Erickson's first

Mission #1

March 27, 1944

Aboard the B-17 - Mirandy (42-31992)

(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)

Cazaux, France

Airfields in France are attacked by 701 bombers. 285 of 290 B-17s hit the following airfields: St Jean D'Angely (55), La Rochell/La Leu (59), Chartres (60), Tours/Parcay Meslay Air Depot (74), Usine Liotard Air Depot (35) and targets of opportunity (2). 1 B-17 is lost and 37 damaged; casualties are 1 WIA and 10 MIA. 248 of 256 B-17s hit the following airfields: Bordeaux/Merignac (123), Cazeux (118) and Chartres (7); 2 B-17s are lost and 51 damaged. The casualties are 11 killed in action, 2 wounded in action. 168 B-24s hit the following airfields: Pau/Ont Long (72), Biarritz (49) and Mont de Marsan (47); 3 B-24s are lost, 4 damaged beyond repair and 18 damaged. The casualties are 20 killed in action, 1 wounded in action, 31 missing in action. Escort is provided by 132 P-38s, 706 Eighth and Ninth Air Force P-47s and 122 Eighth

and Ninth Air Force P-51s; results are: P-38s: 2 lost and 1 damaged beyond repair; 2 pilots are MIA. P-47s claim 6-0-2 Luftwaffe aircraft; 5 P-47s are lost, 1 damaged beyond repair and 4 damaged; 1 pilot is WIA and 5 are MIA. P-51s claim 2-0-3 Luftwaffe aircraft in the air and 30-1-11 on the ground; 3 P-51s are lost and 1 damaged; 3 pilots are MIA.

Of the 701 bombers dispatched March 27th, 256 B-17s (3rd Air Division) from the 94th, 95th, 96th, 100th, 385th, 388th, 390th, 447th and the 452th Bomb Groups are dispatched. 123 are effective on the German airfield of Bordeaux/Merginac, France; 118 are effective on the German airfield at Cazaux, France; 7 are effective on the German airfield at Chartres, France.

Mission #2
March 28, 1944
Aboard the B-17 - Mirandy (42-31992)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
Chateau-Dun, France

A force of 450 heavy bombers from all three Air Divisions are dispatched to bomb the German U-Boat pens at Ljmuiden, Holland and German airfields in France.

Of the 450 bombers dispatched March 28th, 191 B-17s (3rd Air Division) from the 94th, 95th, 96th, 100th, 385th, 388th, 390th, 447th and the 452th Bomb Groups are dispatched. 127 are effective on the German airfield at Chateaudun, France, 61 are effective on the German airfield at Chartres, France. 2 aircraft Failed to Return and 13 airmen are killed in action, 9 prisoners of war, 59 aircraft are damaged. 1 airman in a returning aircraft is Wounded in action. There were no other losses, casualties or claims in these bomb groups.



Lt. Ernest Anders Erickson's Red Feather design on his A-2 jacket

Mission #3
April 1, 1944
aboard the B-17 - T'aint a Bird (230342)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
Ludwigshafen, Germany - Dunkurque

440 bombers and 475 fighters are dispatched to bomb the chemical industry at Ludwigshafen, Germany - the largest in Europe.

The 245 B-17s dispatched of the lead force abandon the mission over the French coast due to heavy clouds; 7 B-17s are damaged.

Mission #4
April 13, 1944
aboard the B-17 - To Hell Or Glory (42-38123)
(B-17 received "extensive" battle damage)
(Returned from Operations, involved in an incident)
Augsburg, Germany

626 bombers and 871 fighters are dispatched to hit targets in Germany. The bombers claim 22-13-34 Luftwaffe aircraft and the fighters claim 42-8-10 in the air and 35-0-21 on the ground. 38 bombers and 9 fighters are lost. The bombers also drop 5.2 million leaflets on Germany. This mission is flown in conjunction with a raid on Hungary by 500+ Fifteenth Air Force bombers and a Ninth Air Force B-26 raid in S The Netherlands.

207 of 243 B-17s bomb aviation industry targets at Augsburg and 20 hit the city of Augsburg. 18 B-17s are lost, 2 damaged beyond repair and 178 damaged. The casualties are 3 killed in action, 16 wounded in action and 170 missing in action.

The 3rd Bomb Division was made up of 94th, 95th, 96th, 100th, 385th, 388th, 390th, 447th, and the 453rd Bomb Groups. German fighter attacks on 1st Bomb Division and 3rd Bomb Group were the heaviest since January 11th, 1944. As envisioned by the Allied planners, the Luftwaffe was being drawn up to attack the bomber stream exposing the Luftwaffe to destruction by the fighters and bomber crews. All contributing to the goal of air superiority prior to D-Day, June 6th, 1944. At this point in time the invasion was scheduled for May 17th, 1944.

SUPREME HEADQUARTERS ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE (SHAEF):
General of the Army Dwight D Eisenhower formally assumes direction of air operations out of the England. This gives Eisenhower direction over the Allied Expeditionary Air Force, Royal Air Force Bomber Command, and US Strategic Air Forces in Europe. The Fifteenth Air Force retains some degree of independence along with the US 1st Army Group, British 21 Army Group, and Allied Naval Forces.

Mission Did Not Count
April 18, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Smilin Sandy Sanchez (42-97290)
(Received "extensive" battle damage)
(Returned Early for Mechanical Reasons)
Oranienburg, Brandenburg, Luneburg Air field, Rathenow, Germany

776 bombers and 634 fighters are dispatched to hit air fields and aviation industry targets in Germany. The AAF claims 33-5-19 Luftwaffe aircraft; 19 bombers and 5 fighters are lost. Due to poor weather, several units bomb targets of opportunity in the Berlin area.

Those details are:

1. 275 of 280 B-17s hit aviation industry targets at Oranienburg, Perleberg Air field, Wittenberge and targets of opportunity. 3 B-17s are lost and 90 damaged. 29 airmen are missing in action.
 2. 210 of 221 B-17s hit Oranienburg, Brandenburg, Luneburg Air field, Rathenow and targets of opportunity. 14 B-17s are lost and 94 damaged, 2 airmen are killed in action, 12 wounded in action and 139 are missing in action.
 3. 248 of 275 B-24s hit Brandenburg, Rathenow, Cuxhaven, Wittenberge and targets of opportunity 2 B-24s are lost and 20 damaged, 5 airmen are wounded in action and 20 are missing in action. Escort is provided by 119 P-38s, 296 P-47s and 219 Eighth and Ninth Air Force P-51s. 1 P-38, 1 P-47 and 3 P-51s are lost, 3 P-38s are damaged beyond repair and 7 P-38s, 3 P-47s and 18 P-51s are damaged. 4 pilots are missing in action.
- 5 of 5 B-17s drop 2.56 million leaflets on Stavanger, Oslo, Bergen and Trondheim, Norway at 2336-0041 hours without loss.

Mission #5
April 19, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Able Mabel (42-31920)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
Werl, Germany

772 bombers and 697 fighters are dispatched in 3 forces to bomb Germany. They claim 17-1-6 Luftwaffe aircraft; 5 bombers and 2 fighters are lost.

1. 271 of 277 B-17s hit the Kassel area, Eschwege Air field, Limburg and a target of opportunity. Five B-17s are lost and 119 damaged. Casualties are 1 killed in action, 5 wounded in action and 47 missing in action.
2. 243 of 246 B-17s hit Lippstadt and Werl Air fields and a target of opportunity. 21 B-17s are damaged and casualties are 2 killed in action, 8 wounded in action and 55 missing in action

Mission #6
April 20, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Fireball Red (42-31876)
(B-17 received "extensive" battle damage)
No Ball (V-1 installations) Mission - St. Omer – Cherbourg, France

842 bombers and 388 fighters are dispatched to hit V-1 installations (No Ball) sites in France. 24 of 33 sites briefed are hit and 9 bombers and 2 fighters are lost. 438 of 630 B-17s hit sites in the Pas de Calais and Cherbourg areas. 19 other ships hit targets of opportunity. 7 B-17s are lost, 1 damaged beyond repair and 309 damaged. The casualties are 2 killed in action, 25 wounded in action and 69 missing in action.

The target was a No Ball (V-1 installation) situated south of the village, located ten miles southeast of Abbeville. It was a ski shaped launching ramp for V-1 bombs. Other units of the Eighth attacked other installations in the Calais and Cherbourg areas. The Group used a new twelve plane formation, and dispatched two boxes on its target.

The A box was led by Captain William F. Smith as Air Commander and Lt. J. L. Smith was the pilot. The B box was led by Major George C. Hozier as Air Commander and Captain Jerry Godfrey was pilot.

Take off was late in the afternoon, at 1615. Bombing results were good, with the bomb pattern centering within two hundred feet of MPI (Mean Point of Impact). Flak was moderate but accurate. One anti aircraft shell hit the Deputy Lead plane of the B box, piloted by Lt. Walter S. Milne, at the radio compartment, and exploded inside. The remnants of the craft plummeted nose down. Only two of the crew survived the crash. Eleven aircraft from the A box and eight craft of the B box sustained damage.

The aircraft broke apart between the tail wheel and the waist door. The craft hit the ground with a terrific explosion. Four of the crew parachuted to safety.

Mission #7
April 22, 1944
(E. G. Cunningham crew)
aboard the B-17 - Gen'ril Oop (42-31993)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
Hamm, Germany

803 bombers and 859 fighters are dispatched to hit a marshalling yard at Hamm, Germany. The bombers claim 20-6-8 Luftwaffe aircraft and the fighters claim 40-2-16. 15 bombers and 13 fighters are lost. 459 of 526 B-17s bomb the primary, 20 hit Bonn, 19 hit Soest, 15 hit Hamm City and 1 hits a target of opportunity. 8 B-17s are lost, 1 is damaged beyond repair and 138 are damaged. The casualties are 7 wounded in action and 89 missing in action.

Mission #8
April 24, 1944
A2 - (B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
aboard the B-17 - The Doodle Bug (42-107047)
Friedrichshafen - Lowenthal - Manzell, Germany

754 bombers and 867 fighters are dispatched to bomb airfields, aircraft production industries and targets of opportunity in Germany. The bombers claim 20-1-36 Luftwaffe aircraft and the fighters claim 124-6-58 fighters. 40 bombers and 17 fighters are lost. Of 281 B-17s dispatched, 109 hit Erding Air Depot, 84 hit aviation industry targets at Oberpfaffenhofen, 57 hit Landsberg Airfield and 18 hit targets of opportunity; 27 B-17s are lost and 112 damaged; casualties are 4 killed in action, 22 wounded in action and 260 missing in action.

243 B-17s are dispatched to bomb aviation industry targets at Friedrichshafen/Lowenthal (98 bomb) and Friedrichshafen/Manzell (58 bomb), industrial areas at Friedrichshafen/Manzell (58 bomb) and Neckarsulm (15 bomb). 3 B-17s also hit targets of opportunity. 9 B-17s are lost and 119 damaged. The casualties are 7 killed in action, 4 wounded in action and 71 missing in action.

Mission #9
April 27, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Smilin' Sandy Sanchez (42-97290)
(B-17 received "extensive" battle damage)
Nancy, France

486 bombers and 543 fighters are dispatched to bomb airfields, marshaling yards and targets of opportunity in France and Belgium; 4 bombers and 4 fighters are lost. 1. 168 B-17s are dispatched to bomb Nancy/Essay Airfield (103 bomb) and Toul/Croix de Metz landing ground (60 bomb), France. 2 B-17s are lost and 33 damaged; 20 airmen are missing in action.

From the diary of Airman Lt. David W LeBlanc: "This afternoon we went to Nancy, France and it turned out to be a bad day. We had #3 off the group leader. It wasn't very deep in France when #3 engine started running terribly rough so we feathered it.

While determining our trouble we fell back considerably and Knight moved up and took our place. Shortly after he did that we were hit by extremely accurate flak. The very last bursts knocked Copley and Knight down. They both had fires in the right wings. Three or four chutes were seen leaving Cope's ship - none from Knight's ship. Both planes blew up in the air.

Nick, our navigator was riding with Cope. It was his next to last trip - he asked to go. Hayward was with Cope and he was on his last mission. We were unable to keep up so dropped our bombs. Came back across France alone and at 12,000 feet. #4 Engine busted a cylinder and we feathered it and restarted #3. Our electrical system went out because of a fire in #2. Result was that we had no radio, turrets, turbos, hydraulics. P47s picked us up half-way back and remained with us all the way. Thank God for them. We landed at the coast as our gas was very low."

Mission #10
April 28, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Smilin' Sandy Sanchez (42-97290)
(B-17 received minor – degrees of damage)
No Ball (V-1 installations) Sottevast (south of Cherbourg)

223 bombers are dispatched. 116 of 117 B-17s hit Avord Airfield, France. 2 B-17s are lost and 38 damaged. 20 airmen are missing in action. Escort is provided by 118 P-47s and 87 P-51s. Fighters claim 0-0-2 Luftwaffe aircraft in the air and 8-0-3 on the ground. 2 P-51s are lost and 2 damaged; 2 pilots are missing in action.

18 of 106 B-17s bomb the Sottevast, France V-1 weapon site and targets of opportunity. Clouds prevent most B-17s from bombing. 2 B-17s are lost and 47 damaged. 3 airmen are wounded in action and 21 missing in action. Escort is provided by 46 P-47s without loss. 2 fighter-bomber missions are also flown against airfields in France. 34 P-38s using the Droopsnoot method, bomb Tours Airfield. 11 P-38s fly escort and 1 P-38 is lost and 1 damaged; 1 pilot is missing in action.

Mission #11
April 29, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Able Mabel (42-31920)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
Berlin, Germany

This mission took the Bomb Groups to the business district and marshalling yards of Berlin, Germany.

679 bombers and 814 fighters are dispatched to bomb Berlin, concentrating on railway facilities. Crews of B-17 claim 95-33-48 Luftwaffe aircraft, 63 bombers and 13 fighters are lost.

1. 210 of 228 B-17s bomb Berlin. 10 B-17s are lost and 150 damaged. 1 airman is killed in action, 7 wounded in action and 100 missing in action.

2. 218 B-17s are dispatched to Berlin. 158 hit the primary, 24 hit Magdeburg, 10 hit Brandenburg and 4 hit targets of opportunity. 28 B-17s are lost and 161 damaged and 4 airmen are killed in action, 20 wounded in action and 260 missing in action.

4th Combat Bombardment Wing was strongly attacked by fighters, and attacked Magdeburg instead of Berlin. 3rd Bomb Division was made up of the 95th, 96th, 100th, 385th, 388th, 390th 447th and 452nd Bomb Groups. 447th Bomb Group got the worst of that losing 11 aircraft.

Twelve Combat Wings were directed to Berlin. The Group supplied twenty-four aircraft and flew as the high box in the 94th Combat Wing. Major George C. Hozier flew as Air Commander, and Lt. Mark R. Beicher as pilot. There was an undercast at the target area. All aircraft dropped bombs on the Wing Lead PFF ship. Bombing results were unobserved. No enemy aircraft were observed and flak was moderate to intense. No aircraft were lost.

Other wings were not so fortunate. One B-24 Group lost eighteen planes near Magdeburg, and a total of sixty-three bombers failed to return.

Mission #12
May 1, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Mirandy (42-31992)
(B-17 received "extensive" battle damage)
Sarrequemines, France

Operation Crossbow (operations against German missile launching sites) targets are hit in France in the early morning. 531 bombers and 209 fighters are dispatched but weather causes many aborts and only 3 of 23 V-weapons sites targeted are bombed.

Of 161 B-17s dispatched, 18 hit Poix Airfield, 18 hit Roye/Amy Airfield and 15 hit Montdidier Airfield. 1 B-17 is damaged beyond repair and 20 damaged.

22 of 187 B-17s and 57 of 183 B-24s hit the Pas de Calais area. 1 B-17 and 1 B-24 are damaged beyond repair. 19 B-17s and 15 B-24s are damaged. 5 B-24 crewmen are killed in action. Escort is provided by 119 P-47s and 90 P-51s without loss.

In the afternoon, 386 bombers and 558 fighters are dispatched to hit marshaling yards in

France and Belgium; 3 bombers and 3 fighters are lost. 110 B-17s are dispatched to Troyes (52 bomb) and Reims (57 bomb), France. 1 B-17 is lost and 52 damaged. 10 airmen are missing in action. 125 B-17s are dispatched to Saarguemines (64 bomb) and Metz (42 bomb), France and Brussels, Belgium (13 bomb). 2 B-17s are lost, 1 damaged beyond repair and 43 damaged. 20 airmen are missing in action.

Mission Did Not Count
May 7, 1944
aboard the B-17- Smilin Sandy Sanchez (42-97290)
(B-17 received minor damage)
(Returned Early for Mechanical Reasons) - Oxygen leak
Berlin, Germany

600 B-17s are dispatched on a Pathfinder attack on Berlin, Germany. 514 bomb the primary and 39 hit targets of opportunity. 8 B-17s are lost, 2 are damaged beyond repair and 265 damaged; 8 airmen are killed in action, 14 wounded in action and 83 missing in action.

Mission #13
May 12, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Smilin' Sandy Sanchez (42-97290)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
Brux, Czechoslovakia

295 B-17s are dispatched to Brux, Czechoslovakia (140 bomb) and Zwickau (74 bomb). 11 hit Chemnitz, 14 hit Gera marshaling yard, 15 hit Hof and 4 hit targets of opportunity. 41 B-17s are lost, 1 is damaged beyond repair and 162 damaged. 3 airmen are killed in action, 8 wounded in action and 377 missing in action.

886 bombers and 735 fighters are dispatched to hit oil production facilities in Germany and Czechoslovakia. There is strong Luftwaffe fighter reaction and 46 bombers and 7 fighters are lost.

326 B-17s are dispatched to Mersenburg (224 bomb) and Lutzkendorf (87 bomb). 1 B-17 hits Hedrongen and 1 bombs Bullstadt. 2 B-17s are lost, 3 damaged beyond repair and 189 damaged. 4 airmen are killed in action, 6 missing in action and 20 missing in action.

265 B-24s are dispatched to Zeitz (116 bomb) and Bohlen (99 bomb). 14 hit Mersenburg, 1 hits Ostend Airfield, Belgium and 12 hit targets of opportunity. 3 B-24s are lost, 5 damaged beyond repair and 61 damaged. 7 airmen are wounded in action and 33 missing in action.

Escort is provided by 153 P-38s, 201 P-47s and 381 P-51s. P-38s claim 2-0-0 Luftwaffe aircraft, P-47s claim 26-0-8 and P-51s claim 33-0-3 in the air and 5-0-2 on the ground. 4 P-47s and 3 P-51s are lost and 4 P-47s and 9 P-51s are damaged. 7 pilots are missing in action. 5 of 5 B-17s drop 1.74 million leaflets on Denmark. 1 aircraft is damaged and 2 airmen are killed in action and 3 are missing in action.

Mission #14
May 13, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Mirandy (42-31992)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
Osnabruk, Germany

749 bombers and 737 fighters hit targets in Germany. 12 bombers and 5 fighters are lost. they claim 58-5-13 Luftwaffe aircraft. 289 B-17s are dispatched to hit oil targets in Western Poland, but clouds force 215 to bomb Stettin and 57 to hit Stralsund. 10 bombers are lost and 81 damaged. 1 airman is killed in action 1 wounded in action and 88 are missing in action.

199 B-17s are dispatched to hit the marshaling yard at Osnabruck. 178 hit the primary and 1 bomb a target of opportunity. 1 B-17 is lost and 61 damaged. 2 airmen are wounded in action and 10 are missing in action.

261 B-24s are dispatched to hit aviation industry targets at Tutow. 228 hit the primary and 12 hit targets of opportunity. 1 B-24 is lost and 2 damaged. 1 airman is wounded in action and 10 are missing in action.

Escort is provided by 153 P-38s, 238 P-47s and 346 P-51s. The P-47s claim 14-2-9 Luftwaffe aircraft, while the P-51s claim 33-1-4. 1 P-38, 2 P-47s and 2 P-51s are lost. 1 P-47 is damaged beyond repair and 5 P-38s and 7 P-51s are damaged. 1 pilot is wounded in action and 5 are missing in action.

Mission #15
May 24, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Ten Aces (42-38178)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
Berlin, Germany

1,106 bombers and 602 fighters are dispatched on visual attacks on airfields in the Paris area along with accompanying Pathfinder Force with visual bombing of Berlin. 33 bombers and 10 fighters are lost. The fighters claim 33-7-6 Luftwaffe aircraft. 616 B-17s are dispatched to Berlin. 464 hit the primary, 34 bomb Nauen, 13 bomb Rechlin and 6 bomb targets of opportunity. 33 B-17s are lost, 1 is damaged beyond repair and 256 damaged. 4 airmen are killed in action and 24 wounded in action and 482 are missing in action.

This is the 3rd 1000 plus plane mission staged by 8th Air Force and the largest to date with 1,106 bombers participating. 1st Bomb Division was made up of 91st, 92nd, 303rd, 305th, 306th, 351st, 379th, 381st, 384th, 398th, 401st and the 457th Bomb Groups.

3rd Bomb Division was made up of the 34th, 94th, 95th, 96th, 100th, 385th, 388th, 390th, 447th, 452nd and the 486th Bomb Groups. 100th Bomb Group became separated from main force by weather and contrails and came under attack by approximately 200 German fighters.

Mission #16
May 28, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Ten Aces (42-38178)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
Dessau, Poland – (Magdeburg)

1,341 bombers and 697 fighters are dispatched to hit oil targets in Germany & Poland. 32 bombers and 9 fighters are lost and they claim 64-30-31 Luftwaffe aircraft. 610 B-17s are dispatched against an oil targets at Ruhland/Schwarz-Heide (38 bomb) and an aircraft factory at Dessau (12 bomb); secondary targets are aviation factories at Zwickau (15 bomb) and Leipzig (28 bomb). 14 bombers hit Bohlen, 15 hit Meissen, 19 hit Brandis/Polenz Wusten-Sachsen Airfield, 12 hit Frankfurt marshaling yard, 32 hit Ubigau, 20 hit Dessau, 4 hit Frankfurt, 5 hit Camburg and 22 hit targets of opportunity. Bombers claim 20-21-18 Luftwaffe aircraft.

17 B-17s are lost, 1 is damaged beyond repair and 107 damaged. 3 airmen are killed in action, 15 wounded in action and 155 went missing in action. 255 B-17s are dispatched to an oil dump at Konigsburg/Magdeburg (105 bomb) and oil industry at Magdeburg/Rothensee (55 bomb). 17 bombers hit Dessau and 6 bomb the marshaling yard at Gera and they claim 16-8-6 Luftwaffe aircraft. 9 B-17s are lost and 64 damaged. 3 airmen are killed in action and 2 wounded in action and 90 are missing in action.

The Group attacked the bomber/fighter engine factories located at Dessau, Germany. The target was the center of the Junkers Aircraft Organization. This organization was primarily engaged in the development and in the experimental work on new as well as existing aircraft. The target had one of the highest priorities of all the remaining targets in Germany. For the second straight day, the bombers felt the wrath of the Luftwaffe.

The bomber stream consisted of fifteen combat wings. The flight was uneventful until the bomber stream separated at a point northeast of Brunswick. Then, the fifteen wings took up separate courses for the attacks on their separate targets. The Group was attacked at the IP by large forces of Me 109s and FW-190s.

The ship piloted by Lt. Clyde B. Knipfer, flying his 24th mission, was hit and dropped out of formation with No. 1 and No. 2 engines blazing. Lt. Knipfer and crew parachuted to the ground where all were picked up by the Germans and held as prisoners of war.

A second mass frontal attack was made on the Group. Waves of Ju-88s and Me-109s attacked from the side followed immediately by Me-109s and FW-190s. Lt. Rudolph Stohi's craft took a direct hit and left the formation. The craft crashed after the crew bailed out. One crewman died.

Lt. Bernard V. Conners' craft came back on one engine, two engines having been lost in the target area. Three cylinders on a third engine had been punctured by enemy flak. Conners had flown back at an air speed of 115 to 135 miles per hour, with just enough power to keep airborne.

Prior to reaching the target, the craft of the Air Commander, Major George C. Hozier, was attacked. One engine was damaged and set ablaze, and the wing fuel tank was punctured seriously, endangering the safety of the craft. In spite of the damaged condition of the craft, Major Hozier maintained the lead and when he found it impossible to visually bomb the

Primary target, after making two 360 degree turns, led the Wing to the secondary target, an aircraft factory at Leipzig and bombed with excellent results.

For his gallant leadership, sound judgment and devotion to duty, Major Hozier was awarded the Silver Star. In addition to the enemy fighter opposition, the anti-aircraft fire was moderate but accurate. A number of planes suffered damage. Gunners received credit for destroying one enemy aircraft and damaging five.

Mission #17
May 30, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Ten Aces (42-38178)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
Brussels, Belgium

Loading of assault forces for Operation OVERLORD (invasion of Normandy) begins. 928 bombers and 672 fighters in 6 forces are dispatched to hit aircraft industry targets in Germany and marshaling yards in France and Belgium. They claim 65-8-6 Luftwaffe aircraft. 12 bombers and 9 fighters are lost.

268 B-17s are dispatched to attack aviation industry targets at Dessau (83 bomb), Halberstadt (107 bomb) and Oschersleben (51 bomb). 5 other hit targets of opportunity and they claim 8-5-1 Luftwaffe aircraft; 9 B-17s are lost and 81 damaged. 2 airmen are wounded in action and 86 are missing in action.

369 B-24s are dispatched to hit aviation depots at Oldenburg (135 bomb), Rotenburg (147 bomb) and Zwischenahn (71 bomb); 1 other hits a target of opportunity; 1 B-24 is lost, 2 damaged beyond repair and 36 damaged. 1 airman is killed in action, 2 wounded in action and 9 are missing in action. 46 of 91 B-24s hit Munster/Handorf Airfield and 36 others hit Diepholz Airfield. 2 B-24s are lost, 1 is damaged beyond repair and 36 damaged. 1 airman is killed in action, 6 wounded in action and 9 are missing in action.

122 of 126 B-17s hit French marshaling yards; 62 hit Reims and 60 hit Troyes. 24 B-17s are damaged. 39 of 40 B-17s hit Brussels/Schaerbeek marshaling yard, Belgium; 12 B-17s are damaged. 76 of 84 B-17s hit V-weapon sites in the Pas de Calais, France. 12 B-17s are damaged and 3 airmen are killed 9 in action, 2 wounded in action and 10 are missing in action.

Escort is provided by 186 P-38s, 184 P-47s and 302 P-51s. 3 P-38s are damaged. P-47s claim 2-0-0 Luftwaffe aircraft with 1 loss (pilot is missing in action). P-51s claim 48-3-2 Luftwaffe aircraft in the air and 7-0-3 on the ground with the loss of 8 P-51s (pilots are missing in action), 2 damaged beyond repair and 4 damaged. 637 Ninth Air Force fighters support the mission. They claim 8-0-2 aircraft in the air and 0-0-4 on the ground for the loss of 3 planes. 100 P-47s are dispatched to bomb 4 rail bridges in NW France. 37 hit Longueuil bridge, 26 hit Beaumont-sur-Oise bridge, 23 hit Canly-le-Jouque bridge and 12 hit the Creil bridge. 1 P-47 is lost and pilot was missing in action.



The only known photograph of the B-17 - 'Lili of the Lamplight' (44-6085) in flight

**Mission #18
May 31, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
Osnabruk, Germany**

1,029 bombers and 682 fighters attack marshaling yards and aircraft industry targets in Germany and rail targets in France and Belgium. The fighters claim 4-0-1 Luftwaffe aircraft on the ground. 1 bomber and 3 fighters are lost.

Of 246 B-17s, 36 hit Luxeuil marshaling yard, France; 30 hit Florennes/Juzaine Airfield and 4 hit Namur marshaling yard, Belgium. 23 hit Gilze-Rijen Airfield and 12 hit Roosendaal marshaling yards in The Netherlands. 3 hit targets of opportunity and 45 B-17s are damaged. 1 airman is killed in action and 4 are wounded in action.

287 B-17s are dispatched to hit marshaling yards in Germany. 88 hit Osnabruck, 54 hit

Schwerte, 52 hit Oeske and 50 hit Hamm. 1 B-17 is lost and 58 damaged with 1 airman is wounded in action and 10 missing in action.

3rd Bomb Division was made up of 94th, 95th, 96th, 100th, 385th, 388th, 390th, 447th, 452nd, 486th and the 487th Bomb Groups. The 96th Bomb Group had the unfortunate distinction of sustaining the highest loss rate of any 8th Air Force Bomb Group during operations from January through May 1944.

Mission #19
June 2, 1944
aboard the B-17 – Paisano (42-1024
(B-17 received “major” battle damage)
Paris, France (Acheres)

The role of the heavy bombers from the 2nd through the 5th of June 1944 was in preparation for the invasion of Normandy on June 6th. The missions included the continuation of attacks against transportation and airfield targets in Northern France and the institution of a series of blows against coastal defenses, mainly located in the Pas de Calais coastal area, to deceive the enemy as to the sector to be invaded (Operation Cover).

In the morning of June 2nd 521 of 633 B-17s and 284 of 293 B-24s hit V-weapon sites in the Pas de Calais area. 11 B-17s are damaged; 1 airman is killed in action, 1 wounded in action and 1 missing in action.

In the afternoon, 242 B-17s are dispatched to railroad targets in the Paris area. 163 hit the primaries, 49 hit Conches Airfield, 12 hit Beaumont-sur-Oise Airfield and 1 hits Caen/Carpique Airfield.

77 B-24s are dispatched to Bretigny Airfield in France. 13 hit the primary target, 47 hit Creil Airfield and 14 hit Villeneuve Airfield. 2 B-17s and 5 B-24s are lost, 2 B-24s are damaged beyond repair and 90 B-17s and 37 B-24s are damaged. 1 airman is killed in action, 4 wounded in action and 68 are missing in action. 3 of 7 P-38s hit the Ostend Bridge, Belgium without loss. 3 B-17s fly weather reconnaissance over the Atlantic.

During the evening, 5 B-17s drop leaflets on targets in Belgium and France and 18 B-24s fly Carpetbagger operations.

Operation Carpetbagger was the aerial supply of weapons and other material to Resistance fighters in France, Italy and the Low Countries by the 8th Air Force that began in January of 1944.

Mission #20
June 4, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)
(B-17 received “major” battle damage)

No Ball (V-1 & V-2 installations) - (Pas de Calais) Boulogne, France

The effort is to be divided between the Pas de Calais (COVER) area and the Normandy assault (NEPTUNE) area, however, D-Day is postponed 24 hours and the NEPTUNE force is cancelled. 183 of 201 B-17s and 51 of 56 B-24s attack 7 targets in the Pas de Calais area. 10 B-17s are

damaged; no casualties. Escorting are 130 P-47s and 42 P-51s. 2 P-51s are lost, though no casualties. 2 B-17s fly weather reconnaissance over England and the Atlantic.

Mission Does Not Count **June 5, 1944** **Normandy, France**

The Eighth Air Force reaches its top strength as the 493d Bombardment Group (Heavy) becomes operational, making a total of 40 heavy bomber groups now operational. Heavy bombers fly 4 missions in support of the Normandy invasion:

At first light, 659 of 882 B-17s and 418 of 543 B-24s hit coastal targets in the area of the invasion beaches between Le Havre and Cherbourg; overcast and inability of the bombers to locate (or absence of) lead flight leaders causes failure of some units to attack. 1 B-24 is lost, 1 B-24 is damaged beyond repair and 14 B-17s and 1 B-24 are damaged. 12 airmen are killed in action, 2 wounded in action and 13 are missing in action.

A second mission strikes at transportation choke-points in towns immediately around the assault area. With total cloud cover causes 84 B-17s and 259 B-24s dispatched to return with their bombs, but 37 B-24s manage to bomb the secondary target of Argentan. 2 B-24s are lost and 1 B-17 is damaged and there are no casualties.

Mission #21 **June 6th, 1944** **aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)** **(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)** **No Ball (V-1 & V-2 installations) - (Calais) Boulogne, France**

423 of 464 B-17s and 203 of 206 B-24s hit coastal defenses in the Le Havre, Caen, Boulogne and Cherbourg, France areas. 4 B-17s and 2 B-24s are lost, 1 B-24 is damaged beyond repair and 37 B-17s and 39 B-24s are damaged. 1 airman is killed in action, 10 wounded in action and 47 missing in action. Escorting are 127 P-47s and 245 P-51s. 1 P-47 and 1 P-51 are lost and 1 P-47 is damaged beyond repair.

7 of 8 P-51 fighter-bomber attack a truck convoy near Lille. The 8th P-51 bombs Lille/Vendeville Airfield with no losses.

In preparation for D-Day, 3 B-17s fly weather reconnaissance over England and the Atlantic Ocean. During the night, 11 B-24s fly Carpetbagger missions: (aerial supply of weapons and other material to French Resistance Fighters).

OCTOBER 5, 1944

"Lili of the Lamplight Was Lucky Lady," Pilot Says

"I wasn't so scared the first time we ran into opposition, but that was because I didn't know what flak could really do," said Lt. Ernest A. Erickson, now home on leave. He was the pilot on a B-17 Flying Fortress, christened by the boys as "Lili of the Lamplight."



Lt. Erickson, who was with the Eighth Air Force in England, recently was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for "extraordinary achievement while participating in more than a score of bombing assaults on vital Nazi targets in Europe and in support of advances by the ground troops in France." Lt. Erickson, also holder of the Air Medal and four Oak Leaf Clusters, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Erickson, 800 Memorial Highway. He has completed 35 flying missions, including shuttle-bombing missions over Germany from England to Russia.

"Our fourth mission was a rough one, however. Our ship was seriously damaged. Although we managed to stay in formation, part of the rudder was torn off and the ship

was in bad shape. I learned then what flak could do. It was on our seventh mission that we first really came in contact with enemy fighters. Things happen so fast most of the time that we don't have much chance to analyze our feelings, although most of us know what it's like to be good and scared. I think I have been overly lucky, Lt. Erickson said. He came through the 35 missions without a scratch.

Lt. Erickson wears a leather flying jacket which has attracted considerable attention since his return home. On the left breast is painted the insignia of his squadron, a coat of arms done in brilliant but flexible colors. On the back is the name of his ship "Lili of the Lamplight" with pictures of a number of bombs.

The painting was done by one of the sergeants in his outfit, he said, and cost all of the men who had such jackets made "eight bucks apiece."

A 1941 graduate of Bismarck high school, he entered service in May, 1942. Prior to that he was employed by the U. S. army engineers at Fraine Barracks. He also attended Bismarck Junior college and the Capitol Commercial college here.

Following the expiration of his leave the latter part of this month he will report to Miami Beach, Fla. where he will be reassigned.

Mission #22
June 7, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
Normandy, France (Nantes)

The Allied Expeditionary Air Force (AEAF) directs air attacks against congested points to delay movement of more enemy forces into the assault area. In the first mission in the morning, 182 B-17s and 291 B-24s, including 20 PFFs, are dispatched. Of the B-17s, 58 hit Conde sur Noireau, 60 hit Flers, and 54 hit Falaise; of the B-24s, 66 hit Argentan, 19 hit Vascoeuil, 61 hit Laigle and 83 hit Lisieux; 1 B-24 is damaged beyond repair and 17 B-17s are damaged. 8 airmen are killed in action and 3 are missing in action.

In the second mission in the afternoon, 487 B-17s and 88 B-24s are dispatched. The primary targets for the B-17s are Nantes (190 bomb) and the Kerlin/Bastard Airfield (132 bomb); 23 B-17s hit Niort and 40 hit the Nantes Bridge. The primary target for the B-24s is Tours/La Roche (12 bomb) and 13 hit Pouance, 13 hit Blain, 13 hit Chateaubriand, 25 hit Laval Airfield, 12 hit Vitre and 3 hit Tours. 1 B-17 and 1 B-24 are lost, 1 B-17 and 7 B-24s are damaged beyond repair and 78 B-17s and 96 B-24s are damaged; 21 airmen are killed in action, 12 wounded in action and 12 are missing in action. Heavy cloud prevents almost 100 others from bombing targets.

Mission #23
June 18, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
Hanover & Misburg, Germany

1,378 bombers are dispatched to targets in Germany. 11 bombers are lost, 10 to AA fire and 1 to unknown causes. Of 890 B-17s dispatched, 381 bomb Hamburg, 88 hit Hannover-Misburg oil refinery, 85 hit the Bremen area. 60 hit Hannover, 54 hit Hamburg-Eurotank oil refinery, 38 hit Hamburg-Ossag oil refinery, 36 hit Hamburg-Schindler oil refinery, 18 hit Bremen-Oslebshausen. 18 hit Hamburg-Ebano oil refinery and 5 hit targets of opportunity. 7 B-17s are lost, 2 damaged beyond repair and 284 damaged. 1 airman is killed in action, 10 wounded in action and 70 are missing in action.

Of 488 B-24s, 168 hit Hamburg, 107 bomb Bremerhaven, 58 attack the Watten V-weapon sites, France, 54 hit Brunsbittel, 45 hit Stade Airfield, 28 hit Wesermunde, 13 hit Husum Airfield, 9 hit Nordenham, 8 hit Heligoland Airfield, 5 hit targets of opportunity and 1 hits Wrist marshaling yard. 4 B-24s are lost and 53 damaged. 8 airmen are wounded in action and 39 are missing in action.

Escort is provided by 198 P-38s, 172 P-47s and 215 P-51s. 1 P-38 is damaged beyond repair and no losses or claims. VIII Fighter Command missions in France are 94 of 98 P-38s and 82 of 87 P-47s attack railroad bridges in the St Quentin area without loss. 47 P-51s make a sweep of the Dol de Bretagne area. 3 P-51s are lost (pilots are missing in action).

9 B-24s are dispatched on Carpetbagger missions (aerial supply of weapons and other material to French Resistance Fighters) in France. 1 B-24 hits tree at the drop zone.

Mission #24
June 20, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)
(B-17 received "extensive" battle damage)
Fallersleben, Germany - Brunswick

In the morning 1,548 bombers are dispatched to attack 14 strategic targets in Northern Germany and V-1 and V-2 weapon sites in France. 49 bombers are lost. 126 of 146 B-24s bomb V-weapon sites in the Pas de Calais area. 1 B-24 is lost, 1 damaged beyond repair and 83 damaged. 4 airmen are killed in action, 8 wounded in action and 24 are missing in action. Escort is provided by 44 P-47s. Fighters claim 3-0-0 Luftwaffe aircraft; 1 P-47 is lost (pilot is missing in action). Of 341 B-17s dispatched, 137 hit Fallersleben, 95 hit Magdeburg/Rothensee and 52 hit Konigsberg. Bombers claim 2-0-6 Luftwaffe aircraft. 6 B-17s are lost, 2 damaged beyond repair and 116 damaged. 11 airmen are wounded in action and 60 are missing in action. Of 191 B-24s, 169 hit Hannover/Misburg and 3 hit a target of opportunity. 1 B-24 is lost, 1 damaged beyond repair and 89 damaged. 4 airmen are killed in action, 6 wounded in action and 9 are missing in action.

Escort is provided by 98 P-38s, 86 P-47s and 38 P-51s and 81 Ninth Air Force P-51s. Fighters claim 10-1-10 Luftwaffe aircraft in the air and 8-0-3 on the ground. 1 P-38, 1 P-47 and 1 P-51 are lost (2 pilots are missing in action).

Of 512 B-17s dispatched, 107 hit Hamburg/Eurotank oil refinery, 60 hit Harburg/Ebano oil refinery, 54 hit Haburg/Schliemanns oil refinery, 53 hit Harburg/Rhenania oil refinery, 53 hit Hamburg/Deut.Petr, 50 hit Hamburg/Rhenania-Ossag oil refinery, 26 hit Hamburg/Schindler oil refinery, 12 hit Brunsbittel canal lock and 2 hit targets of opportunity. 7 B-17s are lost and 349 damaged. 1 airman is killed in action, 13 wounded in action and 63 are missing in action.

Escort is provided by 96 P-38s and 48 P-47s without claims or loss. 4. Of 358 B-24s, 245 hit Politz, 71 bomb Ostermoor and 12 hit targets of opportunity. Bombers claim 10-3-2 Luftwaffe aircraft; 34 B-24s are lost and 205 damaged. 3 airmen are killed in action, 6 wounded in action and 343 are missing in action. Escort is provided by 50 P-38s and 221 P-51s; they claim 28-1-9 Luftwaffe aircraft in the air and 5-0-9 on the ground. 3 P-38s are lost.

In the afternoon, 33 of 37 B-17s and 196 of 380 B-24s attack 10 V-weapon sites in the Pas de Calais area. 1 B-24 is lost and 96 damaged. Escort is provided by 72 P-47s and 40 P-51s without loss. 5 of 5 B-17s drop leaflets in France during the night. 25 B-24s fly Carpetbagger missions (aerial supply of weapons and other material to French Resistance Fighters) in France.

Mission #25
June 23, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
No Ball (V-1 & V-2 installations)
Nanteuil, France

At midday 110 of 134 B-17s and 102 of 106 B-24s attack 12 Crossbow (V-weapon) installations, damaging at least 6 of them. 3 B-17s and 2 B-24s are damaged. Fighter support is furnished by 4 P-51 groups (141 of 161 aircraft) all of which afterward strafe transportation targets in the Paris area, destroying 3 locomotives, 100 pieces of rolling stock and 14 motor vehicles. An

exploding ammunition train causes a low-flying P-51 to crash, the only aircraft lost on the mission (pilot is missing in action).

During the late afternoon, 109 B-17s are dispatched to Nanteuil. 13 hit the primary and 2 hit targets of opportunity. The rest abort due to heavy cloud cover. 1 B-17 is lost and 2 are damaged. 1 airman wounded in action and 10 missing in action. Of 219 B-24s dispatched to airfields in France, 113 hit Juvincourt, 46 hit Laon/Athies, 23 hit Coulommiers and 1 hits Soissons. 6 B-24s are lost, 2 damaged beyond repair and 81 are damaged. 1 airman is killed in action, 3 wounded in action and 58 are missing in action.

Escort is provided by 155 P-47s and 83 P-51s. Afterwards part of a P-47 group bombs and strafes a marshaling yard while the remainder of the group bombs and strafes a train carrying trucks and armored cars, destroying the locomotive, 3 trucks, and an armored car, and damaging 20 freight cars. 169 of 195 P-38s fly fighter-bomber missions in the Paris area. 2 P-38s are lost (pilots are missing in action). 21 B-24s fly Carpetbagger missions (aerial supply of weapons and other material to French Resistance Fighters) in France during the night.

Mission #26 **June 25, 1944**

aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight(44-6085)

(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)

No Ball (V-1 & V-2 Installations) - Salesman, France

During the morning 658 bombers are dispatched to hit targets in France. 7 bombers are lost. Of 263 B-17s, 104 hit Toulouse/Franczal Airfield, 72 hit Toulouse/Blagnac Airfield and 64 hit Montbartier oil depot. 5 B-17s are lost, 1 is damaged beyond repair and 114 damaged. 10 airmen are killed in action, 5 wounded in action and 45 are missing in action. Escort is provided by 46 P-38s, 36 P-47s and 146 P-51s. Fighters claim 10-0-1 Luftwaffe aircraft. 1 P-51 is lost (pilot is missing in action).

During the midday 463 bombers are dispatched to targets in France. 6 bombers are lost; escort is provided by 127 P-38s, 35 P-47s and 181 P-51s. Fighters claim 4-0-3 Luftwaffe aircraft. 1 P-51 is lost (pilot is missing in action). Of 274 B-24s, 63 hit Villacoublay air depot, 35 hit Bretigny Airfield and 11 hit Buc Airfield. 5 B-24s are lost, 2 damaged beyond repair and 104 damaged; 11 airmen are killed in action, 7 wounded in action and 59 MIA.

Of 189 B-17s, 70 hit Soigny Bridge, 38 hit Sens Bridge, 28 hit Clamecy, 21 hit Auxerre Bridge, 21 hit Nanteuil, 20 hit Nogent, 18 hit Orly Airfield, 13 hit Romilly-sur-Seine, 12 hit Etampes/Mondesir Airfield, 12 hit Folous and 3 hit Orly marshaling yard. 1 B-17 is lost and 20 damaged. 2 airmen are wounded in action and 19 are missing in action. 41 of 43 P-47s fly a flight-bomber mission against Evreux/Fauville landing ground.

24 B-24s fly Carpetbagger missions (aerial supply of weapons and other material to French Resistance Fighters) in France during the night.

Mission #27 **July 7, 1944**

aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)

(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)

Kolleda - (Primary Merseberg), Germany

1,129 bombers and 756 fighters are dispatched to attack synthetic oil plants, aircraft assembly plants and engine works, air fields and an equipment depot, marshaling yards railway station and railway repair shops in Germany. 37 bombers and 6 fighters are lost. Of 373 B-24s, 102 hit Lutzkendorf and 64 hit Halle oil plants, 90 hit Bernburg and 73 hit Aschersleben aircraft plants and 8 hit targets of opportunity. Bombers claim 39-5-10 Luftwaffe aircraft. 28 B-24s are lost, 1 damaged beyond repair and 126 damaged. 3 airmen are killed in action, 11 wounded in action and 274 airmen are reported missing in action. Escort is provided by 224 P-38s, P-47s and P-51s. Fighters claim 46-1-16 Luftwaffe aircraft. 1 P-38 and 3 P-51s are lost (pilots are missing in action).

Of 303 B-17s, 64 hit Bohlen and 51 hit Merseburg oil plants, 67 hit Kolleda and 32 hit Lutzkendorf Airfields, 22 hit targets of opportunity and 16 hit Gottingen marshaling yard. 2 B-17s are lost and 112 damaged. 3 airmen are wounded in action and 20 airmen are reported as missing in action. Escort is provided by 185 P-38s, P-47s and P-51s. Fighters claim 9-0-1 Luftwaffe aircraft in the air and 3-0-1 on the ground. 1 P-47 and 1 P-51 are lost (pilots are missing in action).

Of 453 B-17s, 114 hit Leipzig/Taucha, 79 hit Leipzig/Mockau, 35 hit Leipzig/Heiterblick and 35 hit Kolleda Airfield, 15 hit Leipzig/Abtnaundorf oil plants, 46 hit Leipzig bearing industry, 19 hit Leipzig Station and 7 hit Nordhausen. 7 B-17s are lost, 2 damaged beyond repair and 152 damaged. 15 airmen are killed in action, 5 wounded in action and 50 airmen are reported missing in action. Escort is provided by 247 P-47s and P-51s. Fighters claim 20-0-2 Luftwaffe aircraft in the air and 1-0-0 on the ground. 1 P-51 is damaged beyond repair (pilot is wounded in action).

6 of 6 B-17s drop leaflets in France and Belgium during the night. 19 B-24s participate Carpetbagger missions (aerial supply of weapons and other material to Resistance Fighters) in France and Germany.



**Lt. General Jimmy Doolittle & Lt. Ernest Anders Erickson at Horham Air field, England
They are standing below Lady Fortune (Carmen's Folly) 42-97858 - June 1944**

Mission #28
July 24th, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)

Of 1,586 ships sent on mission, 1,102 abort – The Lili returns to Horham
(bad weather causes the operation to be delayed until next day)

July 25th, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)
(B-17 received “major” battle damage)
St. Lo - Tactical / Bomb German Lines

July 24, 1944

Heavy bombers are scheduled to participate in a US First Army offensive (Operation Cobra) penetrate the German defenses west of Saint-Lo and secure Coutances. 1,586 bombers and 671 fighters are dispatched. Bad weather causes the ground forces to delay the attack until the next day and cloud conditions cause 1,102 bombers to abort.

Of 909 B-17s, 343 hit the Periers/St Lo area and 35 hit the Granville railroad junction. 1 B-17 is lost and 70 damaged. 1 airman is killed in action, 1 wounded in action and 1 is missing in action. 109 of 677 B-24s bomb targets of opportunity including road intersections and rail lines. 2 B-24s are lost and 74 damaged. 1 airman is killed in action, 1 wounded in action and 20 missing in action.

Escort for the bombers is provided by 478 P-38s, P-47s and P-51s. Fighters claim 1-0-1 Luftwaffe aircraft in the air and 1-0-1 on the ground. 3 P-38s are lost (pilots are missing in action) and 1 P-47 is damaged beyond repair and 1 P-47 is damaged. 143 of 169 P-51s fly a sweep over Lechfeld and Leipheim Airfields in Germany and they claim 3-0-0 aircraft in the air and 12-0-16 on the ground. 2 P-51s are lost (pilots are missing in action), 1 damaged beyond repair and 6 damaged

7 of 7 B-17s drop leaflets in France during the night. 6 B-24s fly Carpetbagger missions (aerial supply of weapons and other material to French Resistance Fighters) in France during the night.

July 25, 1944

1,581 bombers and 500 fighters are dispatched to support a US First Army assault (Operation COBRA) with saturation bombing in the VII Corps area in the Marigny-Saint-Gilles region, just W of Saint-Lo; 5 bombers and 2 fighters are lost; 843 of 917 B-17s and 647 of 664 B-24s hit the Periers/St Lo area and 13 B-17s hit targets of opportunity; 1 B-17 and 4 B-24s are lost, 2 B-24s are damaged beyond repair and 41 B-17s and 132 B-24s are damaged; 9 airmen are WIA and 46 MIA. Escort is provided by 483 P-38s, P-47s and P-51s and also provide escort for Ninth Air Force B-26s; they claim 12-1-3 Luftwaffe aircraft in the air and 2-0-0 on the ground; 2 P-51s are lost (pilots are MIA) and 5 damaged. Due to a personnel error, bombs from 35 bombers fall within US lines; 102 US troops, including Lieutenant General Lesley J McNair, are killed and 380 wounded.

Operation Cobra

This is the first use of heavy bombers in a tactical role. Plan is to bomb troop concentrations on the Southwest side of the straight road (107 degrees E) between Periers and St. Lo. The

area is defined by a rectangle 1,500 yards wide by 3,500 yards long immediately parallel to the road. The weather is overcast and the target area is not readily visible. The bombers are to attack from 10,000 feet. It was assumed that the bombers would fly parallel to the road and bomb the length of the rectangle, however, because of the number of bombers in the formation it was decided by the 8th Air Force that the bombers would fly perpendicular to the rectangle.

Units of the First Army were poised just 800 to 1200 yards Northwest of the road ready to pounce upon the dazed Germans once the strike was completed. Because of the heavy overcast, Air Chief Marshal Trafford Leigh-Mallory, who was responsible for coordinating Allied strategic bombing in Normandy issued a recall order to the bomber stream, but too late to prevent 343 from dropping 685 tons of bombs. Some of the bombs fall short and land on units of the 30th Infantry Division, killing 27 soldiers and wounding 131 others. It was a truly tragic friendly-fire incident. Something my father never discussed.

Unfortunately on the next days mission, June 25th, another catastrophic error occurs, and the bombs from 35 bombers fall within US lines. 102 US troops are killed and 380 wounded, including Lieutenant General Leslie J. McNair, who was conducting observation along the front lines. He was the highest ranking officer to be killed in the European theater.

Operation Cobra seemingly repeats the bombing errors of the previous day and short-bomb the area again hitting the 30th Infantry Division. 9th AF fighters strafe German troop positions also. While killing many Germans these attacks tended to shroud the bombing zone with smoke and dust, thus, hampering the bombing barrage launched by 8th Air Force. The result was another tragic friendly-fire incident. 111 American soldiers were killed and another 490 were wounded.

Despite the American losses the ground attack proceeded at exactly 1100 hours and First Army made an 800 yard advance though the bombed out zone. 483 of 500 Fighters (mix of P-47s, P-38s and P-51s) from 8th Air Force also participate in the attack with strafing and bombing runs.

German Lt. Gen. Fritz Bayerlein, commander of the Panzer Lehr Division commented in his memoirs:

The bombers came as if on a conveyor belt. Back and forth the carpets were laid, artillery positions were wiped out, tanks overturned and buried, infantry positions flattened and all roads and track destroyed. By midday the entire area resembled a Mondlandschaft (moonscape), with bomb craters touching rim to rim. All signal communications had been cut and no command was possible. The shock effect on the troops was indescribable. Several of my men went mad and rushed round in the open until they were cut down by splinters. Simultaneously with the storm from the air, innumerable guns of American artillery pounded drum-fire into our positions. Over 70 percent of my soldiers were either dead, wounded, crazed or dazed.

Because of these so-called friendly-fire casualties, General Dwight Eisenhower forbids the use of heavy bombers in as a tactical support for ground troops for the remainder of the war. Something I am sure my father at the time was very grateful for.

Mission # 29
July 28, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)
(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)
Merseberg / Leuna Germany

1,057 bombers and 753 fighters are dispatched to bomb targets in Belgium, France and Germany. 7 bombers and 2 fighters are lost. 291 B-24s in 2 forces are dispatched to hit signal depots, fuel dumps and V-weapon supply sites and a bridge in Belgium and France but the forces are recalled because of cloud cover over the targets; the first force of 180 B-24s is dispatched to Northwest France V-weapon sites, fuel dumps and a railroad bridge. 1 B-24 is damaged beyond repair and 8 are damaged; 10 airmen are killed in action. Escort is provided by 235 P-47s and P-51s. 1 P-47 and 2 P-51s are damaged (pilots are listed as missing in action).

The second force of 111 B-24s is dispatched to hit Brussels and Vilvorde fuel and supply depots. 8 B-24s are damaged and escort is provided by 40 of 53 P-51s.

766 B-17s are dispatched to bomb the synthetic oil plant at Merseburg, Germany. 652 hit the primary while 36 hit Leipzig/Taucha oil refinery, 18 hit the Wiesbaden marshaling yards and 8 hit targets of opportunity. Bombers claim 1-2-1 Luftwaffe aircraft. 7 B-17s are lost and 217 damaged; 1 airman is killed in action, 7 are wounded in action and 67 are listed as missing in action. Escort is provided by 386 P-38s and P-51s. Fighters claim 4-1-1 Luftwaffe aircraft. 2 P-51s are lost and 3 are damaged. 3 pilots are missing in action.

An interesting side note to me, Lt. Gen. George S. Patton assumes command of 3rd Army on August 1st, 1944. 6 of 6 B-17s drop leaflets in France during the night.

Mission # 30
August 3rd, 1944
aboard the B-17 - The Doodle Bug (42-107047)
(B-17 received "extensive" battle damage)
Troyes, France

672 bombers and 352 fighters are dispatched to hit rail and other targets in the French/German border area and oil dumps and bridges SE of Paris. 6 bombers and 6 fighters are lost. Of 345 B-17s, 106 hit the Merkwille Oil Refinery, 68 hit Strasbourg marshaling yard, 62 hit Saarbrücken marshaling yard, 54 hit Mulhouse marshaling yard, 16 hit Toul/Croix de Metz Airfield, 11 hit a railroad near Saarbrücken and 6 hit targets of opportunity. Bombers claim 4-1-1 Luftwaffe aircraft. 6 B-17s are lost, 1 damaged beyond repair and 98 damaged. 9 airmen are killed in action, 9 wounded in action and 54 are listed as missing in action. Escort is provided by 175 of 200 P-51s. Fighters claim 6-0-0 aircraft in the air and 5-0-1 on the ground. 6 P-51s are lost (pilots are listed as missing in action).

Of 155 B-17s, 38 hit Troyes Bridge and 36 hit Joigny/La Roche Bridge. 11 B-17s are damaged. Escort is provided by 96 of 103 P-51s.

133 P-38s and P-47s fly fighter-bomber missions against rail traffic in the Metz-Strasbourg-Saarbrücken area. Fighters claim 1-0-0 aircraft in the air and 1-0-0 on the ground. 1 P-47 is lost.

Mission #31
August 6, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)
B-17 received “minor” battle damage
(Beginning of 10 day Shuttle Bombing Mission run – 4 missions)
Rahmel, Poland

In the USSR, a shuttle mission is flown in accordance with a Soviet request. The aircraft land in one of the Operation Frantic Russian bases at Poltava Airfield in the Ukraine.

The 95th Bomb Group was the only Eighth Air Force Group to be awarded three Distinguished Unit Citations. The first, shared by all four Bomb Wing Groups, was for the bombing of an aircraft factory under intense enemy fire at Regensburg on August 17th.

Operation Frantic missions continue with 75 of 78 B-17s hitting the Gdynia/Rahmel aircraft factories in Poland and proceeds to return to the airfield at Poltava. Bombers claim 0-2-2 aircraft. 23 B-17s are damaged. Escort is provided by 154 of 160 P-51s. Fighters claim 7-2-3 aircraft. 4 P-51s are lost and 1 is damage

Mission #32
August 7, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)
(B-17 received “minor” battle damage)
Shuttle Bombing Missions continue
Trzebina, Poland

In the USSR the Operation Frantic shuttle mission continue and one is flown in accordance with a Soviet request. 55 B-17s and 29 P-51s sent out from Poltava Airfield in the Ukraine to attack an oil refinery at Trzebina, Poland. No ships were lost. The aircraft return to Operation Frantic bases (Poltava Airfield) in the Ukraine.

Mission #33
August 8, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)
(B-17 received “extensive” battle damage)
Shuttle Bombing Missions continue)
Bazau, Romania

Shuttle missions continue as 78 B-17s with 55 P-51s escort, leave bases (Poltava for the 334th Squadron) in the Ukraine to hit air fields in Romania. 38 hit Buzau and 35 hit Zlistera. No Luftwaffe fighters are encountered during the mission and the force flies to the 15th Air Force field at Foggia, Italy.

The 95th Bomb Group was the only Eighth Air Force Group to be awarded three Distinguished Unit Citations. The first, shared by all four Bomb Wing Groups, was for the bombing of an aircraft factory under intense enemy fire at Regensburg on August 17th.

On a side note that would have interested my grandfather Frank back in 1944 was when Lt. Gen. George S. Patton assumed command of 3rd Army on August 1st, 1944.



Lt. Ernest Anders Erickson at Foggia Airfield in Italy during the 95th Bomb Group's Shuttle Missions (4 missions) August 1944

**Mission #34
August 12, 1944
aboard the B-17 - Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)
(B-17 received "extensive" battle damage)
Last leg of shuttle-bombing missions England - USSR - Italy - UK
Toulouse, France**

This is the last leg of the shuttle-bombing mission from England - USSR - Italy - England. Of the 72 B-17s taking off from 15th Air Force base in Foggia, Italy 3 B-17s have various problems and the others bomb Toulouse/Franczal Airfield in France and then proceed back to England. 62 P-51s (part of the shuttle-mission force) and 43 from England provide escort. No aircraft are lost. 70 B-17s and 58 P-51s land in England. 5 B-17s and 6 P-51s, either left in Italy or returning there during this mission, subsequently return to England.

6 of 6 B-17s drop leaflets in France during the night. 486 P-38s, P-47s and P-51s attack transportation targets in the Paris and Brussels areas. Fighters claim 5-0-0 aircraft in the air and 13-0-0 on the ground. 1 P-38s, 5 P-47s and 7 P-51s are lost (pilots are reported as missing in action). 220 P-47s and P-51s attack transportation targets in Northeast France. 2 P-51s are lost (pilots are reported as missing in action) and 3 are damaged beyond repair.



Lt. Ernest Anders Erickson receiving the Distinguished Flying Cross at Horham Airfield in June 1944. Presented Lt. Erickson by Colonel Karl Truesdell Jr.

Lt. Ernest Anders Erickson 35th and Final Mission

Mission #35

August 26, 1944

aboard the B-17 - Stand By / Goin' My Way (42-1072014)

(B-17 received minor - degrees of damage)

Brest, France

359 B-17s are dispatched to attack gun batteries in the Brest, France area. Targets are Brest/Pte de St Mathieu and coastal batteries at Kerandieu, Cornovailles, Brest/Ile Longue, Brest/Kerviniov and Brest/Ponscorf.

Targets of opportunity are Brest/Pte des Espagnoles II and Brest/Pte des Espagnoles III. 3 B-17s are damaged beyond repair and 4 damaged. 18 airmen are killed in action. Escort is provided by 48 of 49 P-51s. 1 P-51 is lost.

Final Flight & Mission of the Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085)

August 25, 1944

Albert Bishop Powell Jr. crew

Shot down over Rechlin, Germany and crashed into the woods near the villages of Schwankenheim, Wolfshorst and Schwabach, eight miles outside of Szczecin, Poland

Full story:

http://markerickson.com/Family_History/Ernest_Erickson/Lt.%20Ernest%20Anders%20Erickson-95thBG-334th%20Sq.pdf

The B-17 my father and crew most identified with as 'their ship' was the 'Lili of the Lamplight,' on which they flew fifteen of their thirty-five missions. Their last mission with the Lili, their 34th, was completed on August 12th, 1944. The crew spent the next ten days in London, on what my father referred to as 'flak leave.'

Luck was with my father and his crew, aboard the Lili of the Lamplight. The Lili's next crew was not so fortunate. On August 25th, 1944, 13 days after Ernest and his crew flew their last mission on the Lili of the Lamplight, the ship took off from Horham with another crew onboard, piloted by Albert Bishop Powell Jr.

Pilot - 2nd Lt. Albert B. Powell Jr. - Daytona Beach, Florida - POW
CoPilot - 2nd Lt. William C. Connor - Los Angeles, California - POW
Navigator - 2nd Lt. Donald W. Overdorff - York, Pennsylvania - POW
Bombardier - 2nd Lt. Phillip F. Whalen - Canton, Ohio - POW
Waist Gunner - Staff Sgt. Eldred W. Steffens - Greeley, Colorado - POW
Radio Operator - Staff - Sgt. Peppe J. Delio - Ashland, Kentucky - POW
Ball Turret Gunner - Staff Sgt. Orlin E. Covell - Canandaigua, New York - KIA
Waist Gunner - Staff Sgt. Henry W. Schneider - Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania - POW
Tail Gunner - Staff Sgt. Melvin F. Wilhelm - Toledo, Ohio - KIA
Air Corps Photographer - Sgt. Berton E. Briley - Wilson, Oklahoma - KIA

The Lili of the Lamplight (44-6085) was flying in formation alongside other heavy bombers of the 334th Squadron, targeting the Hydriewerke synthetic petrol factory near Politzan der Oder, a town in Central Pomerania, which is now a district of Poland. Also targeted were sites near Rechlin, Germany, where the Germans had converted an airport into a secret research center for the Luftwaffe.

The Messerschmitt Me-262 fighter was conceived and designed there. The Me-262 nicknamed 'Schwalbe,' or 'Swallow' in English was the fighter version, the 'Sturmvogel' or 'Storm Bird' was the powerful fighter-bomber model. It was the world's first operational jet-powered fighter. Design work started in the mid-late 1930s, but engine problems and Hitler's interest in bomber production kept the aircraft from operational use with the Luftwaffe until mid-1944. The Me 262 was faster, and more heavily-armed than any British or American fighter.

One of the most advanced aviation designs in use during the war, the Me 262 was used in a variety of roles, including a light bomber, reconnaissance, and an experimental night fighter-bomber. Flying into a concentrated "flak" field, the Lili took innumerable hits and two engines began to sputter. Trailing smoke but still flying steady, the bomber took a direct hit to the No. 3 engine's fuel tank. A

massive explosion sheered off a large part of the wing and the ship was in serious trouble. The pilots had previously attempted to evade the flak bursts by pulling out of formation and turning

right. Controls now became useless, and the ship went into a free-fall.

The pilot and crew were hopelessly fighting to correct catastrophic problems throughout the ship. In the final moments, the men began to bail out as the ship was spiraling out of control, in a rapid descent. Splitting apart, the Lili in its last seconds violently hurtled into the woods near the villages of Schwankenheim, Wolfshorst and Schwabach, eight miles outside of Szczecin, Poland, some seventy-five miles from where the ship first came under-fire. Three crew members and a 95th Bomb Group photographer onboard the mission were killed. Over the next three days, the other seven crewmen were captured by the Germans, spending the duration of the war in a POW camp. The first-hand reports of the crew that I received from a very generous researcher in Poland, who found them in the Luftwaffe files, give a vivid account of what happened onboard during those last minutes of the mission. Four of the survivors, including pilot Albert Bishop Powell Jr., gave testimony describing this last mission of the 'Lili of the Lamplight.' Their words are direct and unnerving. Some are purely surreal.

One of the crew members wrote:

The plane broke into at least three parts: The nose, the pilot's compartment and the rest of the plane. The nose was falling in free spin, the bombardier and another crew member were still in the fuselage area. Both at the same time spotted an opening and headed out to that point to bail out. As they approached the opening an explosion threw them clear of the ship. Their chutes opened. The pilot, co-pilot and navigator were in the pilot's compartment. After the plane broke off at bomb bay doors, all three bailed out at the vast opening that appeared behind the pilot's compartment. The side gunner was near bomb bay at the time the plane split in thirds and he bailed out from there. His chute opened. The tail gunner was blown out of the plane unconscious and came to in mid-air, pulled his rip cord and landed safely by chute. He told me this when we met later at Lucky Strike (POW) camp in France.

Another crew member wrote:

The airplane lost a wing and dropped several thousand feet and then disintegrated. Those of us still living were thrown out. The ball turret gunner was either killed by flak or could not get out of ball turret. I never saw him again. The third enlisted man recalled, The ship suffered a direct hit below No. 3 engine. Being in the position of the ball turret gunner made it difficult for him to abandon ship as the direct hit on No. 3 hit the main fuel tank and that exploded, taking the wing off almost immediately. I do not think he ever made it out. After a drop of several thousand feet the ship began to disintegrate.

Pilot Albert Bishop Powell Jr. gave this chilling final report:

When the ship was hit we managed to hold it in a slow turn to the right losing altitude at approximately 700 to 1000 feet per minute. We could not gain control of the ship. At this point I called for the crew to bail out. For thirty-eight seconds, I got no answer from any of the crew.

Finally, one of the gunners responded, asking,

"Did you say to bail out, sir?"

I responded, "Get out now! We are trying to hold steady, but I don't think we can. Get out!" That was the end of the conversation.

These passages opened my eyes to the dangers my father faced every time he took off from Horham and headed east over Nazi occupied Europe. Today, we can look back on those missions as seen through the jittery lens of an onboard gun camera, or the newsreel footage originally shown in movie houses during the war. Those films tell the story in black and white. The words of the crew members, describing their final moments aboard an airplane spiraling uncontrollably toward the ground, perhaps more vividly describe the terrifyingly real dangers which faced the bomber crews on every mission.

**95th Bombardment Group (Heavy) - 13th Combat Bombardment Wing
3rd Bombardment Division - Horham Air field - England
June 15, 1943 - August 6, 1945**

The 95th trained in B-17's in preparing for duty overseas and moved to England between march and May of 1943. Assigned to the 8th Air Force and entered combat on the 13th of May, 1943 by attacking an air field at St. Omer, France. During the next two months, made repeated attacks against V-weapon sites and air fields in France. Began bombing strategic objectives in Germany in July of 1943 and engaged bombing operations until V-E Day. Targets included harbors, industries, marshaling yards, and cities.

Received a DUC for maintaining a tight defensive formation in spite of severe assault by enemy fighters and bombing the aircraft assembly plant at Regensburg on the 17th of August 1943. Withstanding concentrated attacks by fighters during the approach to the target and intense anti-aircraft fire directly over the objective, the group effectively bombarded marshaling yards at Munster on the 10th of October 1943. The 95th was awarded a DUC for the performance. Participated in the intensive campaign of heavy bombers against the German aircraft industry during Big Week, the 20th through the 25th of February 1944.

The 95th also received another DUC for action during an attack by AAF bombers on Berlin on the 4th of March 1944. While many participating organizations, because of weather conditions, either abandoned the operation or struck other targets, the 95th proceeded to Berlin and successfully bombed a suburb of the German capital despite snowstorms, dense clouds, and severe enemy attack. The group interrupted its strategic operations to strike coastal defenses and communications during the invasion of Normandy in June of 1944.

The 95th hit enemy troop concentrations and thus assisted the Allied breakthrough at St. Lo in July of 1944. The dropped ammunition, food, and medical supplies to Polish troops in Warsaw on the 18th of September 1944. The 95th attacked enemy transportation during the Battle of the Bulge in December of 1944 through January of 1945. They also bombed airdromes in support of the Allied assault across the Rhine in March of 1945. The 95th flew its last combat mission, an attack on marshaling yards at Oranienburg, Germany on the 20th of April 1945. The 95th dropped food to the Dutch during the first week in May of 1945. After V-E Day, they transported liberated prisoners and displaced persons from Austria to France and England. The 95th returned to the states in June through August 1945. The 95th was deactivated on the 28th August 1945.



**Lt. Ernest Anders Erickson at Foggia Airfield in Italy during the
95th Bomb Group's Shuttle Missions (4 missions) August 1944**

just the same, Thanks
to Brother Frank,



E. J. Prichard