

1946

The story of the 73rd: the unofficial history of the 73rd Bomb Wing

United States Army Air Forces

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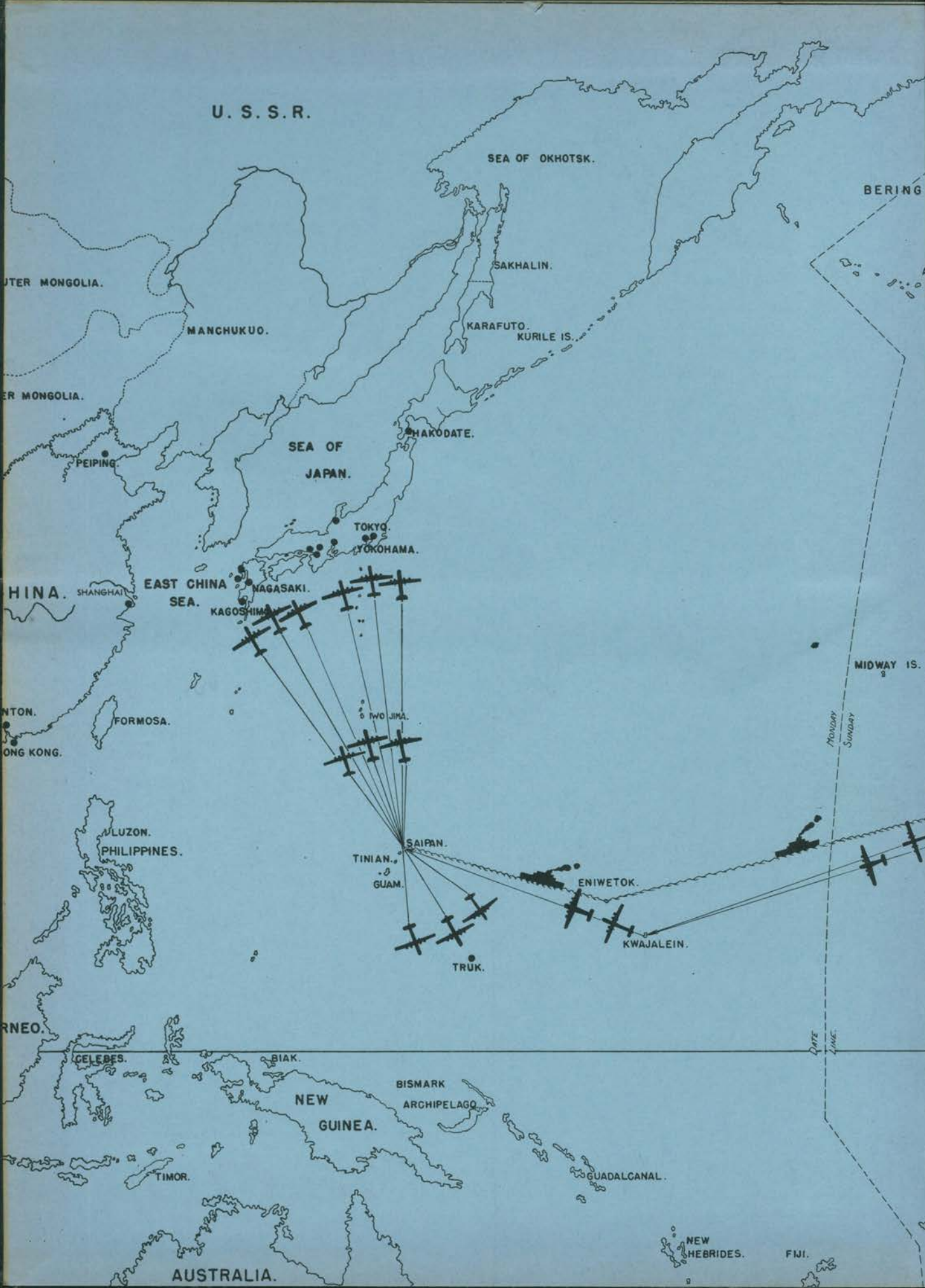
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73RD WING



U. S. S. R.

SEA OF OKHOTSK.

BERING

UTER MONGOLIA.

SAKHALIN.

MANCHUKUO.

KARAFUTO.
KURILE IS.

ER MONGOLIA.

SEA OF
JAPAN.

HAKODATE.

PEIPING

TOKYO.

YOKOHAMA.

HINA.

SHANGHAI

EAST CHINA
SEA.

NAGASAKI.

KAGOSHIMA

NTON.

FORMOSA.

ONG KONG.

MIDWAY IS.

Marianas
Sunday

LUZON.

PHILIPPINES.

SAIPAN.

TINIAN.

GUAM.

IWO JIMA.

ENIWETOK.

KWAJALEIN.

TRUK.

RNEO.

CELEBES.

BIAK.

NEW
GUINEA.

BISMARK

ARCHIPELAGO

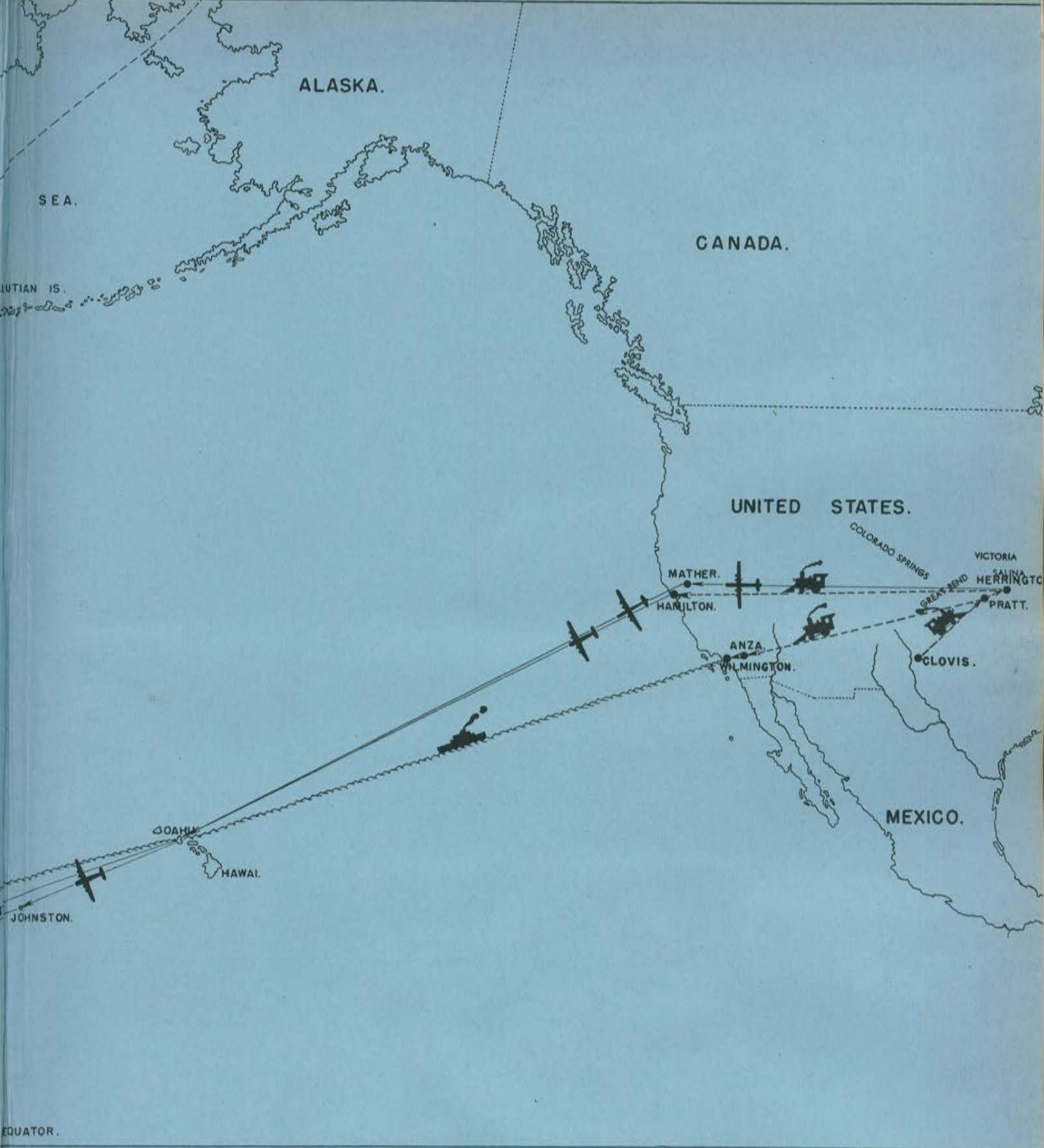
GUADALCANAL.

TIMOR.

AUSTRALIA.

NEW
HEBRIDES.

FJI.



CLOVIS to TOKYO

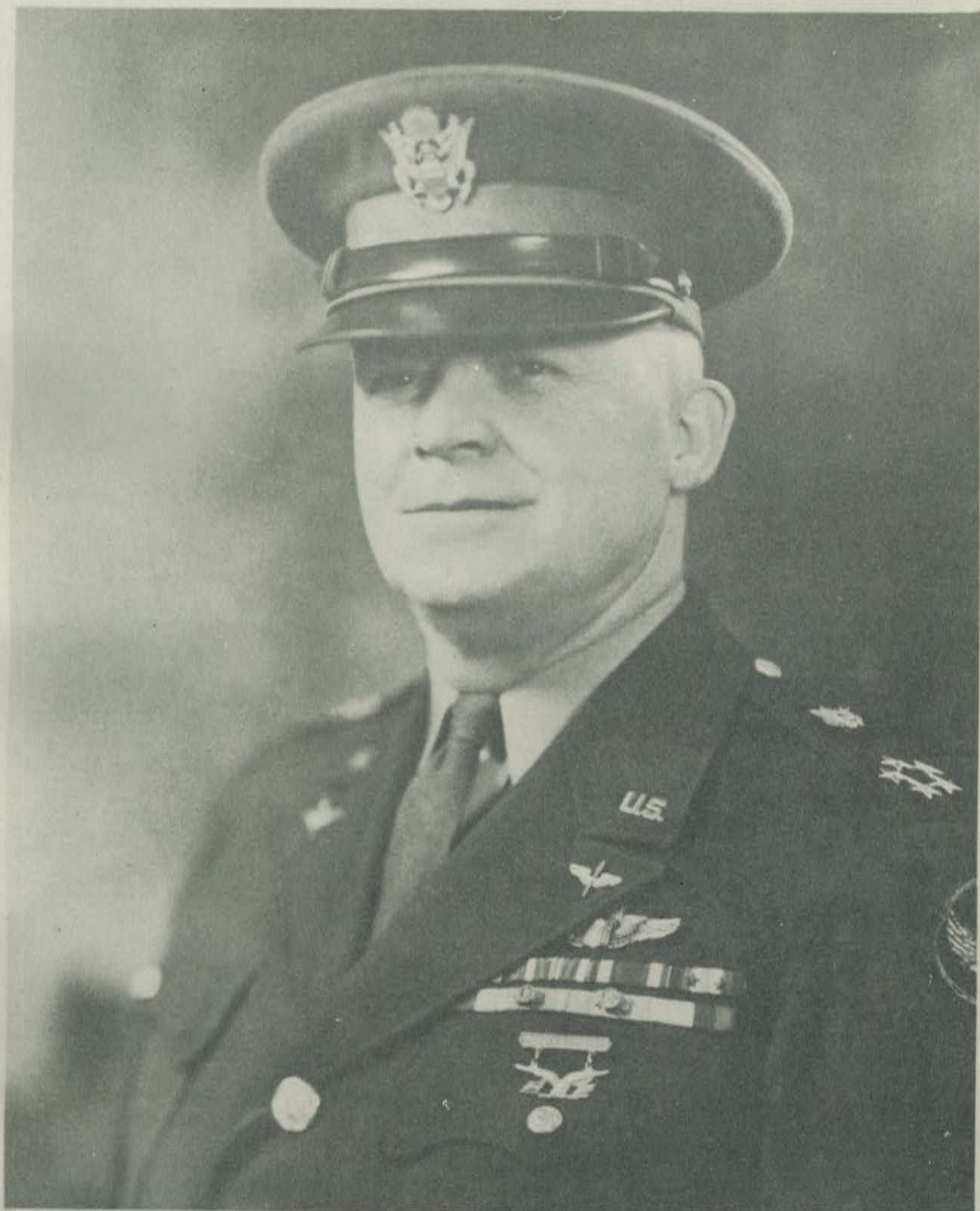
the STORY
of the...

73rd



WANDER
LIBRARY

The Unofficial History of the 73rd Bomb Wing



To "Big, gen" Rosie O'Donnell - and officers
& men of the 73rd Army
Good luck & best wishes for dropping
more & better bombs on the Japs -
W. Arnold

Wanna Boast?

Tons of bombs dropped on all targets (65% incendiaries)	48,532
Tons of bombs dropped on Tokyo	8,508
Tons of bombs dropped on Nagoya	5,938
Tons of bombs dropped on Osaka	5,268
Tons of bombs dropped on Kobe	2,369
Total combat sorties flown	9,894
Enemy aircraft attacks	7,663
Enemy aircraft destroyed	436
Enemy aircraft probably destroyed	239
Enemy aircraft damaged	422
Enemy aircraft casualties per 100 attacks	14.3
Total hours flown (88 per cent combat)	155,545
Average bomb load per aircraft (July)	14,810
Total engines removed	1,628
Average hours per engine removed	275:28

The Cost

Total aircraft lost (including 37 war wearies)	182
Total aircraft battle damaged	1,044

Personnel Casualties

Killed	69
Missing	964
Wounded	138
Total Casualties	1171
Crew members known to have ditched at sea	709
Crew members rescued (40%)	285

(Quoted from Wing Stat's "Summary of Operations" published in August 1945)



Brig. General Emmett O'Donnell, Wing Commander, at the controls of a B-29 over Saipan

Foreword

The record of the 73d Wing is one of which we are all justly proud. Faced at the start with the serious difficulties and limitations incident to the introduction of a new weapon into a new theater of action, the Wing reduced its obstacles to dust and emerged a battle-scarred but proud and strong organization.

It is no secret that the B-29 effort from the Marianas brought the Japs to terms. Even before the dropping of the first atomic bomb, the early and decisive defeat of our enemy was assured through the destruction of the fifty most important Japanese cities and their included industries, by the wide-ranging and hard-hitting 20th Air Force.

The 73d Wing shouldered one-third of this magnificent effort—flew one-third of the total number of missions—dropped one-third of the bombs and suffered one-third of the casualties. Its sacrifices in the early days before the acquisition of Iwo Jima as an intermediary base, paved the way for the final victory.

Our comrades who failed to return caused us anguish and grief. That their sacrifice was not in vain is evidenced by the fact that the B-29 assault made unnecessary an invasion of Japan with its estimated one million attendant American casualties. I wish it were possible for all to read the responses to my inadequate letters of condolence from their bereaved wives and mothers. While each received the bitter news with the deepest sorrow, all assured me of their fervent prayers for our continued success and ultimate victory. Those letters, containing the reactions to sorrow and sacrifice of a true cross section of our people, are sufficient to make me believe that the United States will emerge from these troubled times triumphantly.

To those who fought and died and to those who must struggle on against the travails of this earth without their loved ones, we humbly dedicate this volume.

Emmett O'Donnell
EMMETT O'DONNELL
Brig. General, U.S.A.



Introduction

Before leaving Saipan a number of men with the 73rd Wing and its units expressed a hope that some sort of a history of our organization would be published and made available to all Wing personnel. The Wing historical officer seemed the logical person to do this since he had handled the official history of the Wing which is now on file in Washington. In response to this demand, as well as to other requests received since returning to the States, this volume is prepared. While material in the book is partly borrowed from the official history, it is mostly written and collected now after a few months in the States have mellowed our memories of the Marianas.

The 73rd Wing, as a whole, was a homogeneous, hard-working organization. Its personnel were cooperative with one another and did a tremendous piece of work on and from Saipan. The Wing was not only the first 20th Air Force organization to hit Tokyo but it also dropped the largest number of bombs on the Japanese Empire and flew the most missions of any of the 20th's five wings.

To the 15,000 men who went through the months on Saipan, those months were long and hard. While these men may not have actually been in the front lines, the Wing's casualty list of both men and airplanes show that we were a fighting organization. Also our living conditions were far from comfortable most of the time. Our food was sometimes inferior and our quarters were not too good. We were subject to Japanese raids during the early part of the period. Nevertheless, our memories of Saipan will always be close to us.

While this volume is written primarily from the point of view of the Wing Headquarters itself it should be of interest to all personnel of the Wing's organizations. After all, the Wing did operate as a single unit from Saipan and the groups never did operate independently. The statistics and figures included have to do with the Wing operation as a whole rather than any particular organization. This history will necessarily lack the personal touch that the story of a smaller unit might have. Personalities are pretty much lost in the over-all picture.

These 73rd Wing organizations included the four tactical groups—the 497th, the 498th, the 499th and the 500th Bombardment Groups. Also there were the four Air Service Groups—the 65th, 91st, 303rd and 330th. Without these maintenance and engineering specialists and the Service Centers they manned, the Wing would surely have failed.

Then there were the 880th and 887th Chemical Companies (Air Operations) that handled our incendiary bombs. Burned Japanese cities attested their efficiency. The 323rd Signal Company Wing made communications easy for us because of its own innate ability.

Two other smaller organizations also made noteworthy contributions. The 435th Aviation Squadron did wonders with jackhammers as well as easier equipment. While the 435th was not actually assigned to the 73rd, it worked so closely with us that it was practically a part of the Wing. The 558th AAF Band kept our morale high with its concerts and parades. Also the Band gave us stature as a military organization.

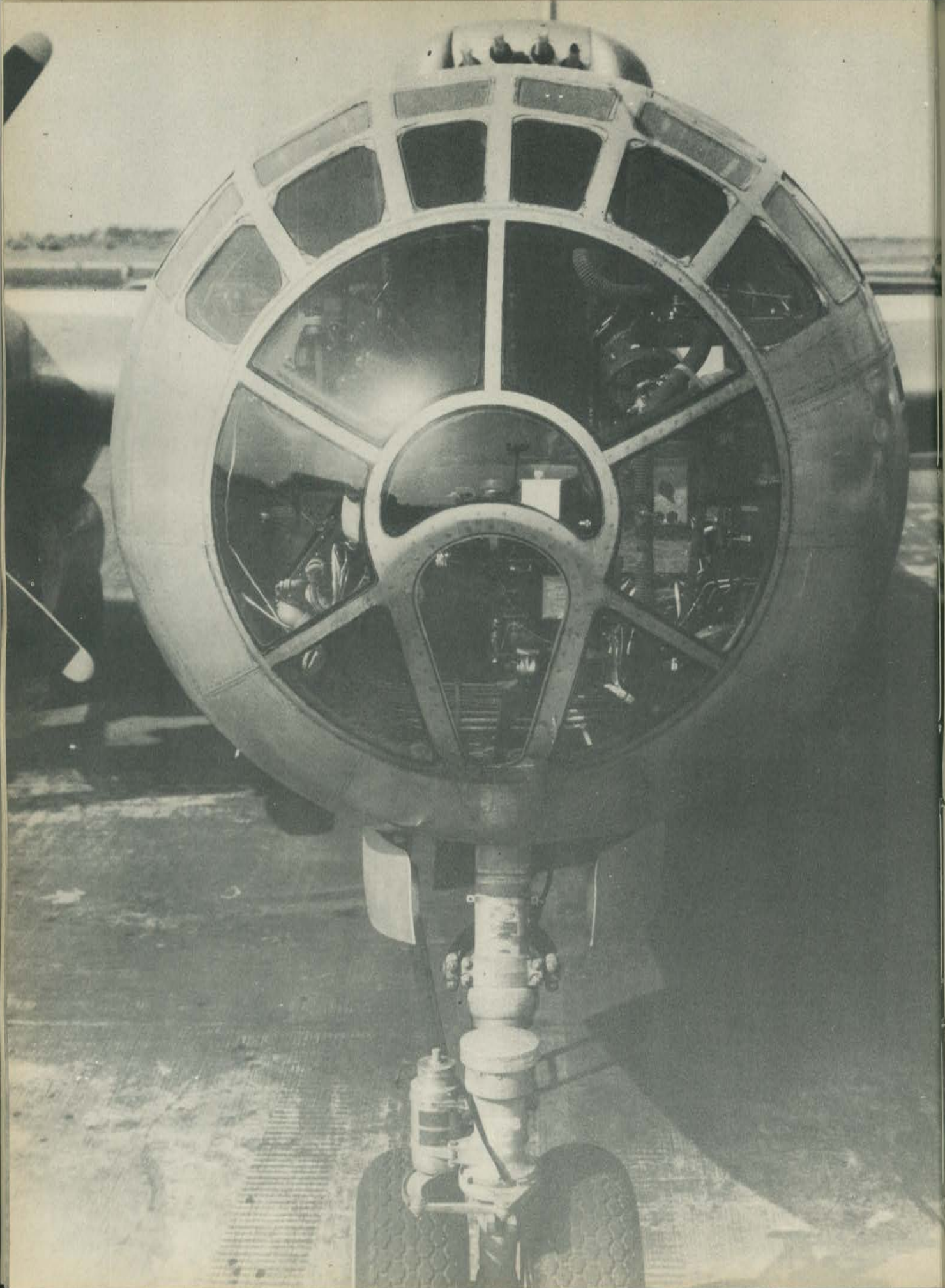
The contribution of Lieutenant Lane and his 237th Army Postal Unit in getting our mail to us cannot be judged by the small size of the unit. It can only be estimated from the morale improvement experienced after receipt of mail.

It is to all the men of the Wing from General O'Donnell to the most recent replacement private to join us that this volume is addressed. Its author is aware that many pictures that might well be included are left out and that much material of interest to many has been omitted. In extenuation I can only plead that some negatives and records have been lost or are now unavailable. Also the book had to be kept in a comparatively small compass for so ambitious an undertaking as a combat Wing history.

Joseph T. Davis

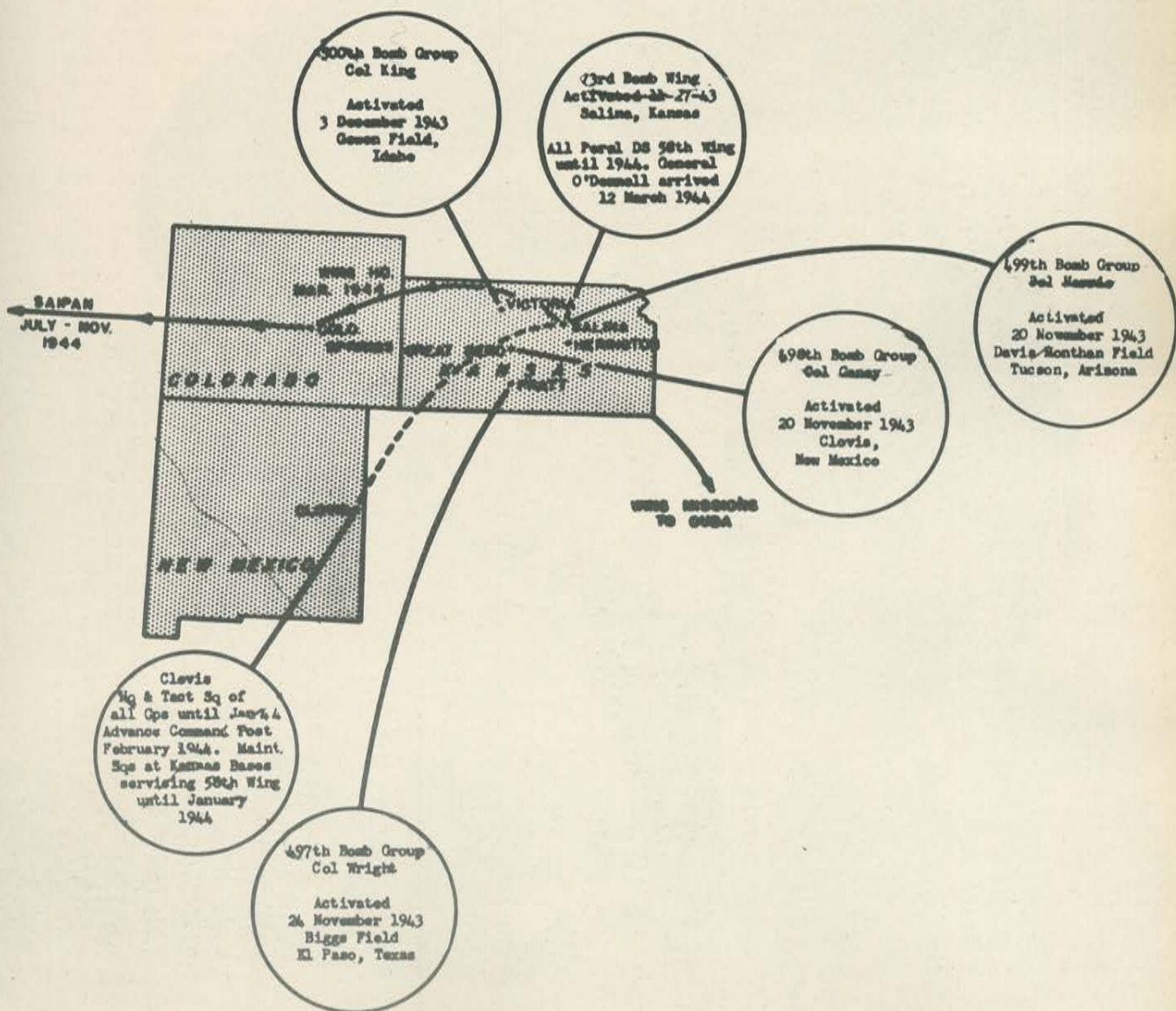
Joseph T. Davis
Captain, Air Corps

Carlisle Barracks, Penna.
December 15, 1946



PART I

Before Combat





General O'Donnell in the early days



Col. Chapman — Our first Wing Commander

CHAPTER I

Salina Period

The 73rd Bombardment Wing (VH) was activated in Salina, Kansas on November 24, 1943. This activation was necessitated by the growth of the B-29 project to a point where the old 58th Wing was no longer large enough to handle all the B-29 groups. The 20th Bomber Command was activated at the same time and that Command became the higher echelon for both the 58th and the 73rd.

In December of 1943, the 73rd did nothing but accumulate personnel. This personnel was partly overages from the 58th Wing and the 20th Command and most were men who had been overseas in all the various fighting air forces and had returned to a tour in the 2nd Air Force. All were most eager to get into the very heavy program and were pleased with their assignment. As a result of this, there was great enthusiasm in the new Wing.

The number—73rd—came from the old 73rd Bombardment Operational Training Wing which had formerly existed at Salina and had been deactivated. On the first of December the Wing Headquarters was actually set up in a corner of one of the new Bomber Command offices with Technical Sergeant Horace A. Blagg as the entire Wing Headquarters enlisted personnel—and he was only part-time.

On that day the morning report started with the statement, "No personnel yet asgd." One might wonder, looking at such a morning report, who had typed the morning report for the date in question. One might wonder even more, on glancing over the morning reports for the next week, since all read just like the first one. The explanation is that Sergeant Blagg was not really assigned as yet but was only borrowed. The 73rd, then, started with a borrowed part-time clerk at a borrowed desk in someone else's office.

The first Wing Commander, Colonel Thomas H. Chapman, had already been assigned but was actually away from Salina at this time attending to the mysterious business that always arises with the birth of a new army unit.

On the fourteenth of December, a new building was nearly enough completed for Colonel



Deputy Wing Commander—Col. Sweeney



Lt. Col. Donald McDonald—Wing A-4



EM in first A-2 Section Sgt. Noss, Pfc. McMann, Cpl. Patrick, Pfc. Neitzel, M/Sgt. Reel.

Chapman and Major Love, who was acting adjutant, to move into it. Carpenters were still working in most of the rooms of the building so only these two rooms were actually occupied before New Year's. Throughout December the organization of the Wing moved forward—at least on paper. A plethora of officers was assigned and they held temporary jobs as acting or assistant section heads for a while and then moved again. Many of these temporary section heads were actually destined for the various groups.

All four of the Wing's bombardment groups had been activated by the same 2nd Air Force General Order (Number 176) which activated the Wing Headquarters. These groups were the 497th at Biggs Field, El Paso, Texas, the 498th at Clovis Army Air Field in New Mexico, the 499th at Davis-Monthan Field in Tucson, Arizona, and the 500th at Gowan Field, Boise, Idaho. All four of the groups, on activation, had four bombardment squadrons and four bombardment maintenance squadrons. Also each group had a photo lab.



First Wing Statistics Office, Cpl. Innis, Pfc. Blumenschine, S/Sgt. Rymzo, Lt. Owens.



First Wing Adjutant's Office, Capt. O'Rourke, Lt. Col. Morris, M/Sgt. Blagg.

Throughout the period that the Wing Headquarters was in Salina, this organization was maintained. Each of the groups had a group commander who changed frequently—in some cases daily—and almost no other personnel. Only the 499th had its permanent commander—Colonel Wiley D. Ganey—in this early period. He assumed command on the seventh of February.

The bombardment maintenance squadrons of all four groups were assigned directly to the four Kansas bases of Pratt, Great Bend, Victoria and Salina, where the four groups were to train after the departure of the 58th Wing for India. This gave the maintenance personnel of the 73rd an excellent opportunity to secure valuable training by working on the 58th's planes.

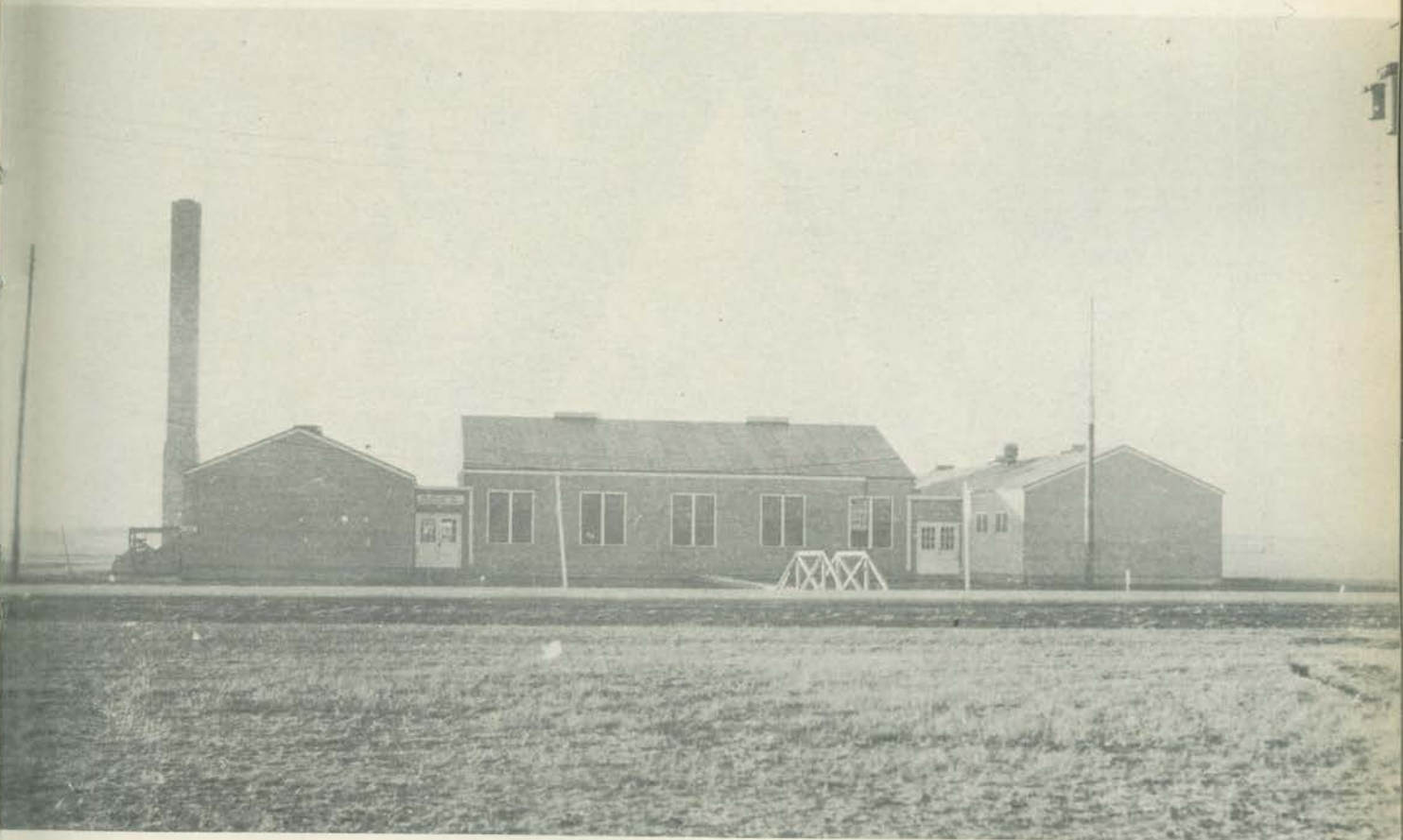


Lt. Hellman, Wing Photo Officer had plenty of equipment in the States.

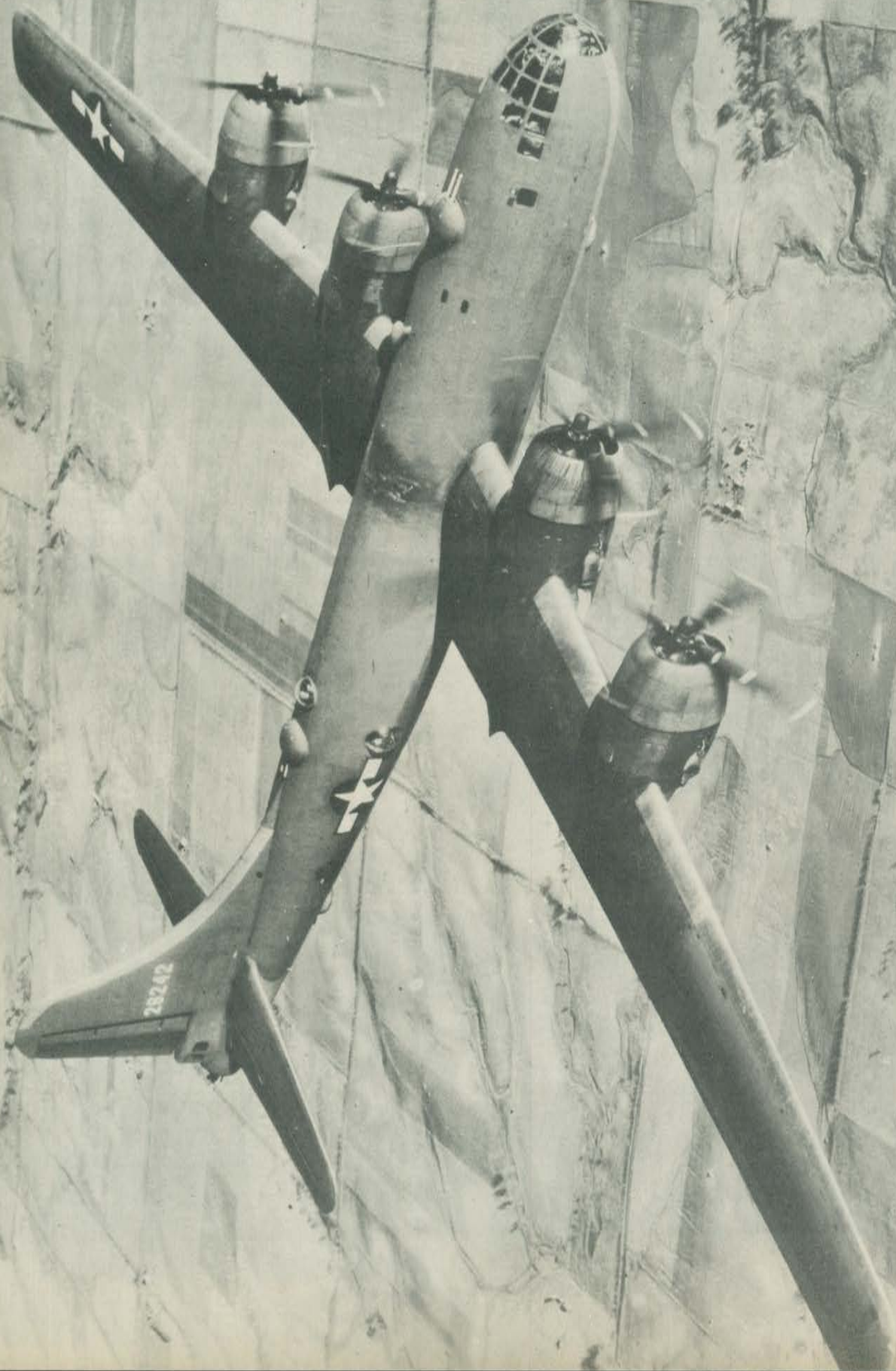
The Wing and all its units spent practically full time attempting to reach table of organization strength during the first quarter of 1944. On March fifteenth, Brigadier General Emmett O'Donnell assumed command of the Wing when it was relinquished by Colonel Chapman. The coming of the General added much to the unit's importance as a combat Wing.

In February, an advance command post of the Wing had been set up in Clovis where all personnel of all four groups had been concentrated. Housing conditions were very bad in Clovis and were especially aggravated by the large numbers there. Some training, especially ground school, was begun in Clovis but conditions were not favorable to a real training program. The 58th Wing had virtually left the Kansas bases by the end of March so our groups began moving to them.

Also at the end of March the need for better liaison between the 2nd Air Force and the 73rd Wing Headquarters had become so great that the Wing Headquarters was ordered to move to Colorado Springs where 2nd Air Force Headquarters was located. On March 27, the Wing closed its offices in Salina.



73rd and 58th Wings' first Headquarters



CHAPTER 2



THE Colorado Springs

PERIOD

The change of Wing Headquarters location to Colorado Springs on March 28, 1944 was very pleasing to Wing personnel. The Headquarters staff was delighted with the fine living conditions at the Springs. The city and its environs had among the finest equipment for entertainment, both convivial and athletic, that any army post could possibly want—especially at such places as the Broadmoor Hotel. Since there were not enough suitable quarters on the post, most of the officers and many enlisted men lived in civilian homes. This gave us a last taste of American home life before going overseas.

Also the actual professional reason for our moving to Colorado Springs—so that we might have better liaison with the 2nd Air Force—did make our work easier. While the difficulty of reaching our own groups through channels sometimes made us wish we might have stayed in Kansas where liaison with those groups would have been simpler; it was possible for us to have conferences in Colorado Springs. This pleased group staff personnel since it gave them an opportunity to see some of the magnificent Colorado scenery and to visit some of the places of note in the area.

Since the 58th Wing's groups had completely left the Kansas fields early in April for larger fields in India, it was possible for the 73rd's groups to complete their moves to the Kansas bases. When the groups moved from Clovis, the 497th went to Pratt, the 498th to Great Bend, the 499th to Salina and the 500th to Victoria. These movements were all carried out with ease unusual in such mass military movements.

By the time our groups arrived in Kansas, they found that the maintenance personnel had had considerable experience working on the 58th's planes and so a flying training program could be started immediately. Most of the crew members



Colorado Springs HQ sign

of the groups were glad to be able to fly regularly again.

In April the group reorganizations were started and soon Colonel Stuart P. Wright was in command of the 497th, Colonel Samuel R. Harris of the 499th and Colonel Richard T. King, Jr. of the 500th. The fact that colonels were now in command of all of the groups, instead of just the 498th, gave them more authority and greater standing as organizations. The various new commanders immediately went to work on reorganizing their groups.

In addition to the new colonels in command of the groups, Wing Headquarters received Colonel George E. Schaetzel who became A-4 and Colonel Byron E. Brugge as A-3. Later both men were elevated to be Deputy Chiefs of Staff, when that office was introduced in a later new re-organization. These men both reached the Headquarters with considerable experience and they still further increased the prestige of the Wing.

During the Colorado Springs period of the Wing history, reorganization after reorganization based on almost constant changes in the table of organization kept everyone in a turmoil and low-

ered morale considerably. This led to constant uneasiness. The most important change to the Wing as a whole was the reorganization of groups when they changed over from four bombardment squadrons and four bombardment maintenance squadrons each to just three tactical squadrons each. These squadrons combined the personnel of the maintenance squadrons with that of the bombardment squadrons. The former table of organization had called for seven airplanes per squadron, making a total of 28 to each group while the new number of airplanes was ten per squadron or 30 to a group so actually the size of the groups in both personnel and equipment was about the same or a little larger than before.

Throughout its training period the entire B-29 program had some difficulty with morale since so many of the men in the program had had considerable combat time overseas and they disliked having to go through further training in the States. However, they found the training bearable when they could see progress being made. Our personnel suffered considerably in the early months of 1944 from sheer ennui since so many of us had no airplanes to fly and not too good a ground school



Headquarters, Colorado Springs and part of Pikes Peak

Champ



871st Squadron engines run 400 hours without a change—August 1944

Clovis Chicken...



882nd Sq. with Maj. Van Tright Commanding



4/6/44—EM of 884th Sq. with Capt. Cordray in Command

to attend and a variety of "chicken" to endure. During this time the Wing directed that all personnel be given leaves or furloughs as soon as possible so that these leaves or furloughs would be over by the middle of the summer and would not interfere with the latter part of the training program. An opportunity to go home for a short time pleased everyone.

The months of May and June were good months for the 73rd Wing. Training, both aerial and ground, progressed most satisfactorily. The only real difficulty was insufficient radar equipment in the B-29s, which prevented the completion of a lot of training missions, but the flying time was kept at a high level.

Wing headquarters received its first official intimation of its eventual movement overseas on the second of May when warning orders arrived from the 2nd Air Force. This was welcome news to the entire staff as well as to the personnel of all the groups. It resulted not only in improved morale but also in increased interest in both training and overseas processing.

The first Wing conference and Wing Ding took place on June 1 at the Officers' Club of the 2nd Air Force Headquarters in Colorado Springs. This conference, as well as the later ones held at the various Kansas bases, was planned not only as a social get-together of all the groups' staff officers but also for the transaction of some gen-

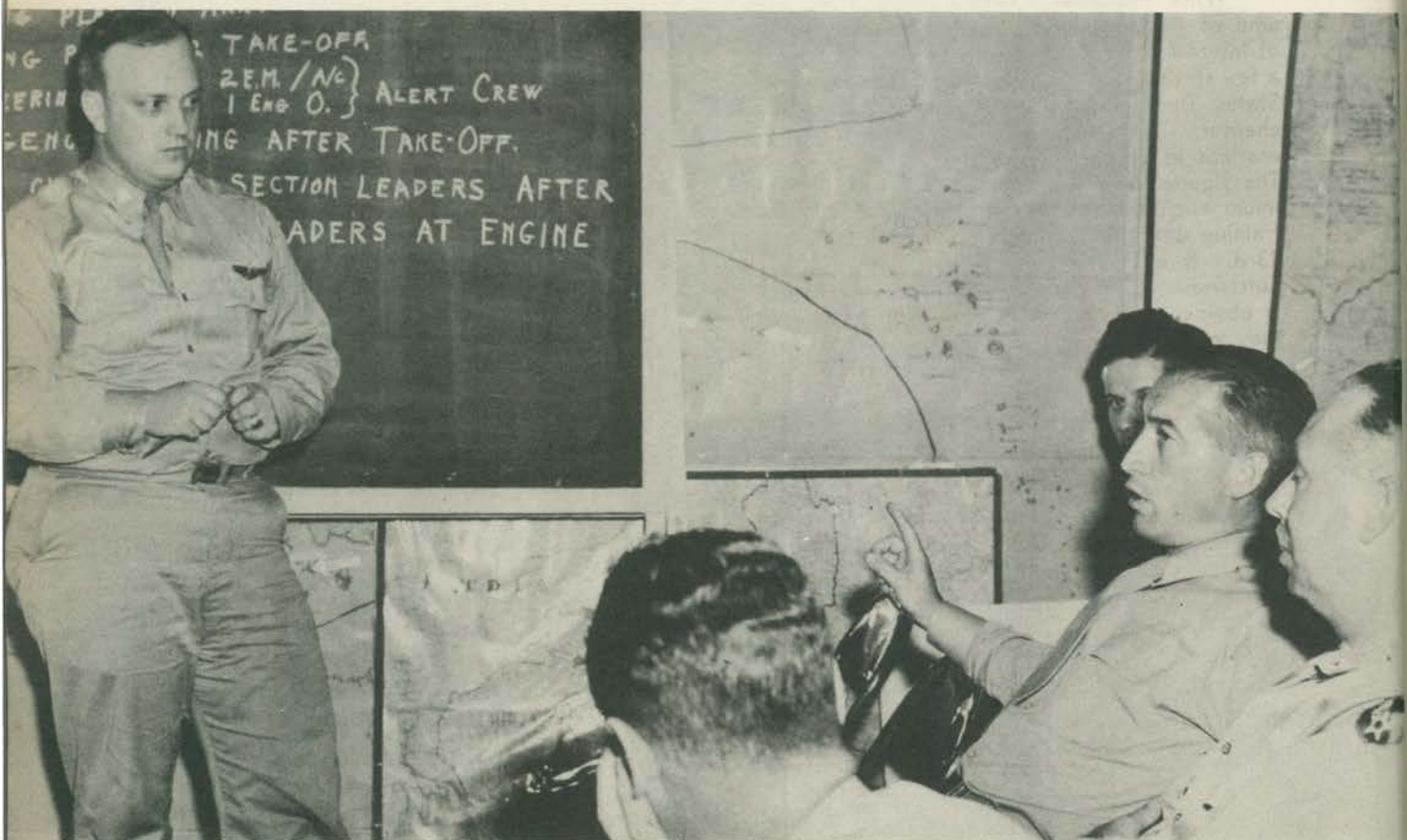
eral Wing business and a conference on Wing policies. These functions led to a better acquaintanceship among the officers doing various types of work in the different groups and their opposite numbers in other groups. This gave the organizations in the Wing a feeling of Wing solidarity and esprit de corps.

Just after the first Wing Ding, the announcement of the addition of the air service groups to the Wing was made. All four of them—the 65th, the 91st, the 303rd and the 330th were to remain at Tinker Field in Oklahoma City until they departed for overseas service. The reason for assigning these particular air service groups to the 73rd was to give the Wing the highest possible experience level of maintenance and engineering personnel. There were other less experienced service groups at the Kansas bases who were actually taking care of our service problems at that time.

A little later in June, the divorce of the 73rd Wing and its units from the 20th Bomber Command became a matter of record when the 2nd Air Force announced it. Next the 21st Bomber Command was activated at Peterson Field and the 73rd became the first wing of that command.

So far as activity in Kansas and Colorado was concerned, July was a month of routine training for the Wing. Much overseas processing was also completed.

In August, the outstanding event was the



Lt. Col. Beightol, A-3, briefs the General, Headquarters Situation Room in Colorado Springs, August 23



Col. Harris, C. O., 499th Bomb Group—April 1944



Col. Brugge, of Wing Headquarters—lost over Tokyo later



Col. Schaetzel of Wing Headquarters

mission to Batista, Cuba. This mission was reasonably successful although bad weather caused considerable difficulty with the planes not being able to return to their bases so for a few days the Wing had planes scattered all over the eastern part of the United States.

While numerous statistics would make a volume of this type boresome reading, it might be of interest to Wing personnel to be able to quote a few statistics on Wing training before leaving the States. Therefore, the table below is added to this chapter. This is quoted from the Summary of Operations as prepared by Wing Statistical Control. The figures show a comparison between the minimum required to complete the 2nd Air Force training directive and the average per crew of the 73rd. It is cumulative until October sixth. The outstanding deficiency was in radar bombing. It is obvious that our crews were well trained when they went overseas.

REPORT OF AIR TRAINING

Cumulative to 6 October 1944

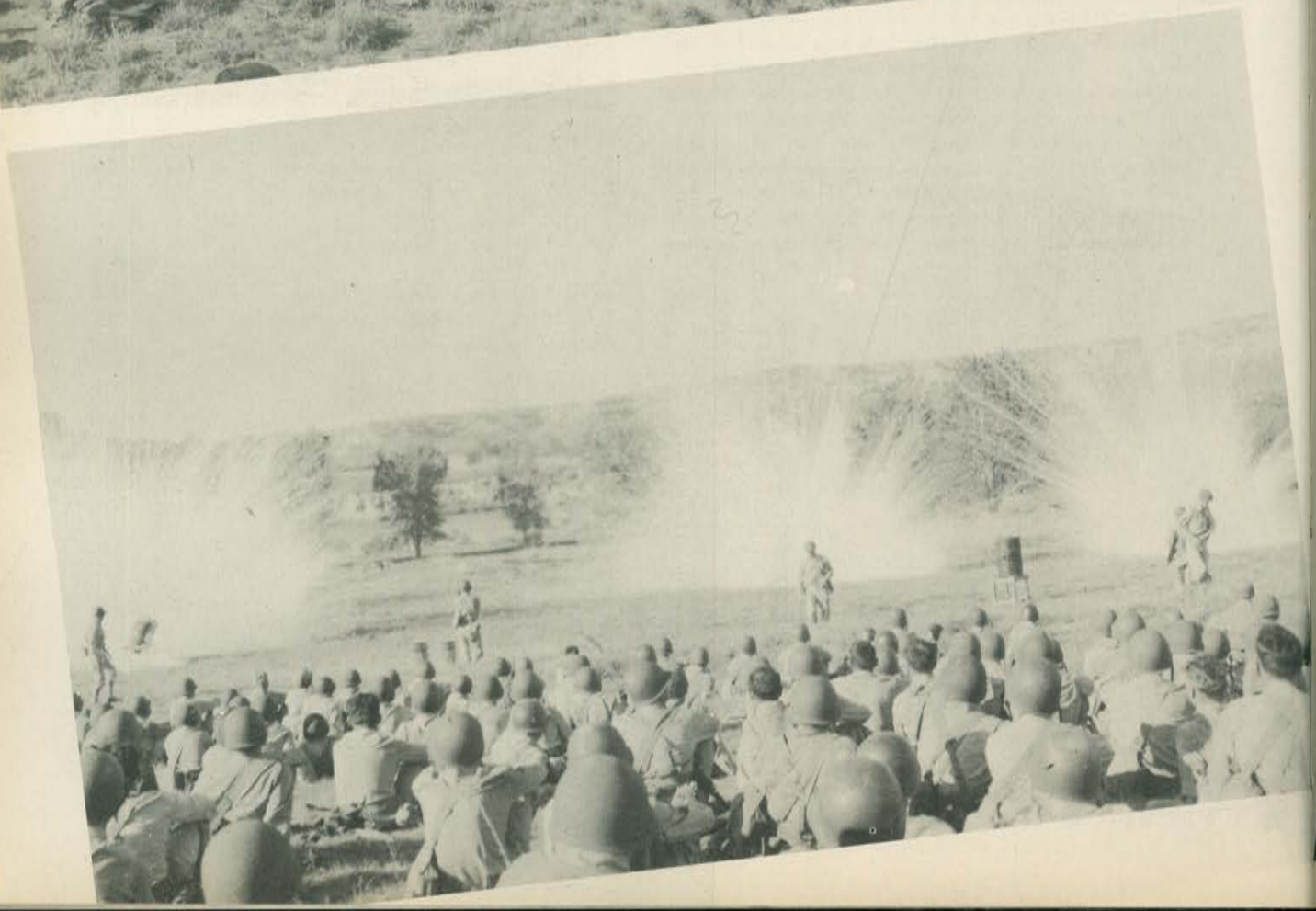
	Min. Req.	Total Av. Per Crew
B-17 Missions Flown	14	14.0
B-17 Missions Flown & Completed	14	14.0
B-29 Missions Flown	16	14.6
B-29 Missions Flown & Completed	16	12.11
Total Formation Time	56	55.5
Total Formation Time above 25,000 ft.	32	30.0
Total Individual Bombing Releases	100	96.7
Total Time on B-29 Preferred	40	39.4
Total Instrument Time	40	37.2
Total Hrs. Individual Navigation	40	40.0
Total Rounds Per Gunner Air to Air	400	391.0
Total Rounds Per Gunner Air to Ground	1400	1242.0
Total B-29 Pref Missions Flown	6	5.8
Total B-29 Pref Missions Completed	6	5.2
Radar Bombing Attacks	40	12.9

"Gentlemen: The Situation"—Lt. Goldfarb starts in Colorado Springs.



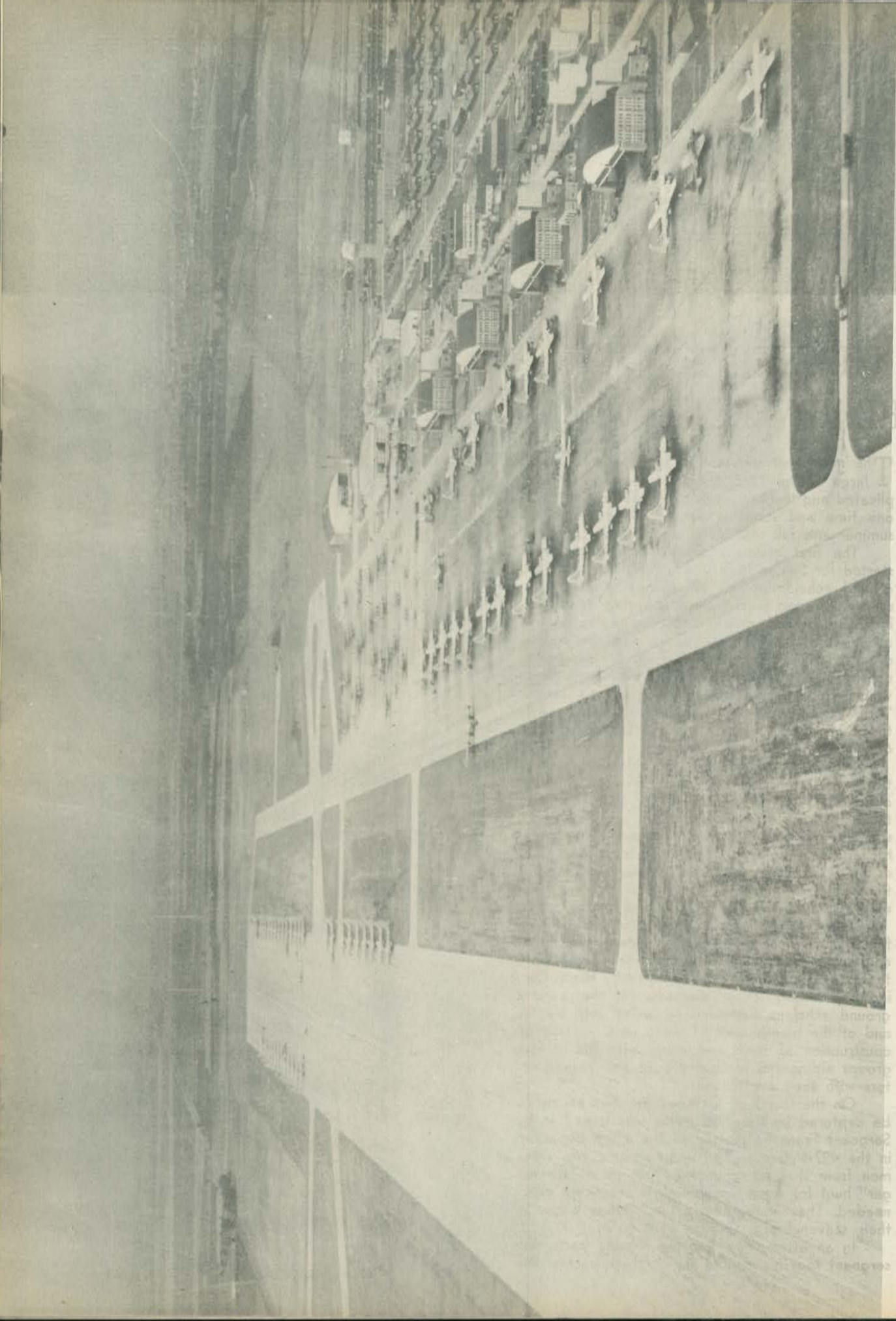
303rd and 330th

Bivouac...



May 1944





73rd's planes ready for Wing mission at Smoky Hill 8/29/44



CHAPTER 3 THE MOVEMENTS

Overseas

The movement overseas of any organization as large as the 73rd Wing is necessarily a complicated and lengthy process. Some units went at one time and some at another. Throughout the summer and fall of 1944 this move continued.

The first elements of the Wing's personnel started for Saipan in July. On the eighteenth, the ground echelon of the Wing Headquarters personnel departed from Colorado Springs. Also during July ground echelons of the bombardment groups left their Kansas bases and the service groups departed from Tinker Field. These ground echelons and the service group personnel, all of which traveled by boat, really had a serious "gripe". The trip was a long and arduous one—in the case of the Headquarters squadron, it took 61 days by ship.

All of the other ground echelons took practically the same time since there were long delays either at Oahu or at Eniwetok or both. Some of the ships carrying our personnel and equipment spent as much as three weeks "stewing" in Eniwetok lagoon in the Marshalls. During these long pauses the personnel were allowed on shore only a short time at most and the steel plates of the decks of the ships just became hotter and hotter.

The Headquarters squadron ground echelon finally arrived in Saipan on the sixteenth of September and found considerable personnel from both the tactical and service groups already there. During September, other elements of the various ground echelons continued to arrive until by the end of the month most of them were working on construction of their own areas with the service groups aiding the tactical groups and Headquarters with their construction.

On the fourth of October the first enemy to be captured by the 73rd Wing was turned in by Sergeant Frank Veselovsky of the 870th Squadron in the 497th Group. The Sergeant and two other men from that squadron were out on a "scavenger" hunt for some machine parts that were much needed. They were, perhaps, a bit too eager in their scavenging.

In an attempt to find the missing parts, the sergeant took his men to the northern part of the



The WACs the HQ left behind—10/10/44—
Colorado Springs



HQ ground echelon goes—7/18/44



HQ ground echelon ready to go—7/18/44



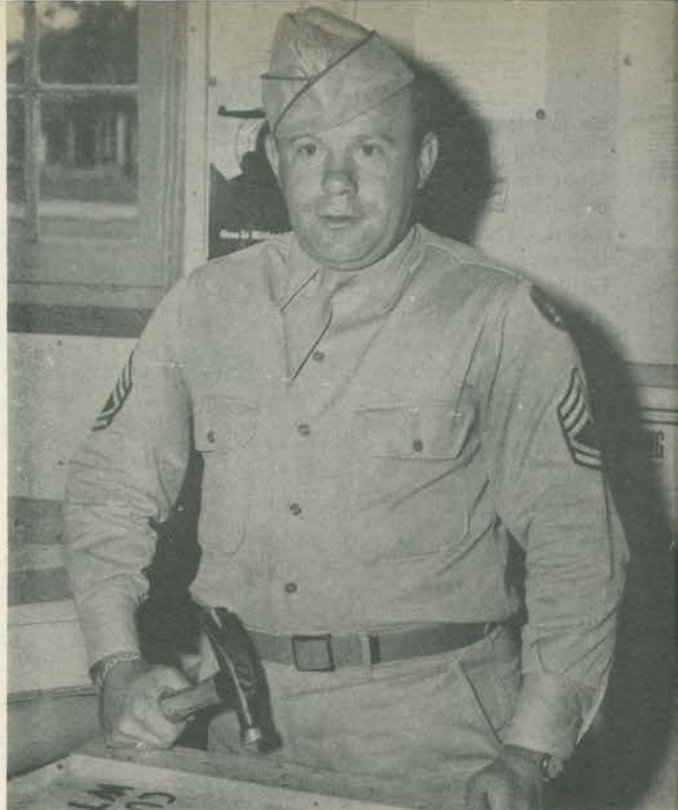
HQ air echelon Officers—10/10/44



HQ E. M.—10/10/44—Colorado Springs



HQ E. M. pack and load TAT equipment—
1st Sgt. Griffiths directs.



T/Sgt. Broscoe of Wing HQ packs equipment to go.

island which was still off limits because of the hostiles known to be there. Their jeep wandered up a road that they later learned was unusually dangerous, and stopped so that they could carry on their search on foot. They started around a large rock just off the road and found a very surprised Japanese. He reached for his grenade but realized that he was covered by three guns so he gave up. The men hurried back to the bivouac area without all the parts they were looking for but with this unexpected prize. There was much excitement in the Group.

When the captive was reported to the island Provost Marshal he was ordered brought to the stockade. This was done and the interpreter discovered that the prisoner was Toshio Tagawa, nineteen years old and a first-class seaman who had been on shore duty for some two months before the invasion. He answered questions with no diffidence and seemed not at all interested in security.

Our officers were a little at a loss to know what to do with our three men. It was true that they had captured an enemy sailor but they had done it in an area that was restricted and where they had been explicitly ordered not to go. The decision was that they were to be punished and they thus found themselves not quite heroes.

The second prisoner was a civilian construction worker. He surrendered himself under rather humorous circumstances, as it turned out. About 10:30 on the evening of the fifth of October, Sergeant Clyde Nichols of the 871st Squadron, also in the 497th Group, was writing a letter home in the squadron armament tent which happened to

be the last one in one corner of his bivouac area. The sergeant heard a noise behind him and what sounded like double talk but since he was concerned with composing his letter, he did not look around. Presently the muttering was repeated and the sergeant turned around to see who was disturbing him.

He was much taken aback when he saw a Japanese standing there. The prisoner stood with his hands folded on top of his head and seemed a little surprised at the hubbub he caused. The interpreter later found that he was Yaskasi Olomo and that he was a member of a conscript labor battalion that had come to Saipan about 2,000 strong. All but four of his organization had been either killed or wounded and he had lost track of the other three. Some time earlier he had noticed that the Americans were digging ditches and building roads and since that was what he had been brought to Saipan to do, he thought that maybe he could labor for the Americans as well as for his own countrymen. All he wanted was a little food in return.

The reaction of our soldiers toward these prisoners was interesting. Both men were weak and sickly looking when captured and both were the recipients of many gifts of food and other little things. All these things were most courteously accepted. For many, pity seemed to overcome incipient hate when the Americans saw these two puny, beaten Sons of Heaven.

About a month after the long odyssey of the ground echelon began, the advance air echelon of Wing Headquarters left Colorado Springs. It was under command of Colonel Brugge who was at that time Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Training. This echelon consisted of a few key men who could easily be carried in one B-24, "Walking Slowly." Colonel Brugge had some difficulty in getting past the ATC authorities in California since his plane normally seemed



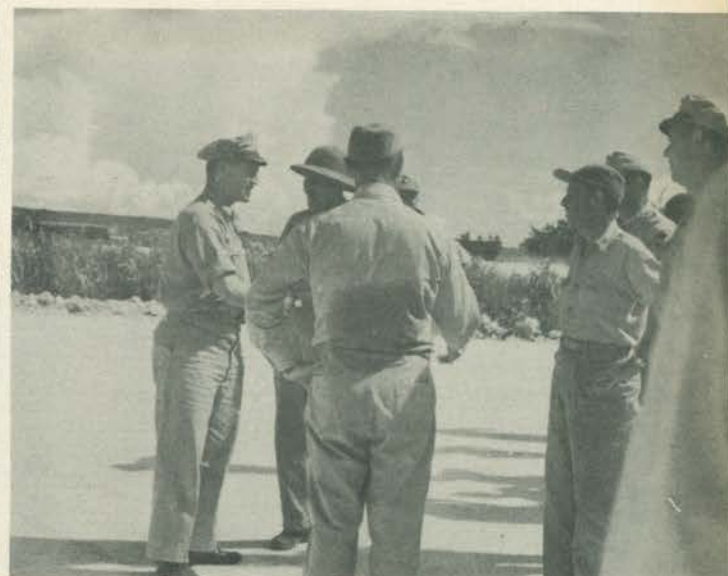
Joltin' Josie, the first B-29 comes in at Isley—
10/12/44



First B-29 crew on Saipan



Crew of First B-29 welcomed to Saipan



General O'Donnell arrives—10/20/44



Construction work went on all night in early days.



Road construction in September of 1944



Mess hall construction—October 1944

to fly at an uneven keel. It was a peculiar airplane but made the trip without incident.

In spite of the delay in California, Colonel Brugge reached Saipan on the twenty-fourth of August after only twelve days enroute. He had picked up Lieutenant Sutter of the 323rd Signal Company Wing on Oahu. The lieutenant was his unit's advance party. The advance echelon was housed here and there until some of the Wing's units arrived. It proved to be most advantageous for that echelon to go on ahead since Colonel Brugge was able to talk the island authorities out of housing the Wing in the swampy area north of Isley Field that they had planned for us. Instead he obtained for us the very fine area on the south end of the island where there would be more or less constant breezes and where swimming was easily available for all.

The air echelons of Headquarters and all the tactical groups went by Air Transport Command from Hamilton Field. The aircraft used were C-54s and they were quite comfortable. A sample trip from Colorado Springs took two weeks from the tenth of October until the twenty-fourth.

October 12 was an historic date for the 73rd Wing. The first B-29 arrived on Saipan on that date. It was piloted by Brigadier General Haywood S. Hansell, Commanding General of the 21st Bomber Command, and Major Jack J. Catton of the 873rd Squadron, 498th Group was the copilot. The plane they were flying was "Joltin' Josie, the Pacific Pioneer." This was the first B-29 in the Pacific Ocean Area, as well as the first of the 73rd's flight echelon.

At this point it might be well to quote from the December 12, 1944 issue of Brief (AAFPOA magazine). In that issue the first few paragraphs of a story about the historic arrival show how very well the combat crews of the B-29s had been indoctrinated for security.

The war just about stopped dead in its tracks the day Joltin' Josie arrived in the Marianas. Josie—her formal name is "Joltin' Josie, the Pacific Pioneer," was the first B-29 ever to be seen in the Pacific. She was the first of a Superfortress fleet scheduled to jam bases within bombing range of the Japanese mainland. Josie's name honors her skipper's wife and her own trail-blazing flight.

That her arrival attracted the curious from as far north as Tokyo during the next few days was no surprise to Josie's crew. For the first of the B-29s had been inspected by every big gear and ogled from afar by every small fry for 5000 miles. She was a sensation. And a member of her crew was as blissfully inconspicuous as a dinosaur at a church social.



Mess hall (869th) construction—October 1944



Group HQ mess hall—October 1944

THEY DON'T TALK

It's a ticklish situation. Take, for instance, the case of T/Sgt. R. A. Hancock of San Antonio, Texas. He's Josie's crew chief and a reasonably affable sort of a guy. He suspects neither the General nor the curious KP of espionage. He sympathizes with their curiosity.

But they ask too damn many questions. "First," says Hancock, "they want to know the bomb capacity. They want to know the range. They want to know how high she'll fly and how fast she'll go. They want to know everything about her, but mostly they want to know about bomb capacity and range."

To which the answers are:

"Well," confides Hancock, "the bomb load depends on how much gas you have to carry."

And how much gas do you have to carry on an average run?

"Well, that depends on the number of bombs and how far you're going."

How far WILL this thing go?

"Well, that depends on the balance between bombs and gas."

WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

"Well that depends on . . . What? Oh, Hancock. R. A. Hancock."

After prolonged questioning a talented sleuth eventually will deduce that Josie and her sisters will carry quite a load of bombs quite a distance quite fast. He also will learn that Hancock and his fellow mechanics are concerned with keeping Josie fit for the air and if he wants to know anything else he'd better talk to the Major.

While not directly concerned with the history of this Wing, some mention of the work of the aviation engineers might well be made. Under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Edward A. Flanders, these men landed on Saipan the sixth day after the invasion and went to work. Aslito



The Coral Quarry



Quonset Construction—10/4/44

airstrip was in bad shape from the attacks of the Americans. Also, roads were very poor if not destroyed. In spite of these things, Joltin' Josie found herself a well built home that was more than adequate for herself and all her sisters that were to come. Possibly conditions for the men of the 73rd left somewhat to be desired, but conditions for the planes of the 73rd left much less to be desired. Coral and asphalt were used lavishly on runways, taxistrips and roads.

Eight days after the arrival of Joltin' Josie, our own General reached Saipan on a plane of the 497th Group with Major J. P. Baird as copilot. General O'Donnell had a very expeditious trip since he did not leave Colorado Springs until October 14. B-29s continued to arrive at the rate of two or three a day.

On November 1, almost everyone was on Saipan except the Wing Headquarters rear echelon which did not depart from Colorado Springs until the sixth of November. They came through in a B-24 piloted by Colonel Walter C. Sweeney, Jr., Chief of Staff of the Wing. Their trip took only eleven days since they arrived on the seventeenth of November.

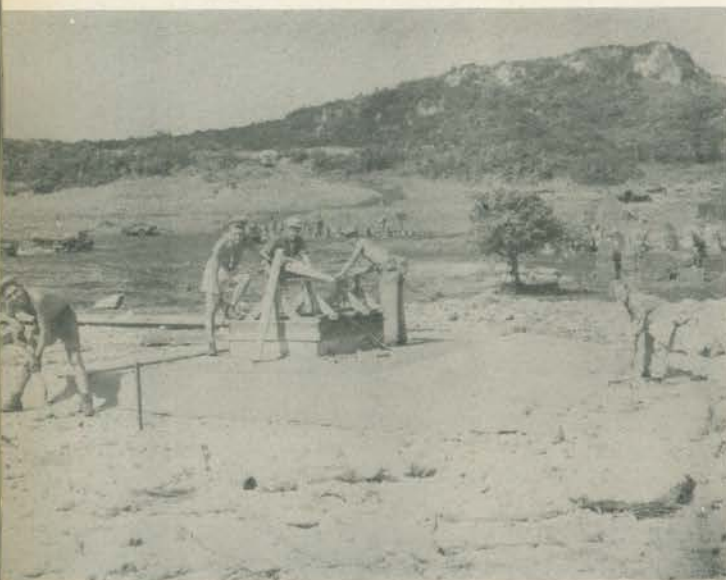


Beginning of latrine construction

rained most of the time and with men living in pup tents in cane patches it was most uncomfortable.

In October, all of us, both rated and non-rated, were at work much of the time on permanent housing and office areas. In actual practice it was found that even field grade officers had to work at such lowly tasks as digging latrines and laying tent floors. While this was unfortunate, that was the way it was, and everyone did it without too many grumbles.

By the last week in October there were enough B-29s on Saipan to make the first combat training mission possible and the various headquarters and offices were sufficiently organized to start the operations for which we had been training so long.



Open Latrine

The entire movement overseas of all personnel had taken from July 2 when the first units of the service groups left Tinker Field to November 17 when the last echelon of Headquarters arrived. In spite of the long time consumed, the whole movement was much more orderly than this amount of time would seem to indicate. The TAT equipment actually traveled with the troops on ships and did arrive in good condition for the most part. While the food was very poor on the ships that transported our men to Saipan, it was adequate and other conditions were about as comfortable as might have been expected in a combat theater. On arrival in Saipan, all personnel found it raining, really raining—not a gentle Stateside shower. Throughout September it

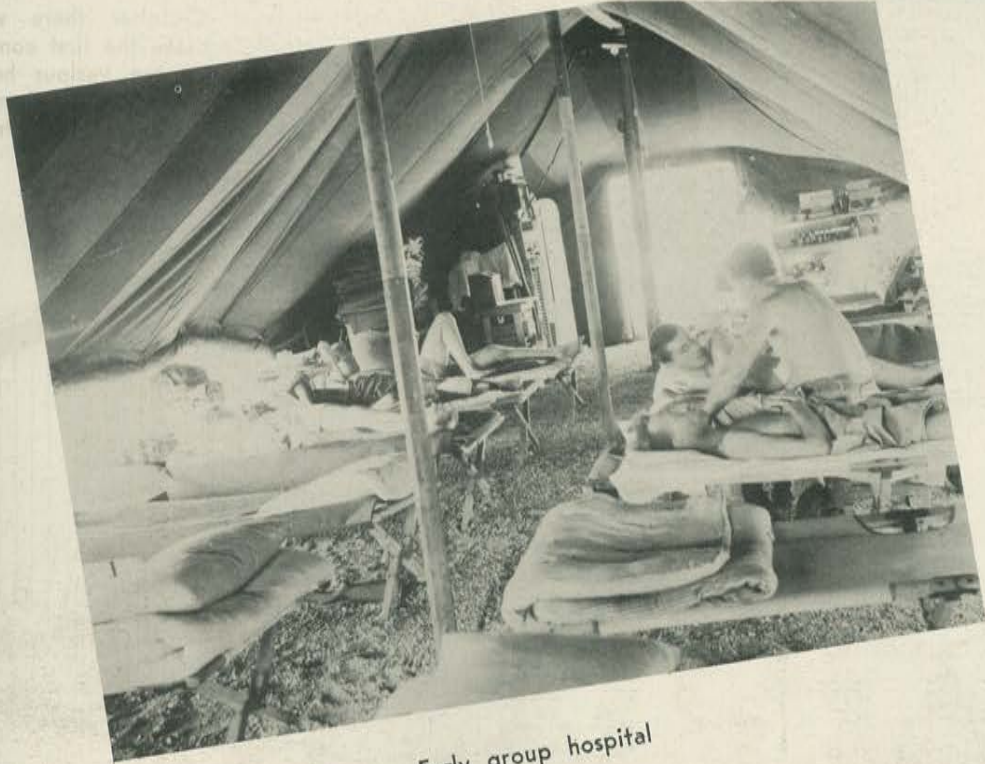


Covered Latrine



Erecting water tanks in October 44

Erection of early water tank



Early group hospital



PART II

Combat



CHAPTER 4



Combat Training

MISSIONS

The first actual mission the Wing flew against the Japanese took off on October 28, sixteen days after the arrival of the first B-29 on Isley Field. From then until the eleventh of November six missions were flown against Truk and Iwo Jima. The first three and the sixth hit Truk and the fourth and fifth, Iwo. While these missions were actually of minor importance so far as damaging the Japanese war effort, they did provide both excellent training for the crews involved and a fine opportunity for the staff sections of all organizations to perfect their methods and routines before the attacks on the Empire began. Also the armament, ordnance and chemical personnel had opportunities to practice.

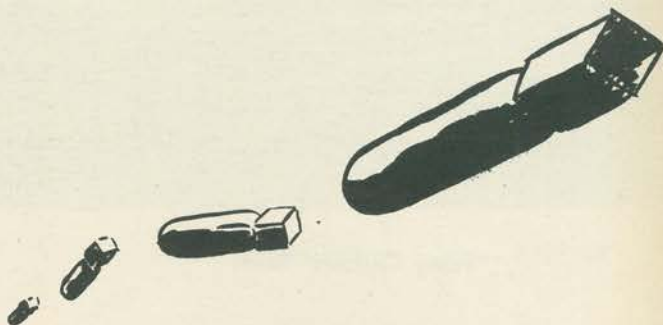
The first of these missions had eighteen aircraft—nine each from the 497th and 498th. The briefed target was the submarine pens on Dublon Island in Truk Atoll. Six thousand pounds of general purpose bombs per plane were carried and the total mileage for the mission was only 1,480 for the round trip.

Four of the planes, including the one carrying General Hansell, were unable to bomb the target and returned early. The other fourteen reached the target and bombed from 25,000 feet altitude. Enemy opposition was negligible and our airplanes received no damage.

Two days later the next mission was flown against the same target with the same plan. This time, the first squadron made a visual run but the second found it necessary to make a radar run because of a drifting cloud formation. Some of the bombs from the second squadron landed two miles beyond the target so the results were not

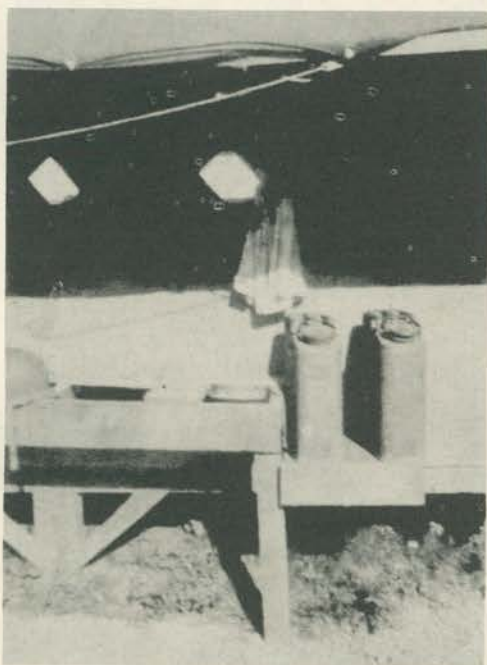


Early tent street



good. Again enemy opposition was practically nonexistent.

Mission number 3 took off on the second of November. Since this was intended to be a training mission to afford practice in using radar in the bomb runs, a day was selected when the weather was expected to be bad in the Carolines. The forecast was 7 to 9 tenths cloud cover and proved about right. The 497th sent eleven planes and the 498th nine. Radar procedure was used



Early washing facilities



Wing Officers' Tents

all the way and since the planes all overran the initial point because the image of a thunderhead had been mistaken for Ruo Island on the radar scope, the bombs were scattered all over Dublon Island. The staff concluded from this mission that more experience was needed by radar operators so they could distinguish between islands and cloud formations in the Pacific.

On November 5, our fourth mission took off against Iwo Jima to practice daylight visual bombing and to test night landing facilities. The number of aircraft flying increased to 36 for this mission and they flew in four squadrons. Two of these squadrons bombed by radar and two visually. The photographs taken on the mission showed that the Japanese had three operational fields on Iwo and our bomb results showed some satisfactory hits near two of these fields. The opposition was very meager. The object of the mission—the night landing—offered considerable difficulty since the pilots were not able readily to identify the base. It took 95 minutes for 35 aircraft to land. The other plane did not return for almost four hours because it was lost. This mission proved that some changes would have to be made in the night landing procedure to include visual signals as a means of locating the runway.

These changes were made and a few days later the fifth Wing mission was flown against the same target with a similar plan, except that the improved landing procedure was to be followed. Seventeen aircraft took off but one was lost on the way to the target for unknown reasons and another aborted due to mechanical causes. On this raid enemy opposition reached out some twenty miles toward our approaching planes in the form of eight enemy fighters. They sent at least six phosphorus bombs at the B-29s. The only damages, however, were burns on one plane.

One of our squadrons bombed visually through a hole in the clouds and the other overran the I. P. 26 minutes before it broke out of the clouds. This second squadron finally jettisoned all its bombs and returned home. The mission was a failure since the weather did not allow visual bombing for one squadron at all and only through a hole in the clouds for the other.

The last of the combat training missions was flown on Armistice Day with all the planes from the 500th. There were only nine. Again enemy fighter and antiaircraft opposition was very slight. The mission did cause some fires in the target area and there were fifteen bomb bursts directly on the target.

After this mission all the groups but the 499th had some crews that had actually flown missions against the enemy. It was felt that the combat crews as well as the staff personnel were ready for the main effort and the next few days were to be devoted to perfecting the plans for the first Tokyo mission.



Early service group HQ mess



Supplies



It had rained on 9/19/44 on Saipan



497th Group HQ on Saipan—9/23/44



Before



Water—but phooey



Early photo lab—September 1944



September (1944) Mail Call



One truck every forty seconds moves out of the enormous quarry carrying coral to surface strips



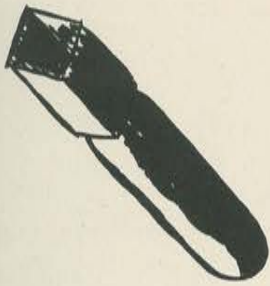
Captured Jap railroad engine and cars being used by the Navy Sea Bees to haul material for airfield repair and construction

Mud



—and
Mail







Dauntless Dottie arrives on 10/20/46—
with Col. Wright, C. C. of the 497th and
Memphis Belle Morgan



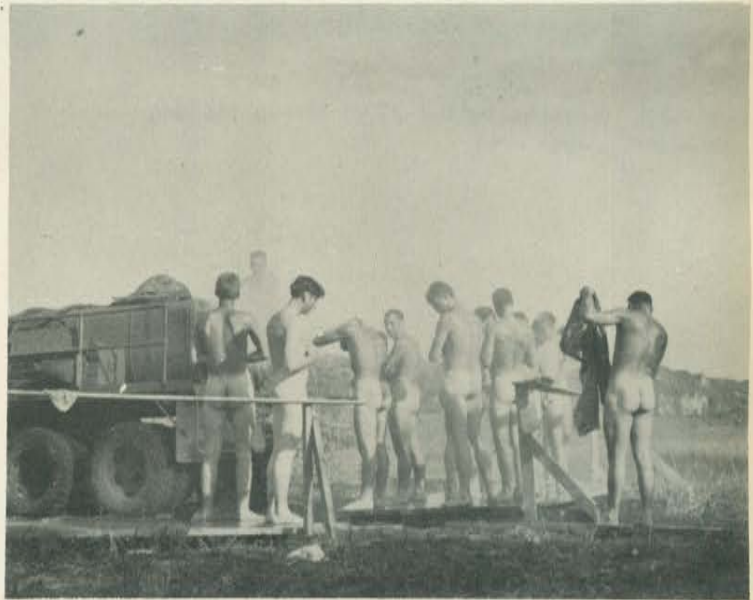
Col. Wright rides to his HQ on arrival



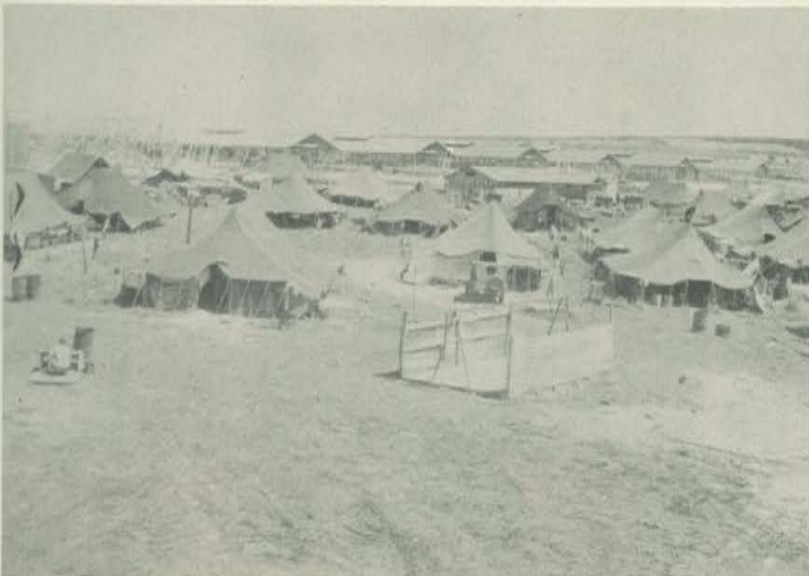
498th Group in October



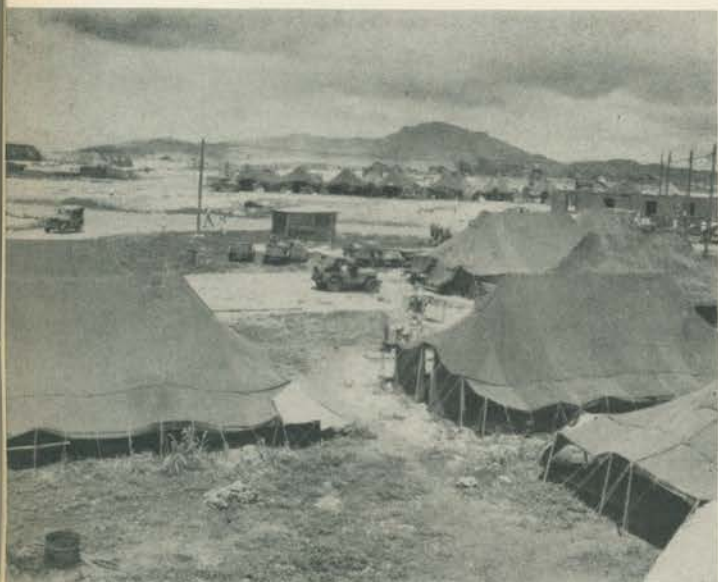
Washing in September, 1944



Oh, boy—A bath!



Second period shower arrangements—October '44



Mt. Tapachou behind 330th Group Housing area in October 1944



It rained in October



Sgt. Clyde Nichols and Takaski Oloneo—our prisoner.



Father and Son



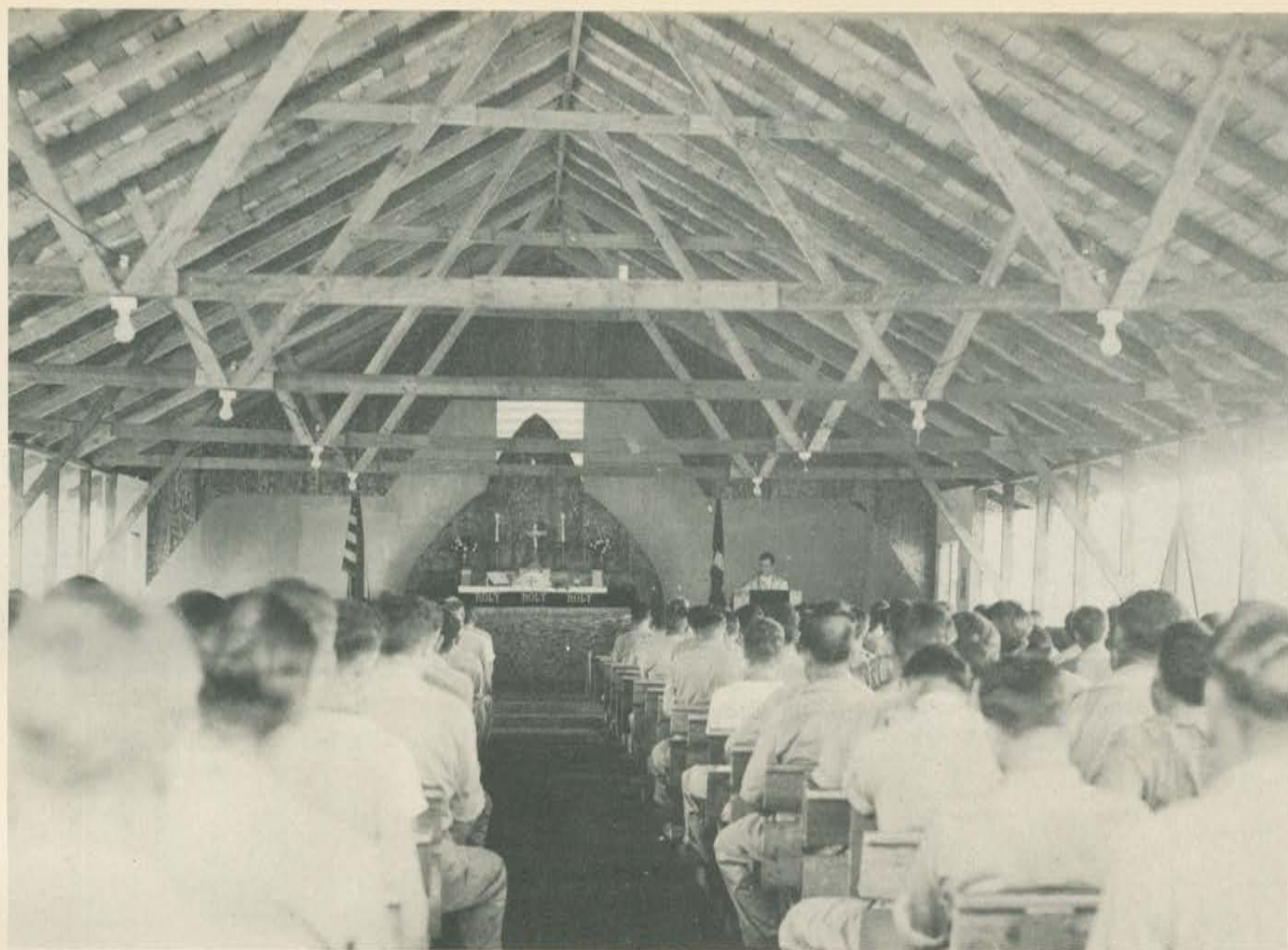
Early phone exchange—Pigskin—330th Group



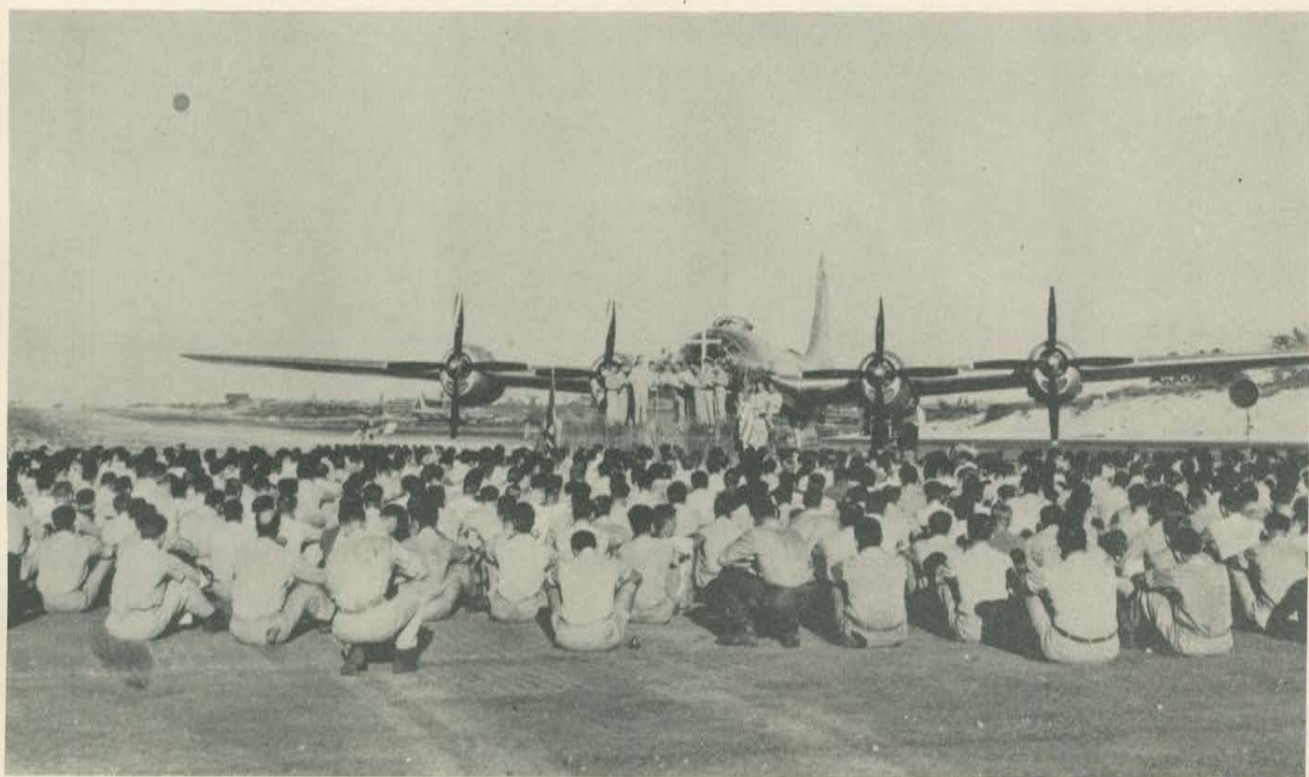
Bananas Growing



We had some vehicular accidents in early days



Chapel Dedication



Protestant Thanksgiving



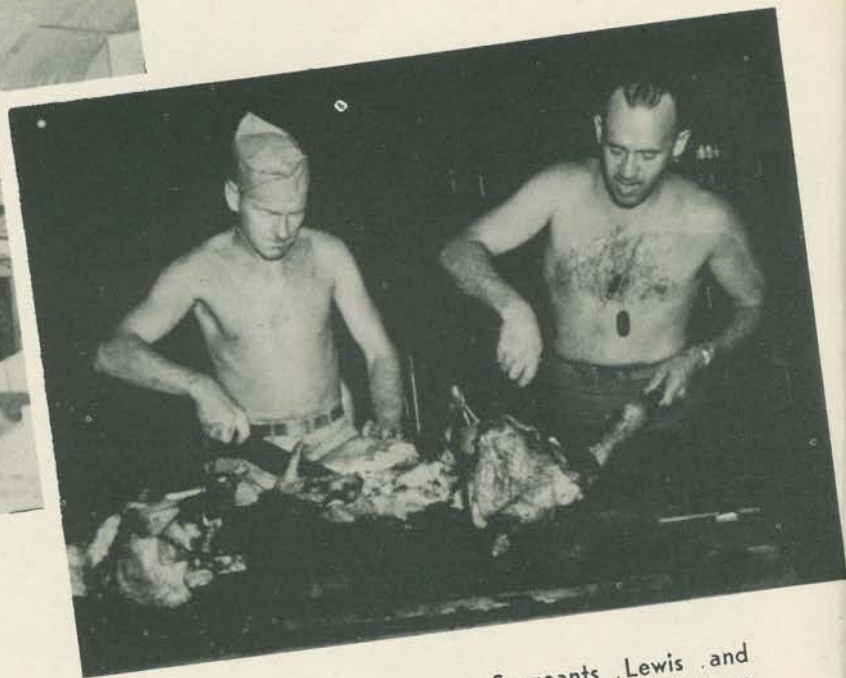
Take off on Mission number 1



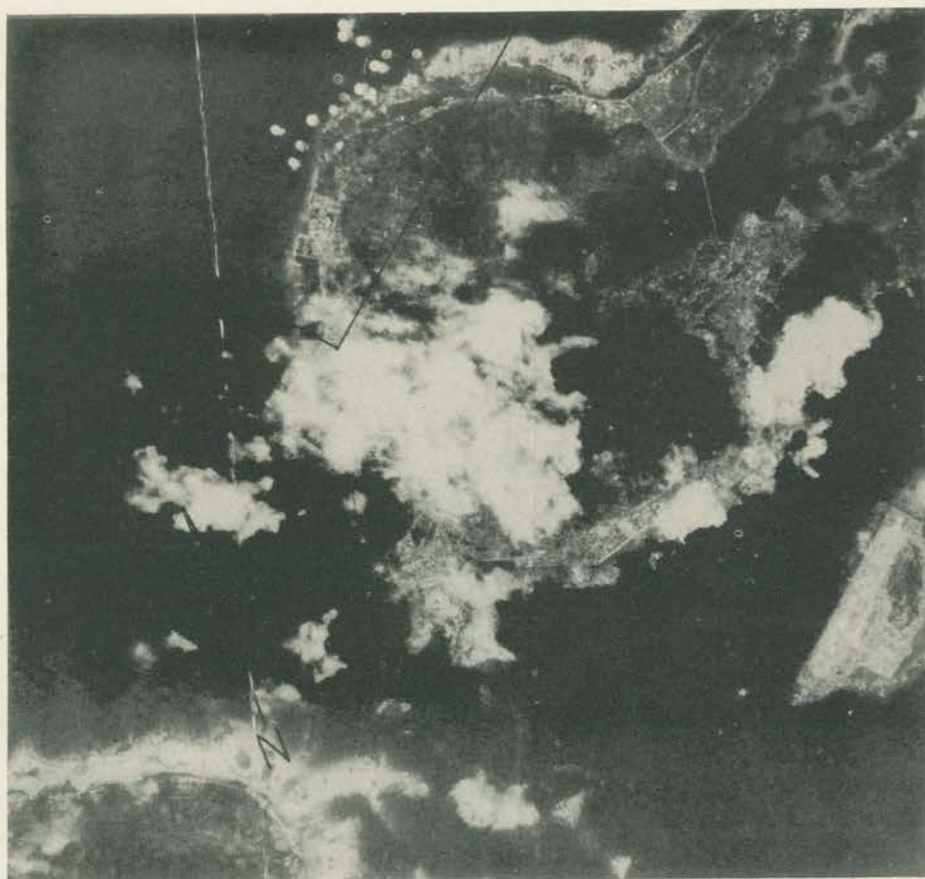
Taxing for first Mission



A-2 Office—Conditions in Quonset were crowded in November.



Thanksgiving Turkey—Sergeants Lewis and Crockett of Headquarters carve turkey ration on Thanksgiving Day



Armistice Day Mission to Truk

CHAPTER 5

Trouble

FROM THE
NEIGHBORS

Right after the personnel of the various units of the 73rd Wing began to arrive on Saipan, the only evidences of continued interest in the island on the part of the Japanese Air Force were infrequent reconnaissance missions. This condition lasted until the morning of the third of November when there was an alert about 1:30 a.m. and a little later nine Japanese planes—presumably all Bettys—came over. Some of them made low-level attacks. All our anti-aircraft opened up and at least seven were shot down either over Saipan or Tinian. The only damage caused to our installations was in the bivouac area of an engineer outfit near Isley Field where one Betty was shot down by a P-51. Four men were killed near their tents and six were seriously wounded. Our Intelligence was able to recover a map from this plane showing that it came from the Bonin Islands—undoubtedly Iwo.

There were two raids on November seventh. However, they were minor and no damage resulted. The first alert was again at 1:30 a.m. when one low flying aircraft strafed the runway with very little damage and escaped without drawing fire. Three hours later another plane swept over the runway and neither dropped bombs nor fired its guns. It might have been taking pictures. This plane also escaped.

Then on the day of our first Tokyo raid there was an alert at 9:15 in the morning when one Irving was shot down by a P-38 some five miles northwest of Isley Field. It was assumed that this plane was attempting to secure information on our mission. We did not even know about this alert at the time.



Fighting fires in burning wreckage after 11/27 Japanese night raid.



Morning after of a destroyed B-29—11/12/44
—note damaged B-29 in background

On the twenty-seventh, however, there were two important raids. The first one was just after midnight of the twenty-sixth when two Bettys passed over the bivouac areas at low level and then bombed and strafed the 499th Group's dispersal area. Then twelve hours later, at ten minutes after noon, while we were all at lunch, seventeen Zekes came in over Isley Field and strafed it thoroughly. After strafing the field, the planes came over the bivouac areas of most of our units and strafed them. One man was killed and a number of men in the 500th Group were injured by burning and the explosion of ammunition when a Zeke was shot down in their area. As a result of these two raids on the same day, seven B-29s were either destroyed or surveyed because of serious damage. Many others were shot up but repairable.

The night attack had caught our aircraft loaded with bombs and ready for a morning takeoff, while during the noon attack about 60 of our planes were over Tokyo. Our score against them was thirteen Zekes shot down by our antiaircraft and one destroyed by P-47s near Pagan and another destroyed on Pagan airfield just after it had landed. It is probable that two other Japanese planes ditched because of battle damage. There was no alert before either of these two raids.

Two days later we had another minor alert at one in the morning when eight bombers came in over the field and caused some slight damage. Only one of them was shot down.

During December there were six raids or attempted raids. The first occurred about ten in the morning on the fifth when a Japanese reconnaissance plane was shot down by a P-38 two miles northwest of Tanapag from an altitude of 30,500 feet.

Two days later, just before dawn, several very low flying bombers strafed bivouac areas, our field and the island generally but especially East Field (later called Kagman Point Field). A few

minutes later thirteen more Japanese planes came in over Isley at altitudes ranging from 13,000 to 33,000 feet. Our antiaircraft destroyed six of them. However, the fifteen Bettys that were on this raid destroyed two of our B-29s. Three more were badly damaged and twenty suffered minor damage. The raid lasted an hour and a half. Casualties to our personnel included one killed



and two wounded in addition to many minor casualties. No doubt the Japanese flew this mission to celebrate Pearl Harbor Day.

After it they left us alone for two weeks until on the twentieth when there was another morning alert. At 10:43 a Japanese reconnaissance plane sneaked in behind a B-29 but escaped after a chase.

Three days later there was an alert at a little after eight in the evening when five Japanese planes damaged some B-29s at Isley. Two of these planes were shot down.

This was the raid that we all remember very well since it was the first that came during the movies. Headquarters personnel remember it especially well since we were seeing the mystery whodunit "Laura" and there was a humorous incident during the raid. When the alert was sounded the movie was perhaps half over. Of course the lights all went out, the movie stopped and we raced to our shelters. It happened that General O'Donnell was in a shelter that was fairly large and he together with everyone else spent the time in the shelter trying to figure out who had murdered Laura. People who were in the shelter said that the General expressed his opinion as to the murderer and backed it up with cogent reasoning.

However, an unidentified man in the shelter differed with the General and told him so. He

backed up his guess as to the murderer with equally cogent reasoning. Apparently this discussion between the General and the unidentified individual lasted a good while and then the alert was over and the lights relit. The General found he had been talking with one of the assistant cooks in the Headquarters mess—a private first class. The denouement was—when we went back to the movies, it was found that the private first class was correct.

On Christmas Night there was an alert lasting an hour when 25 Japanese planes came in over Isley Field, East Field and Kobler Field. Two more B-29s were destroyed on Isley; one by a very accurate glide bombing attack. Four Japanese aircraft were destroyed with one probable. While there actually was a lot of damage, relatively the damage was light considering the large number of Japanese planes. They came in at such high altitude that their bombing results were not accurate.

After Christmas there were nine more alerts, the majority coming during the night hours. During most of these attempted raids no Japanese aircraft were actually over Saipan. The last Japanese attack was on the second of February just before the taking of Iwo.



Body of burned Japanese pilot



Cpl. Dreeze of HQ with smoking B-29 as background during noon raid—11/27/44



Men of 435th Aviation Squadron attack burning wreckage with Bulldozers—11/27/44



Smoke from burning B-29s billows over HQ area—11/27/44



HQ Officer with smoke from burning B-29 behind—11/27/44



Bulldozer attack on burning B-29 wreckage is work. 11/27/44



Air raid shelters were convenient to Sgt. Alexander's wash stand



Sgt. Mine works on his shelter



Hospital shelter for 330th Group



Wreckage of Japanese plane—11/27/44



Betty shot down near Isley



Scenes of wreckage in the town of Garapan



The Jap Strikes back



Crowds of engineers and ground crewmen watch B-29 begin first Tokyo mission



A ground crew looks on, B-29 takes off for Tokyo in dim early morning light

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High Altitude

MISSIONS

CHAPTER 6

The culmination of all the Wing staff activity to date came on the sixteenth of November—the First Wing Briefing for an Empire Mission. Everything done through the weary weeks in Kansas and Colorado was now to be put to the test. The Wing was to find out whether it was capable of fulfilling its mission and worthy of the trust put in it.

While everyone knew in advance—or had guessed correctly months before—what the proposed targets of the Wing would be, it was still a moment charged with drama when Colonel Brugge rose to start the briefing. He made just a few introductory remarks before presenting the officers who actually did the briefing. Colonel Beightol was the principal speaker for A-3 and Major Beckett for A-2. Other speakers included Colonel Hotchkiss (Communications Officer), Major Reineck (Navigator), Captain Gibson (Flight Engineer) and Lieutenant Kramer (Photo Interpreter). The primary target was announced as the Musashino Aircraft Plant that was west of Tokyo, with the dock and the urban areas of Tokyo as the secondary target. This Musashino plant was to become very familiar to the Wing crews as target number 357. There were two initial points announced, one of which was Fujiyama. After the briefing, the next eight days were probably among the most nervous ever experienced by both crews and staff personnel of the Wing. For the first two of these days group briefings were held. After that everything was ready.

The planes were ready; the men were ready; the weather was NOT ready.

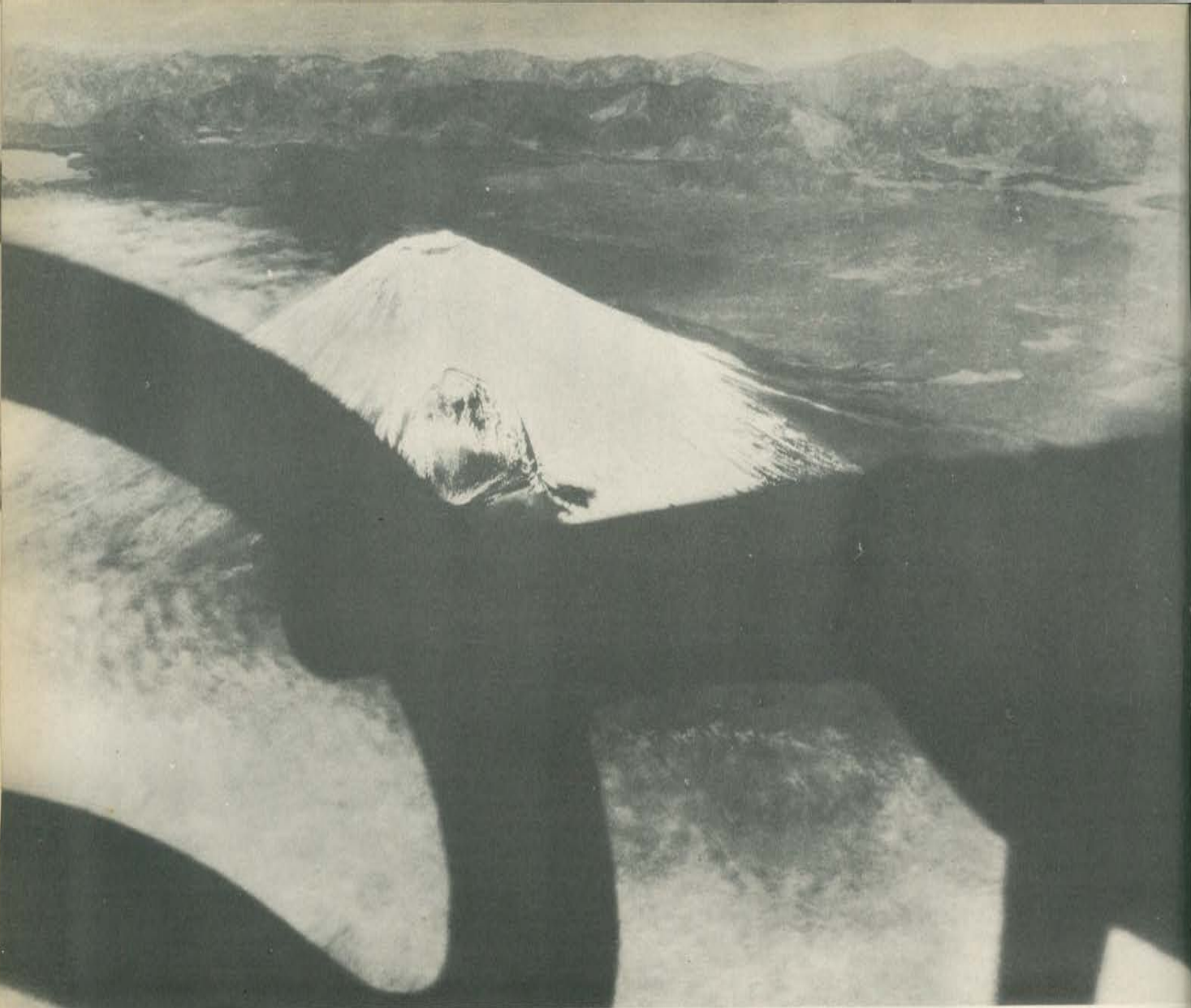
The mission was postponed from day to day. There were frequent false alarms of the start. Three times the crews actually boarded their planes and then got off them again and just waited as did everyone else. The nervous strain was visible on everyone's countenance.

Finally, on the twenty-fourth, the first aircraft took off for Tokyo. It was piloted by General O'Donnell with Major "Memphis Belle" Morgan as the copilot of his own "Dauntless Doty."

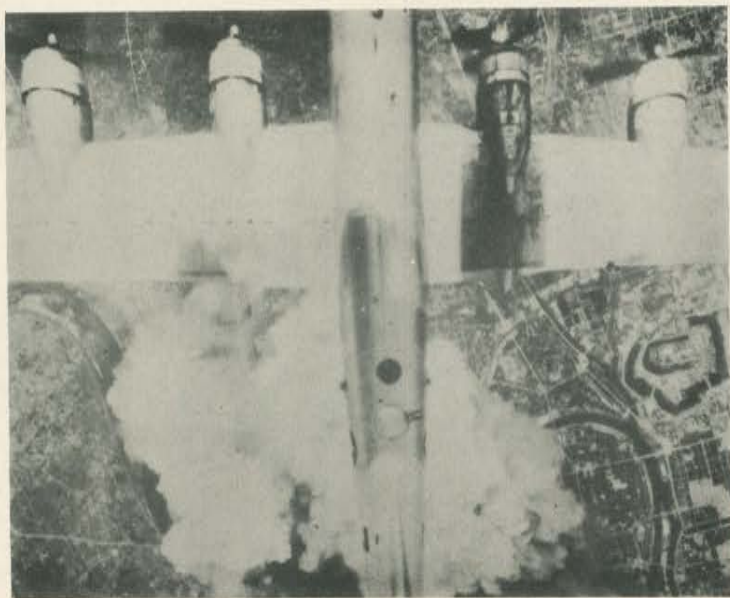


Briefing approach chart on first Empire mission

This mission happened to be in celebration of the Wing's first birthday anniversary since the date of the activating orders had been exactly one year before. In that one year the Wing had grown from a paper dream of someone in Washington to a full-sized fighting organization of some 15,000 men—men who were well trained and were now starting their first real warfare as a unit. The 73rd marked its first birthday, then, with the first air raid over Tokyo since the one led by General Doolittle.



Remember?



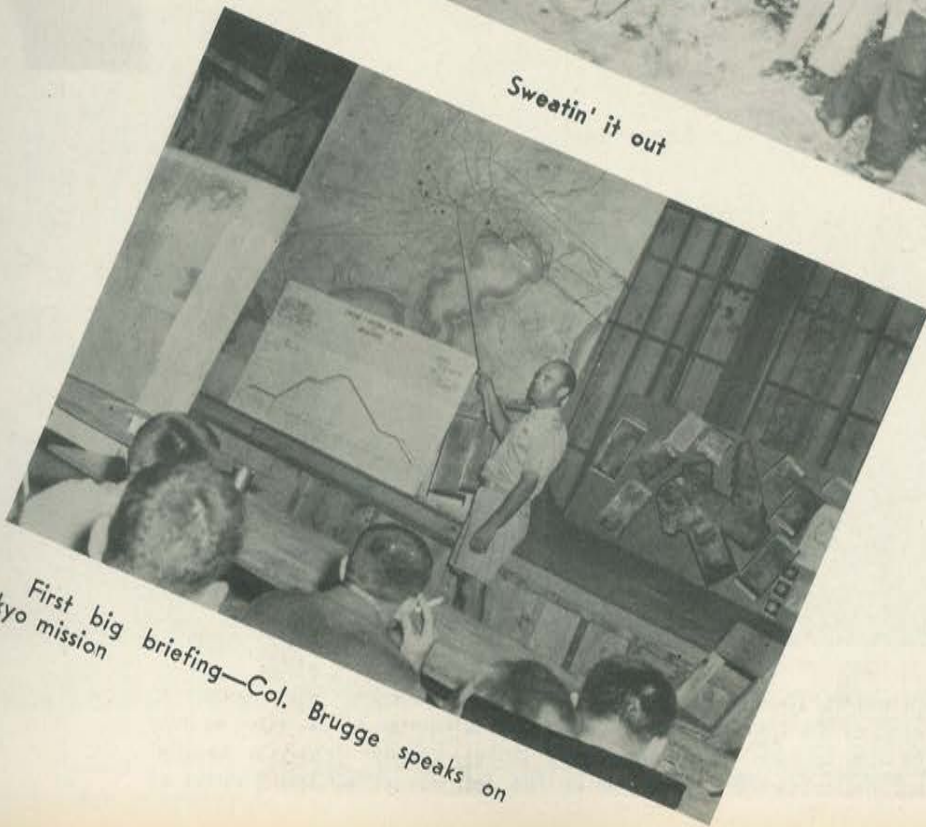
First big bridge
Tokyo museum



Plane off on first Tokyo mission



Sweatin' it out



First big Tokyo mission briefing—Col. Brugge speaks on



Brig. Gen. Emmett O'Donnell has a final word with his co-pilot Maj. Robert K. Morgan, former pilot of the famous Memphis Belle and a veteran of 25 missions over Germany, prior to the take-off on the first B-29 strike over the Japanese capital. Gen. O'Donnell led the successful mass strike on the Jap war production centers at Tokyo.

While this mission was actually not very successful, it was a strike against the Empire itself and it blazed the way for future missions. Only 24 aircraft bombed the primary target because of radar conditions over it. However, 64 planes bombed other targets and caused some damage. We lost two aircraft and had eleven damaged.

Radio Tokyo commented on our first big mission somewhat as follows:

Enemy bombers appeared over Tokyo today in large groups of ten. They did not achieve great tangible bombing results because of effective interception by Japanese fighter planes.

Upon interception the big bombers fled to the southern and northern outskirts of the city. Several enemy bombers were knocked down.

True, the mission did not cause much damage. But it was the weather, not Japanese fighters, that interfered.

Mission number 8 took off three days after the first big Empire mission against the same target. Only 81 airplanes took to the air this time as against 111 on the first one. With a completely solid undercast, the weather was still worse on this mission and no aircraft bombed the primary target. However, 62 planes did hit Tokyo (the



Audience at first big briefing



General O'Donnell's plane off the ground on first Tokyo Mission



497th briefing

secondary target) with 114 tons of general purpose bombs and 44 tons of incendiary bombs. Our casualties were one aircraft ditched and one damaged.

The next mission was flown two nights later and was a night radar run against the light industrial and dock area of Tokyo. Since the weather was again solid undercast, the results were completely unobserved. It was a small mission with only 29 planes airborne, but 24 of them did reach the primary. Our losses were one plane lost and one with damage. The one that had battle damage was hit by fire from another American plane over Tokyo. The damaged plane in mission number 8 also was hit by fire from a friendly plane, but in the Marianas.

The first December mission, flown on the third, was a disastrous one for the Wing. While some of our bombs did hit the Musashino plant, the Wing lost six aircraft on the mission including the airplane that was piloted by Colonel Richard T. King, Jr., commander of the 500th Bomb Group. On the same plane was Colonel Brugge, from Headquarters, who was flying as observer.

Before being able to release its bombs, the aircraft was attacked by fifteen single-engine fighters that had been waiting above the mission's line of flight. The plane was the lead ship and was at about 32,000 when it was hit. Because of damage it quickly lost altitude to about 28,000 when seven or eight crew members bailed out. Both the Colonels were captured by the Japanese and imprisoned. After his release from the prison camp, Colonel King told his experiences there and his remarks are included in a later chapter of this book. Colonel Brugge apparently died in captivity.

For the mission as a whole, there were 86 of our aircraft airborne and 60 bombed the Musashino plant. Eight others hit the dock and industrial areas and, as on most of our missions, there were some planes bombing targets of opportunity. In addition to the one plane shot down over the primary target, we had another destroyed



on the way back and the rest of those lost were missing. Thirteen were damaged. An unforecast 200 mile-an-hour wind at bombing altitude hampered the flight considerably.

There were two missions flown against Iwo Jima in December. This was somewhat before the Iwo landing and the missions were designed to help "soften up" the island. These missions were flown on the eighth and twenty-fourth. On the first one there were 82 aircraft airborne and the other only 29. We suffered no losses whatever in either mission nor did we have any bombers damaged. Because of the cloud cover during both missions there were very few pictures taken but what pictures there were showed considerable damage to the runways of the Japanese fields on Iwo. There were also, of course, bursts in other areas. Both of these missions were flown at an altitude of a little over 20,000 feet.

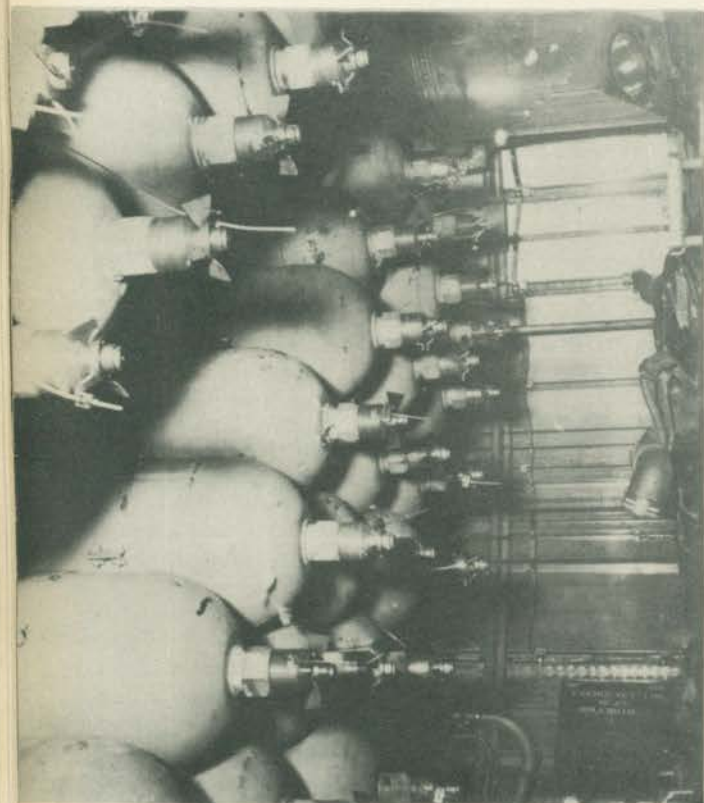
Between the two Iwo missions the Wing started its campaign to destroy the Mitsubishi Aircraft



COL. A. T. JOHNSON

Col. Johnson (497th C. O.) in Saipan Office

American Maid starts for Tokyo—11/24/44



Inside bomb bay

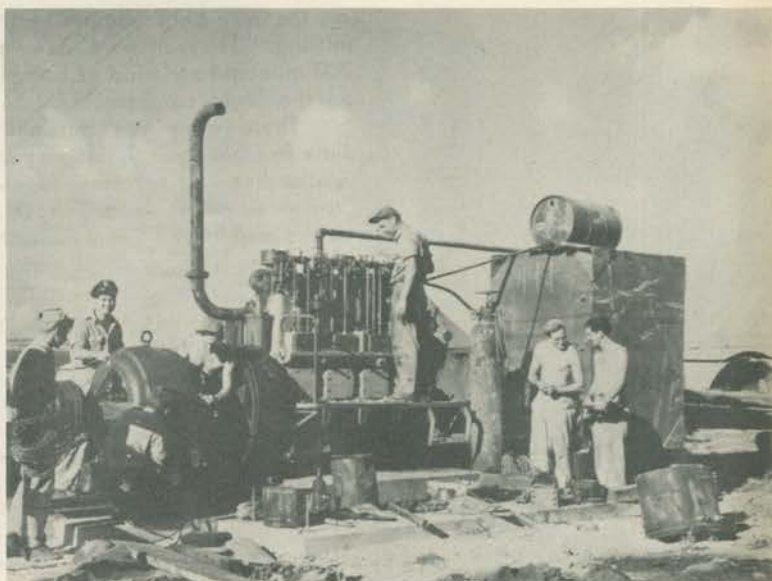
Plant at Nagoya. There were three missions flown against this target—on the thirteenth, eighteenth and twenty-second of the month. The first mission had very good weather and bombed visually while the second mission had only enough good weather for nineteen planes to bomb visually. However, those nineteen did very well. The other planes on the second mission and all planes on the third were forced to bomb by radar. All three missions were



869th Squadron's S-2 Office with Lts. Colvin and Boring in February

about the same size with 90, 89 and 78 aircraft airborne and 71, 63 and 48 over the primary target.

This was the first introduction of our crews to what was to become familiar as "flak alley." These planes were forced to fly north up Nagoya Bay toward the city which was at the end of the narrow bay. The Japanese had heavy antiaircraft installations on both sides of the Bay so coordinated that they could make the area over the Bay extremely hot for raiding American planes. Our losses on these missions clearly show how bad the flak conditions were since we lost twelve planes on the three missions and had 56 that suffered battle damage. The fighter opposition over Nagoya was also extremely heavy—for example, the third



497th scavenged an old Japanese Diesel engine and generator in February—it worked

Behind scenes in PX

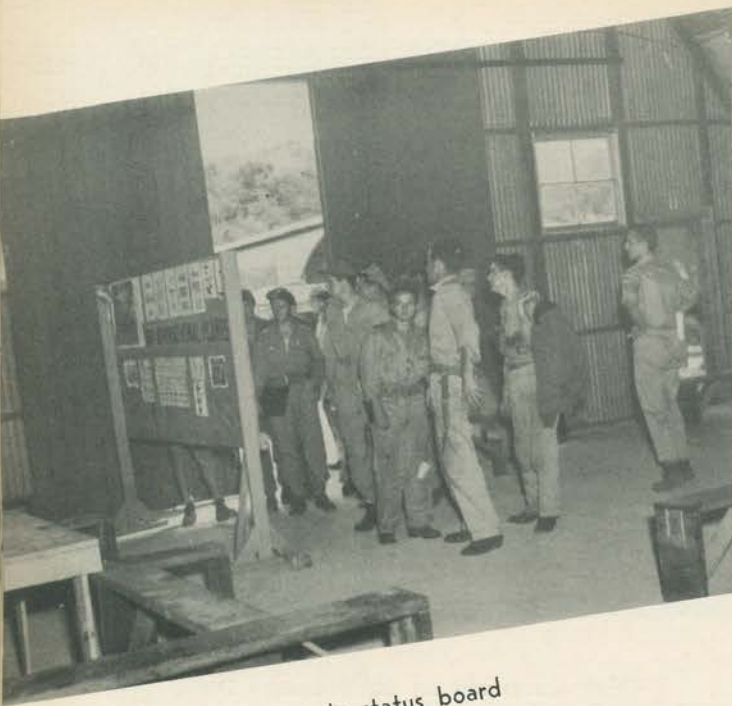
of these raids reported 509 attacks. In spite of these rough conditions at Nagoya, it was worth while since the first raid on which the Wing caused really substantial damage to a target was the first of this group of missions. Forty per cent of the plant was seriously damaged on that one trip.

For the last mission of the year, on December 27, the Wing returned to target number 357. On this raid there were 72 airplanes airborne but only 39 bombed the primary. There was trouble

over the target both because of planes flying at incorrect altitudes and off course and because of excessive unforecast winds. The mission was an unfortunate one as were most of the missions against the Musashino plant. Not much damage was caused and three of our planes were lost with fourteen suffering battle damage. On this mission a serious blow was struck at Wing Headquarters because of the loss of Major William H. Walker. The major was flying on one of the planes as an observer and his plane was destroyed over Tokyo.



Crews came down from line by truck



Crews study status board



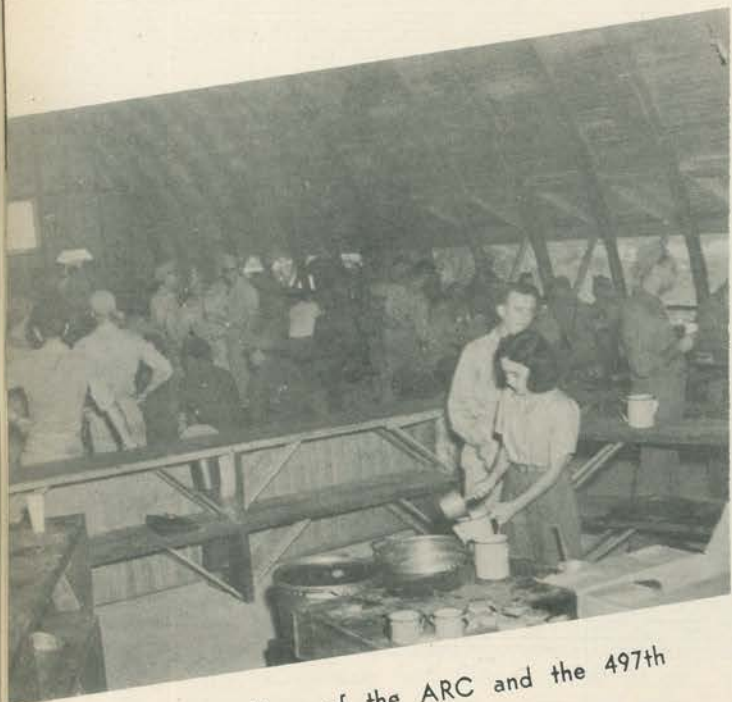
Crews give S-2 Information

He was safe then, but became a prisoner of war. After VJ Day, he was rescued, but was so weak that he died on the hospital ship.

To start off the New Year right, the Wing began a new type of mission on January 3. While it still flew at altitude—this particular mission came in at over 30,000—the target was the city of Nagoya rather than any particular place in that city. Earlier missions had carried loads that were partly incendiary but this mission was the first one that set out to burn a city. The results showed 3,000,000 square feet of residential area and one

small textile mill destroyed. Bad weather resulted in only 57 planes of the 97 that took off being over the primary and enemy fighters and anti-aircraft destroyed five of our airplanes and damaged 21.

There was one very remarkable experience in this first 1946 mission when Sergeant James Krantz of the 497th Group was blown out of his airplane at 29,000 feet. Shortly after bombs away over Nagoya, the right gun blister and tail turret of his plane were hit by fighter gunfire simultaneously. The blister shattered and blew out. Then the out-



Betty Sullivan of the ARC and the 497th feeds her boys



She gives good service



By January, we were building theaters—Goat Gulch.



Goat Gulch from back seat

rushing pressure blew the gunner and his gunsight out of the plane. Sergeant Krantz must have had a premonition, since he had designed his own safety harness. It was a heavy web belt strapped around his legs and shoulders with enough slack to allow freedom of movement. This particular harness had a little too much slack but it was still adequate to save the sergeant's life.

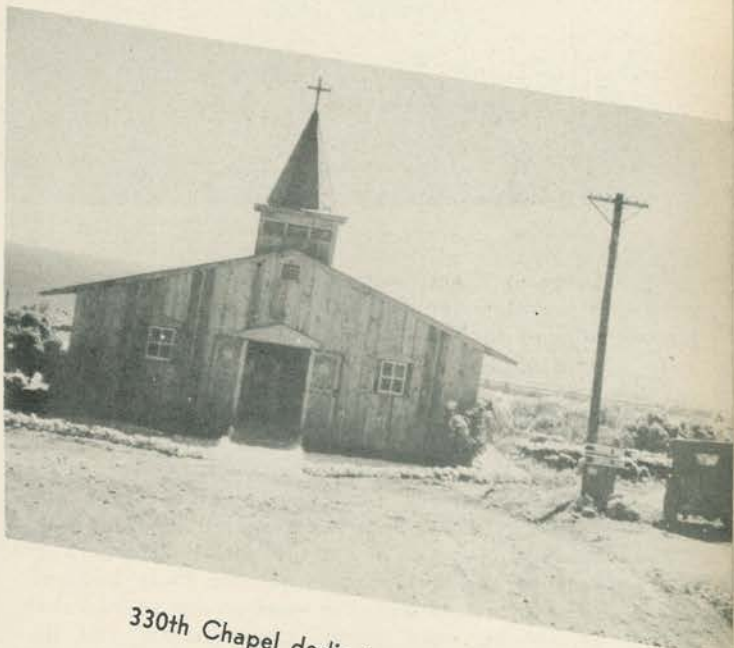
On finding himself out of the blister in the slipstream the gunner was seen by occupants of another airplane instinctively to try to adjust his oxygen mask. At this time he was completely out of the aircraft except for that portion of one leg

below the knee. He next tried to "walk" himself back into the airplane by use of the gunsight cables but lost consciousness in approximately three minutes.

Next the CFC gunner and left gunner tried unsuccessfully to pull Sergeant Krantz back into the plane. The radar operator also tried but because of the cramped conditions near the blister they were not able to pull him back. The copilot went back and by gripping Sergeant Krantz' shoulder holster strap he was able to get the sergeant back with the aid of the two gunners.



Crew members leave liferaft for destroyer deck.



330th Chapel dedicated on 2/18/44



AFTER

AKASHI PLANT
KAWASAKI COMPANY

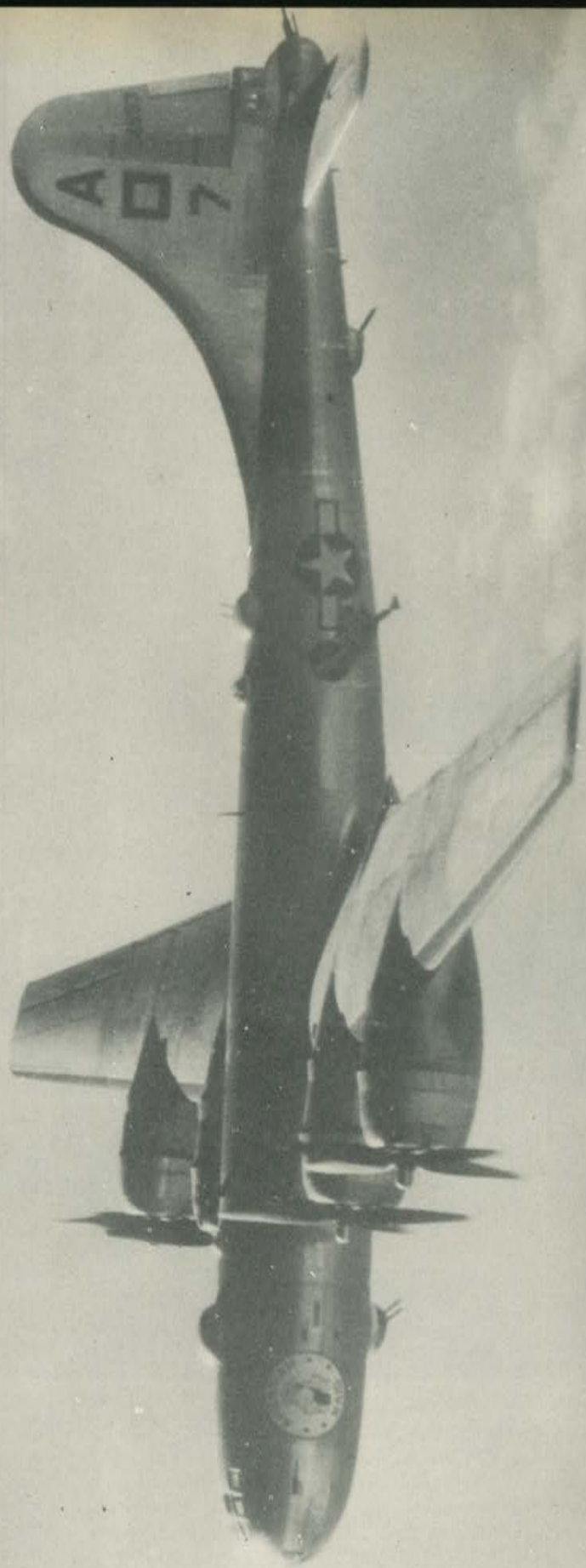
TARGET INTELLIGENCE SECTION
19 JAN 45

Sergeant Krantz was outside of the airplane approximately ten minutes. When pure oxygen was applied to him, he opened his eyes and showed signs of recovery in about twenty minutes. At the time he reentered the aircraft it was flying at 28,000.

The next two missions were a return to high altitude precision attacks with 72 planes on the ninth against the Musashino plant in Tokyo and 73 planes on the fourteenth against the Mitsubishi plant in Nagoya. It was instrument weather both enroute and over the target for these missions. On the first mission, the weather was so bad that formations were never consummated and the planes reached the target singly. In fact, only eighteen did reach the primary target with 33 hit-

ting various targets of opportunity. On the Nagoya mission, 40 bombed the primary by radar but they had nearly 600 fighter attacks that were the most aggressive and accurate yet encountered. As a result of the bad weather and heavy enemy opposition, eleven airplanes were lost on these two missions with 33 suffering battle damage.

The next Wing mission—number 20—was the most successful of our precision missions. It was flown against the Kawasaki Aircraft plant in Akashi on the nineteenth of January. Sixty-two aircraft of the 80 airborne bombed the primary target and scored at least 129 hits on all but eleven of the buildings in the area causing severe damage to the target. The missed buildings were all small. Forty per cent of the bombs fell within 1,000



Sergeant Krantz outside his plane at 27,000



feet of the aiming point. We lost no B-29s and only twelve suffered battle damage.

The other two January missions flown were another pair against the Mitsubishi and Musashino plants in Nagoya and Tokyo. Both missions made the almost routine reports of very bad weather enroute and over the target. The first mission, which was the one to Nagoya, lost only two airplanes with 32 battle damaged. However, on the second mission, which was flown on the twenty-seventh, the Wing experienced the heaviest losses

on any mission—nine B-29s were lost. There was a total of 984 aggressive fighter attacks. The fighters actually followed our airplanes 50 miles off the coast on the way out. Our gunners claimed the destruction of 60 enemy aircraft with seventeen probables, and 79 damaged.

This mission was also noteworthy because one B-29 flew all the way back to base from the target on only two engines. It was escorted by another plane but it still made the entire trip with just the two engines. Lt. Col. Trickey was the pilot.

During February the Wing flew five missions against Japan. More than half of all the aircraft on the missions were forced to bomb by radar which greatly reduced the efficiency. The first two of these were against brand new targets that had not formerly been attacked. One of these was

Kobe which was hit by an incendiary attack on the fourth of February. The mission was very successful since 2,651,000 square feet of the city were destroyed. There were at least 50 fires started within 7,000 feet of the aiming point. A number of our airplanes bombed other targets so

Bombardier's view of Nagoya from 29,000—1/3/45—Lt. Phelps of the 870th Sq.



feet of the aiming point. We lost no B-29s and only twelve suffered battle damage.

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Musashino Engine Plant of the Nakajima Aircraft Company

an any mission—nine B-29s were lost. There was a total of 984 aggressive fighter attacks. The fighters actually followed our airplanes 50 miles off the coast on the way out. Our bombers claimed the Mitsubishi plant at Nagoya again on the fifteenth. Our planes took off and completed their formation as briefed but a front extending from 28 degrees north to the coast of Japan caused the formations to break up before reaching Honshu. Nevertheless, 29 of the 91 airplanes airborne did bomb the primary with most of the rest hitting

various last resort targets. No B-29s were lost and only twelve suffered minor battle damage.

About this time the United States Navy had reached a point where it could attack the mainland of the Empire. On the seventeenth of February the first large carrier strike against Tokyo took place and two days later the 73rd was or-



Early church service



Interior of 330th Service Chapel at dedication



Choir under direction of T/Sgt. Luther Noss at 330th Chapel dedication

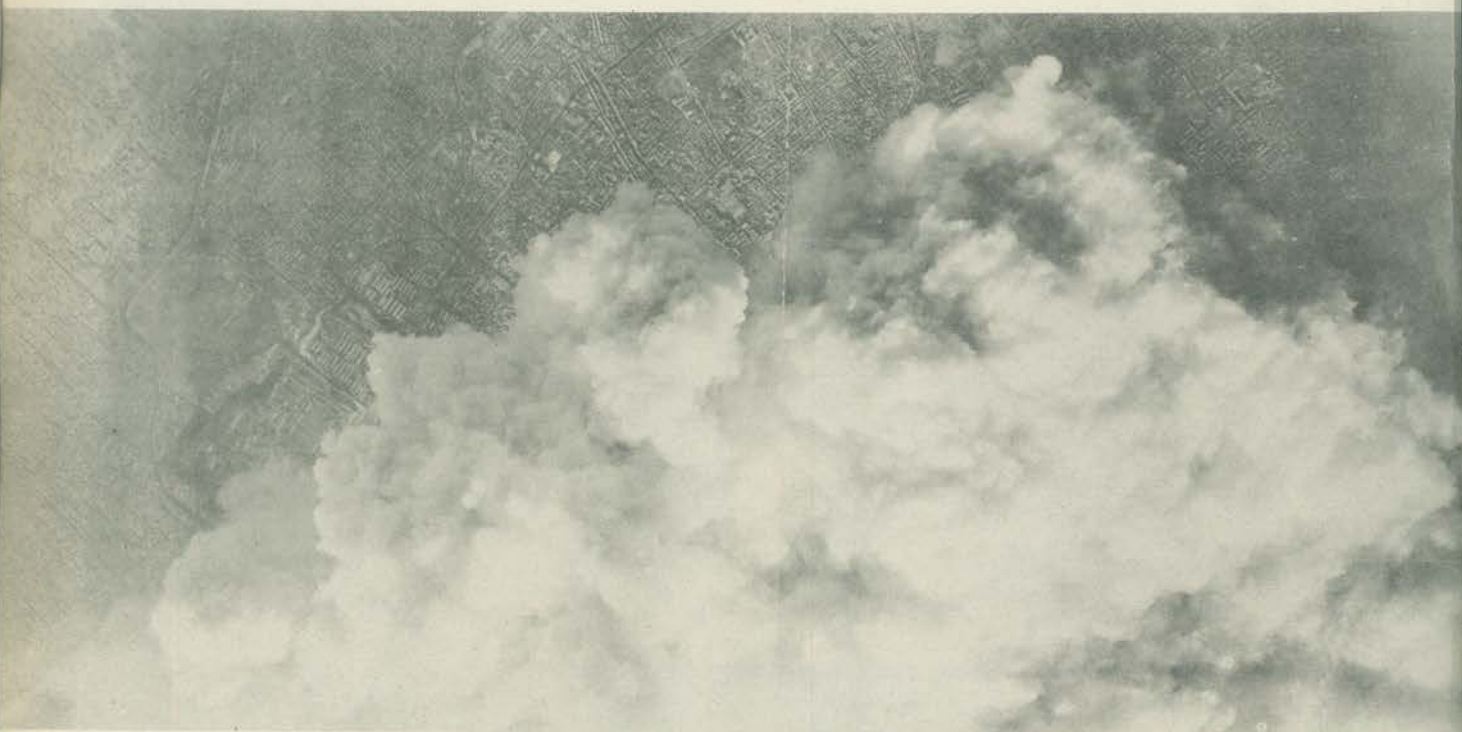


330th Chapel Dedication Services—2/18/44





Fires start at Nagoya



dered to fly against our old friend, number 357. None of our 101 airborne planes found weather good enough to bomb the primary. There was a very heavy undercast over the entire area around Tokyo that day. The result was that 81 of our planes hit the urban and dock areas of Tokyo.

Perhaps a word here on the Musashino plant might be appropriate. At Musashino there was

located a plant of the Nakajima Aircraft Company. This plant was apparently of extremely strong construction since numerous hits and near hits caused slighter damage than would have been anticipated.

On this particular mission many of us found it humorous that the strike photographs showed the Japanese Fertilizer Company and a number

of nearby residences some six miles from the Nakajima plant were destroyed. If the 73rd couldn't damage Japanese aircraft industry, it apparently accidentally selected another industry which might cause more damage to Japanese economy over a long-range view. In spite of the bad weather and our planes not being too close to the briefed target, we still lost five and had 25 battle damaged.

Apparently the authorities at Bomber Command felt that since the 73rd seemed unable to reach the Mushshino plant, they might as well be briefed for the urban and dock areas of Tokyo in the first place so for the next mission they ordered an attack on that area. The Wing put 94 aircraft over the downtown buildings and piers in Tokyo and bombed them by radar. This mission carried mixed bomb loads again. Weather in the entire target area was solid undercast to 24,000 feet with a heavy snowstorm falling at the time of the strike. Our strike photographs, of course, showed nothing whatever of the results but Radio Tokyo reported both kinds of bombs falling in the Shitayku area of Tokyo and a number of fires. The Wing lost two aircraft because of enemy action and two were lost because of a collision just beyond the Wing assembly point and one landed wheels up at Isley.

For the first mission in March (on the fourth) the Wing was once again briefed to attack the

Musashino plant and once again no airplanes bombed the target because of very heavy undercast. This mission had exactly the same results as the last February mission since again 94 aircraft bombed the urban and dock areas of Tokyo by radar. Radar photographs did show that some planes of the formations flew directly over the briefed target and Radio Tokyo mentioned high explosives falling in a residential area. One B-29 ditched on the way back near Anatahan.

At this time the Wing had flown 22 high altitude missions. A majority of them had been against precision targets in either Tokyo or Nagoya. While it is true that the various targets attacked had great military importance and that their destruction would have contributed mightily to the damage of the Japanese war effort, it is also true that the 73rd Wing's efforts to date had not been good. Primarily because of extremely bad flying conditions and because of enforced radar bombing we had lost 66 B-29s and with the exception of the Akashi raid and one or two other missions we had not been anywhere nearly successful enough to justify so great a loss.

As a result of the unfortunate results of these earlier raids higher Headquarters determined that the 73rd would at this point begin a new and very different form of attack.







Finest Fire BLITZ

CHAPTER 7

In the ten days from March 9 to 18 a series of five low-level incendiary missions was flown resulting in the destruction of approximately 32 square miles of Japanese cities. On these missions the Wing flew 762 sorties and released 4883 tons of bombs on primary targets. Eighty-eight per cent of the 178 aircraft assigned to the Wing at the time were utilized and 91 per cent of those airborne bombed the primary targets. This was accomplished with an average bomb load of 14,666 pounds. The flying of these missions was the first time the Wing was tested for repeated maximum effort operations.

Before daylight on the morning of the tenth of March the 73rd's planes flying the first of these missions attacked Tokyo. This was the beginning of the "fire blitz" and it marked a definite departure from the high altitude precision missions formerly flown. It was the beginning of an attempt to burn the enemy where his people are concentrated rather than to strike a small pin point target which has great military importance.

Photographic records of this first mission showed most of the assigned target area destroyed—a total of 16½ square miles of Tokyo burned. In addition to these good results (from our point of view), our losses were also very small since only one plane was lost and 23 damaged. This mission was also by far the largest flown up to this date since 165 planes were airborne. Then, this was the

first time a B-29 had landed on Iwo Jima. An injured ship, limping home to Saipan from Japan, came in there for fuel and then went on later. This was the first of over 500 planes of the 73rd that landed there for help before the end of hostilities. For us, Iwo was well worth taking.

The next four missions, together with this first one, made up this fire blitz. These missions were flown very close together and all were really maximum effort. The targets were Nagoya on the eleventh, Osaka on the thirteenth, Kobe on the sixteenth and Nagoya again on the eighteenth. The destruction to the three cities totaled 4.51 square miles of Nagoya, 8.1 square miles of Osaka and 2.8 square miles of Kobe and our losses were only three airplanes.

It is interesting to note that during the record strike from England of February 3, over 1,000 8th Air Force heavy bombers dropped 2,250 tons of bombs on Berlin, a 1,000-mile round trip, while on the last strike of this series 142 B-29s of the 73rd Wing dropped more than half that weight of bombs on Kobe with a round trip flight of over 3,200 miles. On a comparable basis, it would take 500 heavies operating from a base 300 miles north of Iwo Jima to do what 142 B-29s did from Saipan. Using ton-miles to the target as the comparative factor, the ratio in favor of the B-29 is 8.3 to 1.

On all of these missions our gunners' claims



Burning Tokyo

of aircraft destroyed were extremely low since our planes flew virtually unarmed. The only ammunition carried was for the tail guns. Another departure for these missions was the altitude. Instead of flying high altitude as heretofore the planes were briefed to fly at 7,000 to 8,000 feet. The first reaction of the Wing combat crews to these low altitude unarmed missions was that they did not like them but after the first few were so successful the boys wanted to fly in low and burn the Japanese cities off the map.

After the very hard week of the first fire blitz all of us had six days to recuperate before mission number 34 on the twenty-fourth of March made another attempt against the Mitsubishi factory at Nagoya. On this mission the Wing tried another new technique.

It was an experimental night precision bombing mission. While inadequate illumination caused by not enough flash bombs hampered bombing, the mission still destroyed 102,000 square feet of the roof area of the target and 6,000,000 square feet of the surrounding city. We had 106 airplanes over the target out of 122 airborne and lost four with 25 suffering battle damage. The results of this mission were sufficiently good so that further night incendiary missions were flown.

The month of March, then, brought us two new types of missions—the incendiary blitz and the night incendiary attack. In later months both types of missions were to be repeated but just before the end of the month a still more startling use for B-29s was evolved in conjunction with the Navy.



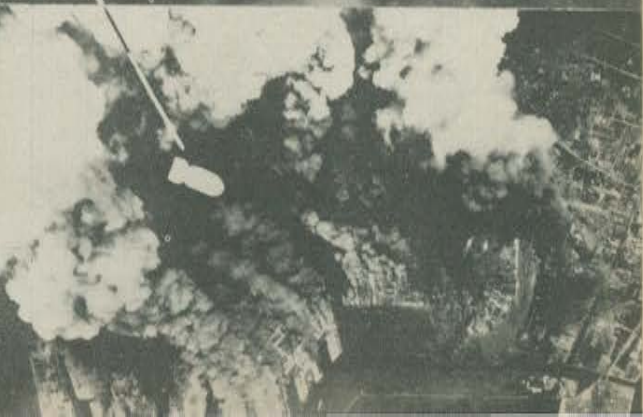
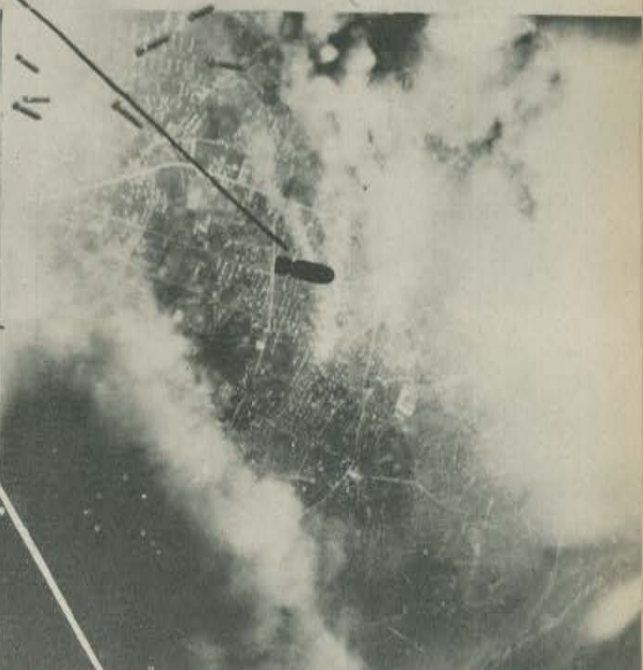
Smoke column over Nagoya on Fire Raid

B-29's Are Tying

JAPAN

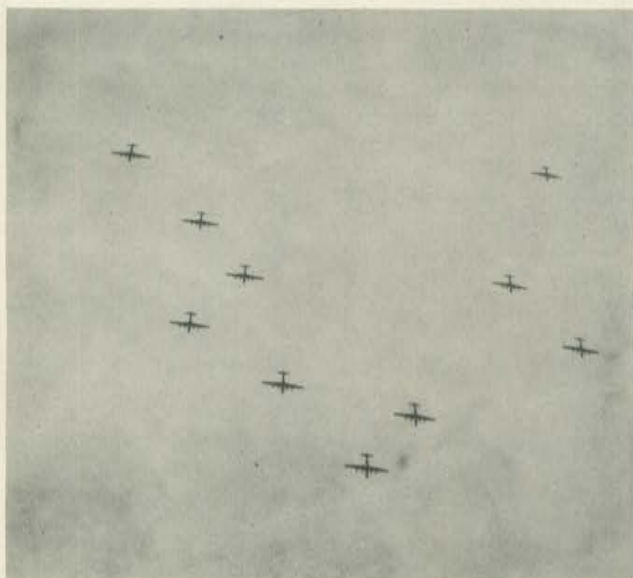
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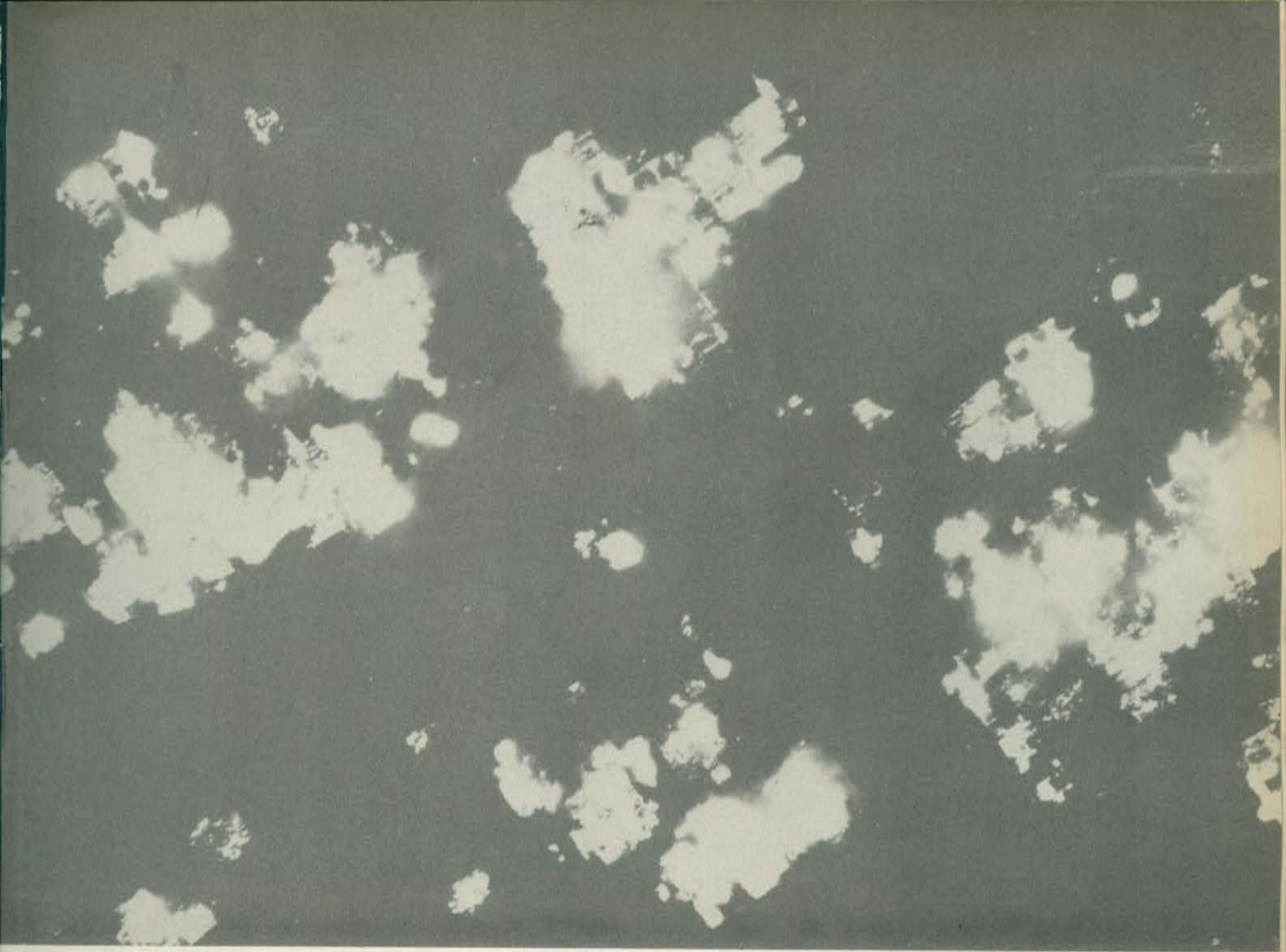




First Fire Raid on Tokyo—Burned 16½ square miles—3/10/45



Jap's Eyeview of 73rd Wing formation



Nagoya burning in last fire blitz mission



73rd's Eyeview of Target 357

CHAPTER 8

Kyushu

MISSIONS

Toward the end of March the Navy was carrying on a full-scale major sea campaign in the vicinity of Okinawa. These fleet operations were being seriously hampered by the attacks of Japanese kamikaze pilots as well as other air attacks carried on by Japanese bombers and fighters who were less spectacular than the kamikaze boys. The Navy did not seem able to handle its own air defense without disproportionate losses. Therefore, it called on the B-29s for assistance.

For the first time, very heavy, very long-range bombardment was to be used in direct support of surface naval warfare. Our assigned mission was to destroy the Japanese airfields on Kyushu and to destroy all operational aircraft that might happen to be on these fields at the time of our visits. The Kyushu fields were the only operational ones the Japanese had close enough to the Ryukyus to base their planes in the Okinawa campaign. If all these airfields could be neutralized, it would be a tremendous step forward toward victory by our forces.

The plan was to bomb from medium altitude with most planes going in at around 15,000. During the period from the first Kyushu mission on March 27 to the last Kyushu mission on April 29 the 73rd flew 29 missions. Twenty-one of these were against Kyushu and eight others were against more normal targets. With the exception of the first one the Kyushu missions normally contained only 22 to 33 planes apiece but since we flew as many as four missions on the same day our total number of airplanes airborne and bombs





Night take off

dropped for this period was greater than ever before.

The first Kyushu mission was against Tachiarai and Oita airfields. This was a large mission with 120 of our airplanes in the air and 112 over the targets. Fifty-one Japanese airplanes were destroyed on the ground and a large percentage of the installations at both fields were destroyed or damaged. After this first Kyushu raid nearly two weeks went by before the next one and in the meantime our planes bombed four precision targets.

The first of these was hit on the last day of March when our planes attacked the Tachiarai Machine Works. The report of this mission shows that the target was almost completely destroyed. We had two aiming points and one was saturated with bombs and the other was very well covered. One of our planes ditched on the way back.

In the beginning of April there were the other three missions against precision targets. The first was the Musashino plant again. It was attacked on the first and was another experimental night attack. The report states "no new damage to target number 357 was shown on post-strike photographs." The report also said "Recent experience indicates that successful night attacks against precision inland targets lacking prominent radar features are beyond the capabilities of presently available equipment." In spite of no damage being caused to the Japanese war effort, this was next to the worst raid the Wing had so far as losses of our airplanes were concerned. We lost seven.

Two days later the Wing bombed the Tachikawa Aircraft Company plant west of Tokyo with a normal force at night. This attack was by individual aircraft with "pathfinders" dropping colored incendiaries as target markers. The damage to the target was again reported as "scattered" with perhaps ten per cent of the total roof area destroyed. As on earlier night missions, inadequate illumination hampered the bombing.

On the seventh of April the 73rd flew its first fighter-escorted mission. The target was the Musashino plant once more and our planes came in at medium altitude. The escort consisted of approximately 90 P-51Ds from the 7th Fighter Com-

mand based on Iwo Jima. They were the first land-based American fighters to operate over the Empire. Our attack was reasonably successful since extensive damage was caused to the eastern part of the factory but the concrete structure to the west was not hit at all. Our losses were six B-29s and two fighters.

The fighters were met over Iwo by three navigational B-29s and escorted to Koju Shima where they rendezvoused with the bombing task force. Reports from our planes said that the fighter escort was very good for the first elements of our formations but by the time the last elements reached the target area the fighters were all gone. This was in spite of the fact that there was only six minutes from our first formation to our last.

The Wing had 111 aircraft airborne and 101 over the target. The bombs carried on this mission were also different from what we had been



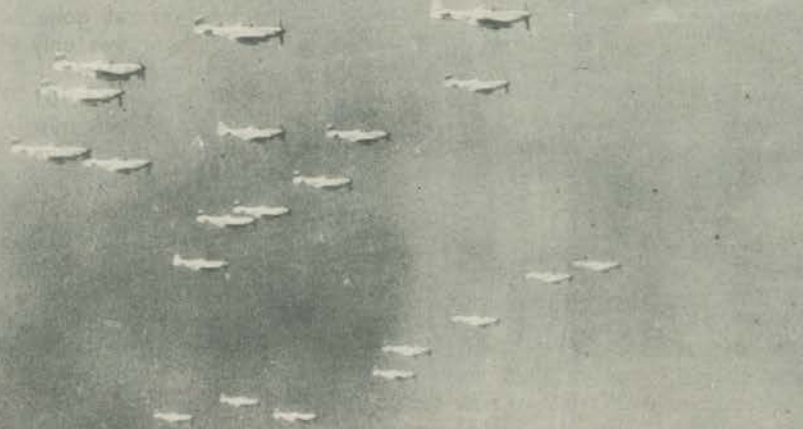
Irish are lucky. This plane shot down 7 Japanese fighters on April 7.



Iwo Jima

...and they were the first
...and they were the first
...and they were the first
...and they were the first

...and they were the first
...and they were the first
...and they were the first
...and they were the first



Navigation B-29 leads fighters from Iwo



Wing flag at half staff for the president

using since they were 2,000 pound general purpose bombs. The American claims against the enemy were 101 aircraft destroyed. Eighty of these claims were by B-29s and 21 by the fighters. This was also the first mission where a large number of our planes landed at Iwo. Thirty-one of our planes came in there on the way back, some because of battle damage and others because of being short of gas as a result of the high speeds required to escort the fighters home.

In addition to the six B-29s destroyed, there were 66 that suffered battle damage. That was the highest figure of damage to our aircraft on any of the Wing's hundred missions. This seems odd when we realize there was fighter escort. However, enemy fighters were extremely reluctant to close with P-51s so our fighters were almost always the aggressors. This put them at some disadvantage. The best thing about this mission was the weather. It was CAVU over the entire Tokyo area.

The next mission was intended to be one against Kanoya airfield on southern Kyushu. However, because of a 10 tenths undercast covering the entire southern portion of the island, all planes hit the radar secondary target—the city of Kagoshima. For such a small mission—29 planes—it was quite successful since an area of 1,260,000 square feet of the center of the city was destroyed. The Wing suffered no loss nor damage.

Mission number 41 which flew on April twelfth was very similar to the mission of five days earlier. It had fighter escort and was again against the Musashino plant. However, this time



P-51—fighter support on 4/7/45

instead of having CAVU conditions there was heavy haze over the target. Two of our squadrons had good patterns in the eastern portion of the factory but the other squadrons did not do so well. The fighter cover was considerably better than the first time since the fighters had been briefed on covering the entire mission this time.

The Japanese fighter opposition was reduced very considerably, partly due to the heavy recent enemy losses and partly due to the diversion of aircraft to take part in the Okinawa campaign. Our support of the Navy was helping us, too. Also, of course, our fighter escort had a disconcerting effect. Another factor was the attack by both the 313th and 314th Wings on Koriyama just before the 73rd Wing arrived. They drew a number of fighters. We lost no airplanes and had 36 with some degree of battle damage. There were two P-51s lost but one of the pilots was rescued by a destroyer.

The next two missions, numbers 42 and 43, were flown on the nights of the thirteenth and fifteenth of April and both were incendiary missions against Tokyo. The first was by individual aircraft between 7,000 and 8,000 feet. The weather was completely CAVU over the target and at least 10.7 more square miles of the city were burned. Many large explosions were seen from as far away as 150 miles and a reconnaissance mission reported extensive fires still burning the next night. Both the 313th and 314th Wings joined the 73rd on this one. We had 122 planes in the air.

The other Tokyo mission took off 48 hours after these planes landed and was against Kawasaki, a southern suburb of Tokyo. Again, all three wings attacked simultaneously and the destruction was severe. The city was burned to the extent of 8.1 square miles with 5.2 square miles of this being in the area of the 73rd Wing aiming point. The 73rd lost only one airplane and that was not due to enemy action but because of a ground crash on landing at Iwo. The other two wings lost a total of eleven aircraft.

A series of blitz attacks against the Kyushu airfields took place in the six days from April seventeenth through April twenty-second when the Wing flew nine missions against five airfields. During the period Izumi and Tachiarai airfields were attacked three times and Oita, Usa and Tomitaka were attacked once each. The bombing results were excellent. Out of a total of twenty squadrons that attacked on the nine missions, twelve dropped more than 50 per cent of their bombs within 1,000 feet of the assigned aiming line. In the entire series of missions only two B-29s were lost. These were both shot down by Japanese fighters over Tachiarai.

Before going back to Kyushu one more normal mission was inserted in the mission list. This was on April twenty-fourth when our mission number 53 sent 45 aircraft to the Hitachi Aircraft Engine Plant at Tachikawa on Honshu. Although only 34 planes were actually over the target, this was a successful mission with 70 per cent of the target destroyed. Also our claims against the enemy totalled twenty aircraft as against our loss of only one.

In the 96 hours of the twenty-sixth, twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth of April the Wing ran a last blitz against the Kyushu airfields. We hit Miyazaki three times, Izumi twice and Miyakonojo, Usa, Tomitaka, Oita and Saeki once each. All of these missions had 21 to 24 airplanes airborne and we lost a total of four with only fourteen having battle damage. The results of these missions were reported as being excellent and perhaps the only nonroutine item on any of them was on the twenty-eighth when the first B-29 landed at Okinawa as a result of fuel shortage caused by a sea search off the Kyushu coast.

As to the value of these airfield missions, the consensus was that they were extremely successful since aerial opposition to the Navy in the Ryukyus was greatly reduced during and after this period.

CHAPTER 9

We Burn

THE BIG

Japanese

CITIES

After the Okinawa campaign was successfully concluded and our planes were freed for a more normal use than close support of fleet operations, a series of missions was flown between the last Kyushu mission on April 29 and June 11. There were fifteen raids of which eight were incendiary missions against the urban areas of the great cities of Japan. Nagoya was hit twice, Tokyo twice and Osaka twice. Also Yokohama and Kobe were each bombed once and on all of these missions goodly portions of these cities were burned.

The other seven missions of this period were against miscellaneous targets with the climax reached when the Hitachi Engineering Works near Tokyo was almost completely destroyed. The weather conditions were better than during the first series of high altitude missions but not as good as for the Kyushu missions. Some Wing personnel had felt it was unfortunate to waste such good bombing weather on what appeared to be unimportant targets on Kyushu. However, the results had justified this use of the B-29s.

The first mission in this group was number 64 on April 30 and suffered from very bad weather. While a precision target in Tokyo (NOT number 357) was selected as a visual target, the weather was so bad that Hamamatsu, the radar target, was bombed. Fifty-five aircraft bombed this city which had so often before been used as a target of opportunity by wandering 73rd Wing planes. The results were good.

In May a mission was not flown until the fifth when 130 planes took off to bomb the Hiro Naval Aircraft Factory at Kure. The briefed radar target was the Hiro Arsenal. Of the fourteen squadrons flying eleven bombed the aircraft factory and three the arsenal. Strike photographs showed that the aircraft factory was 75 per cent destroyed. Because a late change in the bombing load made

That Smokestack at Saganoseki



Bombs on Oita—4/21/45



Bomb Burst on Tachiarai—4/18/45



Bomb Pattern on Tomitaka A/F—4/22/45

it impossible to install bomb-bay tanks, 64 aircraft landed at Iwo Jima short of fuel. Our combat losses were three planes with 39 battle damaged.

Five days after the Kure mission two missions were flown the same day against two targets in Tokuyama. These were the Naval Fuel Station and

the Naval Coal Yards & Briquette Factory. Both were 85 per cent destroyed. Weather over the targets was clear and both fighter opposition and antiaircraft were meager and inaccurate. None of our planes were lost on either of these missions and only twelve suffered battle damage out of the 61 and 64 airborne.

On the eleventh, a small mission of 24 planes attacked the Kawanishi Aircraft Plant at Kobe. This was not a very successful mission since radar approaches were required and the target proved to be unidentifiable by radar. However, 35 per cent of the target was destroyed and all our planes returned safely.

On May 14 and 16, the Wing really started a serious effort to burn the great cities of Japan with two maximum effort missions against Nagoya. These two missions actually placed 2,166 tons of incendiary bombs on the city and destroyed 5.9 square miles of it. On the first, the Wing lost two planes and had 25 seriously battle damaged. On the other, there were neither losses nor battle damage. On the first, fifteen squadrons bombed assigned areas of Nagoya. On the other, the pathfinder system was used and seemed to work equally well. Toward the end of this second mission the glow of fires could be seen more than 150 miles from the target and observations were impossible because of the thick smoke rising through flight levels at 13,000 feet.

After the two Nagoya missions there was another attack against Hamamatsu by radar. The briefed target on this May 19 mission was the Tachikawa Army Arsenal with general purpose bombs but since this mission had probably the worst target weather the 73rd Wing ever had on a major strike, most squadrons were broken up shortly after assembly. The result was that there were all sorts of individual and mongrel attacks on the radar target. However, the Wing had really learned to use radar as evidenced by the fact that 83 out of 94 planes airborne did bomb Hamamatsu. There was very heavy damage caused. The clouds were solid from about 800 feet to about 23,000 feet with icing in them. While it is true that the bad weather interfered with our bombing, it also protected our planes since there was no damage.

On the twenty-third and twenty-fifth of May, missions number 72 and 73 hit Tokyo with fire bombs at night and bombed 18.2 square miles of this—the third largest city in the world. The first of these missions was a large one with 170 airplanes airborne and the second was a normal effort with 144 in the air. Both missions operated on the pathfinder system and both had quite good weather although surface winds for the first mission were very light so that fires did not spread as rapidly as they might have. On the first mission, 93 per cent of the main force bombed within a 42-minute period and on the second the entire main force bombed within 50 minutes. While this concentration of time interval made the fires better, it also created a traffic problem both on the bomb run and on the withdrawal. The Japanese destroyed ten of our planes on these missions and damaged 32. The targets were different areas

the Naval Coal Yard & Shipyard Factory. Both were 25 per cent destroyed. Weather over the targets was clear and both fighter opposition and anti-aircraft were meager and inaccurate. None of our planes were lost on either of these missions and our fighters inflicted battle damage out of the 25 per cent destroyed.

The following is a brief mission of 24 planes. The target was the Naval Coal Yard at Kobe. The target was a large building which since radar was used to locate it the target proved to be a large building. However, 25 per cent of the planes were destroyed and all our planes were damaged.

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Yokohama May 29th

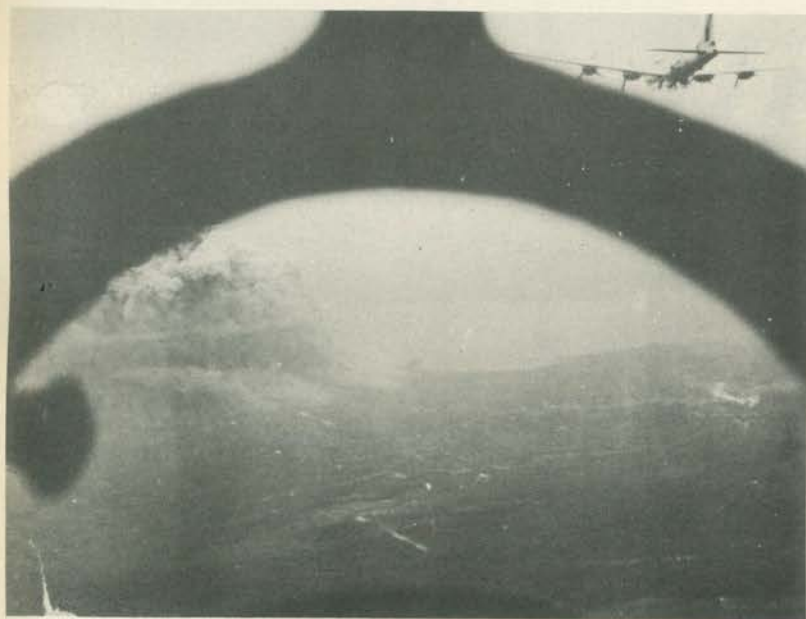


**ON THE
WAY OUT**

The following is a brief mission of 24 planes. The target was the Naval Coal Yard at Kobe. The target was a large building which since radar was used to locate it the target proved to be a large building. However, 25 per cent of the planes were destroyed and all our planes were damaged.

THE I.P.

FUJIYAMA



BOMB DOORS OPEN -

YOKOHAMA AHEAD

ALREADY BURNING

ATSUGI AIRFIELD -

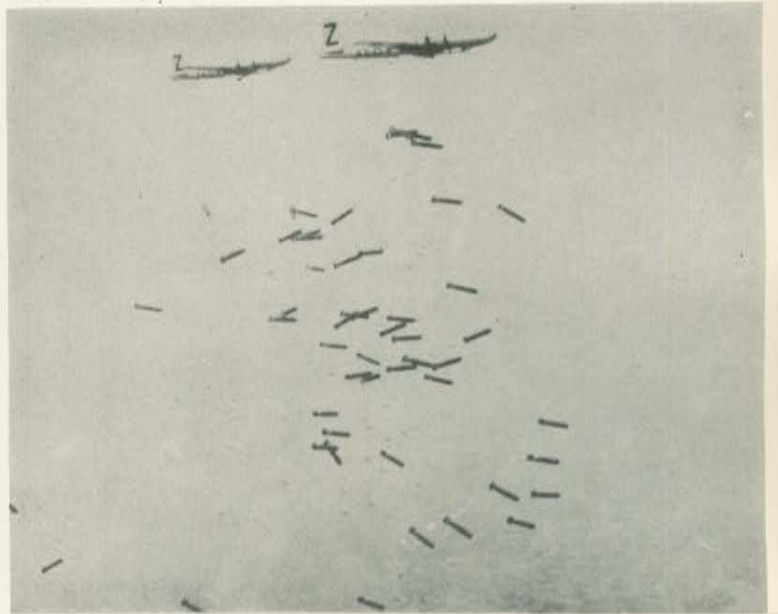
FIGHTERS GUARD

THE APPROACH





BOMBS AWAY



GOING DOWN



**AND STILL
THEY COME**

FLAK AHEAD

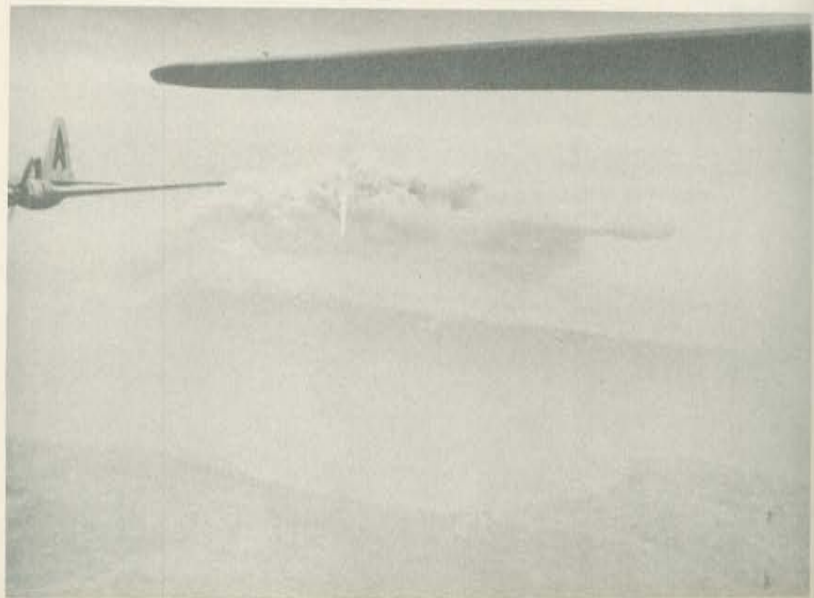


**TROUBLE - NUMBER
ONE FEATHERED**

LOOKING BACK

ON A JOB

WELL DONE





Bombs hit Izumii Airfield—4/18/45

of Tokyo and, in both cases, the fires were all well located in the briefed areas.

On May 29, a daylight incendiary mission was flown with Yokohama as the target. This was very successful since the weather was good and the opposition was light. Also there was a strong surface wind. While we did have 30 aircraft with some battle damage, none were lost and only seven had to land at two. There were 152 airborne and 136 over the primary.

The next three missions were on the first, fifth and seventh of June with the urban areas of Osaka as the target twice and Kobe the other time. The destroyed portion of Osaka totaled 6.55 square miles and 4.3 square miles of Kobe was ruined. These missions had 158 and 133 airplanes airborne against Osaka and 154 against Kobe. On the first Osaka mission smoke rose above 20,000 feet and on the other one the smoke rose right through the undercast covering the target. At Kobe, the surface winds appeared to be light but the dense concentration of bombs made up for it. Also at Kobe, the Wing suffered very heavy battle damage with 55 of the returning aircraft being hit. Two planes were lost on that mission and four on one of the Osaka missions.

On June 10, an attack was planned against target number 357 but because of a 10 tenths undercast the radar target—the Hitachi Engineering Works, Kaigan Plant—was hit and it was ruined by the 118 planes that bombed. This plant had been a leading producer of tanks and other

military vehicles and aircraft components. Twelve squadrons totaling 118 aircraft each carrying seven 2,000-pound general purpose bombs, hit the target visually from about 20,000 feet. There were 101 buildings in the factory area and only eight small buildings showed no visible damage. Out of the 2,000,000 square feet of roof area 96.8 per cent was destroyed. While the plant had been briefed as a radar target, it was actually bombed visually. From the point of view of losses, this mission was also very successful since we lost no planes.



Bombs fall on Miyazaki A/F—4/29/45



Bomb Pattern on Tomitaka A/F—4/22/45



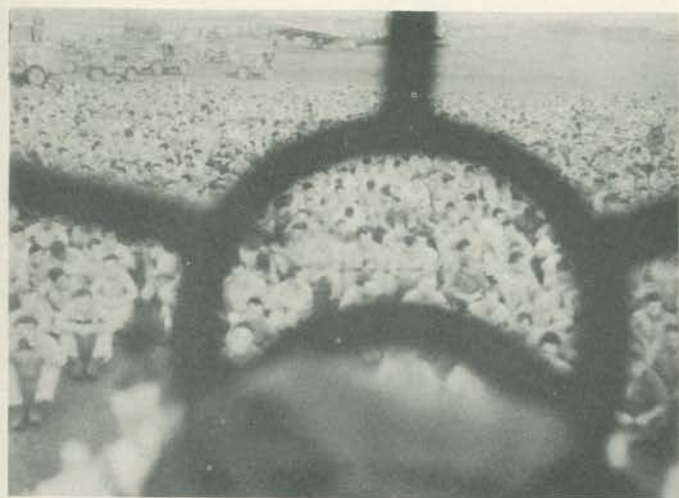
Smoke over Tachiarai A/F—3/27/45



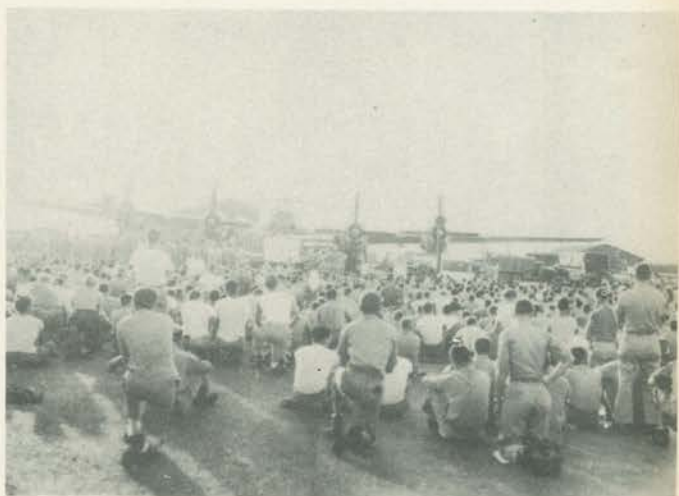
Bombs well centered on Kyushu mission



Bombs away on Tachiarai A/F—3/27/45



Easter Mass through nose of B-29



Looking the other way

DON'T TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT -
See For Yourself



- **The TARGET :** KOBE URBAN AREA : Population about 1,000,000 (roughly the size of St. Louis) JAPAN'S greatest transportation center, land and sea. Heavily industrial, producing aircraft, steel, rubber tires, heavy ordnance, railway equipment, machinery, machine tools, and ... JAPS.
- **The DATE :** 5 JUNE, 1945
- **The RESULT :** (From this and two previous attacks) Eight square miles, about 51% of built up area destroyed. 9 very large important individual targets destroyed. Numerous unidentified industries, wharves, dockyards warehouses destroyed and damaged. Hundreds of thousands of JAPS out of work (and out of doors)

500 B 29's Of the XXI Bomber Command (150 from the 73 Wing) Dropped 3 000 tons of bombs to do this job. They could not have done it without your help.

BEFORE

Grayish white areas represent regions burned by previous raids. Congested, heavily industrial core of city lies along narrow plain between sea and mountains. Great trunk railway visible running east and west through city.

DURING

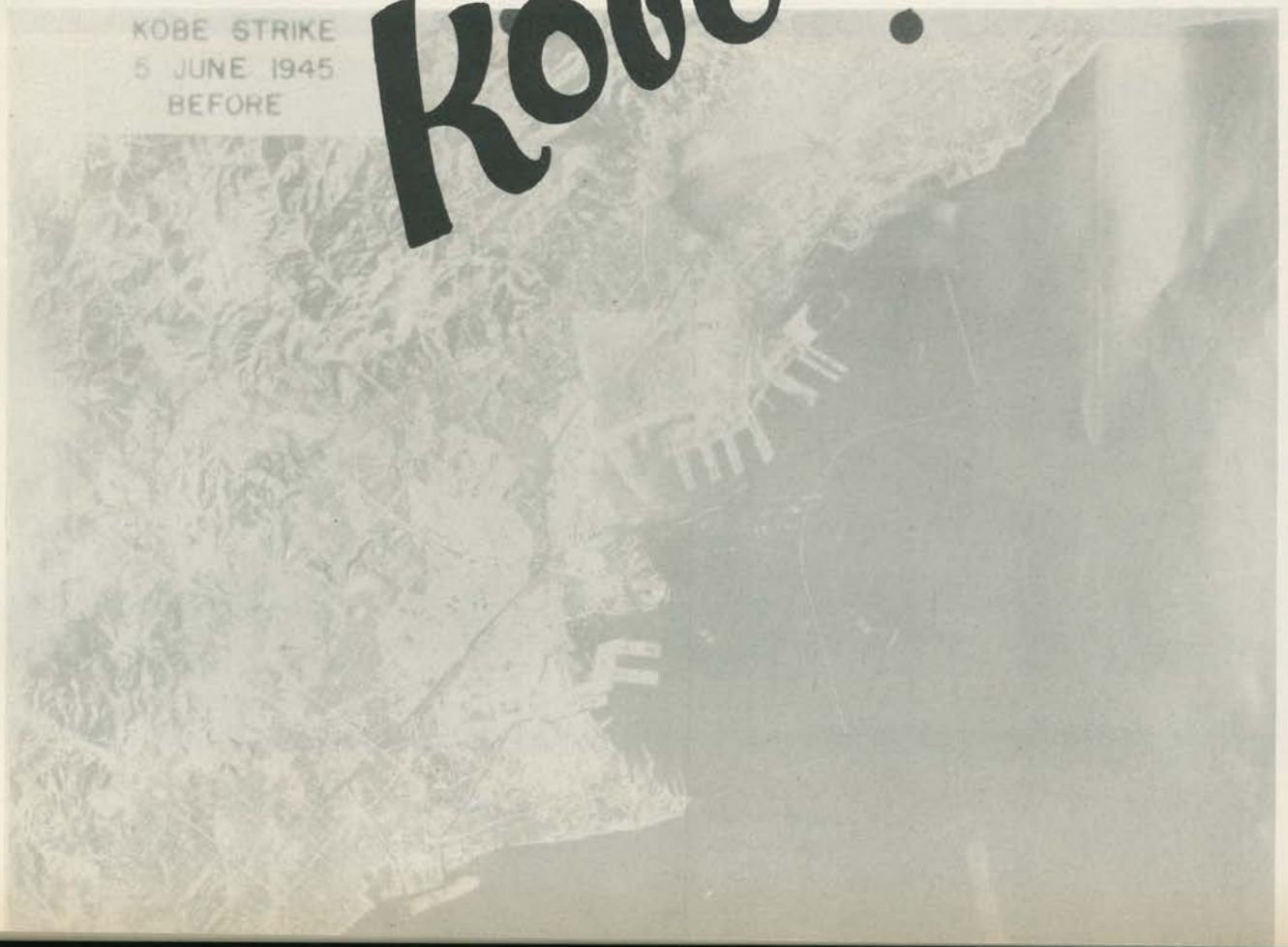
Bright fires are plainly visible through great columns of smoke. Individual fires will merge and form a solid sea of flame.

AFTER

More than half of the city is ashes and rubble. Burned out areas show grayish white in the photograph.

KOBE STRIKE
 5 JUNE 1945
 BEFORE

KOBE



KOBE STRIKE
5 JUNE 1945
DURING

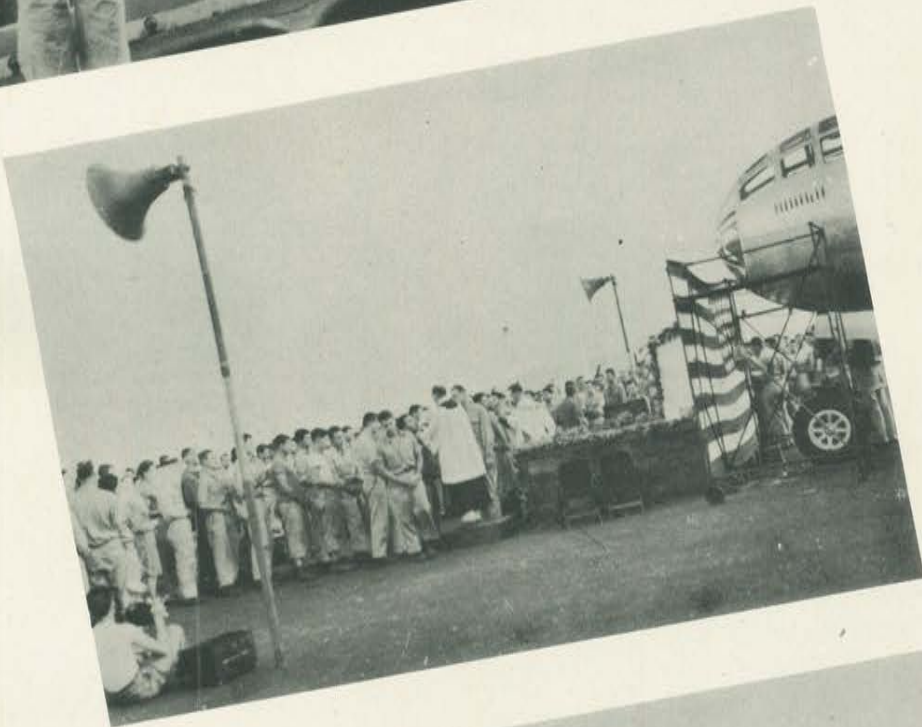


KOBE STRIKE
5 JUNE 1945
AFTER

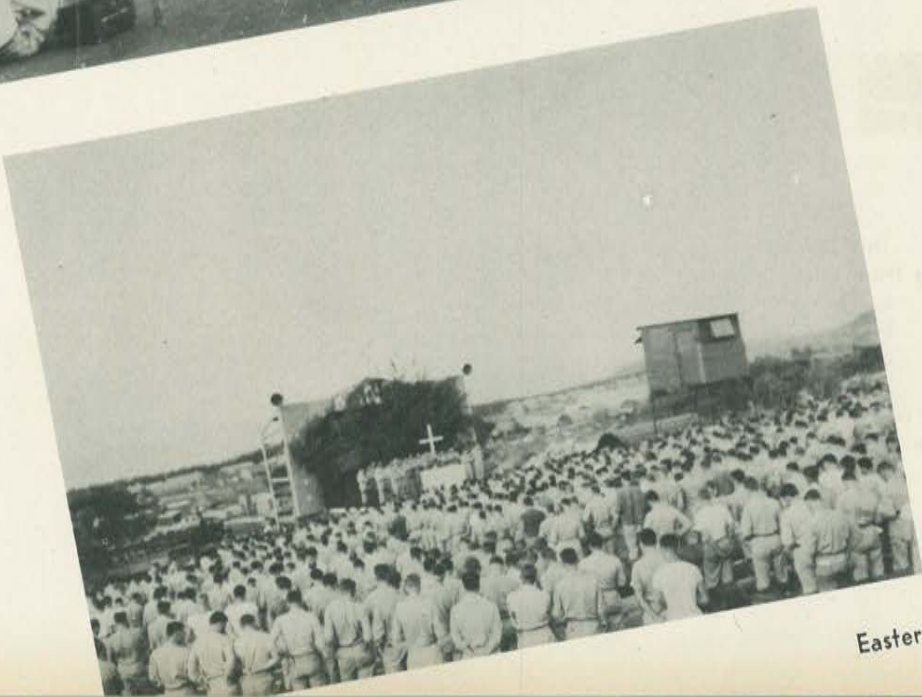




Easter Protestant Services



Easter Mass on Ramp



Easter Protestant Services

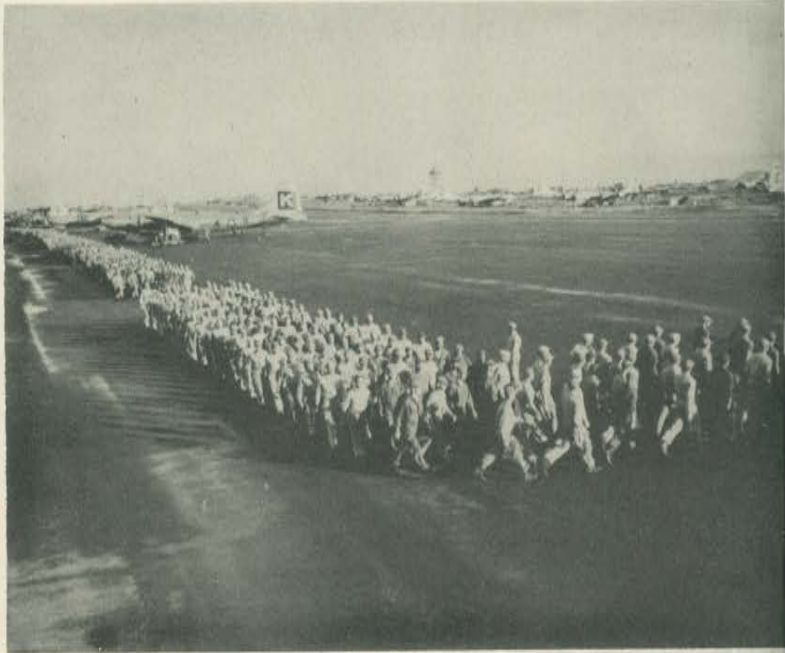


This layout shows how the medical department worked with wounded returning from missions. In the center are shown:

- a. The tower notifying the Wing Surgeon of wounded.
- b. The Wing Surgeon calling from his jeep to the hospital and to the ambulance.
- c. A Chaplain was always with the ambulance.

Upper left shows man receiving a sternal injection before landing. Some men on most crews are trained to do this work. Upper right—the patient is removed from the aircraft. Lower left—he has an operation. Lower right—he convalesces.

Memorial Day



Wing troops march on Ramp



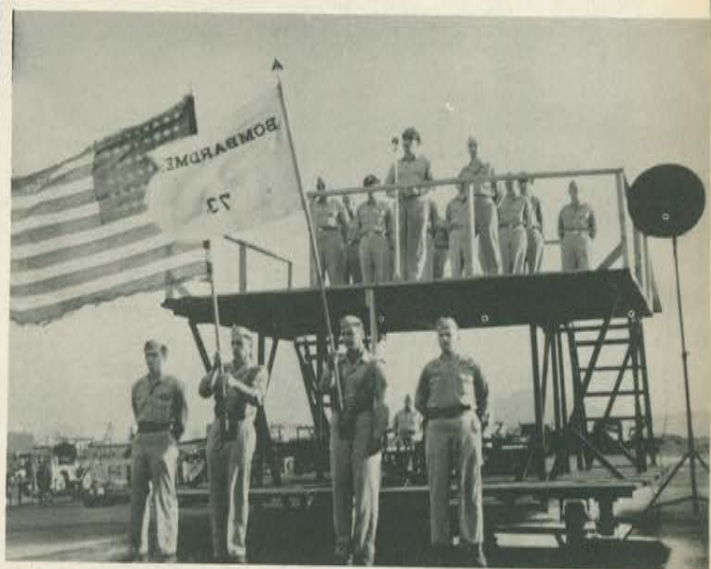
And into formation



The band was there



Col. Sweeney speaks at Memorial Day Services



Gen. O'Donnell speaks on Memorial Day



First crew to complete tour—Lt. Bonner, 873rd Sq., 498th Group and his crew. This crew was the first to finish its missions and be ready for home—on 12 May

CHAPTER 10



— AND THE

Little ONES

By the middle of June, so many of the large Japanese cities had been thoroughly burned out that the 73rd had to start attacking smaller cities to find anything to burn. During the last of June, July and August up to VJ Day the Wing flew seventeen incendiary attacks (mostly night) against various small Japanese cities. We eventually burned almost every city over 50,000 population. Also there were five precision attacks on Japanese arsenals. The small Japanese cities struck were as follows:

- Osaka-Amagasaki
- Hamamatsu
- Fukuoka
- Sasebo
- Kumamoto
- Kochi
- Akashi
- Sakai
- Ichinomiya (twice)
- Oita
- Hitachi
- Matsuyama
- Toyama
- Nishinomiya-Mikage
- Yawata
- Isezaki

While some of these missions were radar, a majority of them were not and areas destroyed vary up to 99.5 per cent in the case of the mission to Toyama on the first of August. This mission, by the way, was the largest flown by the Wing since there were 184 planes in the air and 174 hit the target with 1,465 tons of bombs.



Toyama burning in August during 73rd's Biggest Raid.

DON'T TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT - See For Yourself



- **The Target:** HAMAMATSU URBAN AREA. Population about 165,000 (about the size of Ft Worth, Texas). Industrially a suburb of Nagoya. Has immense railroad shops. An outstanding mixture of dense housing and small industrial plants producing aircraft parts and materials.
- **The Date:** 17-18 JUNE 1945
- **The Result:** About two and a fifth square miles burned out. Hundreds of residences wiped out. Two large and many small industrial plants destroyed or damaged. Total damage nearly 70% of built up area of city.

135 B-29s of the 73rd Wing dropped nearly 950 tons of bombs to do this job. They could not have done it without your help.

BEFORE

Photograph shows some previous damage resulting from an attack in April. The river is the Maosuu.

DURING

A great conflagration is developing. Bright fires & massive columns of smoke are seen over a large area.

AFTER

The burned area, showing greyish tone, was formerly the most congested and productive portion of the city.

This is the top of the poster that was posted over the three pictures on the next page

All of these various Japanese cities had some type of industry located within the city. They also had many Japanese living in them and while it is unfortunate that so many thousands of people were made homeless by the Wing, it is clear that tremendous damage was done to the Japanese war effort by these missions which reached into the small cities of Japan to destroy their industry.

All but the last of these missions, the one against Isezaki, were normal or maximum effort for the Wing with the number of planes airborne varying from 184 against Toyama down to 122 against Yawata. By this time, the Japanese air forces were so depleted and there had been such serious damage to their antiaircraft installations that the Wing lost only a total of six airplanes on all of these missions.

This reaching into the very heart of Japanese urban life with nocturnal fires must also have caused considerable havoc to Japanese thinking. From night to night the Japanese people never knew which of their cities would be the next target. Throughout the period leaflet missions were being flown in between the bombing missions announcing lists of possible targets. This further disrupted Japanese psychology and undoubtedly contributed heavily toward the happenings of the fifteenth of August.

The first of the five nonincendiary missions during this last period of the Wing's fighting was flown on June 22 against the naval arsenal at Kure and the target was 56 per cent destroyed. On this mission 126 airplanes were airborne and 104 reached the target. Apparently the Japanese considered the arsenal very important since there was sufficient opposition to damage 55 of our planes and destroy one. Careful scoring of bomb bursts showed that 36 per cent of the bombs dropped within 1,000 feet of the aiming point.

Four days later an arsenal of the Japanese Army in Osaka was selected as our target. One hundred and twenty-two airplanes took off and

109 reached the target but found bad weather, and were forced to use radar bombing technique with questionable results through the 10 tenths undercast.

Nearly a month later, on July 24, this same arsenal at Osaka was attacked again but this time it was a very large mission with 173 planes airborne. Bad weather forced all but 35 to bomb Kuwana City, the radar target. Nevertheless,



HAMAMATSU
BEFORE



DO NOT TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT
See for Yourselves

...and bad weather
...technique
...10 feet
...the camp
...the time
...air
...to bomb
...Nevertheless

HAMAMATSU
DURING

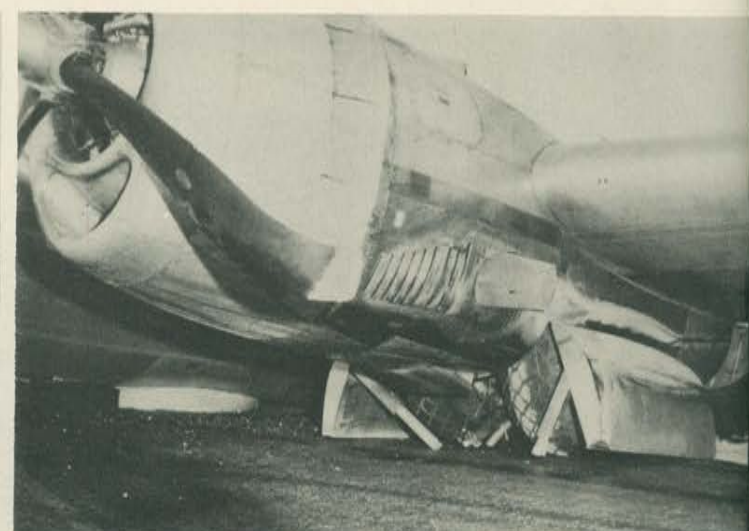


HAMAMATSU
AFTER





Ticklish job—loading 2,000-pound bombs in June



Crash landing in June



those 35 succeeded in destroying 434,500 square feet of the roof area of the arsenal. This mission was the last one upon which the Wing suffered heavy battle damage. There were 46 of our planes damaged but none lost.

There was another naval arsenal located at Toyokawa and on the seventh of August the Wing attacked it with 29 planes over the target out of 34 airborne.

Just before VJ Day the Osaka Army Arsenal was again struck by the Wing with 165 planes airborne and 145 over the target. There were no planes lost on either of these two missions and only 35 were damaged on both. According to the reports, the results were "good to excellent" on both missions.



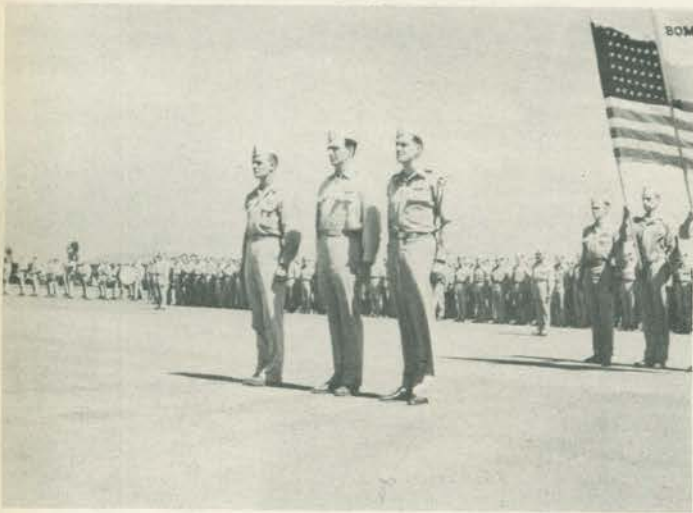
One of the 499th's Mess Halls burned in July



General Arnold arrives—June 12



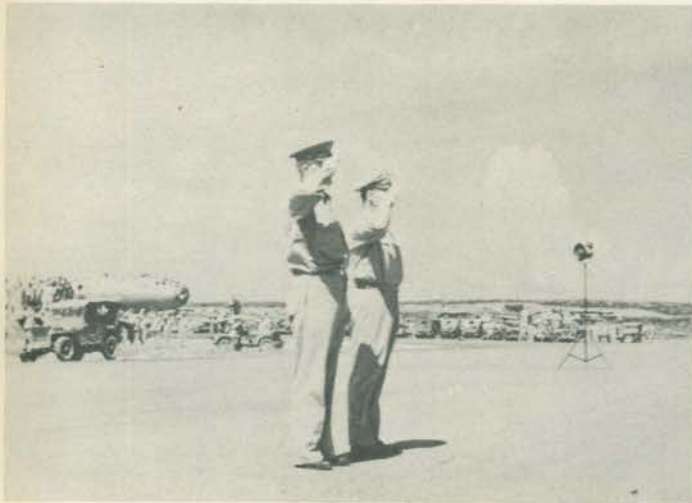
5 stars on Saipan



He is greeted by the troops



He speaks to the troops



The big boss and the little boss salute



General Arnold, General O'Donnell and Colonel Shelmire



Our General's House



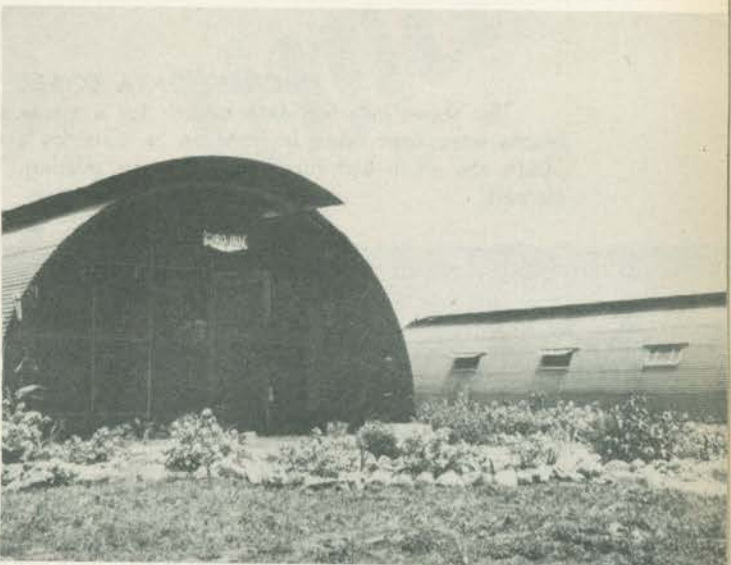
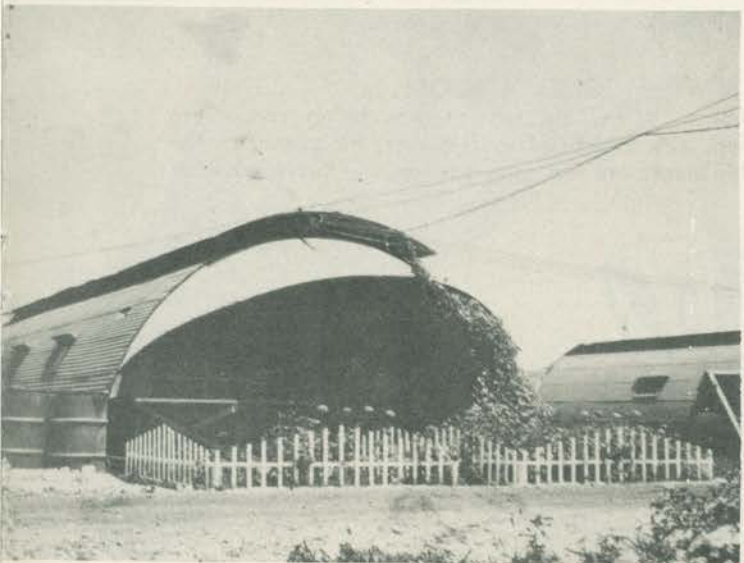
C-47 spraying DDT—It really worked



Wing HQ street in June



Typical 73rd Target Weather



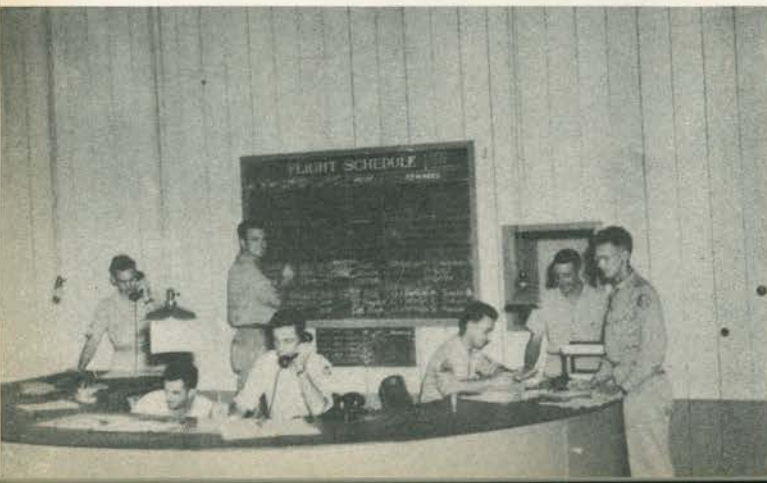
Combat crews built gardens

499TH		SANDY		YE08	
NO	TIME	STATUS	PILOT	REMARKS	
8	0332	—	WILKINSON	LOST OVER TARGET	
11	0328	1902	NEWELL	VISEJATY	
6	0339	1746	DELANEY	TEMME	
7	0338	1902	SMITH, H.C.	FRANKENBOTT	
3	0404	1927	CAMERON		
12	0338	1735	HEARSEY		
10	0335	1709	MARCACCI		
1	0337	1726	VACULA		
9	0340	1732	EWING		
15	0336	LDG IWO	SANDER	FUEL ETA 2>304	
45	0325	1740	HAMILTON	VIA 3A5Y	
43	0326	1739	PEDDY	HENSE	
42	0327	1725	MILLS	TREVITT	
57	0330	1729	THORBURN		
54	0340	1649	HANCOCK		
47	0331	1739	RIDENHOUR		
44	0329	1654	SIKES		
55	0330	1724	SCHUMACKER		
48	0344	1751	BISHOP		
52	0323	1750	ROSS		
37	0331	1429	BRASHEAR	ZOLLER	
26	0328	1715	SCARBOROUGH	SCHIEBER	
32	0341	1737	COATS	VIA 3B11Y	
21	0335	1720	MERLOW		
34	0344	1744	LEHMAN		
25	0342	1714	WEEKS		
35	0343	1736	HANFORD		
27	0345	1753	COX	SMELTON	
28	0339	1732	MCGUFFEY		
36	0341	LDG IWO	SILVESTER	VIA 3A2 TWO SRX 4DIY	
33	0343	1730	NETHERTON		
50	0327	1651	FAISON	IFF OUT ETA 1606	
46	0327	1658	TEETOR	COL CHAMBERS VV283D1V	
31	0342	1713	PAYEA		
23	0334	1737	GUILLES	JOHNSON WILEY VVIA 3A4Y	
% SCHEDULED	41	16 0331	1934	SECORIS	
% AIRBORNE	41	30 0342	1738	FRAGGETT	
% ABORTED	3	41 0332	1723	THURSTON	
% LANDED	40	56 0335	1744	SALIBA	
% DITCHED	0	40 0338	1051	SMITH, R.L.	
% LOST TO %	1	13 0336	0518	BETHKE	
% MISSING	0	51 0443	IWO	MORAN BOSWELL-6.	

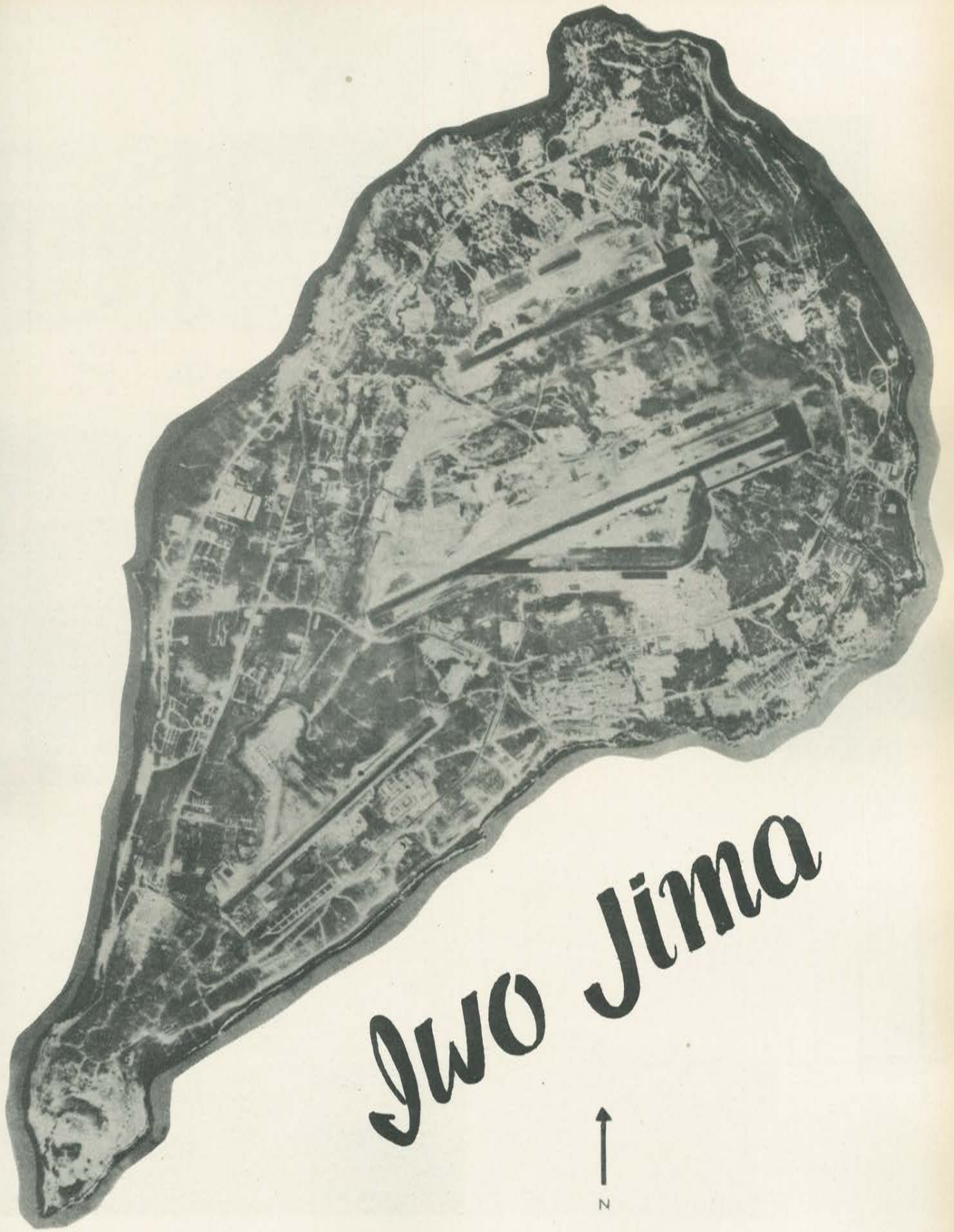
500TH		PLUTO		Y609	
SR	NO	TO	TIME	PILOT	REMARKS
1ST	12	0340	1809	CURTIS	BRANDAN - PACE STOP
	9	0347	1837	CONN	HATCH
153	19	0347	LDG IWO	ALTHOFF	ETA 2>30
	15	0348	1712	PEARSON	
	2	0349	1819	LEWIS	PACK
	6	0350	1818	LAHOUN	
	16	0350	1806	GIEKER	
	14	0351	1815	MATHER	
	11	SCRATCHED		WALTER	COMMON BROWN
	5	0349	1745	KAPPL	
2ND	23	0352	1906	HAYS	BRANNOCK VVIE 3B9Y
	27	0351	1787	SASSER	
	33	0356	1918	KEEVES	
	35	0356	1810	GRAY	
	28	0355	1829	CORDEAY	
	26	0353	1806	SEALY	ARNOLD
	21	0352	1807	GILLERT	
	32	0353	1805	PARSONS	
	29	0354	1815	SHOREY	
3RD	28	0352	LDG IWO	JACKSON	
	42	0348	1802	MCDONNELL	
	37	0348	1408	ADAMS	VV5A3B3S TENG D1Y SUTHERLAND PARED CRASH
	57	0358	1815	ADAMSON	
	48	0357	1800	MCCLANAHAN	
	58	0358	1751	CLINKSCALES	
	52	0402	0449	SHUFFLER	
	43	0359	1815	GROSSE	
	50	0400	1755	BRADEN	
	55	0400	1800	RYAN	
	54	0358	1729	STANDEN	
4TH	39	0345	1822	HOLDRIDGE	LAMARCHE
	24	0354	1808	COFFMAN	VV2A2C4
	34	0357	1723	FARRELL	IFF OUT ETA 1718K
	36	0353	1741	ARBON	
	10	0400	1803	MOCK	
	37	0356	1743	ROBINSON	
	3	0401	1833	MITCHELL	
% SCHEDULED	40	49 0403	1759	GREGG	
% AIRBORNE	39	51 0403	1728	SCHULTZ	
% ABORTED	2	46 0409	1754	FIELD	
% LANDED	39				
% DITCHED	0	45 0434	IWO	BRICKER	BOSWELL-6 SUPE-DU-11A
% LOST TO %	0				
% MISSING	0				

AIRCRAFT DATA BOARD IN WING CONTROL ROOM

This shows half the data boards for a major mission. While the mission was being run, these blanks were kept filled in right up to date by a clerk with a headset. In this case, the planes of the 500th are all in but the 499th has one missing. The blanks are not long enough for this number of aircraft.



Wing Control Room Desk



Gwo Jima





Band and Flag on VJ Day



The Band passes



Capt. Power (497th) Has News



8/15/45—The band plays "California, Here I Come"



Still "California, Here I Come"

Its Over

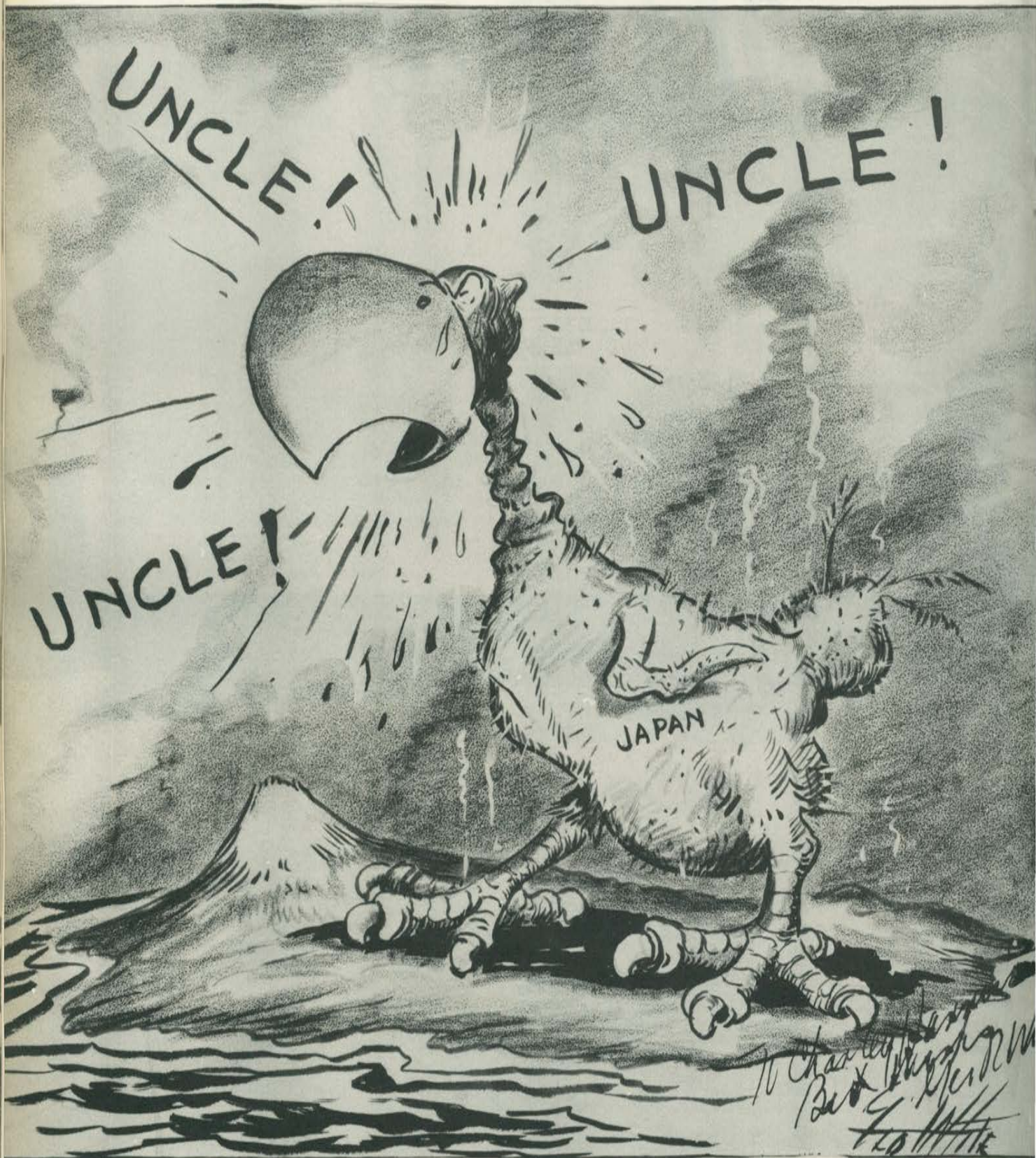
NB -T- NB -LU
FROM : CINCPOA ADV 142315Z
TO M : ALPOA 579 DTG 142304/579
INFO : COMINCH
BT

CEASE OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS AGAINST JAPANESE FORCES X CONTINUE SEARCHES
AND PATROLS X MAINTAIN DEFENSIVE AND INTERNAL SECURITY MEASURES AT
HIGHEST LEVEL AND BEWARE OF TREACHERY OR LAST MOMENT ATTACKS BY ENEMY
FORCES OR INDIVIDUALS X

BT 142315
TOD V JCS 0212Z BMJ K



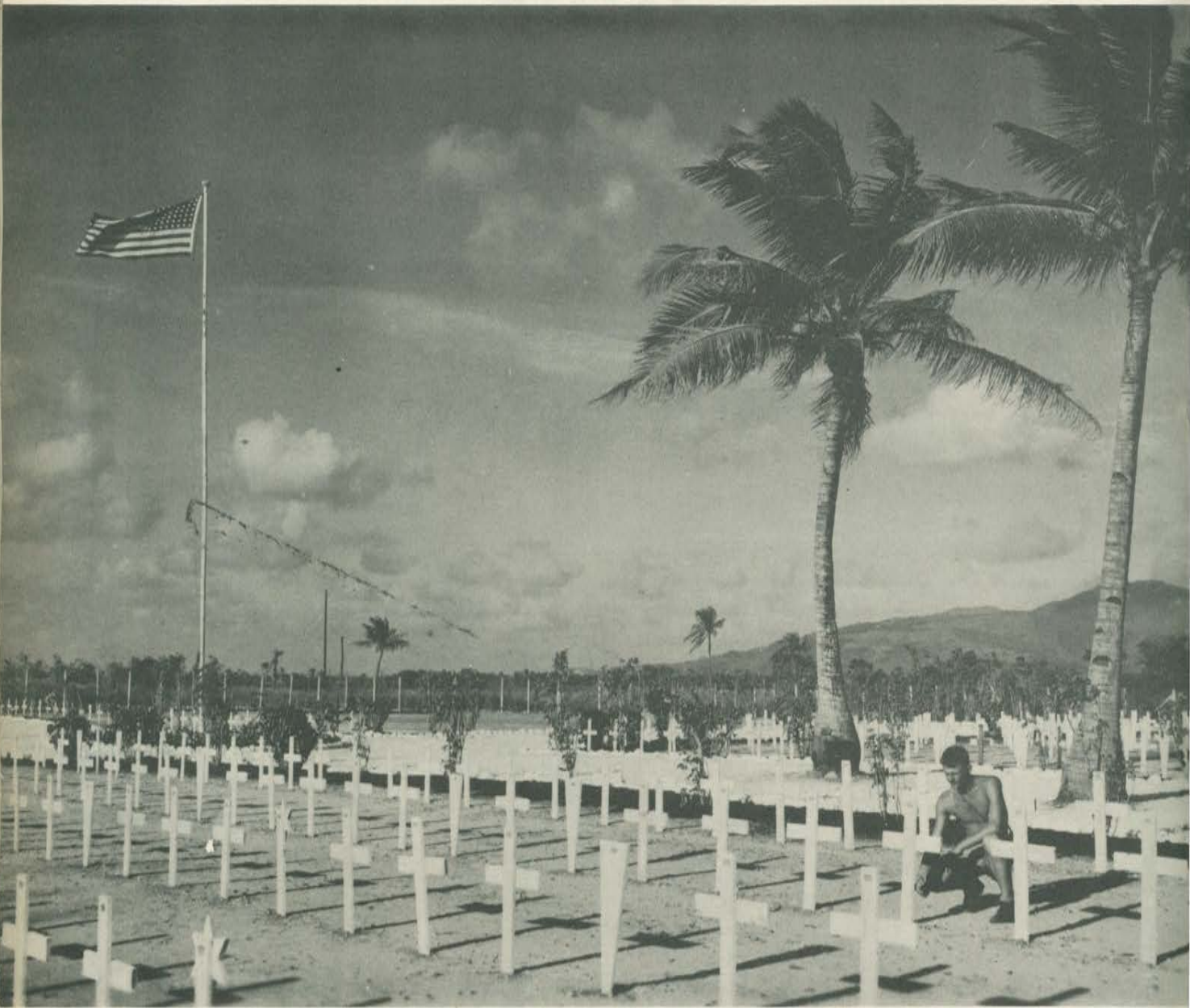
Coming in for a landing



Looks like the 73rd Wing passed this way

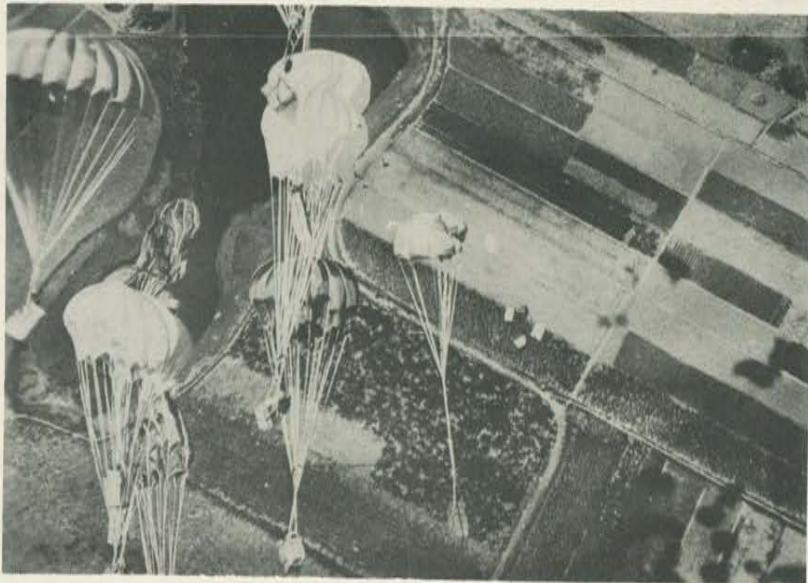


PART III



PART III

After Combat





CHAPTER 11

Entertainment

ON SAIPAN

We had tennis courts by July

While Part III of this volume was intended to discuss the portion of the Wing history after the combat was all over, this seems like a logical place to include some discussion of our off-duty activities on Saipan. When we reached the island, construction and other duties really allowed us very little leisure. But by the end of our stay there we had sufficient time off to require considerable provision for it.

When thinking of entertainment on Saipan, all of us will remember more than anything else those nights in the open air theaters with the rain trickling down inside our raincoats while we waited for the projector to be repaired. So many times we have all strained our ears to catch the failing sound track as it went out at the most exciting part of the picture and so many times we all have cursed at an unforeseen fade-out on the screen with the sound still running. In the beginning, we had very rude moving picture theaters—usually just a screen on scrap lumber supports with a projection booth a proper distance away and sand bags for the audience. From this earliest type of theater we progressed to the very complete appointments of such an imposing edifice as the 497th Goat Gulch theater or the 303rd's Kandu.

With a single exception, however, even the finest theaters built by the Wing were open-air for the audience. This single exception was the Big Top Theater of the 65th Air Service Group. Colonel Hewitt, commander of that group, had arranged for a big tent something like a circus tent and he placed his movie equipment in it. He also had bomb-rack seats with backs which were better than the oil drums that most of the rest of us used.



However, his theater was so small that the live shows could not exhibit in it.

Early in 1945, the Wing had eleven theaters in operation. Every night every theater had a movie and the schedules were published well in advance so that if any of us were unable to see a picture at our own theater, we could catch it at another theater and if, as occasionally happened, a picture was good enough so that we might enjoy it more than once we could go several times. From the discussion of movies in letters received from home, it was clear that we were frequently



Wing officers club

having movies at least as good and as recent as were civilians. "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn", "Roughly Speaking", and "Wonder Man" were among the numerous very good pictures that we had at about the same time as they showed in our home towns.

Then, there were the G.I. nights when we could go and see what a splendid piece of work the 15th Air Force was doing in the Mediterranean or a picture on how to recognize German tanks or maybe a picture of winter sports in Scotland. We also had many grade C or worse pictures, notably the very old pictures that somebody back in the States thought would interest Pacific soldiers starved for entertainment. We just were not that starved.

Occasionally in one of our theaters we would have something other than a movie. The commonest form of such entertainment was a band concert by our own 558th Band or one of its smaller organizations. With the disregard for our own men common to most soldiers, many did not esteem these concerts highly but actually Mr. Lilly and his men did a splendid job. The dance band was a good one and the concert orchestra played about the right proportion of swing and classical music. Many of us enjoyed Mr. Lilly's program notes which he always presented somewhat quizzically.

Other live shows that visited our theaters were the various traveling shows. These covered a



497th Group Officers Club

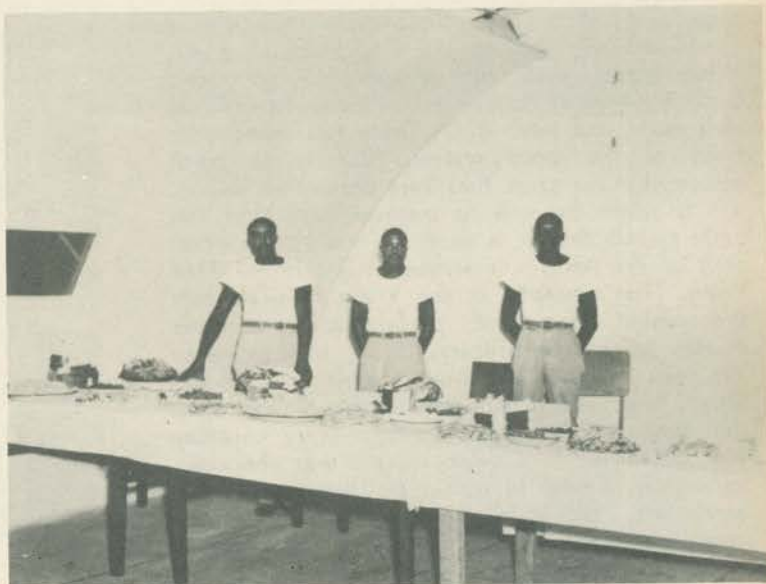
wide variety all the way from very simple native dances up to the very sophisticated humor of the Winged Pigeons.

In October and November (and later) we had the native Kanakas put on their stick dances in



Music—the Wing's own 558th AAF Band furnishes some solid swing

Food—Three soldiers of the 435th Aviation Squadron present a startling contrast as they preside over the collation at the Wing Officers' Club House Warming.



several of our theaters. This was a rather interesting show although not quite what we had expected. We hoped we would see some beautiful hula hula girls performing in grass skirts with very few or no men in the show. What we did see was some beautiful men performing in grass skirts with some—to be charitable—rather unlovely women. The dancing was interesting and the taste of a native civilization where men were in complete authority was something novel to most of us who were accustomed to the American way.

The first type of American live entertainment we had was some of the various shows put on by either our own personnel or other men on the island, like the variety show of the 4th Marines. There were a number of skits and orchestras from various units on the island that were quite good. We all remember the AAA orchestra's rendition of "Robin Hood." This was the musical organization from the artillery outfit on Hill Number 500.

It was in June that the Swabbies show came down our way with the tantalizing Seabees in it. This show had the provocative chorus line made up of six beautiful "girls."

Then, the next month "This is the Army" played at Goat Gulch for several nights. This was also an all-masculine show but many of us will remember Eileen as the "girl" with whom the lonely G.I. left his heart at the Stage Door Canteen. Also we had some USO shows with a few girls in

each. These were usually well received, but the number of girls was always distressingly small.

Although we had a wealth of entertainment material in our own theaters, there was never anything to prevent the men of the 73rd from attending shows in other parts of the island—shows that did not come to our end. An example of this was the Eddie Bracken show that was removed from the island before it played its scheduled showing in our area. Eddie's show was very good and a number of us bummed rides or chiseled jeeps to get to one of the theaters where it played. He had an argument with a unit that caused his expulsion from Saipan.

There were, of course, other types of off-

duty entertainment besides going to shows. The athletic urge, as well as the search for shells, interested many of us in swimming. The swimming was reasonably good so long as we kept inside the reef and wore some sort of foot covering. Many were scratched by coral but that was usually our own fault. It was always interesting to walk up and down the reef and the area behind it looking for shells or—just looking. There were many places along our beaches where the bottom was good white sand for small areas.

Other athletics included baseball and softball. We had a number of teams of our own including such players as General O'Donnell on their roster. Then there were the Marianas big league teams which played for our entertainment on our diamonds. By the end of our stay a number of handball and tennis courts had appeared throughout our area and all were well patronized.

The matter of clubs was one that caused a great deal of discussion in the beginning followed by a lot of hard work and later by a few months of enjoyment. In general, the clubs were built

by the personnel who were to use them but there were some exceptions. These exceptions occurred when a group of officers could either hire or talk some Seabees or Engineers into helping them. So far as excellence of appointments was concerned, the enlisted men's clubs and the officers' clubs were somewhat similar. The same sources of supply were open to both and while the officers usually had a little more money for this sort of thing, the enlisted men were apt to display more ingenuity in acquiring and adapting available materials.

There were two very marked differences between the enlisted men's and officers' clubs. Both of these were unfortunate and some in both groups thought these should have been equalized. The first of these was the possibility of officers being able to obtain whiskey and enlisted men not.

The other difference was the possibility of officers having girls at their parties whereas enlisted men could not. This lack of girls at the enlisted men's parties was not absolute, of course, since occasionally USO show girls passing through or a few Red Cross girls would go to enlisted parties. While nurses could not attend enlisted men's parties because they were officers, Red Cross girls could and some did. These two items were parts of the caste system, recently so much discussed in the press, that were present on Saipan.

It might be well to mention here that this caste system that is so much objected to in other units of the Army was somewhat less in the 73rd Wing. For example, in the Wing Headquarters the enlisted men had prefabricated barracks months before the officers. Many officers never had such buildings but lived in their tents all the time. In general, living conditions and food were the same for both groups and military courtesy was not carried to a point where it was obnoxious to anyone in most of our units. There were some exceptions. Except for the two mentioned differences, entertainment facilities were open to all.

While it perhaps does not come under the heading of entertainment, our churches were an off-duty activity. The Wing was fortunate in having an extremely consecrated group of chaplains. Many of us remember such men as Father Tighe, Chaplain Hauge and some of the others as among our best friends on the island. These men built beautiful chapels. They were able to make for us churches in the wilderness that were comparable to our churches at home in many ways. The 330th Chapel with its murals and magnificent view of Tinian was a church that will long be remembered by those of us who attended it.

The Easter sunrise services were held in the Kandu Theater by the Protestants and on the ramp by the Catholics. These were impressive ceremonies that brought home to all of us in the midst of war that freedom of religion was a prime tenet of the American way of life.

Actually, any group of American soldiers will always find its own entertainment one way or another. Before our clubs were built we all played cards and other games in our tents. The attitude toward money on Saipan was one that many of



Dancing at Officers club



The HQ Officers Club Bar



The Medical Table at HQ club opening

us will remember with a slight tinge of envy of ourselves when we again have to work hard for every penny. It was not that we did not work hard for our money but we had so little legitimate use for it that it meant practically nothing. We gambled for stakes higher than most of us ever had at home. We won and lost money that seemed almost valueless. While only a minority of the Wing gambled, it provided entertainment not only for those who were playing but also for those who were merely spectators. Besides the money games, there was a good deal of serious bridge played in our area.

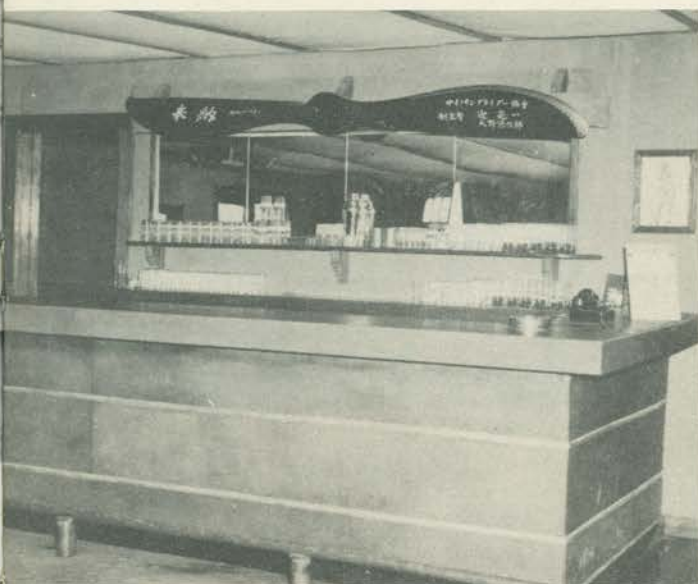
By the middle of our stay on Saipan, we had



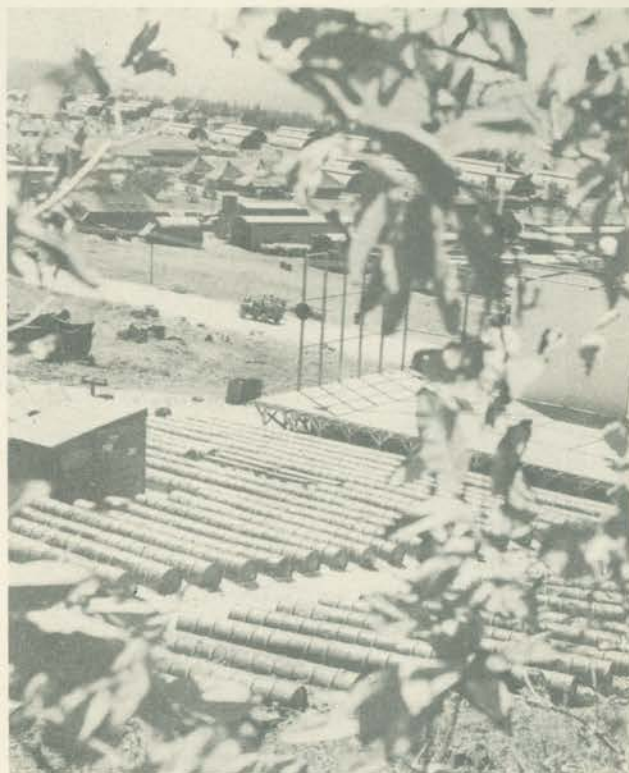
Wing HQ Officers shower



Kandu Theater



Group Club



Goat Gulch Theater



Group Service Club.



HQ Mess had a birthday.



Theater Audience.



Doughnuts by Dottie.



Red Cross doughnuts and lemonade did get around

all arranged our quarters in one way or another so that we could read in bed or in an easy chair and such controversial books as "Forever Amber" and "Strange Fruit" as well as more serious works went from hand to hand and caused considerable discussion.

Before the end of our stay on Saipan the I and E officers had made some inroad on our normal legarthy regarding education and a number of men were taking USAFI courses. Saipan University which was located in Western Pacific Base Command area helped such men.



The man who came to dinner



Charlie Ruggles



Betty Hutton



Musical Nomads in August

4th Marine Show





Khaki Kapers



Winged Pigeon show



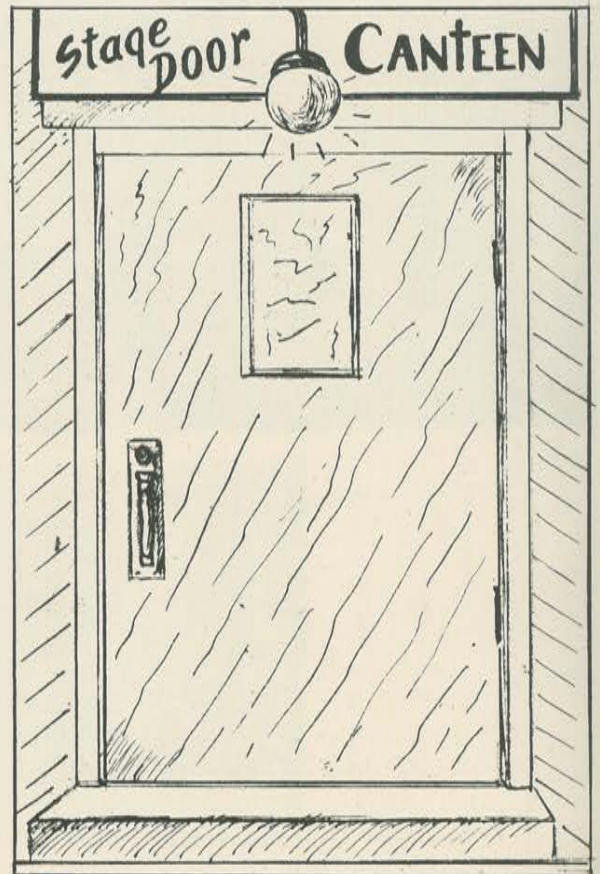
This To The Army



Magician



The Chorus and part of an audience





Gypsy Rose Lee removes effeminating equipment



Real Jive



A Babe



Eileen—The "Girl I left behind me"



"Girl" waits for lonely G. I.'s Heart

Swabbie Show



"Chorines" Dress



Sailor at work

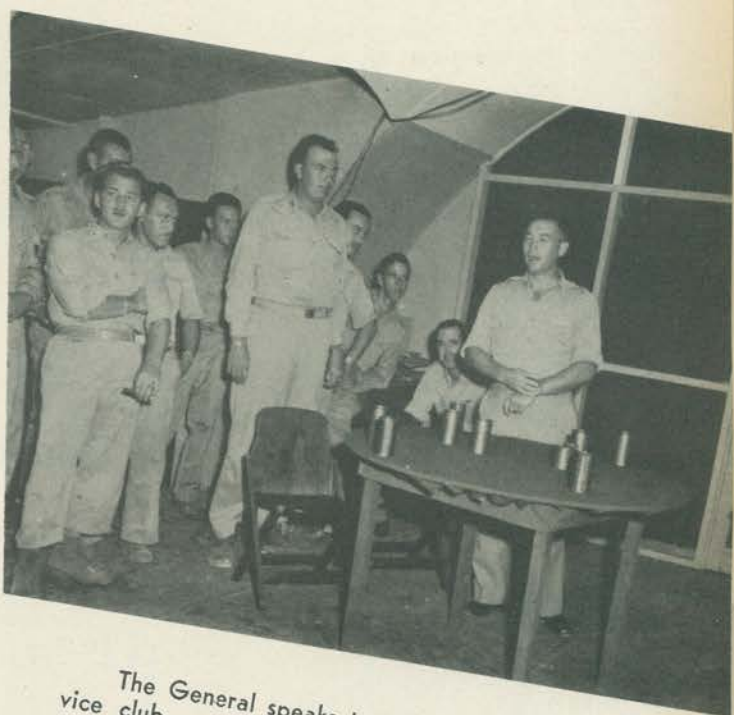


The Chorus line, these are all Sea Bees. Note colored boy on far end. It was a good show.





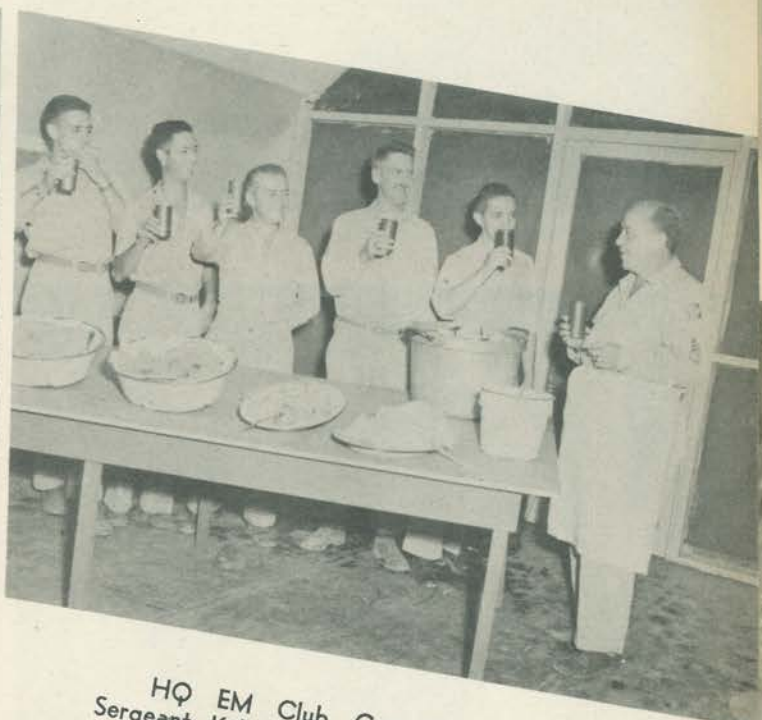
M/Sgt. Blagg entertains the General at the Service Club.



The General speaks to his boys at Wing service club.



The General and Colonel Sweeney have a beer with the boys.



HQ EM Club Committee—Technical Sergeant Kuhnert, Master Sergeant Blagg, Private First Class Huggins, Sergeant Okerblom, and Corporal Lindquist drink to Staff Sergeant Muche (with apron).





Chamorro show



The Chief

Kanaka Dancers



Wing Photo party



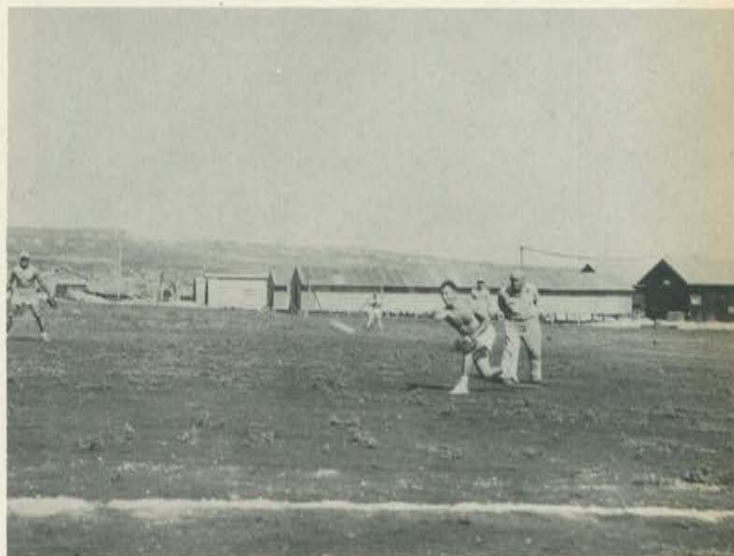
330th Service Club



Canefield



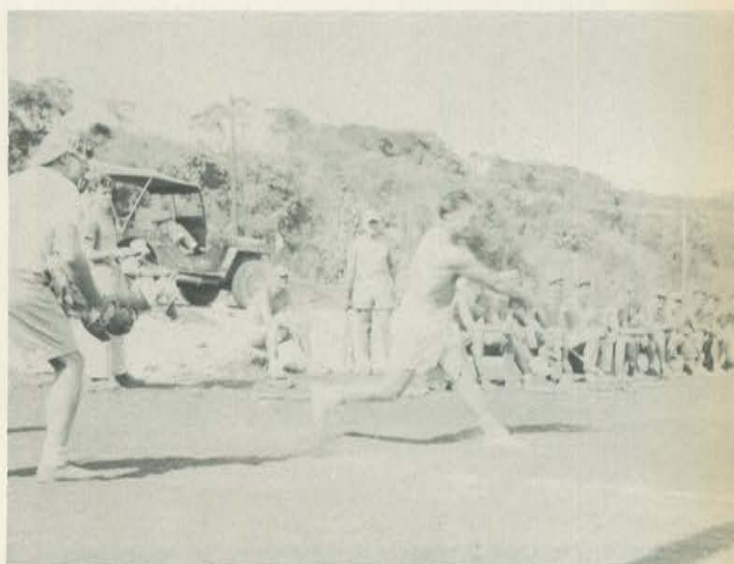
HQ Theater



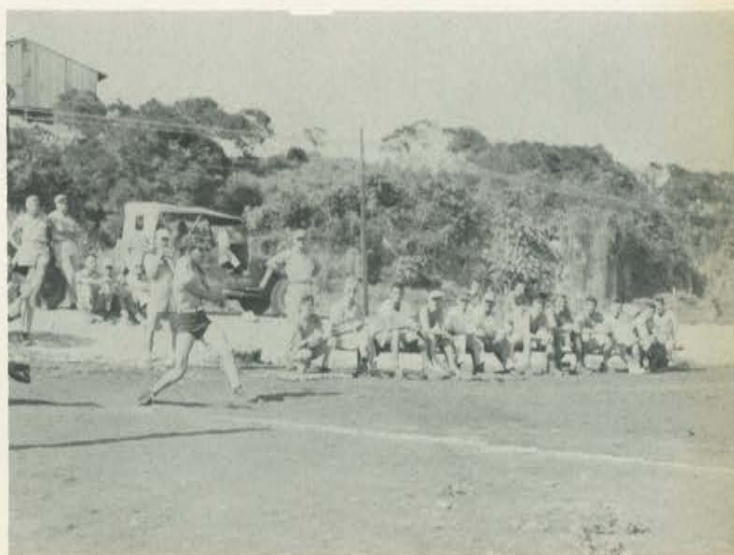
The General pitches



Golden Gloves

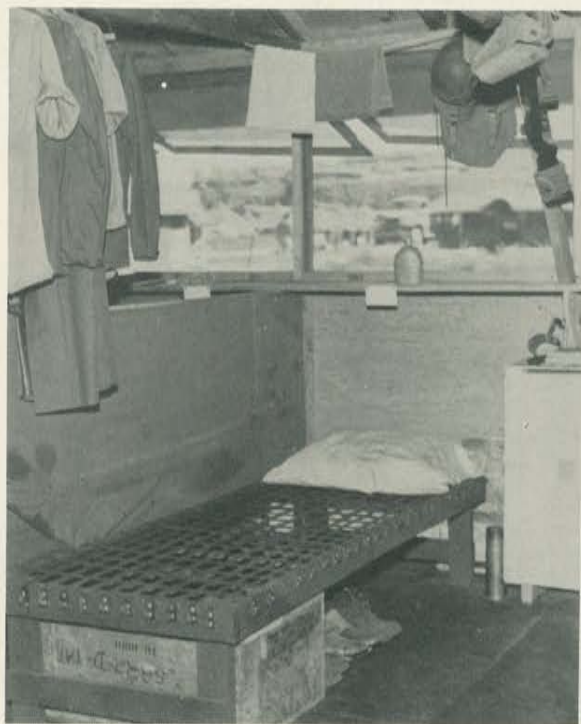
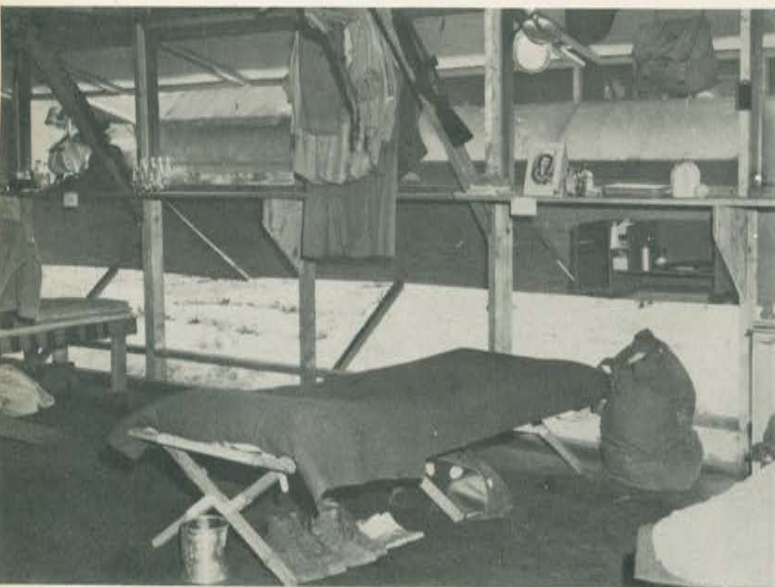


He hits



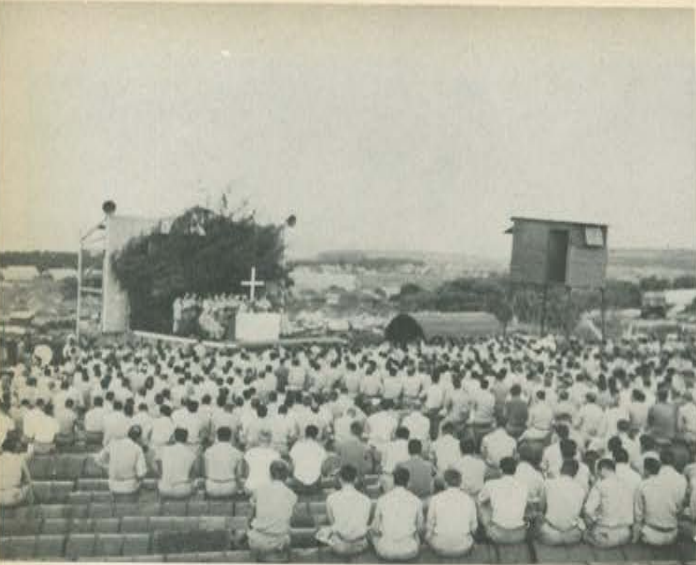


"It Was A



Tough War"

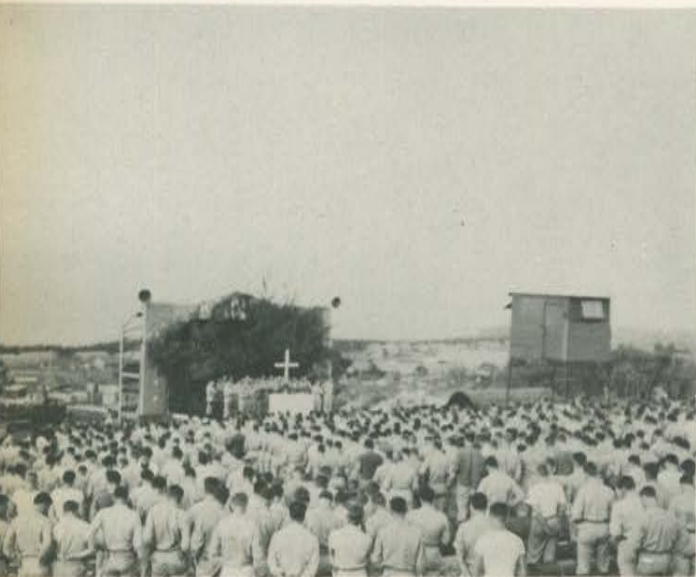




Protestant Easter Service

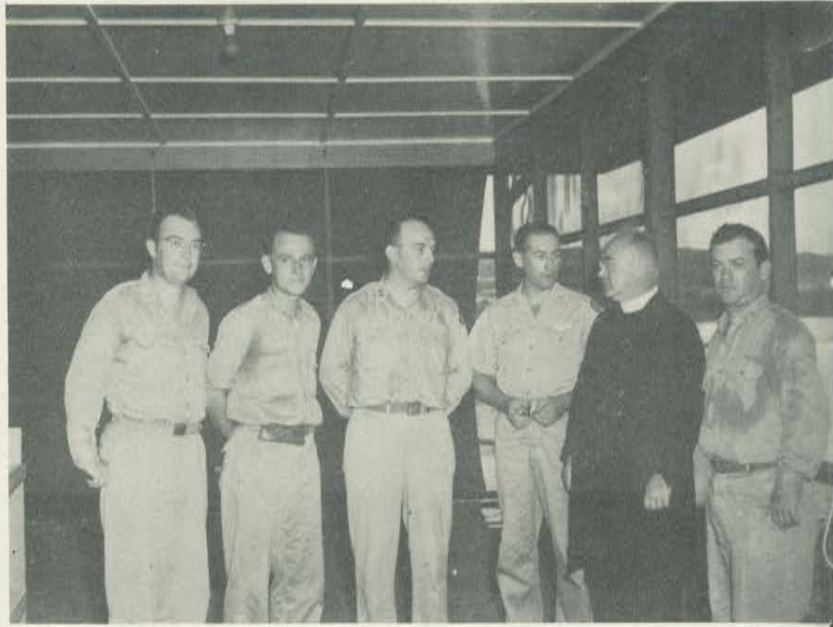


Catholic Easter Services

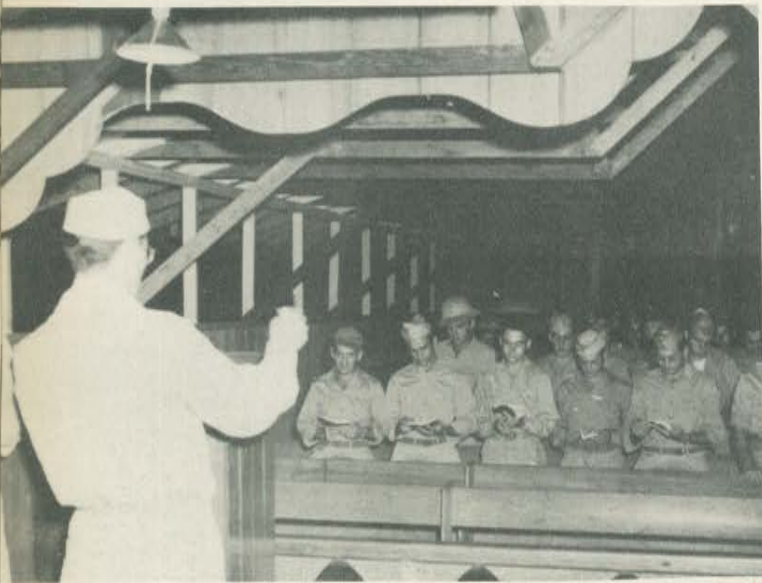


Catholic Mission





Archbishop Spellman



Jewish Services



CHAPTER 12

Mercy

MISSIONS

Came in low

Following the announcement of peace on the fifteenth of August, the Wing did not fly any missions of any kind other than routine weather reconnaissance for a while. During that two week period Isley Field and its environs seethed with rumors rather than activity. In the second week, there was a good deal of work in the A-4 section and in the service centers. Then, on August 27, a flight of ten planes from the 497th Group took off under command of Lieutenant Colonel Van Sickle. They were briefed to fly to Weihsien, a prisoner of war camp on the Shantung peninsula in northern China. It was planned that this mission should stage at Iwo and then go on about dawn from there. One plane was grounded at Iwo and the other nine did take off and had a successful drop near the camp. As an example of how much material could be carried on these missions, the ten planes had three days' supplies for the 1,550 men who were said to be in this camp.

On all of the prisoner of war supply missions a large number of pictures were taken. This first one resulted in a number of excellent shots of conditions in China. These mercy missions brought back the first authentic low level aerial shots of China, Korea and the ruins of the Empire.

The second prisoner of war mission was a max-

imum effort with 159 airplanes airborne. This mission carried three days supplies for 31,800 men and flew to camps all over the Empire. Following it the Wing flew two small and one large mission before the end of August. Then on the second of September there was a 31-plane mission carrying supplies to Honshu.

September 2 was an important date for the Wing since it marked the actual official termination of hostilities with the signing of the peace on the USS Missouri moored in Tokyo Bay. While combat credit had been given to crew members for the supply missions up to that date, afterward that was no longer true.

There were sixteen more prisoner of war supply missions. These carried supplies to camps throughout the main Japanese islands as well as Korea and several points in China. The last mercy mission was on September 15 and it was also the very last mission of any type flown by the 73rd Wing except for some weather missions.

The minor missions of the 73rd have not been discussed in this history. It may be worth while to remember that the Wing did fly weather strike missions and weather reconnaissance missions frequently throughout its term of service on Saipan. These were missions of one or two planes designed



Two briefing for POW mission

to study weather and drop a few bombs in the case of weather strike missions.

Also the Wing flew a number of leaflet missions when small formations of planes dropped leaflets on different parts of Japan. Frequently these leaflets contained information, in Japanese, telling the inhabitants of various cities that they were about to be bombed by the 73rd Wing's incendiaries and warning the inhabitants to depart. A mission of this type was, of course, a mercy mission and it is presumed that some Japanese did heed the warnings.

To get back to the prisoner of war missions—the Wing had a total of 580 aircraft airborne on all missions and 472 of them were effective. The noneffective planes suffered mostly from bad weather but mechanical failures and impossibility of locating some camps contributed. The Wing released 2,470 tons of supplies on prisoner of war installations. All of these prisoner of war missions cost the Wing four aircraft. One of these crashed into a mountain on Honshu. One was forced



POW planes from other wings

down by the Russians over Korea and two were missing.

Our Service Centers also did a tremendous job in loading the supplies for B29s of the other wings. All the planes from Guam and Tinian came to Isley for their prisoner of war supplies. So many came that they were packed in nose to tail on one runway after filling all possible parking places. Isley was quite a sight with all those hun-

dreds of planes being loaded by the 73rd's service personnel.

Colonel Richard T. King, Jr. was one prisoner of war from the 73rd who returned and he has written some comments on his experiences that might well be included here. The Colonel now appears well and strong in spite of his harrowing experiences.



Guam and Tinian planes on Saipan for POW supplies



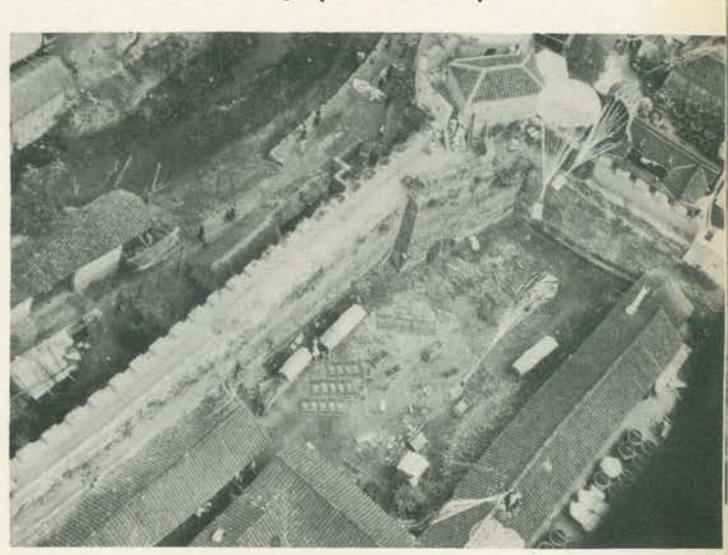
Runway full of planes



Foreign planes and Tapachou



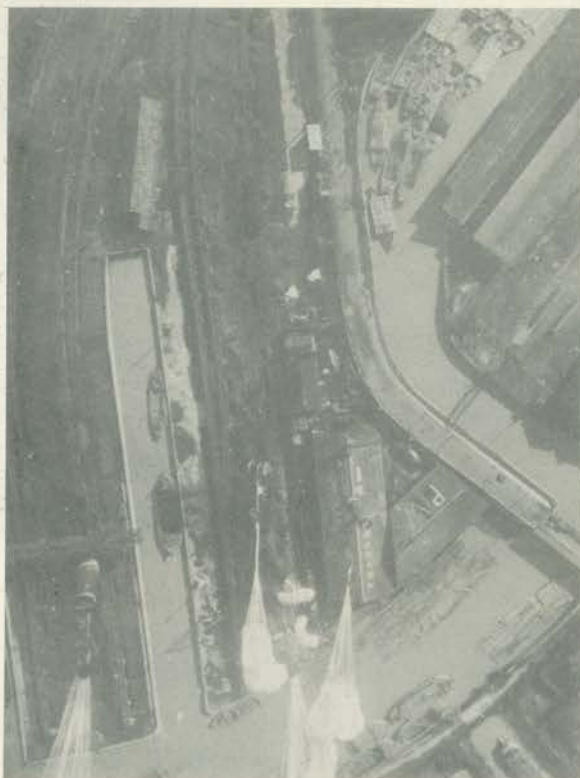
POW Supplies on the line



Yangchow



POW supplies with Mt. Tapachou



Supplies for POW Camp near Yokohama



Our planes were well marked



Loading POW supplies



Loading POW supplies



Even a full Colonel helps load POW supplies



B-29 low over Japan

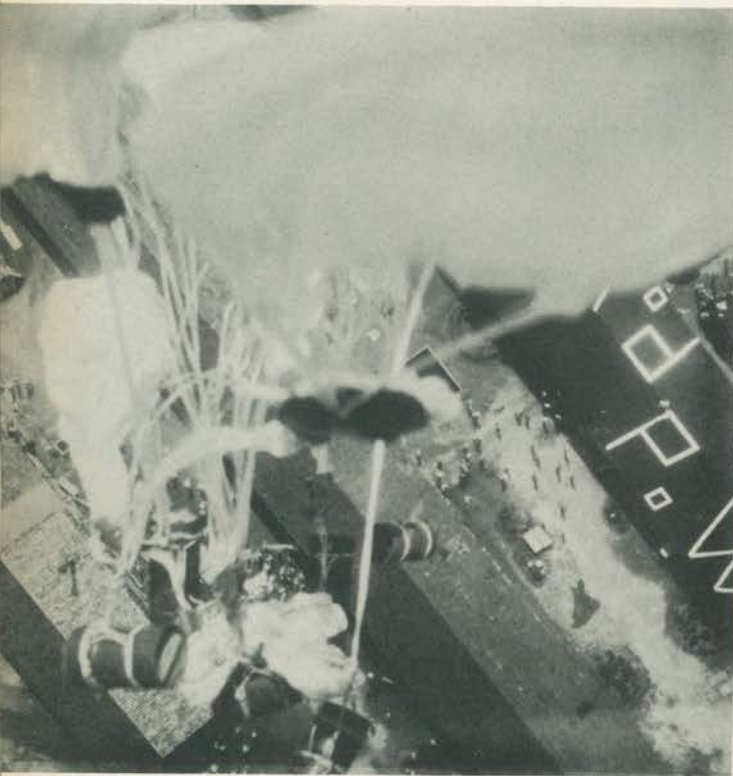


North China scene taken on first POW mission



Supplies through the bomb bays





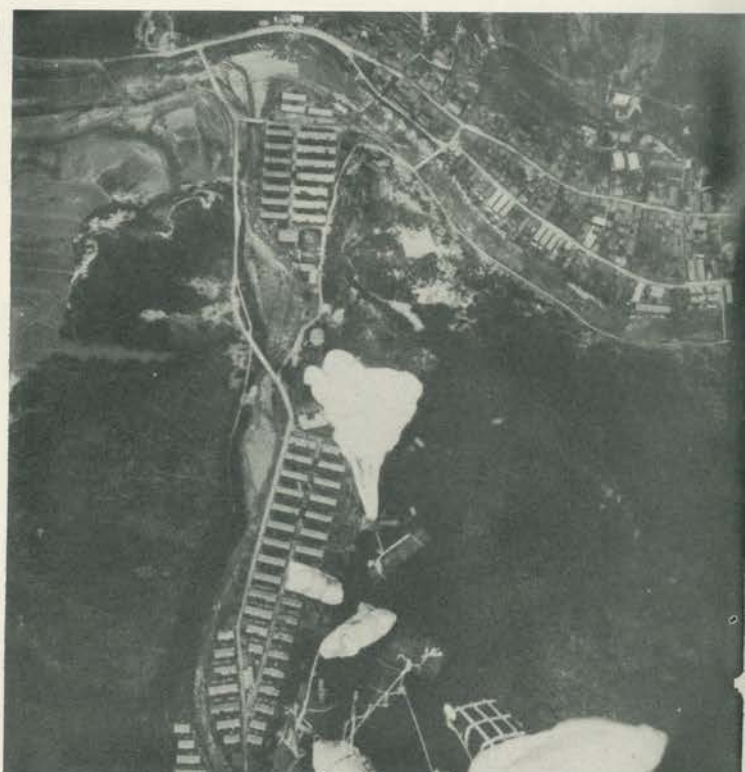
Through the bomb bays at Osaka



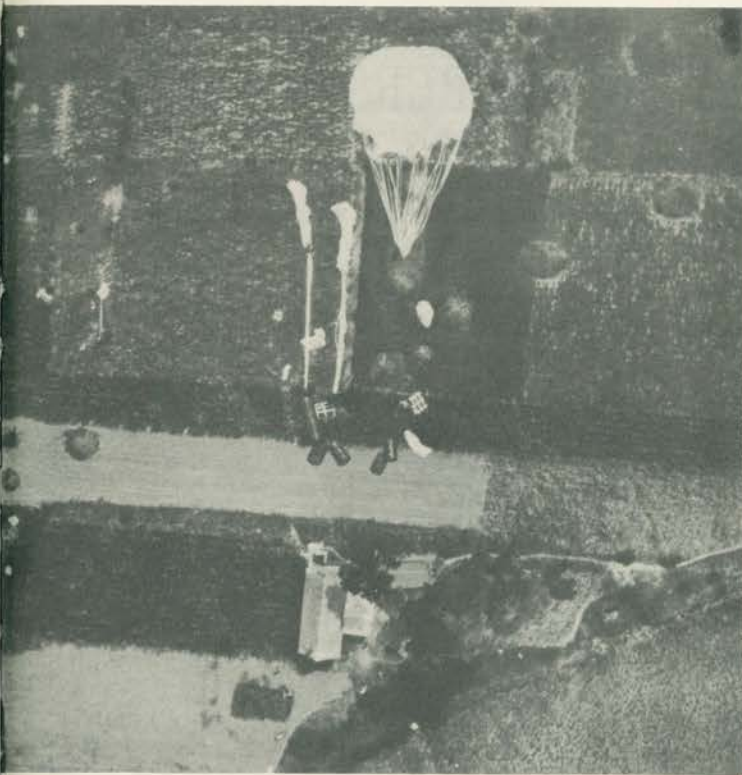
Tokyo POW's wanted accurate dropping



Tokyo camp well marked



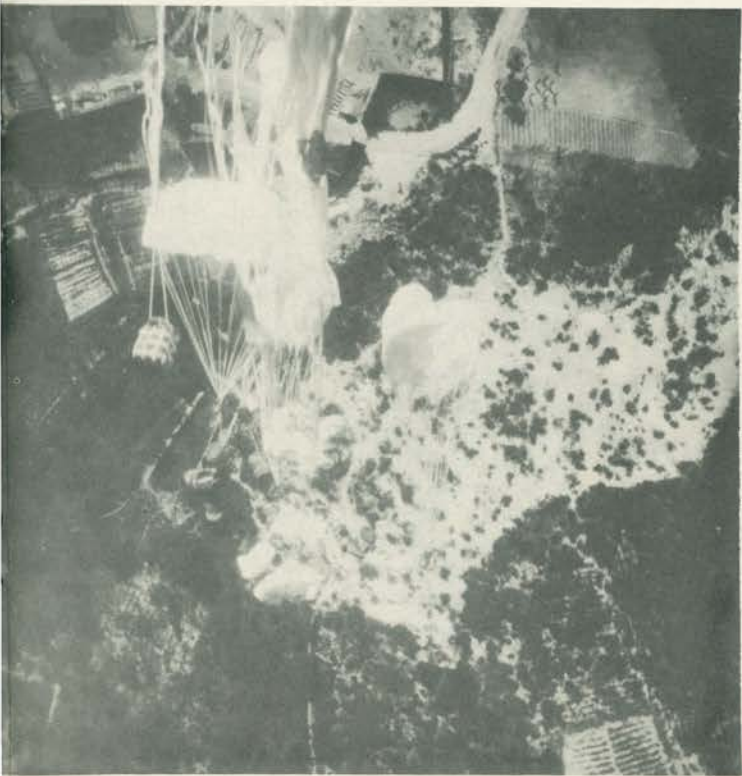
Osaka POW supplies



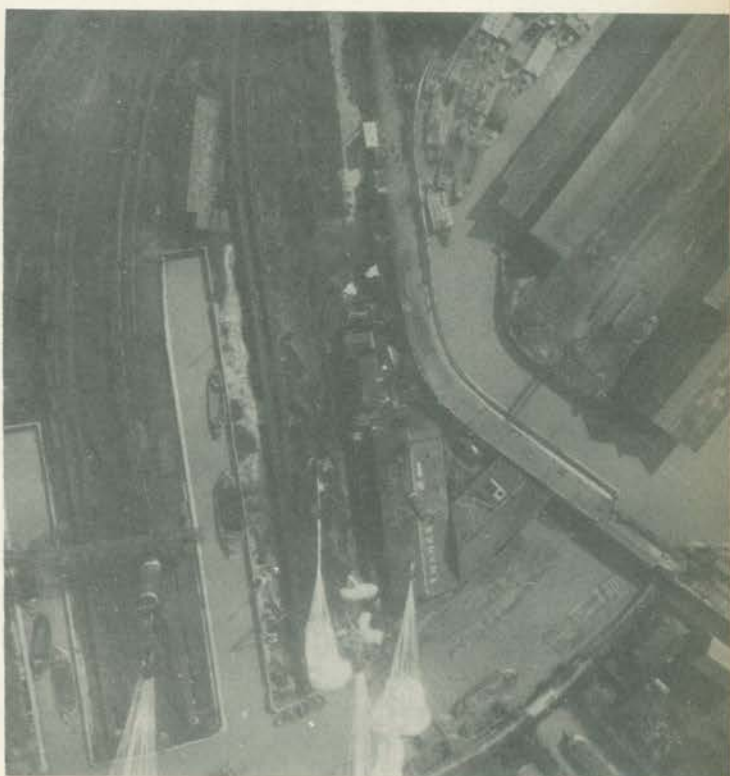
Weih sien



Fukuoka camp well marked



Supplies away at Aichi



The men of the USS Yorktown were near Yokohama

A PRISONER OF WAR REMEMBERS

By Colonel Richard T. King, Jr.

Now that six months have passed since my release from the Japanese prison camps, my outstanding thought about that experience is that the human body has wonderful recuperative ability. Although I lost 69 pounds — from 195 to 126 pounds—my body is now so thoroughly recovered that I feel almost no ill effects. Time has dimmed both the mental anguish and the physical suffering from lack of food, privation and the few beatings I received.

To go back to the beginning—it was on 3 December 1944 that I was flying as Flight Commander of a 12-ship formation with Maj. R. Goldsworthy, one of the flight leaders in the 500th Bomb Group which I then commanded. Our mission was an aircraft engine plant in the Tokyo area and we had dropped our bombs from approximately 32,000 feet, when we were attacked by fighters. Although we shot down some of the fighters, they hit our left inboard gasoline tank so seriously that it sprayed gasoline all over the aircraft and the entire ship began to burn. Slugs from the fighters had apparently also destroyed the electrical system, making the intercom inoperative and damaging the nose wheel support so that it came down. By the time the ship had lost altitude to 29,000 feet I bailed out. At that time I did not realize that I was injured in any way. Immediately after bailing out I counted at least eight and possibly nine chutes as I floated earthward myself.

Landing in an open field, I immediately cut my shroud lines and found that I had been burned on one leg and my face. Since Japanese fighters were diving down directly over the field and it seemed they might be looking for me, I walked over under the trees at one side of the field and waited there a few moments. Meanwhile I looked myself over a little more thoroughly and found that I had landed unarmed since my 45 had been lost on the way down. I was wearing only suntan shirt and trousers and regular GI shoes, socks and underwear, with no other equipment.

Shortly, some Japanese civilians found me and not only handcuffed but also bound me with my own shroud lines. They delivered me to the local police station where I waited for two hours until two Japanese soldiers came to pick me up. As I started down the road in their custody, I met Colonel Byron Brugge, from Wing Headquarters, and asked him how he was. He was able to say "Okay" before the guard ordered "No speak." After being blindfolded the soldiers loaded us into a truck that carried us into Tokyo where we arrived about 2 a.m. From the speed of the truck and the time consumed I would guess that I had landed about 40 miles out of the city.

Immediately Japanese intelligence officers interrogated us as to our name, rank and serial num-

ber. Although this was all the Geneva Convention allows, they went on to request our home addresses and other information. When I asked why they wanted this information, they said they needed it so they could notify our families. This, of course, was never done. Then they asked me to sign a paper which was written in Japanese. I signed as it was obvious that I did not know what it said. Next they stripped me and returned to me my shirt, trousers, shoes and socks. Except for shoes and socks this was to be my entire clothing twenty-four hours a day for the next four months. Only when we were taken out for interrogation were we allowed to put on our shoes and socks. Before daylight I was subjected to a further severe interrogation about everything on Saipan. When I answered many of their questions (truthfully) that I did not know, they attempted to force me to answer by slapping my face and other minor abuse.

I was put in solitary confinement at the Kempei Tai (MP headquarters) in a block of six cells with four other men from the crew occupying the other cells. The only furniture was four dirty blankets. Our food consisted of three meals a day of rice and barley mixed, with an occasional small fish and infrequent watery soup for breakfast. I stayed in this solitary cell without ever going out for exercise or any other purpose except almost daily interrogation until the nineteenth of February, on which date Colonel Brugge and I were transferred to a local police station where we were put in different cell blocks. I stayed in this second prison until the 3rd of April. There was one period from the fourth to the fourteenth of March when I was placed in a Japanese military hospital where I had slightly more of the same type of food and a little exercise. This hospitalization was the result of my being so weak that I could not do even the little that was required of me in solitary.

The next move was to the Omori prison camp. This was the headquarters camp for some 30 prisoner of war camps in the Tokyo-Yokohama area and was located halfway between the two cities on a sand spit projecting into Tokyo Bay. At this camp we were listed as prisoners of war (special) and 36 of us were segregated into two-thirds of a barracks with a separate compound. All but four of the group were B-29 crewmen. The other third of our barracks contained eighteen other "special" prisoners under charge of Lieutenant Colonel Boyington, Marine ace.

We were kept inside our special compound until the fifteenth of August and then for the next two weeks we were allowed an increasing amount of food and medical supplies including blood plasma and the privilege of mixing with the other 600

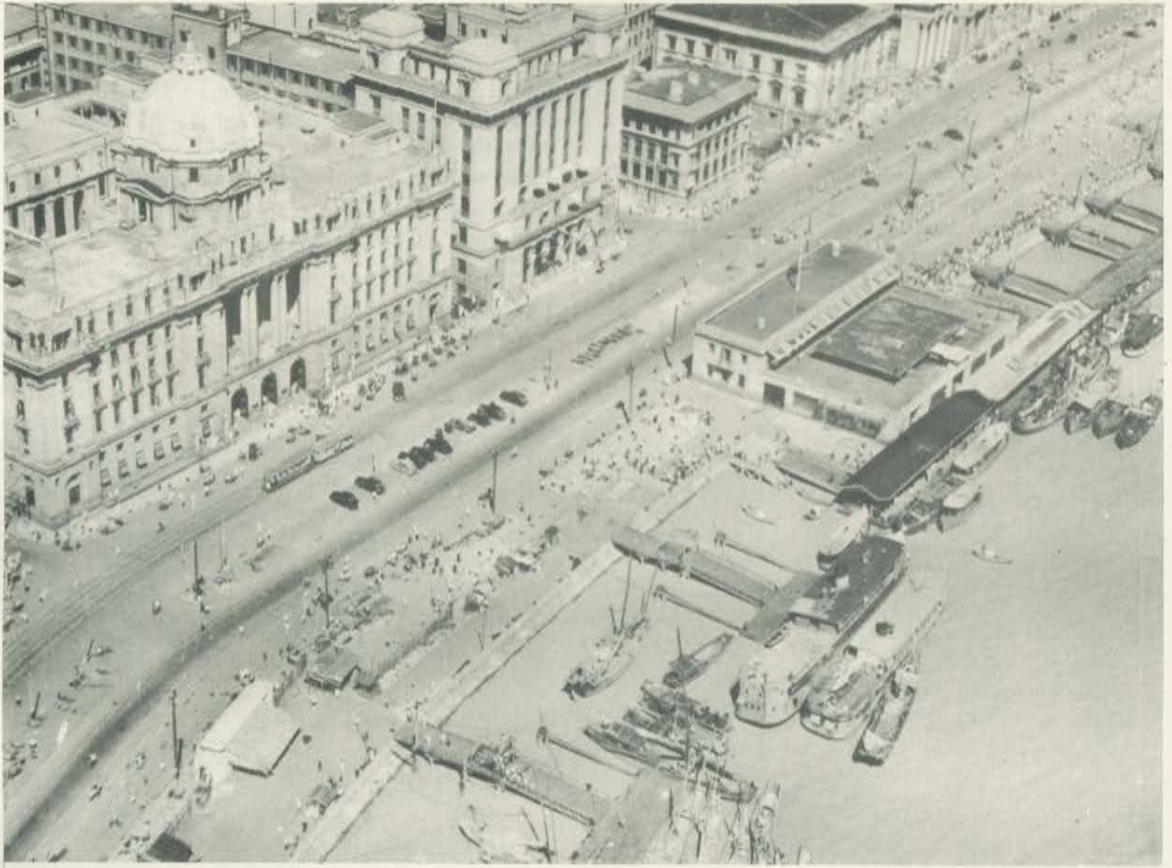
prisoners in our camp. On the 29th Commander Stassen took a group of us off in LCIs to a hospital ship. After eight days I was allowed to go out to Atsugi airfield when I "bummed" a ride to Okinawa and then to Guam and back to Saipan, where I arrived on the eighth of September. On the twelfth of September I was in San Francisco and on the fourteenth in Tampa, Florida with my family.

There are two other noteworthy items of my

experience. On the seventh of May we were allowed to start a small garden at Omori. This gave us something to do and some slight exercise. Perhaps the most exciting moment of my entire captivity was on 9 March when I was able to see the first night incendiary attack of the B-29s on Tokyo. The light from the burning city made it as light as day and gave us all confidence that our liberation was not far off.



Tokyo



Shanghai Bund



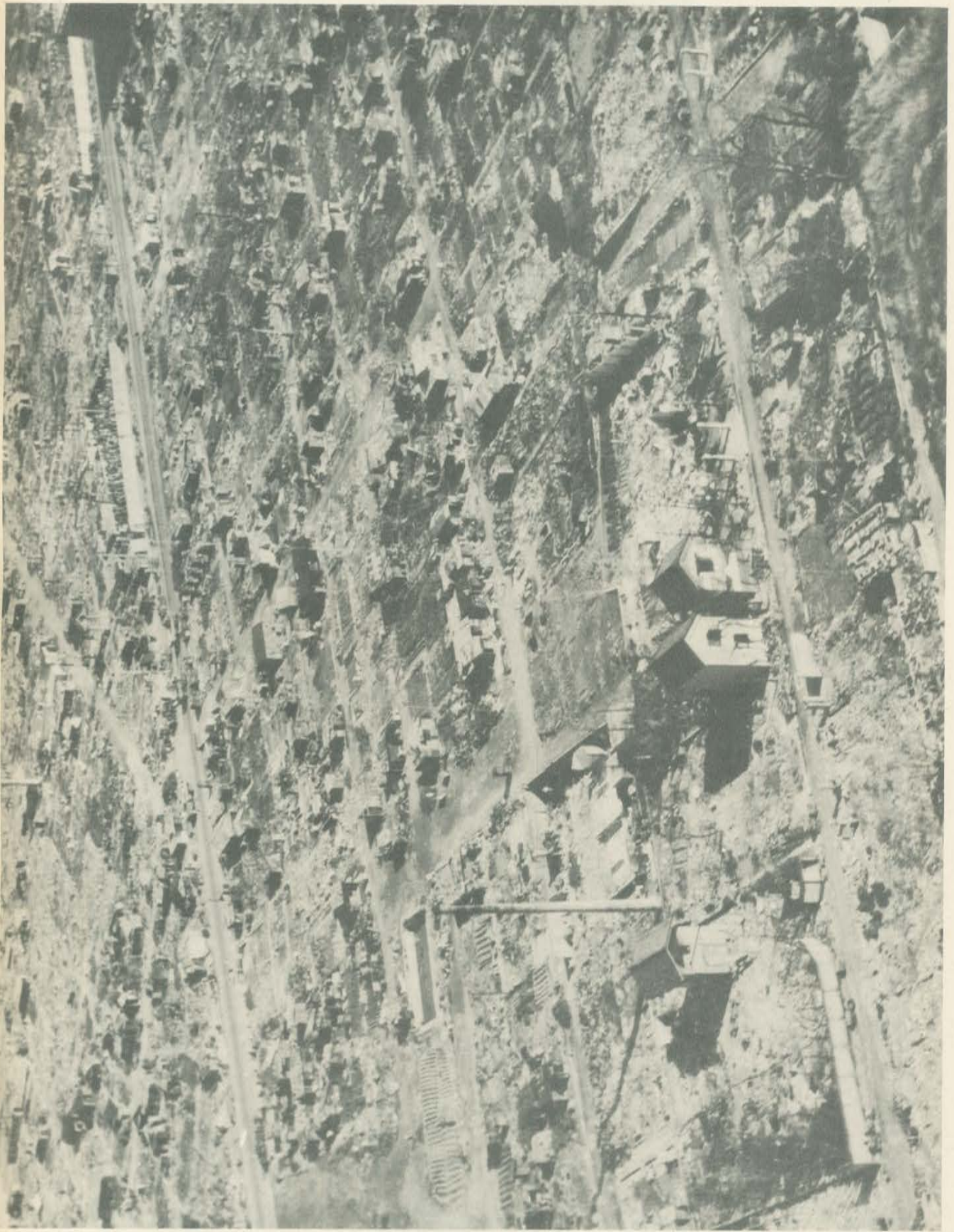
Tokyo



Tokyo



Tokyo freight yard



Tokyo

Home

By the time of the last POW mission everybody in the Wing was discussing and arguing about the many rumors that were flying around about our return home. We were going home immediately. We were going to stay as part of the Marianas garrison. We were going on to Japan and be based at Atsugi. Anyone could get an audience for any rumor on our future. Not only could anyone get an audience, but anyone could get a credulous audience for any weird tale.

By that time also most of the staff sections had their equipment either packed or ready to pack. Many men had started sending home personal bundles of souvenirs and clothing that would no longer be needed. As a matter of fact, we all sat around and did little but dream of home and gossip during September. The typhoon that damaged so much of our end of the island caused a brief interlude of excitement but that only lasted two or three days.

General O'Donnell left Saipan on September 16 for Chitose Airfield, Hokkaido, and there he joined two other generals and other flight personnel for a proposed nonstop flight to Washington, D. C. The flight took off but because of adverse winds the three-plane flight was unable to reach Washington and landed at Chicago instead. This was the first of the record long distance nonstop flights of B-29's. The mileage was 5900. Those of us who heard the radio program, Information Please, on the evening when General O'Donnell was one of the Board of Experts were amused when the General was unable to remember what the figure 5900 meant.

Before the end of the month we knew that the Wing was to fly its own planes home and that they were to go in four successive waves—one for each bombardment group. Our planes were to take off fifteen a night for three nights and then the next three nights the 58th Wing took off from Tinian in the same way. Because of slopovers and washbacks, it actually took a week to get one of our groups and one of the 58th Wing's groups off so it was from the last week in September to the last week in October before all of our

planes left. There were 188 planes in all that flew back from Saipan.

Each of these carried twenty men so there was a total of 3,760 men who flew. Naturally, there was a good deal of trouble about the selection of these men. In addition to the crews of the planes, the others were staff officers and enlisted men who had a high number of points. Also personnel of the service groups and other organizations were included according to the points. While there were many disgruntled men who wanted to fly and did come by boat, there were not as many as might have been expected since the war was over and we all knew we were going home anyway. A difference of a week or a month in the time of our arrival did not seem too important. Also, some men who had enough points to fly actually did not want to do so. The records of the flights home proved there was some slight justification for this feeling since two of the 188 planes were lost. However, most of the personnel from one of these was rescued.

After taking off our planes flew to Kwajalein, landed there and stayed for eight hours unless they had some trouble and then on to Oahu where we stayed for 36 hours. At Oahu the air returnees all had their first taste of civilian American life again. It was interesting to see what many of us sought first. Some of the things we had missed the most were milk, beds with clean sheets and pillow cases, a stroll down a lighted business street, a luxurious hot bath in a tub, a chance to just gaze at civilian American women and an opportunity to shop in a real store for presents to take home. Of course, some did go wild in Oahu, become drunk and find themselves in trouble with the authorities but there were not many on the Sunset project that did.

The Sunset project seemed like a very good name for our returning flights. The rising sun had truly set at this time.

From Oahu our planes took off again and flew to Mather Field near Sacramento in California. We will all long remember alighting from the

plane in the cold light of a California dawn and having a real Stateside breakfast in a Stateside mess hall. Also, we could phone home from there. Next we went to Camp Stoneman and sat around a varying number of days depending on where we were going. Some of us who were to fly to the east coast had to wait as much as nine or ten days for transportation while others who went by train left much earlier.

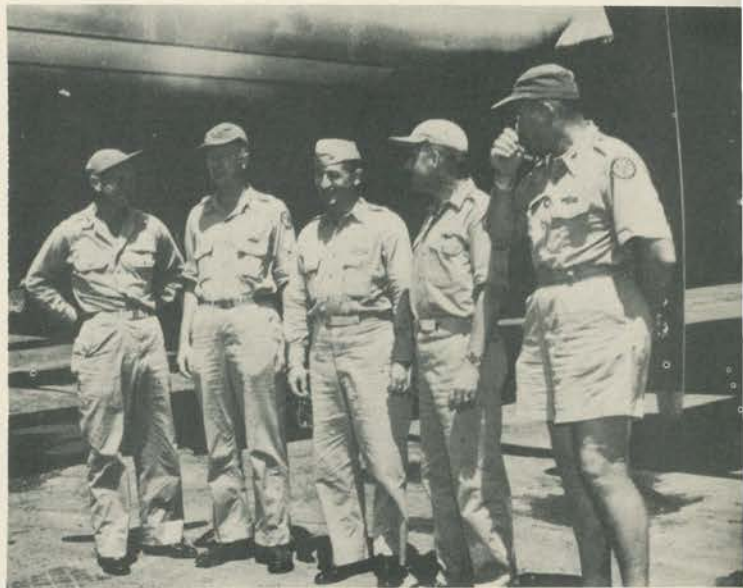
Back on Saipan the men who were to go by ship also waited a varying number of days for the six surface ships on which they returned to the Coast.

The first of these left on October 20 and the last on November 15. These ships followed varying routes Stateside. The original schedule had called for all to go via Oahu to Seattle but that was

changed so that most of them landed in San Francisco or the Los Angeles area. The last one put in at San Pedro and the personnel were processed at Camp Hahn and then shipped to their various separation or reception centers.

By whichever means and whichever route the men of the 73rd returned to the States, they all found at the end of the journey what they had been fighting for—our wives or sweethearts, our families, our parents. Once more we were able to go to the corner drugstore for a milk shake and to the neighborhood theater to see a movie from a dry seat. Some of us were separated from the Army immediately and others enjoyed their temporary duty for rest and recreation and then reported to their next Stateside station.

We were HOME.



The General and his successor, Colonel Lee

General O'Donnell Leaves for the States



L'ENVOI

The 499th and 500th Bombardment Groups and the 65th and 91st Air Service Groups were deactivated right after returning. Wing Headquarters, the 497th and 498th Bombardment Groups and the 303rd and 330th Air Service Groups started to reassemble at March Field as ordered. However, on December 22 these units were transferred to MacDill Field in Florida. Since so few had returned from temporary duty there was confusion of orders reminiscent of the early Clovis days. By the middle of January, 1946, Headquarters for these units were operating on a very curtailed scale. In March the 497th and 303rd groups were deactivated so in April the Wing consisted of only the 498th and 330th and the 323rd Signal Company (with personnel of two.) There had been all sorts of rumors about the future of the Wing—it was going to Puerto Rico to patrol the Antilles—it was to stay in the States as a training wing—it was to be elevated to an Air Division.

Finally, on May 14, 1946, the 73rd Bombardment Wing was deactivated and all its remaining personnel transferred to the VIII Bomber Command. The Wing had finished in Florida the road it started in Kansas.



THE B-29 LULLABY

Conceived and arranged by Gene Munday and his 7 SHARPS and A NATURAL

We will leave the Marianas
Catch the Japs in their pajamas
Drop our eggs on Fujiyama, Tokoyama, Yokohama, Matsuyama, Kobe, and-a
have a Holiday on Wings.

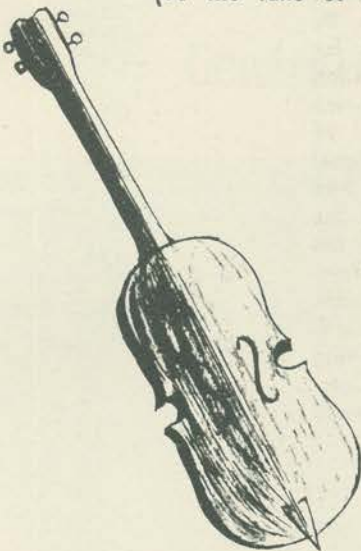
We will fly o'er Kito Jima, Iwo Jima, Chichi Jima,
Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha Jima, Okinawa is a Shima,
We'll have lots of gasoline-a, for our
Holiday on Wings.

Guam, Saipan, we love you Tinian
Don't knock-a, you will find, we'll rockya,
Block by block-a in Osaka.

Matsuoka, hear us you will learn
To fear us, here we come, what's moy-a
We'll drink saki, in Nagoya.

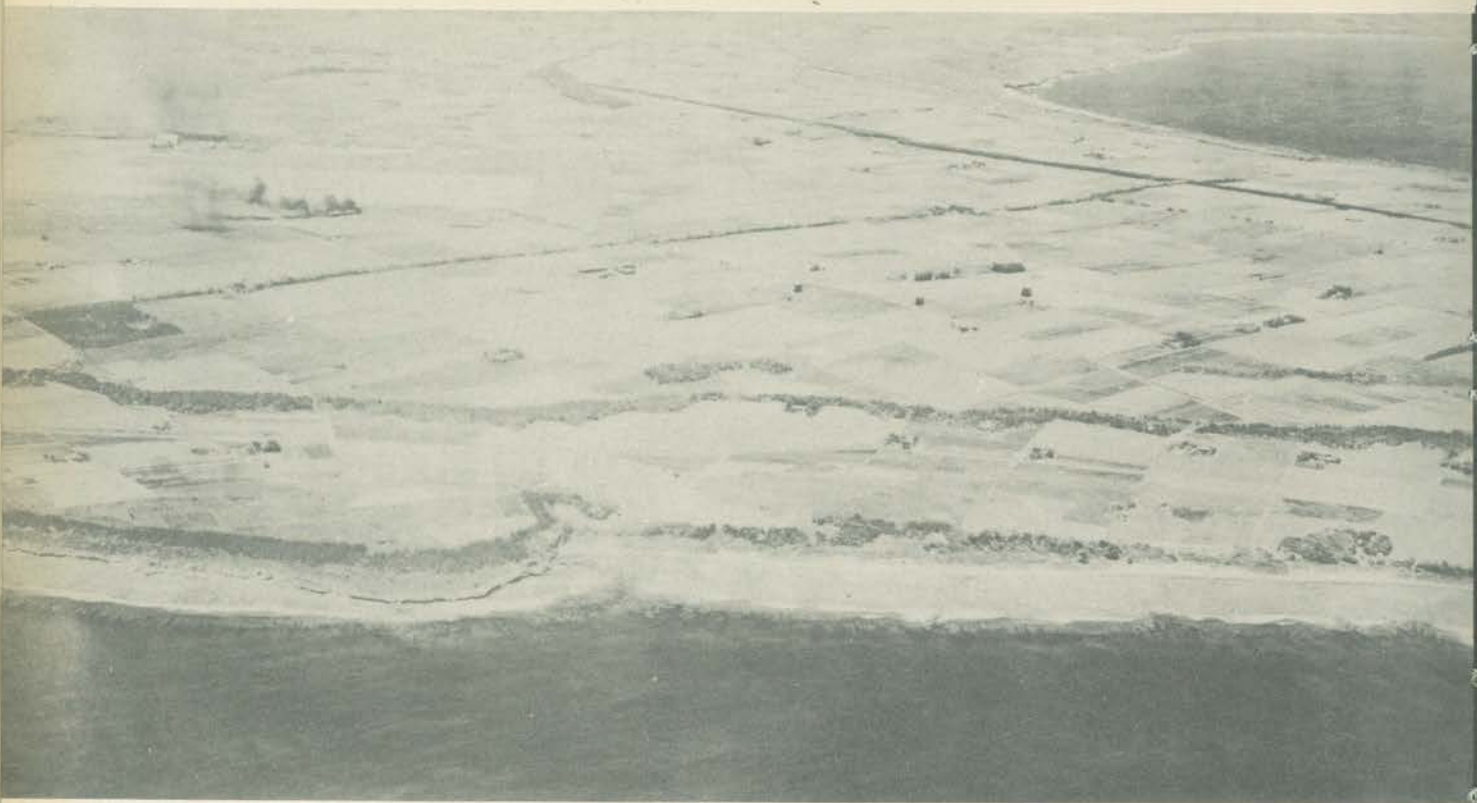
Retto Jima, Kito Jima, Iwo Jima, Chichi Jima,
My-oh-my Minami Jima, Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-Jima
This I know that it will seem-a
Like a Holiday———on Wings.

(To the tune of David Rose's Holiday for Strings.)



Saipan





Before



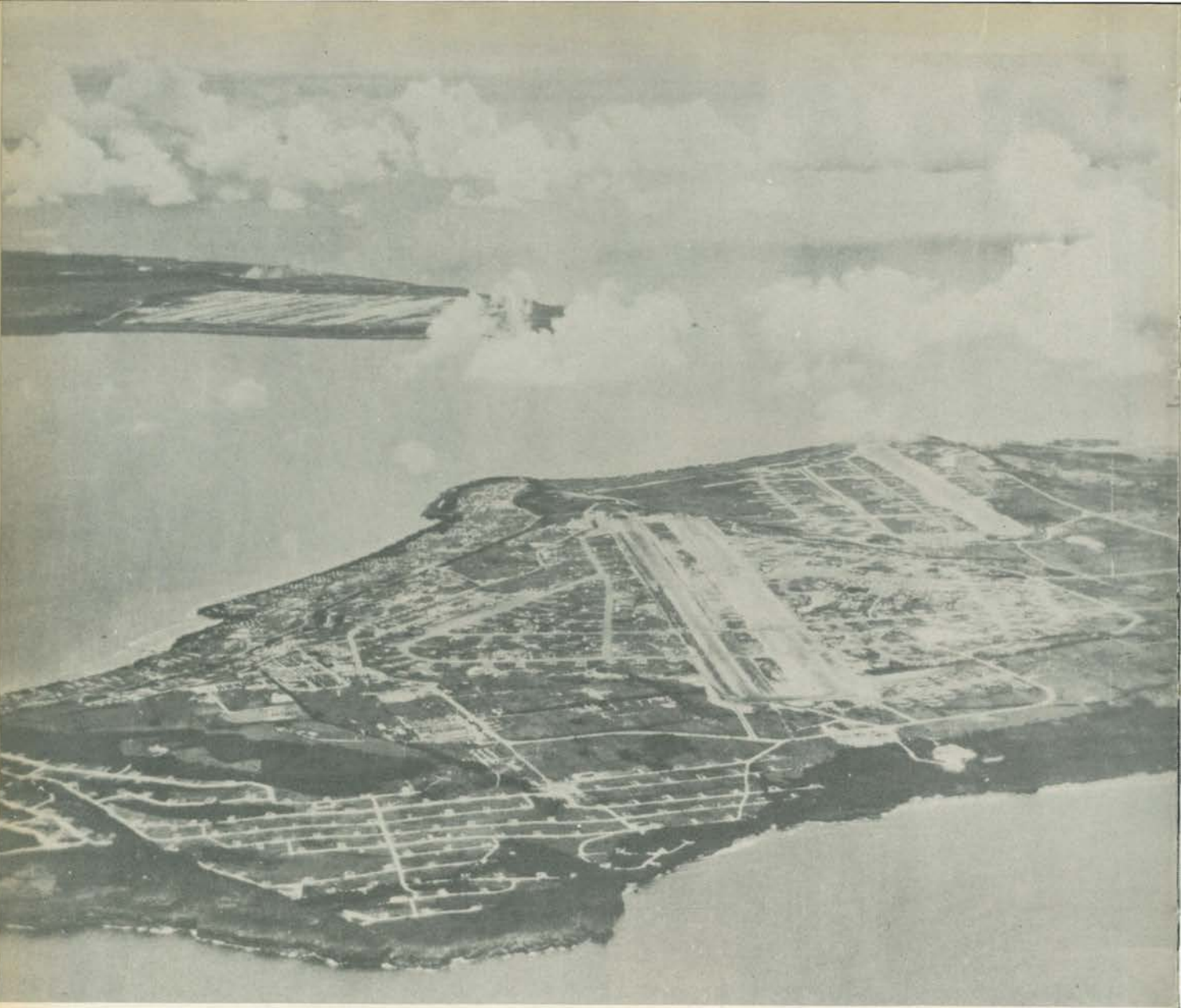
After

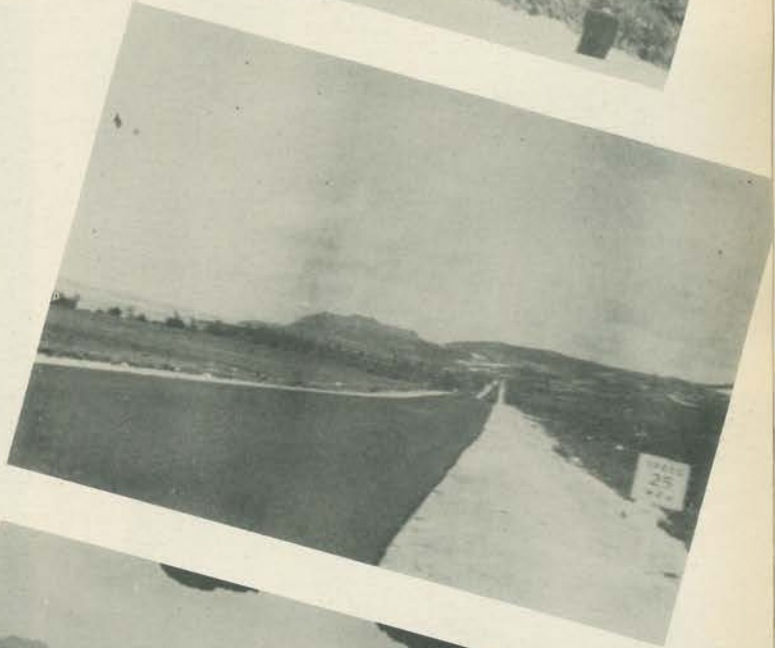


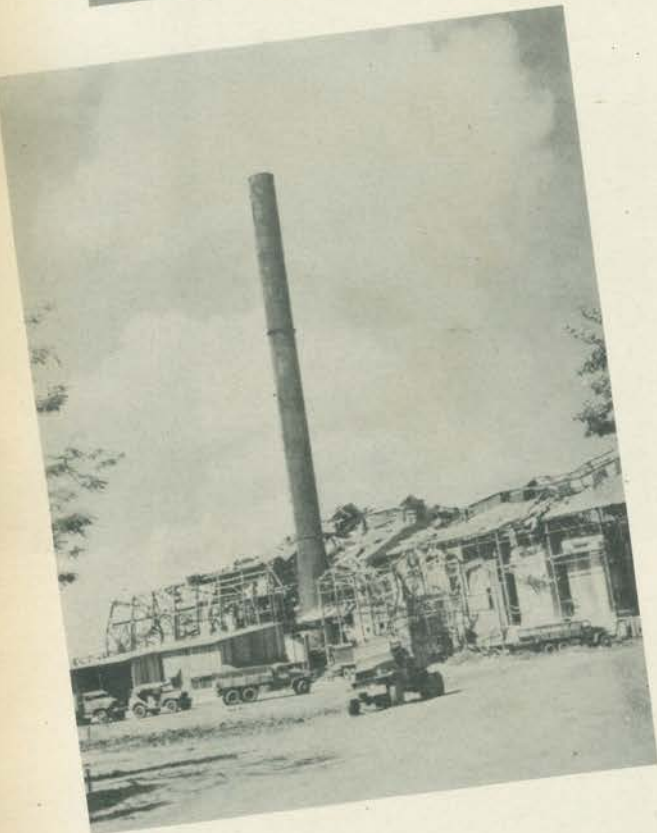
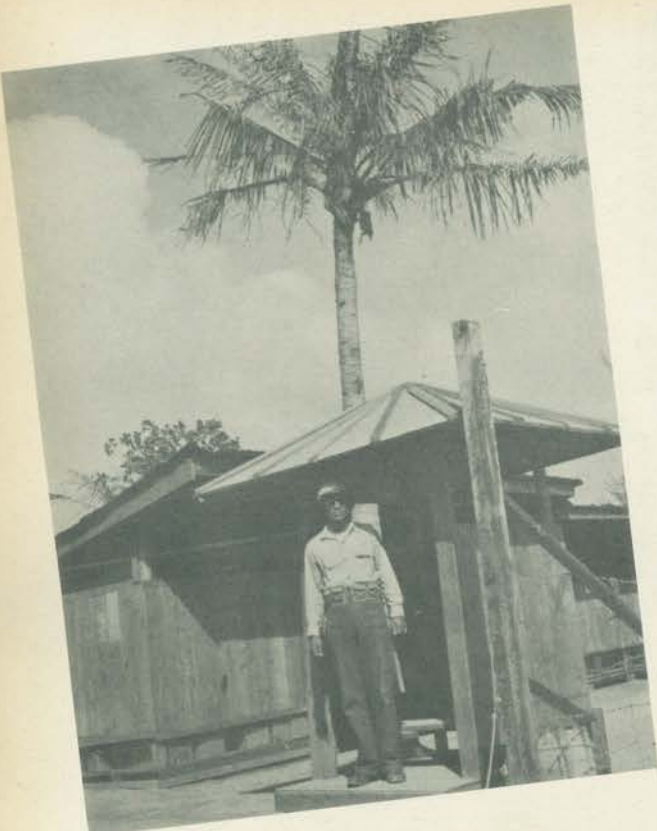
Isley Field





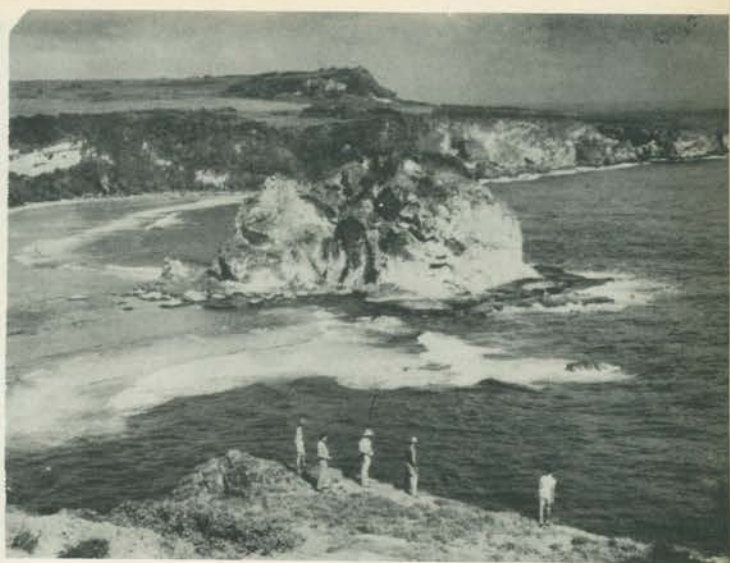


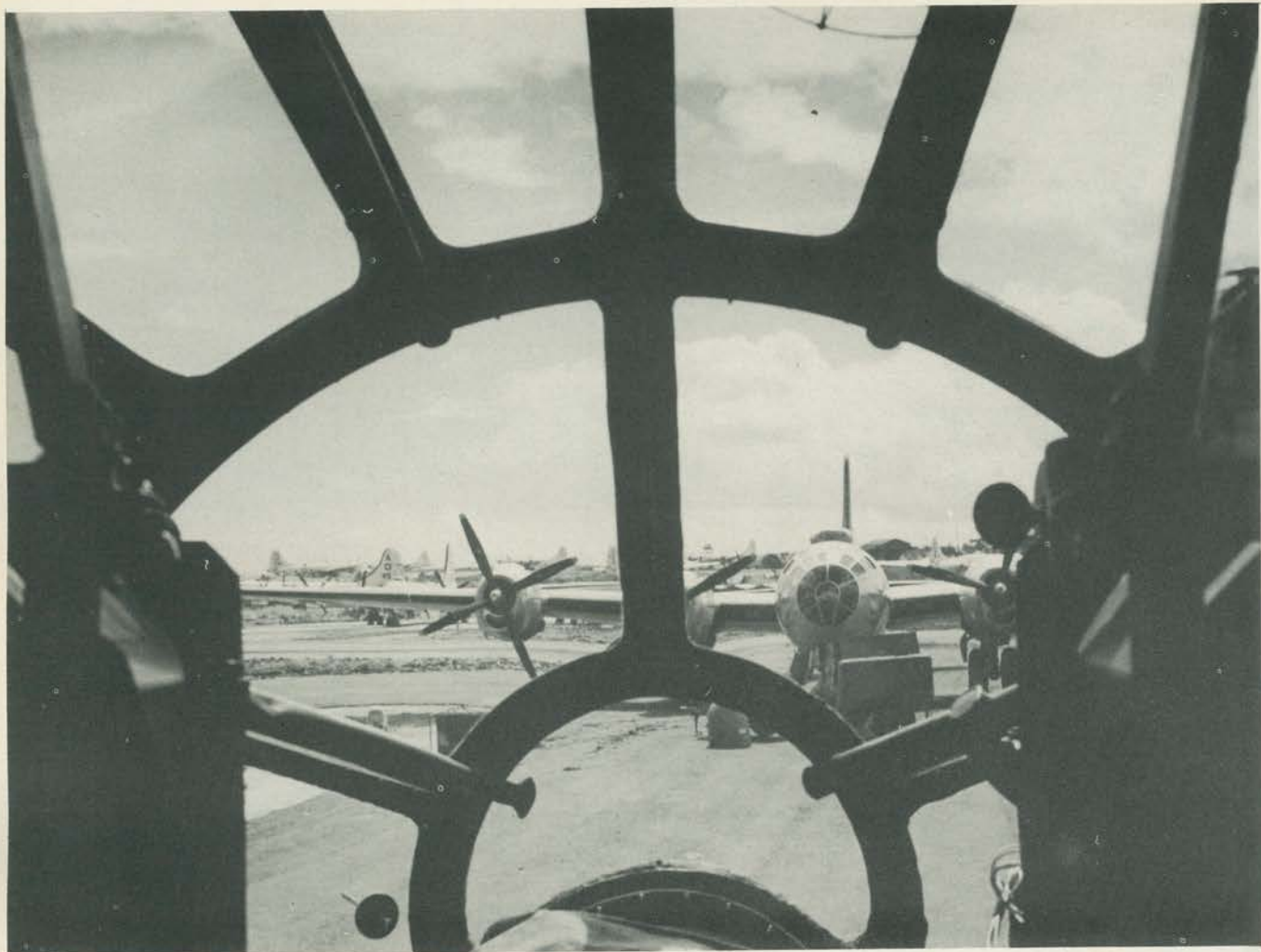




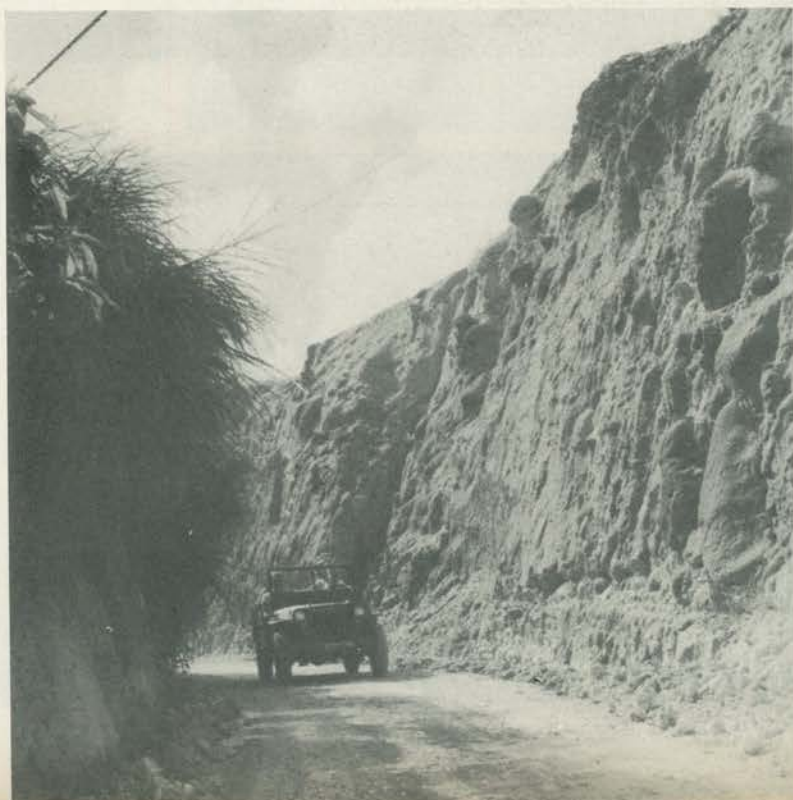




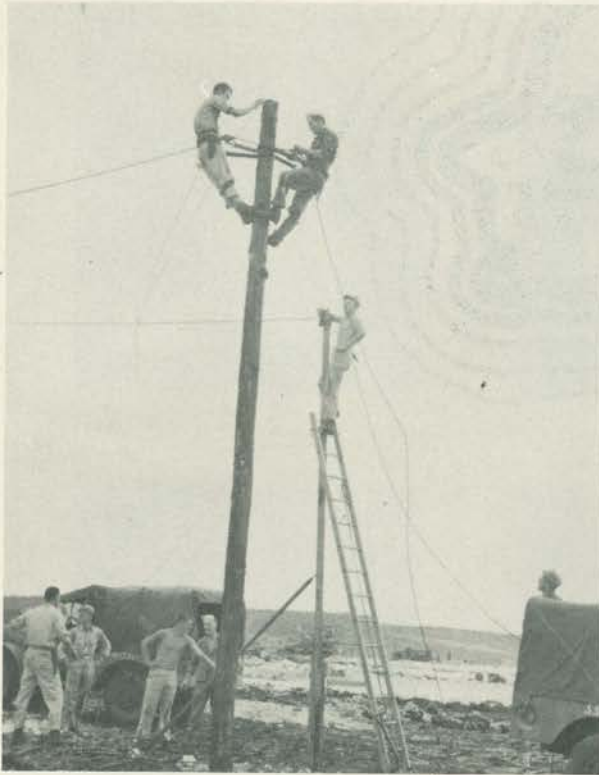




A Boeing B-29 dispersal area at a Saipan base as seen thru the plexiglass nose of a giant Superfortress



G. I.'s in a jeep on a sightseeing trip on Saipan Island



Communications boys string wires



SAIPAN



Noses











Decorations And Awards

The gallantry and outstanding ability of the men of the 73rd were amply rewarded. The following are the numbers of awards and decorations made while we were still overseas and more have been made since our return. This list includes both the awards and the oak leaf clusters.

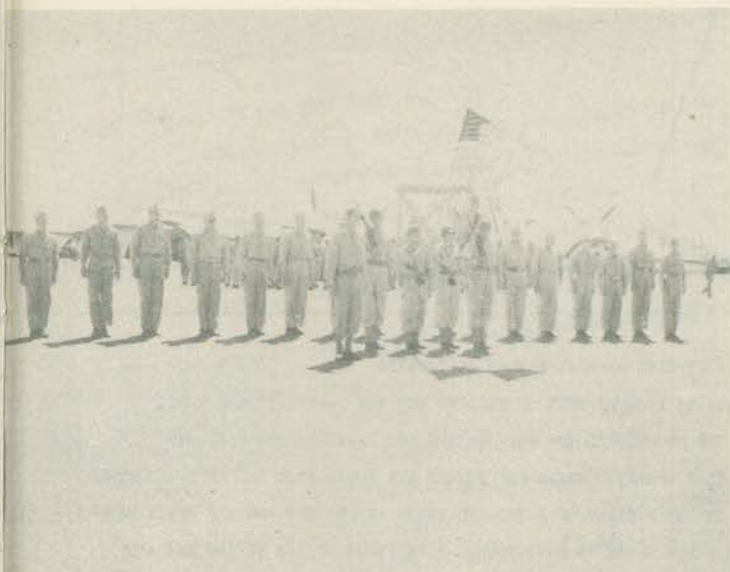
Distinguished Service Cross.....	3
Distinguished Service Medal.....	1
Legion of Merit.....	15
Silver Star.....	32
Distinguished Flying Cross.....	2605
Soldier's Medal.....	46
Bronze Star.....	450
Air Medal.....	14076



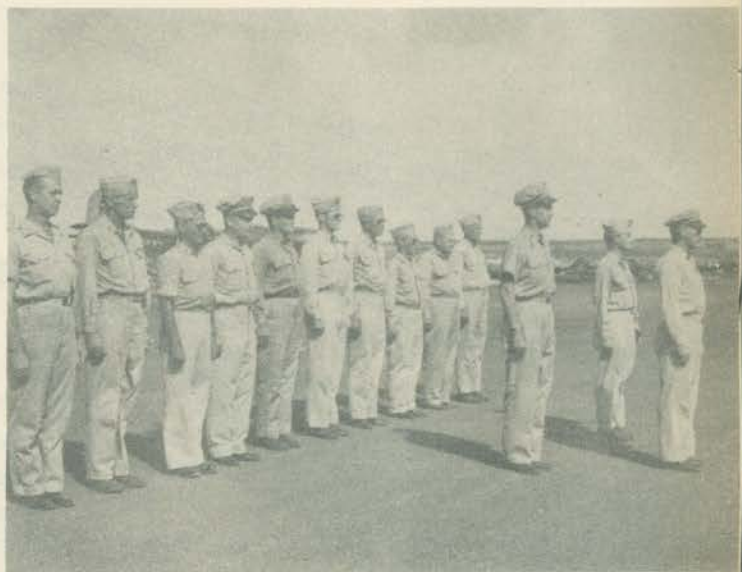
Col. Sutherland receives Legion of Merit



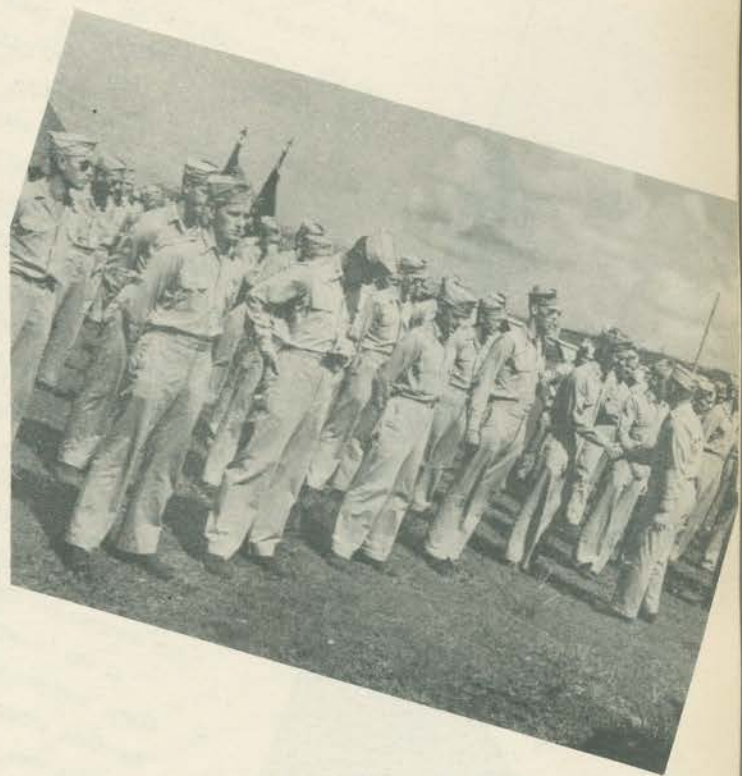
Lt. Cutler (497th) publishes the orders for Air Medal awards—4/20.



Group receiving awards



Awards



What Others

FROM REAR ADMIRAL F. E. M. WHITING
THE ISLAND COMMANDER CONGRATULATES YOU UPON THE BRILLIANT AND
DECISIVE RECORD OF YOUR WING. THE NEVER FALTERING COURAGE, ABILITY
AND EFFORT OF YOUR OFFICERS AND MEN DESPITE BITTER OBSTACLES HAS SET
A STANDARD THAT WILL NEVER BE SURPASSED BY ANY OTHER FLYING UNIT.

FROM LIEUTENANT GENERAL NATHAN F. TWINING

THIS IS A GREAT HOUR OF VICTORY FOR THE TWENTIETH AIR FORCE
WHICH HAS PROSECUTED THE WAR AGAINST THE JAPANESE HOMELAND WITH
DEVASTATING EFFECT. NEVER BEFORE HAS AIR POWER BEEN SUCH A DOMINANT
FACTOR IN THE WINNING OF A WAR AND NEVER BEFORE HAS ONE AIR FORCE HAD
SUCH A LARGE SHARE IN A VICTORY. I AM PROUD OF THE FLYING MEN AND
THE GROUND CREWS OF THIS COMMAND WHOSE COURAGE, PERSEVERANCE AND
SKILL HAVE MADE POSSIBLE THIS OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT. I CONGRATULATE
YOU ALL.

FROM MAJOR GENERAL CURTIS E. LEMAY
IT IS MY PRIVILEGE AND PLEASURE TO COMMEND YOU, THE OFFICERS
AND MEN OF THE 73RD WING AND ALL UNITS SERVING WITH THE WING FOR
YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN SUCCESSFULLY EXECUTING NUMEROUS MISSIONS TO
THE MAINLAND OF JAPAN, AND IN FULFILLING AND EXCEEDING YOUR SHARE
OF THE EXPECTATIONS OF THIS COMMAND.
THE OUTSTANDING COURAGE OF COMBAT CREWS, THE SPECTACULAR
MAINTENANCE RECORD OF GROUND PERSONNEL, THE SOLUTION OF FORMAL
SUPPLY PROBLEMS, AND THE UNTIRING STAFF WORK TO COORDINATE AND IN-
TELLIGENTLY DIRECT THESE ACTIVITIES AT A MINIMUM COST OF LIFE AND
EQUIPMENT ALL BLENDED INTO AN INTEGRATED MAXIMUM EFFORT TO PRODUCE
A TRULY SUPERIOR COMBAT RECORD. THE HIGH DEGREE OF TECHNICAL
ABILITY, DEVOTION TO DUTY, MORALE AND DETERMINATION DISPLAYED BY
EACH OFFICER AND MAN MADE POSSIBLE AN OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO
THE DEFEAT OF THE ENEMY. WHEN THE HISTORY OF THIS WAR IS WRITTEN,
IT IS MY CONSIDERED OPINION THAT SOME OF ITS MOST IMPORTANT PAGES
WILL DEAL WITH THE AGGRESSIVE PLANNING AND ACTION, THE UNTIRING
APPLICATION TO DUTY AND THE YET NOT FULLY REALIZED ATTAINMENTS OF
THE OFFICERS AND MEN SERVING UNDER YOUR COMMAND.
BY THE GALLANTRY, SKILL AND INSPIRED RESOLUTION OF THE COMBAT
CREWS, TOGETHER WITH THE EXCEPTIONAL RESOURCEFULNESS, ESPRIT AND
TECHNICAL ACUMEN OF THE GROUND AND STAFF SCHEDULES, THE MEMBERS OF
THE 73RD WING AND ALL UNITS SERVING WITH IT HAVE UPHOLD THE HIGHEST
TRADITIONS OF THE MILITARY SERVICE, THEREBY REFLECTING GREAT CREDIT
ON THEMSELVES AND THE ARMY AIR FORCES.
AT THIS TIME I ESPECIALLY DESIRE TO EXPRESS MY DEEP APPRECIATION
FOR THE LOYALTY SHOWN ME. IT IS MY EARNEST HOPE THAT WE SHALL AT
SOME FUTURE PLACE AND TIME AGAIN SERVE ON THE SAME TEAM.

To The 73rd Wing

Think Of Us

FROM GENERAL OF THE ARMY HENRY H. ARNOLD
THE SECRETARY OF STATE HAS PERSONALLY EXPRESSED HIS DEEP
APPRECIATION FOR THE EXPEDITIOUS DISTRIBUTION OF PROPAGANDA LEAFLETS
CONTAINING INFORMATION ON CURRENT PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. GWT JOINS THE
SECRETARY OF STATE IN THANKING THE ARMY AIR FORCES FOR THIS JOB.
TO THIS IS ADDED MY OWN GRATIFICATION FOR THIS FINE JOB.

FROM GENERAL JOSEPH T. MCNARNEY
WE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS SEND YOU OUR
WARMEST GREETINGS ON THIS OCCASION OF YOUR FINAL VICTORY OVERTHROW
OF JAPANESE TYRANNY AND THE ATTAINMENT OF COMPLETE VICTORY AS THE
ONE THAT FINALLY BROUGHT PEACE TO A WAR-TORN WORLD. YOUR BRILLIANT
MILITARY SUCCESSES AND THE COURAGE OF THE TROOPS UNDER YOUR COMMAND
HAVE BEEN AN INSPIRATION TO YOUR COMRADES-IN-ARMS THROUGHOUT THE
WORLD.

FROM
FIELD MARSHAL SIR HAROLD ALEXANDER
PLEASE CONVEY TO ALL TROOPS OF
YOUR COMMAND MY IMMENSE ADMIRATION FOR
THEIR SPLENDID VICTORY WHICH MEANS THAT
THE LAST OF THE WORLD'S AGGRESSORS HAVE
NOW BEEN DECISIVELY DEFEATED. WE IN
THIS COMMAND HAVE WATCHED YOUR STRUGGLE
CONSTANTLY AND FOLLOWED YOUR GROWING
SUCCESSES FROM DAY TO DAY, AND IN THE
MOMENT OF YOUR FINAL VICTORY, I SEND
YOU PERSONALLY AND TO YOUR TROOPS OUR
GREATEST CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES.

FROM
GENERAL OF THE ARMY HENRY H. ARNOLD
ALL THE ARMY AIR FORCES JOIN ME
IN CONGRATULATING YOUR ENTIRE COMMAND.
THE DEVASTATING EFFECT OF THE 20TH
AIR FORCE STRIKES HAS BEEN THE MAJOR
FACTOR IN THE CRUSHING DEFEAT OF JAPAN.
YOU HAVE BROUGHT AIR POWER TO ITS
HIGHEST OPERATIONAL FORM.

FROM GENERAL CARL SPRETT
IN THIS HOUR OF VICTORY, MY HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS GO TO
THE OFFICERS AND MEN WHO CARRIED OUT OUR STRATEGIC BOMBING PROGRAM
AGAINST JAPAN.

ALTHOUGH I WAS NOT WITH YOU LONG, I HAD AMPLE OPPORTUNITY FOR
FIRST-HAND OBSERVATION OF THE MAGNIFICENT JOB YOU DID IN THE MARIANAS
AND IWO JIMA, AND WERE PREPARING TO DO ON OKINAWA. I VISITED YOUR
INSTALLATIONS AND WAS IMPRESSED MORE THAN I CAN SAY. I SAW ALL MY
ORDERS CARRIED OUT WITH A PRECISION AND FIDELITY THAT GRATIFIED ME
MORE THAN I CAN POSSIBLY EXPRESS.
YOU HAVE MADE A TREMENDOUS CONTRIBUTION TO OUR VICTORY. YOU
WHO HELPED PLAN AND DIRECT OUR MISSIONS AND OPERATE OUR HEADQUARTERS
MADE A RECORD OF UNMARRED EFFICIENCY. YOU WHO SERVICED OUR AIRPLANES
AND KEPT THEM FLYING SET A NEW STANDARD OF TIMELESS AND FAULTLESS
MAINTENANCE. YOU WHO FLEW THE AIRPLANES, ON THE LONGEST OVER-WATER
MISSIONS EVER KNOWN, SHOWED A COURAGE, SKILL AND FAITHFULNESS OF
THE HIGHEST ORDER.

OUR CREWS WHO WERE LOST GAVE UP THEIR LIVES IN THE HIGHEST TYPE
OF HEROISM -- IN A SPIRIT OF WILLING SACRIFICE TOWARD THE GOOD OF ALL.
TO THESE GALLANT MEN HISTORY WILL PAY ITS TRIBUTE.

YET IN A SENSE YOU HAVE ALREADY PAID THE FINEST KIND OF TRIBUTE
TO YOUR FALLEN COMRADES. YOU CARRIED ON. IN YOUR HANDS OUR STRATEGIC
BOMBING PROGRAM REACHED A DEGREE OF PERFECTION, IN EVERY RESPECT, SUCH
AS FEW MILITARY OPERATIONS IN ALL HISTORY COULD BOAST OF. I AM PROUD
OF ALL OF YOU FOR WHAT YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED.

To The 73rd Wing Thru The 20th

The Service Center

The presence on the island of four service groups, each set up to operate a base for 5,000 men, presented a problem as to how our personnel could be utilized to their full extent without a duplication of working effort. This was resolved by integration of personnel from the 65th and 91st groups into Service Center A to service the 497th and 498th planes on the northern strip and the personnel of the 303rd and 330th into Service Center B to service the 499th and 500th group

planes on the southern strip. During the period of operations, salvage and reclamation shops, tire build-up and engine build-up were centralized as Wing projects.

The Service Centers began operations at the beginning of November. Shop facilities and most shop equipment were lacking for Service Center A but operations were begun out of squad tents. Service Center B had opportunity to construct some shops prior to beginning operations. Con-



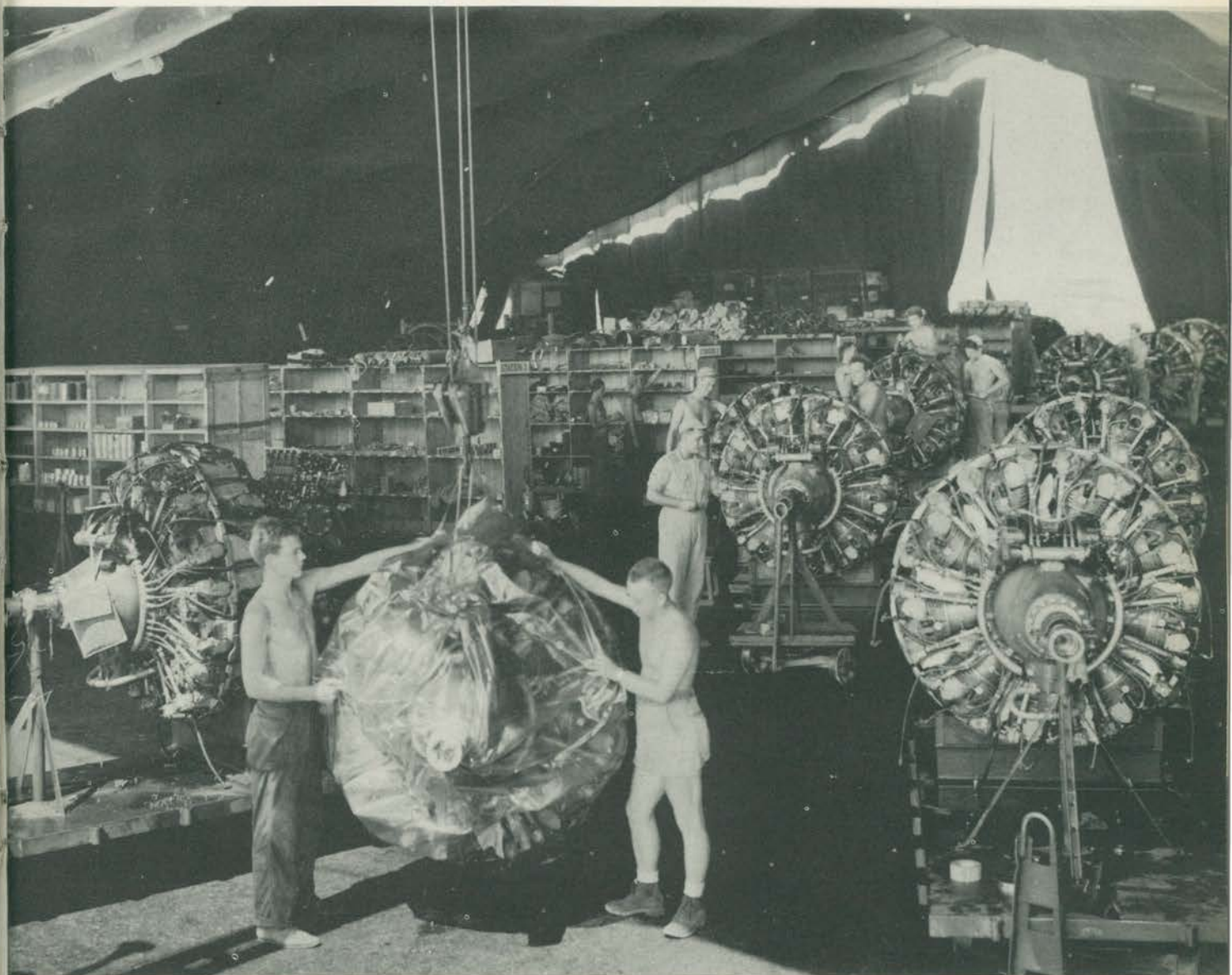
ENGINE BUILD-UP

Newly received engines received final modifications for combat

siderable operations during the early months were hampered by lack of shop facilities and equipment and necessary detailing of shop personnel to construct them.

During the period from March 1 to August 22 the Service Centers repaired 564 aircraft for the five months period for which figures are available. Eighty-one per cent of these aircraft were repaired and returned to the organization within three days. Every four weeks the approximately 600 men ac-

tually assigned to duty in the Service Centers supplied some 100,000 man hours of work. A breakdown of the use of this time was that 66% was utilized on work directly pertaining to aircraft, seven per cent for other work such as repairs of small arms, typewriters and the like, 26% for shop overhead and only one per cent for delay representing the time spent waiting for work or transportation.



ENGINE TEAR DOWN

—Where old engines were partially dismantled and sent back for rebuilding

日本の偉人よ何處に在りや



日本は自由の何たるかを理解した人々に依つて強大を致したのである。
 「國家の獨立はその國民の獨立より」と喝破した福澤諭吉氏。
 その著書「西洋事情」に於て自由の定義を下した源作安文博士。
 多年議會政治の闘士として、今名を馳せた尾崎行雄氏。
 刺客に襲はれた時「板垣死すとも自由は死せず」と絶叫した板垣退助氏。
 此の人達によつて昔の日本には「自由の國家のみがその強大を致し得る」と云ふ事實がよく理解されて居た。

早の隊下下



我々がみんなを言ふのはあなた方の指
 手廻しをまわされる。我々の度と利がして居る者である。彼等は
 利害道が通つて来た。我々の度と利がして居る者である。彼等は
 自らの頭上には下されんとする。地獄と見れんとして、米軍は日
 本人と定府する。あるは定に信じて居る。勝つ見込のない、我
 争ひを起した。我々の度と利がして居る者である。彼等は
 我々の度と利がして居る者である。彼等は
 我々の度と利がして居る者である。彼等は
 我々の度と利がして居る者である。彼等は

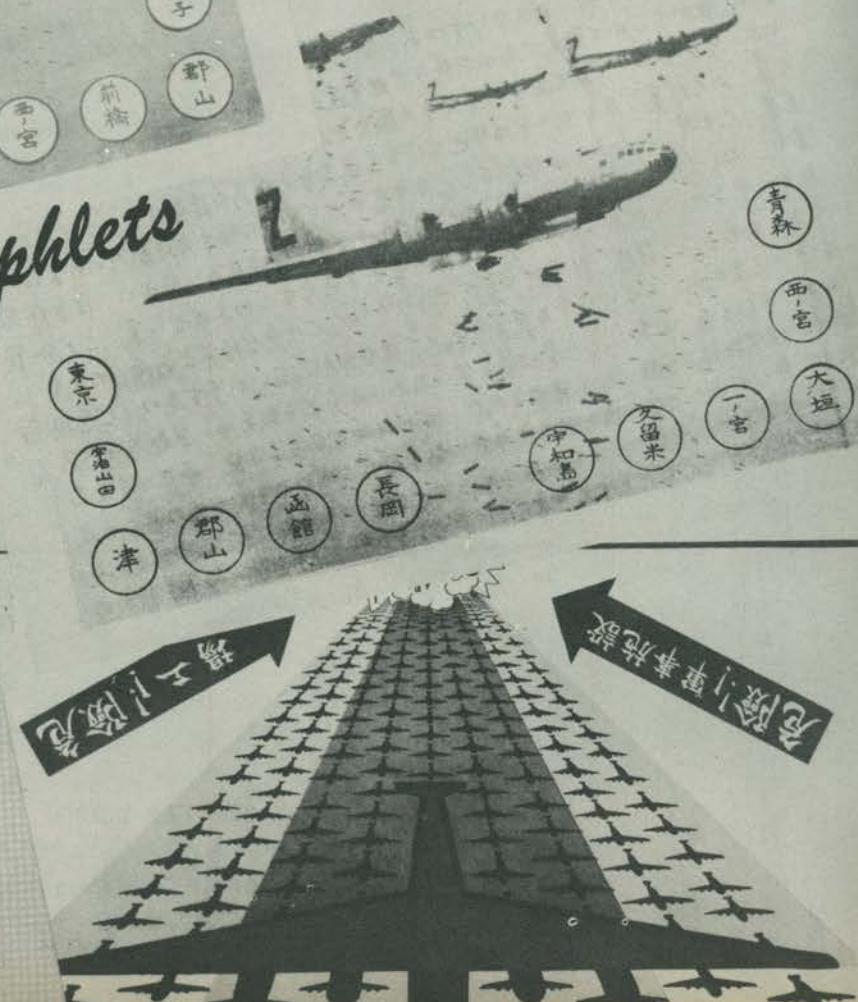


食事中の政治家

Damphlets

一に養生
 二に薬

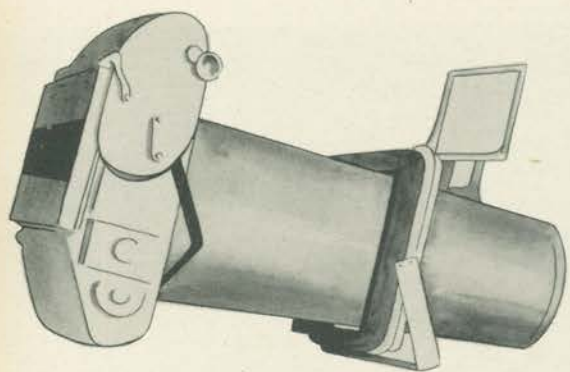
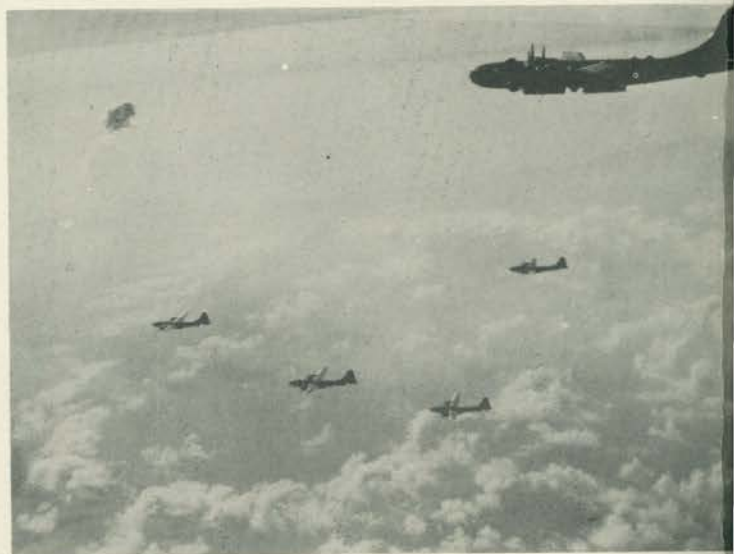
軍閥が降参するまで米國は日本を爆撃せねばなら
 ないのである。米國は此の奇麗な日本がめつやくになる
 まで爆撃を続ける力がある事は皆様に知つて居る。皆様に苦しむの
 は處罰を恐れて戦争を続けるのである。皆様に苦しむのやう
 である。少數の利己主義者の爲に全國國民が苦しむのである。
 皆様の指導者に此の絶望的戦争を止めさせるやう
 な要求せよ。此が爆撃を妨ぐ唯一の方法である。

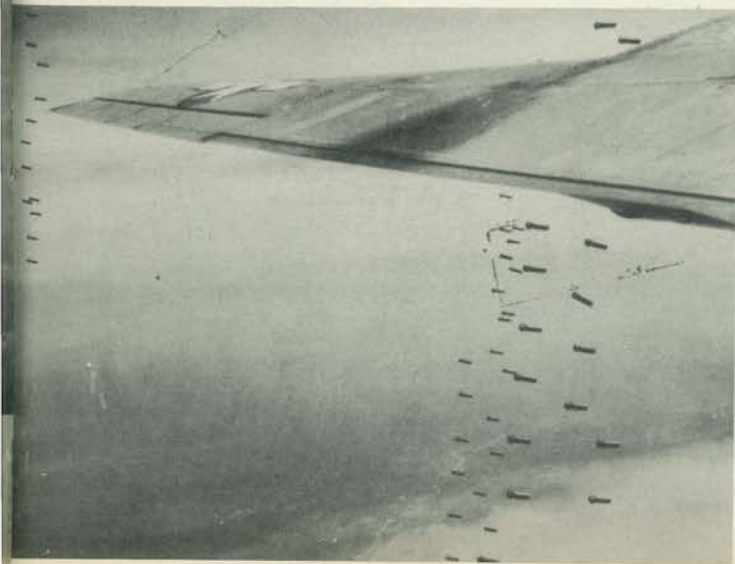




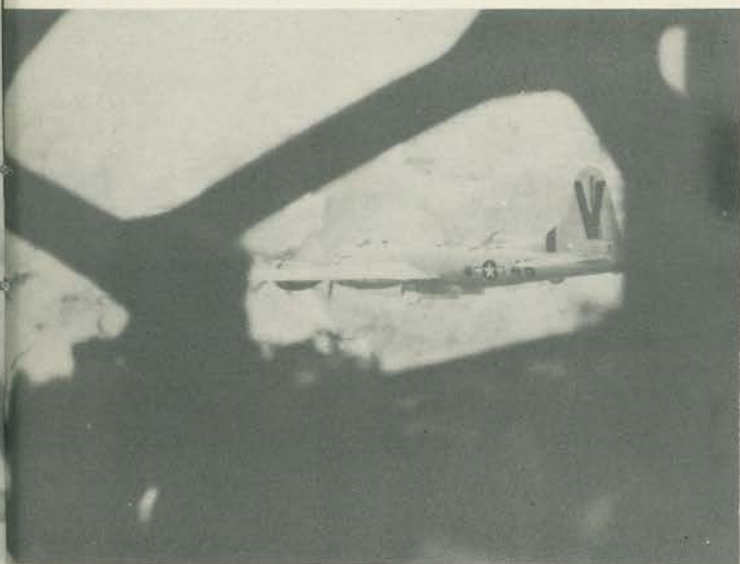
Planes

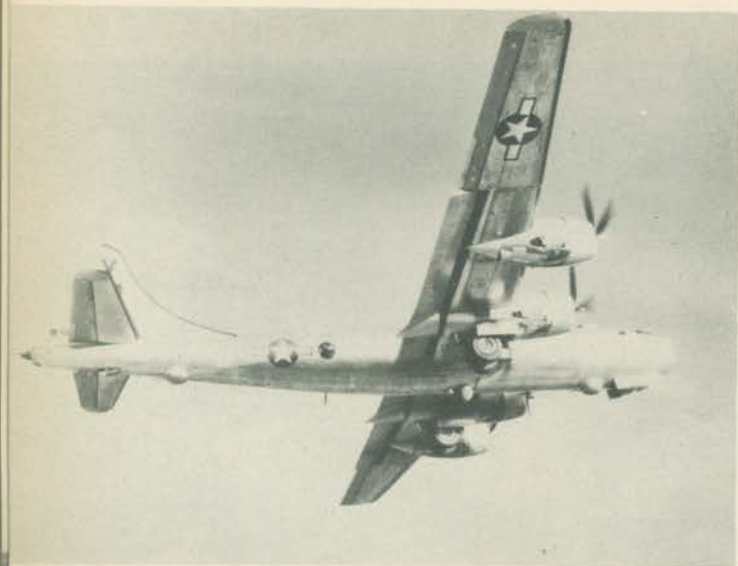


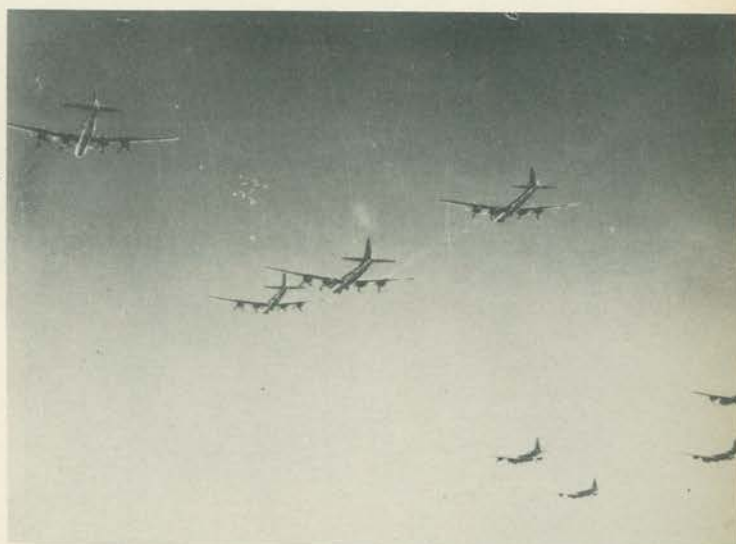


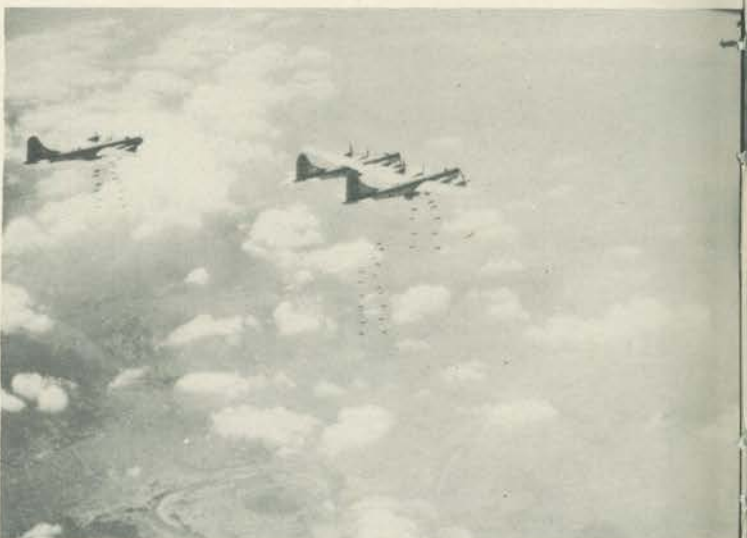














REMEMBER THOSE ARMY CHARTS?

HERE'S SOME TO SHOW THE FOLKS

73rd BOMBARDMENT WING COMMAND & STAFF PERSONNEL

AS OF 1 AUG. 1945

HQ, 73RD BOMBARDMENT WING

COMMANDER	B G O'DONNELL KENNETH JR	A - 3	LTC BRIDGEMAN WILLIS E	SUPPLY CONTROL	COL SHERKINS HORACE W
DEP COMMANDER	COL SWEENEY WALTER C JR	ACTING ENGINEER	LTC MC DONALD DONALD	MAINT CONTROL	MAJ GRANA ROMANO D
CHIEF OF STAFF	COL SWEENEY WALTER C JR	STAT CONTROL	CPT OWENS HARRIS R	WEATHER	MAJ HOPKINS BENJAMIN F JR
DEP C of S OP-TRG	COL SUTHERLAND JOHN R	AIR INSPECTOR	LTC OKERBLOOM PAUL R	COMMUNICATIONS	LTC HUTCHKISS EDWIN L
DEP C of S ADM	COL LARSON KURT M	SUBSON	MAJ HELLER EDWARD F	ORGANANCE	MAJ HERMANSON INGRAM T
DEP C of S S & M	COL SCHWARTZ GEORGE E	ADJUTANT	LTC PARKMAN WILSON W	QUARTERMASTER	CPT HEINE LEWIS W
A - 1	LTC LOVE LORENZO T	PROVOST MARSHAL	CPT KRISHNER THEODORE	ARMAMENT	CPT BONEY ERNEST W
A - 2	LTC SNOW CHESTER	HQ SQUADRON	CPT HEINE LEWIS W	C W S	CPT KILDRIDGE SKELDON F

497TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP

GP COMMANDER	COL JOHNSON ARNOLD T	S - 1	MAJ TEJEN OSCAR C	CO 869 BOMB SQ	MAJ KIMRELL EARL S
DEP COMMANDER	LTC VAN SICKLE HELL D	S - 2	CPT STEWART HARRY A	CO 870 BOMB SQ	LTC TRICKEY FRED L JR
EXEC OFFICER	LTC CAMPBELL NORMAN J	S - 3	LTC HALKY ALBERT L	CO 871 BOMB SQ	MAJ CARROLL JOHN W
		S - 4	LTC DAVIS FRANK L		

498TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP

GP COMMANDER	COL GANEY WILEY D	S - 1	CPT ZECHMAN JOHN A JR	CO 873 BOMB SQ	LTC DAWITT JACK S
DEP COMMANDER	LTC SAUNDERS DONALD W	S - 2	MAJ WEST CARROLL R	CO 874 BOMB SQ	LTC ZUBKO BORIS M
EXEC OFFICER	MAJ HUBBERT CARL R	S - 3	LTC TOLD RICHARD E	CO 875 BOMB SQ	LTC ROBINSON GERALD G
		S - 4	CPT GAST RICHARD E		

499TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP

GP COMMANDER	COL LEE MERRILL J	S - 1	MAJ BALLARD PHILIP S	CO 877 BOMB SQ	MAJ ANDERSON COLIN E
DEP COMMANDER	LTC CHAMBERS WALTER E	S - 2	MAJ SHAYER MARILLA G	CO 878 BOMB SQ	LTC VAN HAUR JAMES P
EXEC OFFICER	MAJ STURDEON GEORGE C	S - 3	LTC WILLIMSON JOHN M	CO 879 BOMB SQ	LTC SCHRIEBER HIGSON M
		S - 4	CPT WILLIAMS CLYDE C		

500TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP

GP COMMANDER	COL DOUGHERTY JOHN E	S - 1	CPT HANSON DONALD M	CO 881 BOMB SQ	MAJ HATCH HORACE E
DEP COMMANDER	LTC MC DONELL W L JR	S - 2	CPT SMOLENSKI JOHN R	CO 882 BOMB SQ	LTC BRANNOCK JOSEPH F
EXEC OFFICER	LTC ADAMSON HERBERT	S - 3	LTC PARSONS FREDMAN A	CO 883 BOMB SQ	MAJ VAN TRUIT JOHN R
		S - 4	MAJ ASHLEY RAYMOND L		

65TH AIR SERVICE GROUP

GP COMMANDER	COL HENITT CLARENCE L JR	EXEC OFFICER	LTC MILES W J	ADJUTANT	1LT GILMORE MARION L
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91ST AIR SERVICE GROUP

GP COMMANDER	COL ZOLLER SOLOMON J	EXEC OFFICER	MAJ MONCKLY CLINTON	ADJUTANT	MAJ RINTON LAURANCE F JR
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303RD AIR SERVICE GROUP

GP COMMANDER	COL SHERKINS HORACE W	EXEC OFFICER	LTC GEISENDORF LOUIS C	ADJUTANT	MAJ OTTOBONI BARTH L
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330TH AIR SERVICE GROUP

GP COMMANDER	LTC MC LEMORE ROBERT H	EXEC OFFICER	MAJ SMITH JAMES E	ADJUTANT	MAJ HANLIN ROSS E JR
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323RD SIGNAL CO WING

COMMANDING OFFICER	CPT FRENCH RUSSELL L
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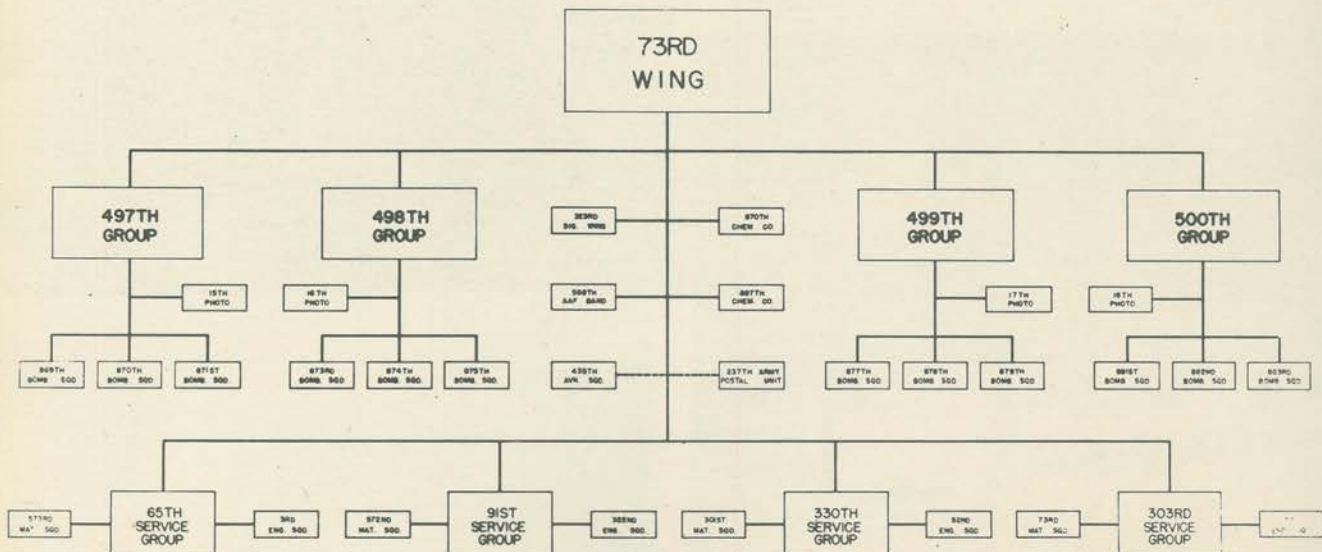
870TH CHEMICAL CO ACP

COMMANDING OFFICER	CPT RAY MERRILL R
--------------------	-------------------

887TH CHEMICAL CO ACP

COMMANDING OFFICER	CPT ENYALES THEODORE L
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73RD BOMBARDMENT WING ORGANIZATION CHART



- LEGEND -

ATTACHED -----

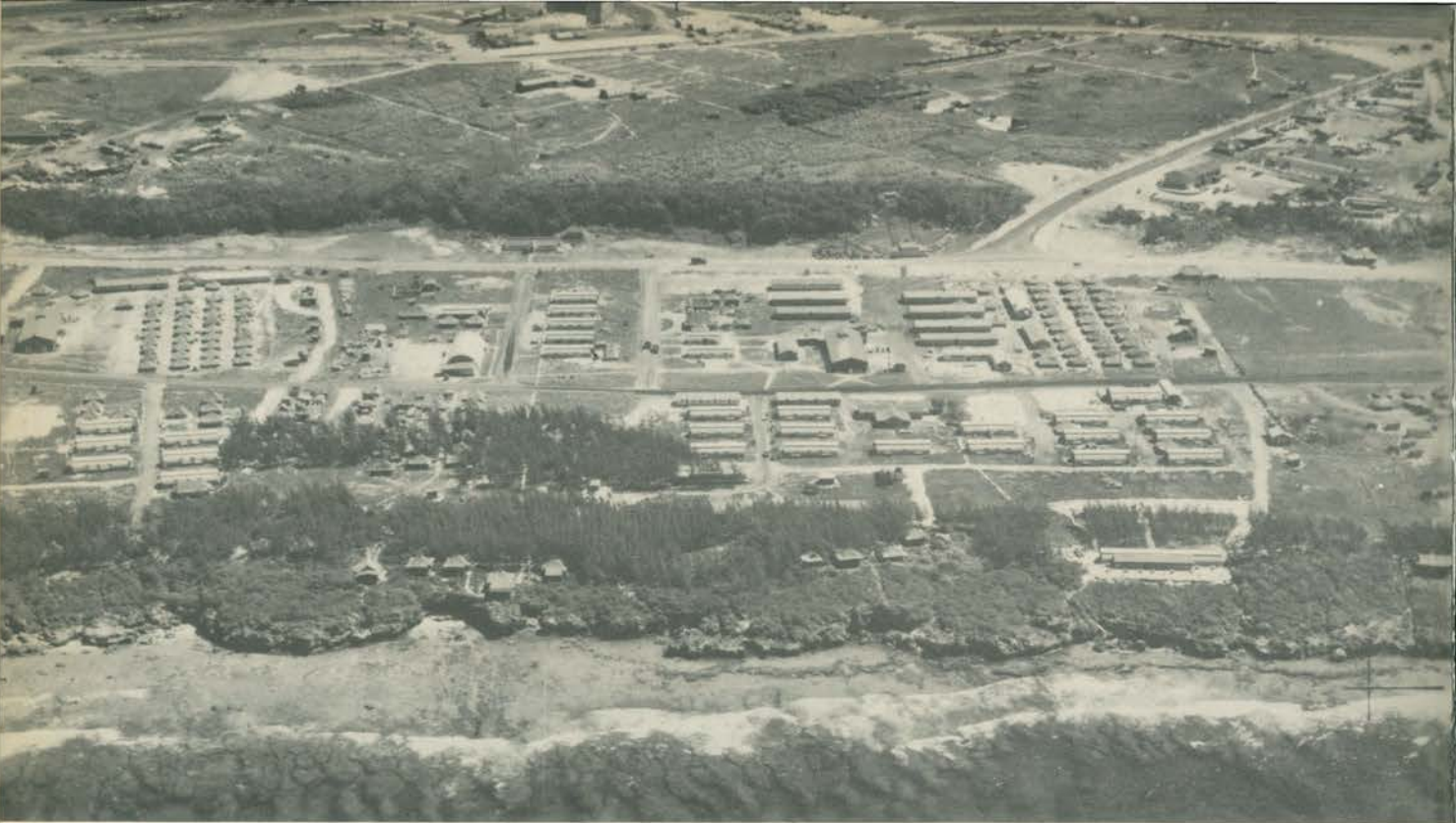
Where We Lived

The following five pages show aerial views of almost the entire 73rd Bombardment Wing area as it was along the southern coast of Saipan. Part of the 500th Bombardment Group area is

missing. These pictures were taken by Lieutenant Colonel Crocker Snow, Wing A-2 in June, 1945. Pictures are shown from west to east.



882nd Bombardment Squadron and 881st Bombardment Squadron of the 500th Bombardment Group. In background were the 1894th Engineers and part of Isley Field runway.



881st Bombardment Squadron (500th Bombardment Group), 499th Bombardment Group Headquarters and 877th Bombardment Squadron of 499th Bombardment Group. Several hardstands may be seen in background.



877th Bombardment Squadron and 878th Bombardment Squadron. Both were in 499th Bombardment Group. In background was the 303rd Air Service Group area.



879th Bombardment Squadron (499th Bombardment Group), 323rd Signal Company Wing and 73rd Bombardment Wing Headquarters. Above hill was most of Service Center B with the 303rd Air Service Group and 330th Air Service Group in front.



Part of 73rd Bombardment Wing Headquarters area and 875th Bombardment Squadron, 498th Bombardment Group. Background shows 330th Air Service Group, Service Center B, hardstands and part of runway.



875th Bombardment Squadron, 498th Bombardment Group Headquarters, 874th Bombardment Squadron. Beyond main road were the 870th Chemical and 887th Chemical Companies, Air Operations and the Wing hospital. Upper right was the 65th Air Service Group.



874th Bombardment Squadron and 873rd Bombardment Squadron (both 498th Bombardment Group). Near background shows Wing hospital, 65th Air Service Group and 91st Air Service Group. Magicienne Bay is in far background.

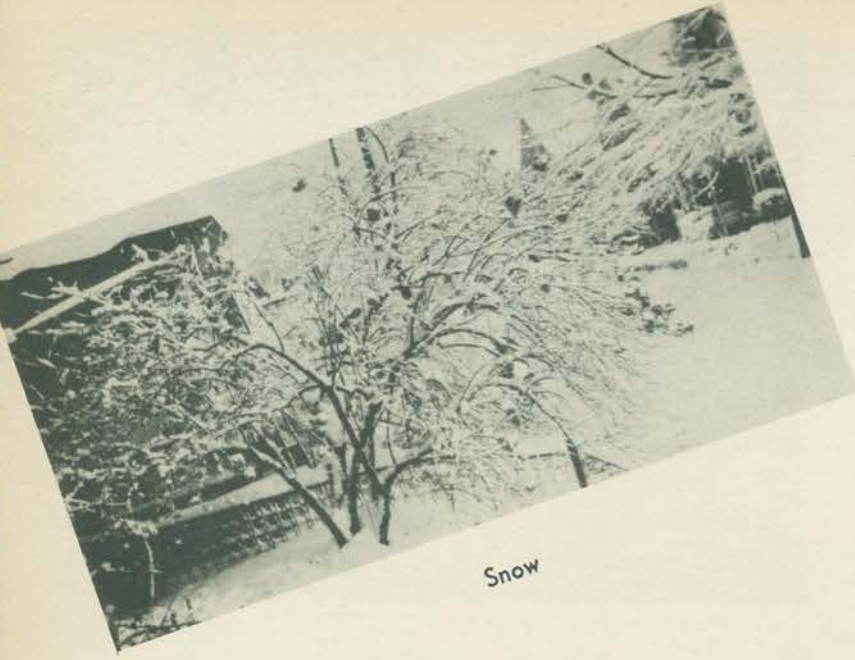
873rd Bombardment Squadron, 498th Bombardment Group, 497th Bombardment Group Headquarters, 869th Bombardment Squadron (497th Bombardment Group). At top of picture is Magicienne Bay.



All three squadrons of the 497th Bombardment Group—the 869th, 870th and 871st were in foreground. The 435th Aviation Squadron was above road.

The 871st Bombardment Squadron (497th Bombardment Group).





Snow



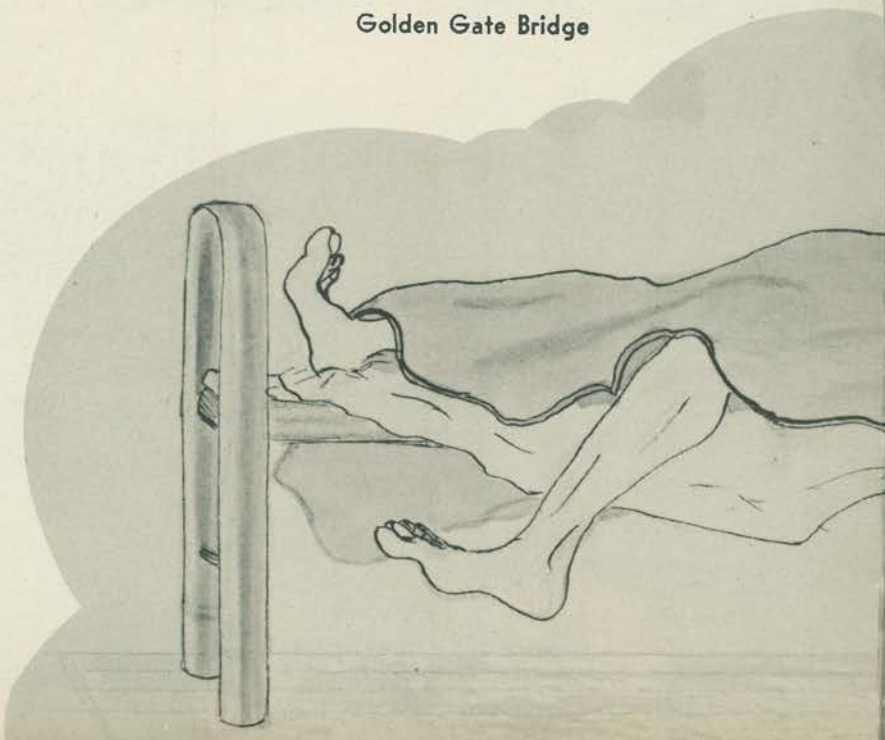
Home

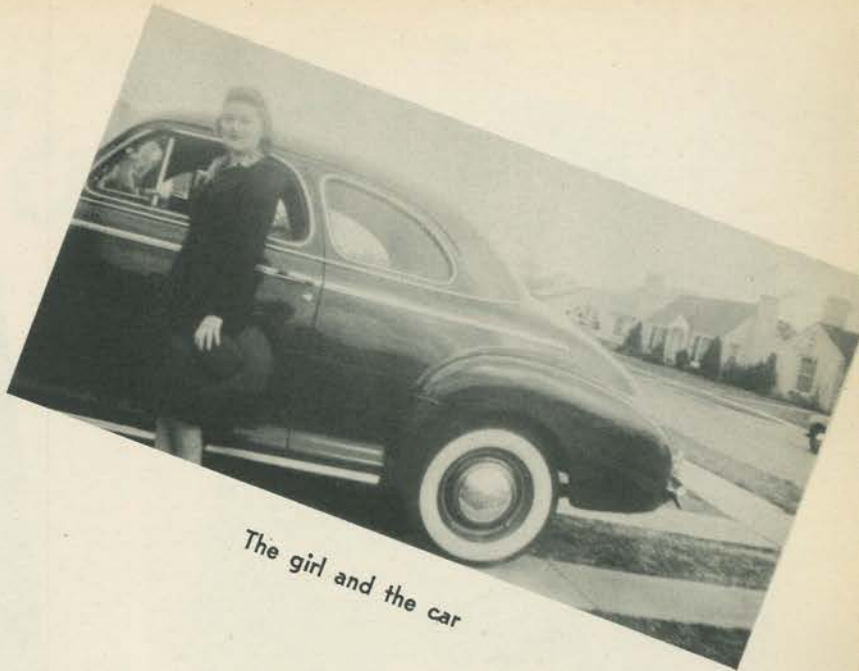


Yankee boy

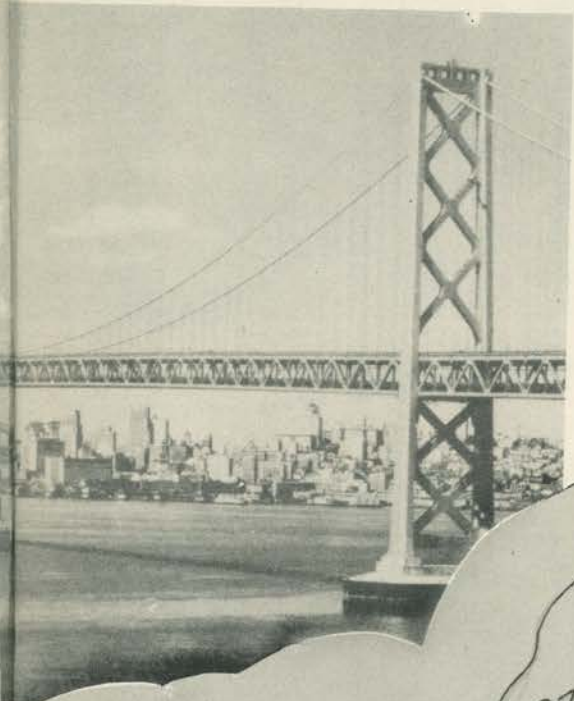


Golden Gate Bridge

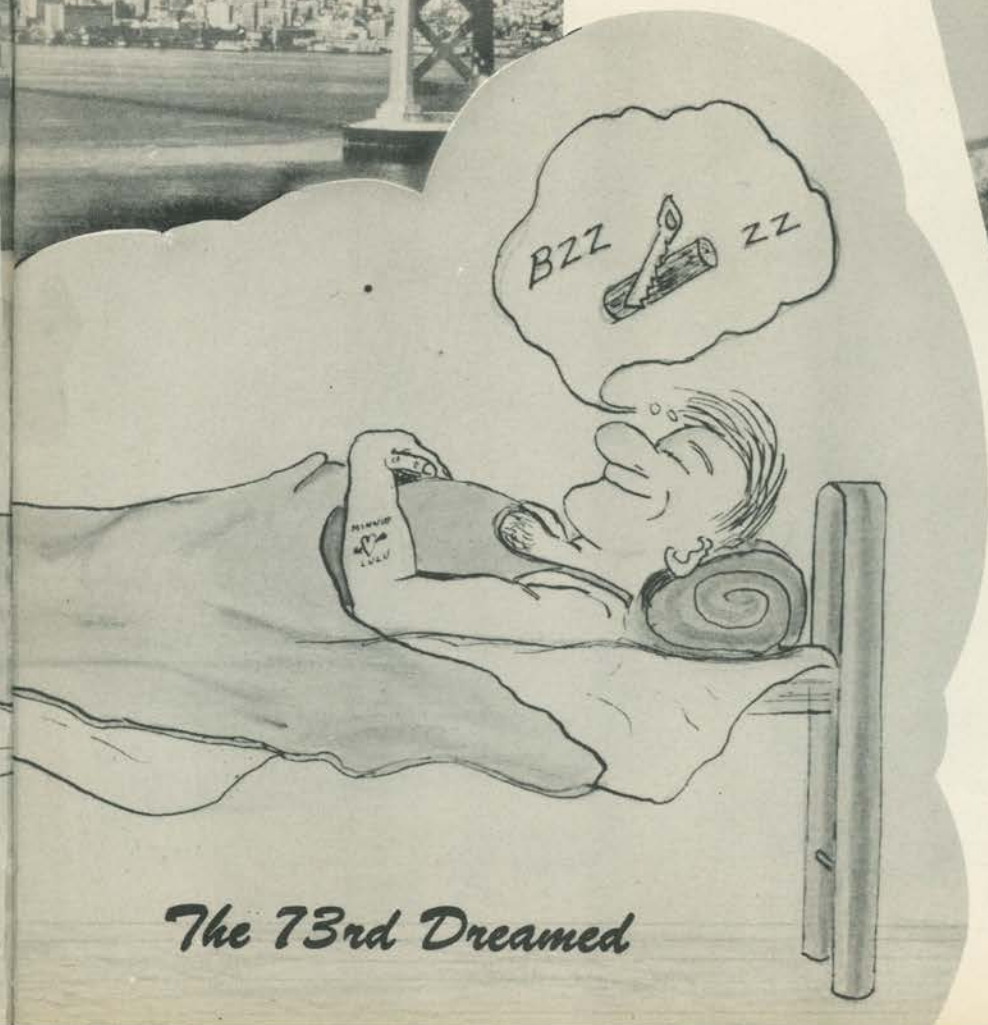




The girl and the car



Southern girl baby



The 73rd Dreamed



Col. Richard T. King, Jr.—
Comamnding 500th Group



Col Clarence L. Hewitt, Com-
manding 65th Service Group

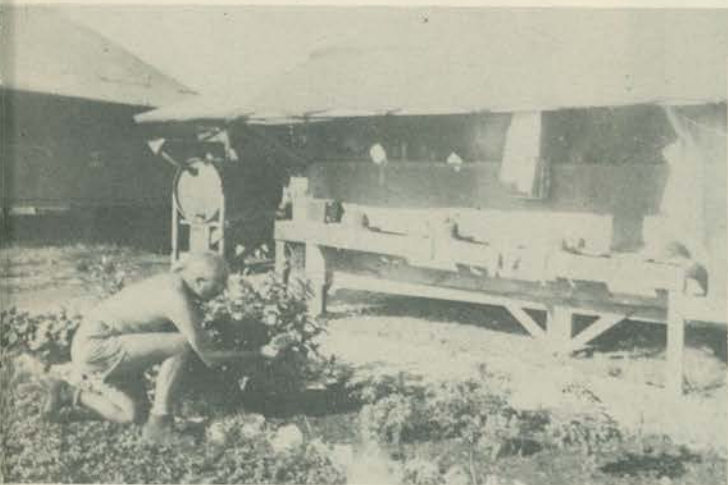


Col. Morris J. Lee, C. O. of the
Wing when General O'Donnell



Col. Wiley D. Ganey and his
sucsessor Col. Donald Saunders,
C. O.'s of the 498th Group

Random Shots



We had victory gardens too



Remember how our laundry came back?





Capt. Bolger, C. O. of the 435th Aviation Squadron



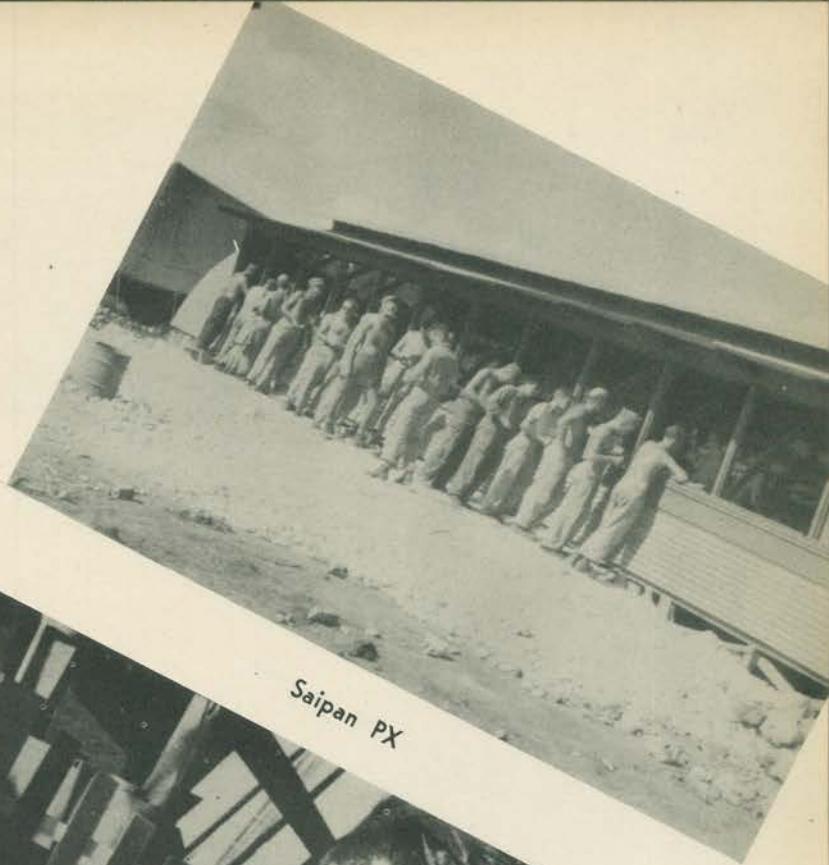
Charan Kanoa Sugar Mill



Asiastic elevated



Headquarters Zebras



Saipan PX



M/Sgt. Miles, HQ rat catcher extraordinary



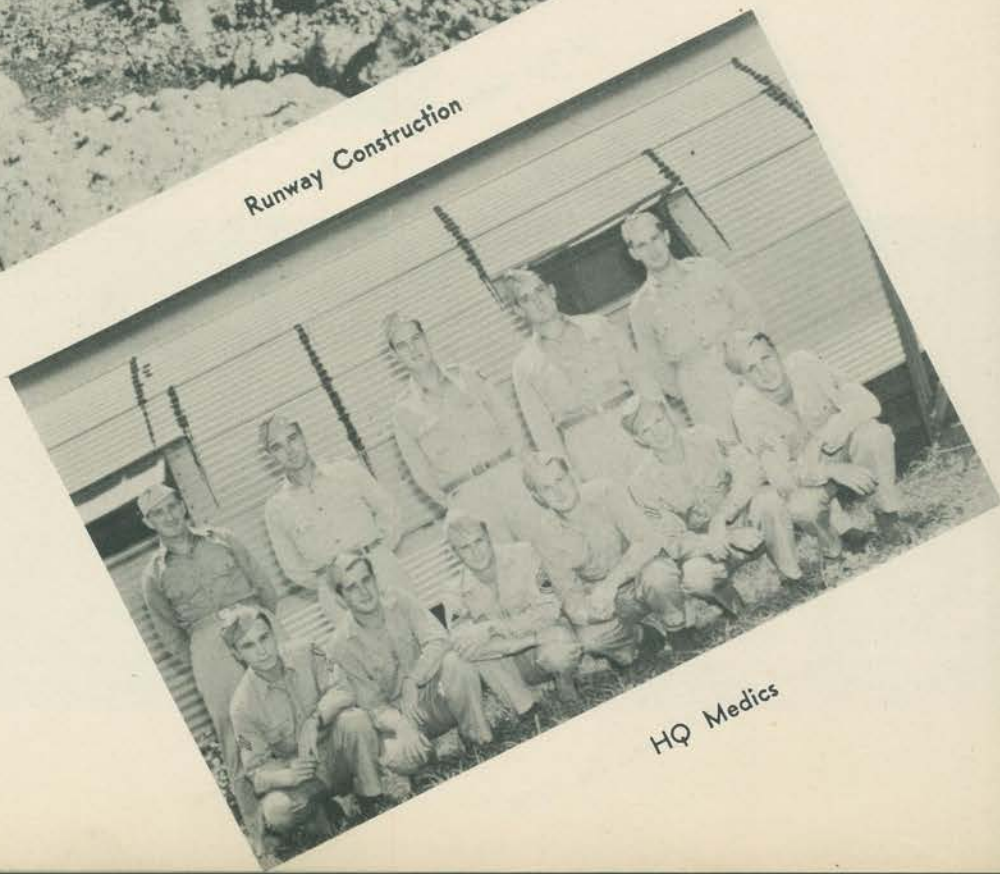
Charlotte Fagen of the ARC and the 497th



Prefab—after one day



Runway Construction



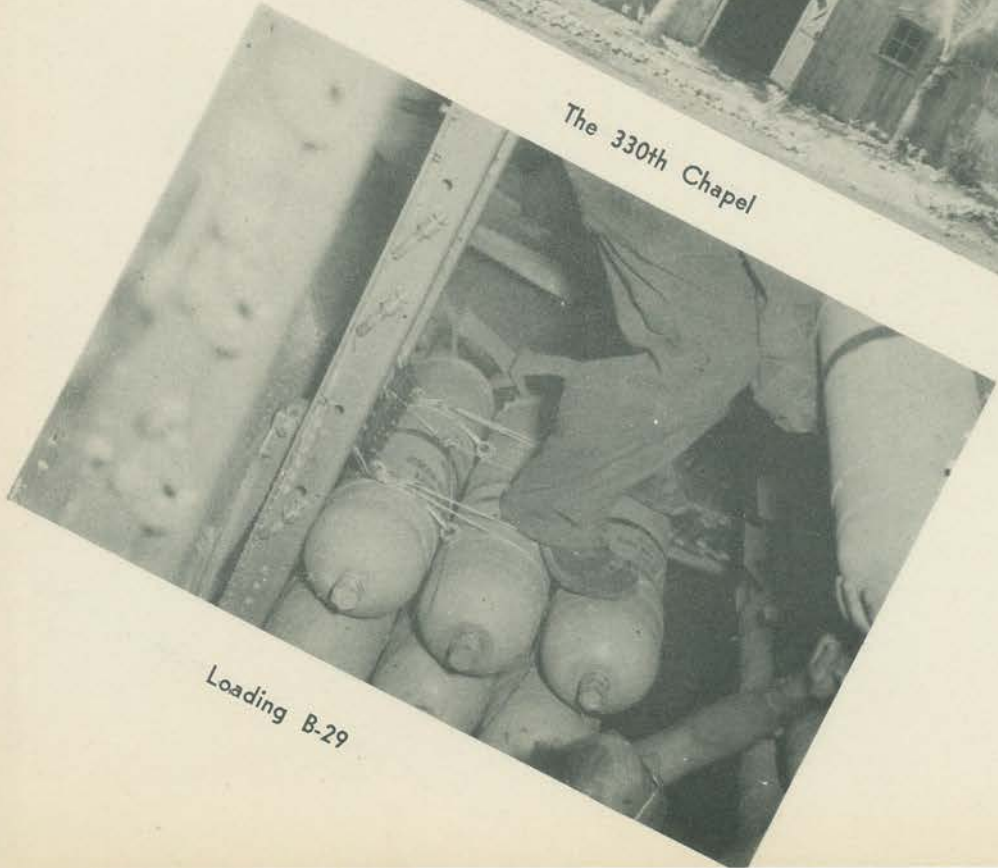
HQ Medics



Ernie Pyle

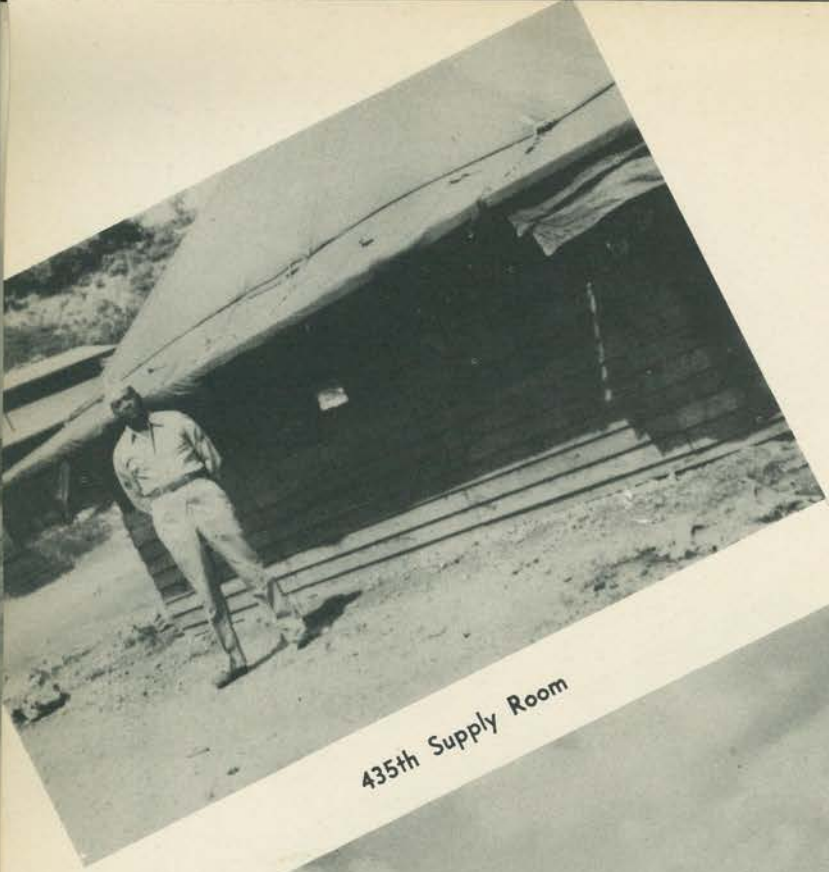


The 330th Chapel

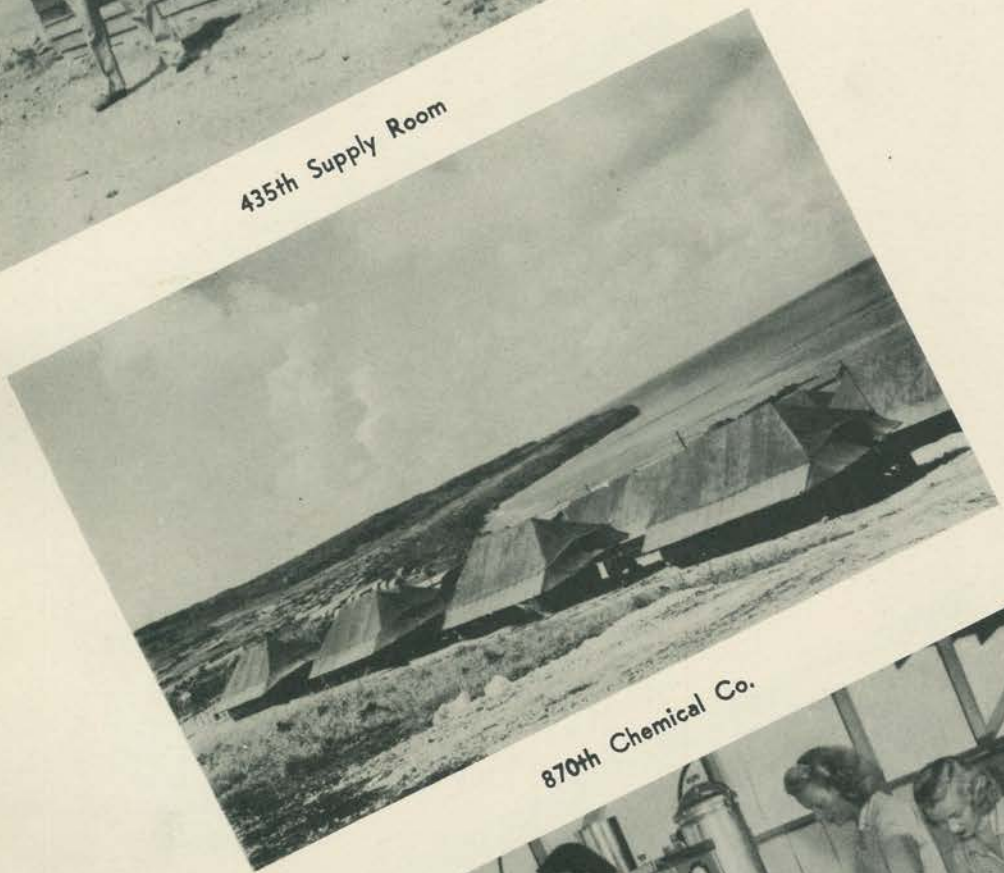


Loading B-29

Davis, Joseph T.
T.A.R.



435th Supply Room



870th Chemical Co.



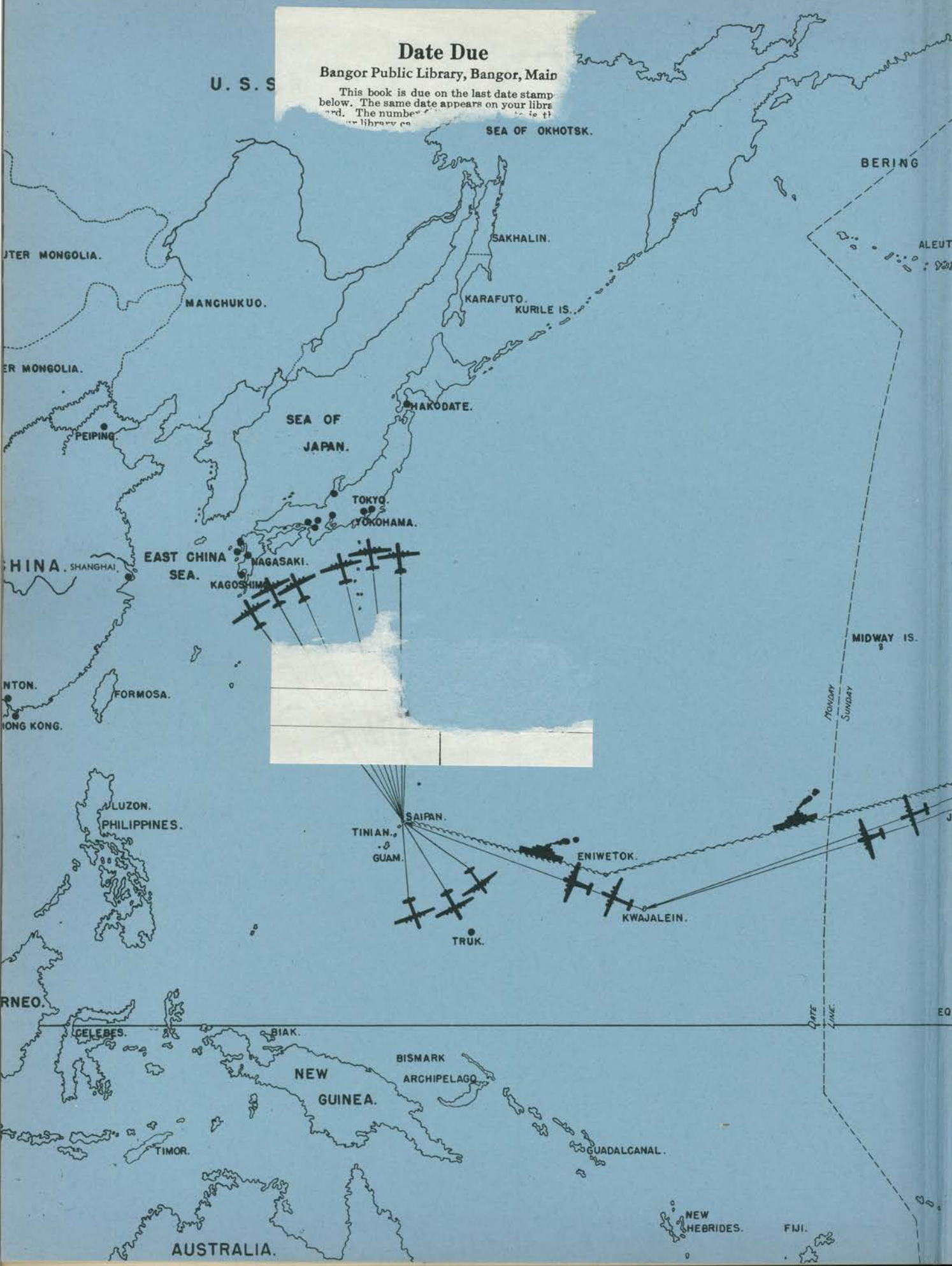
Red Cross girls use 330th's doughnut machine

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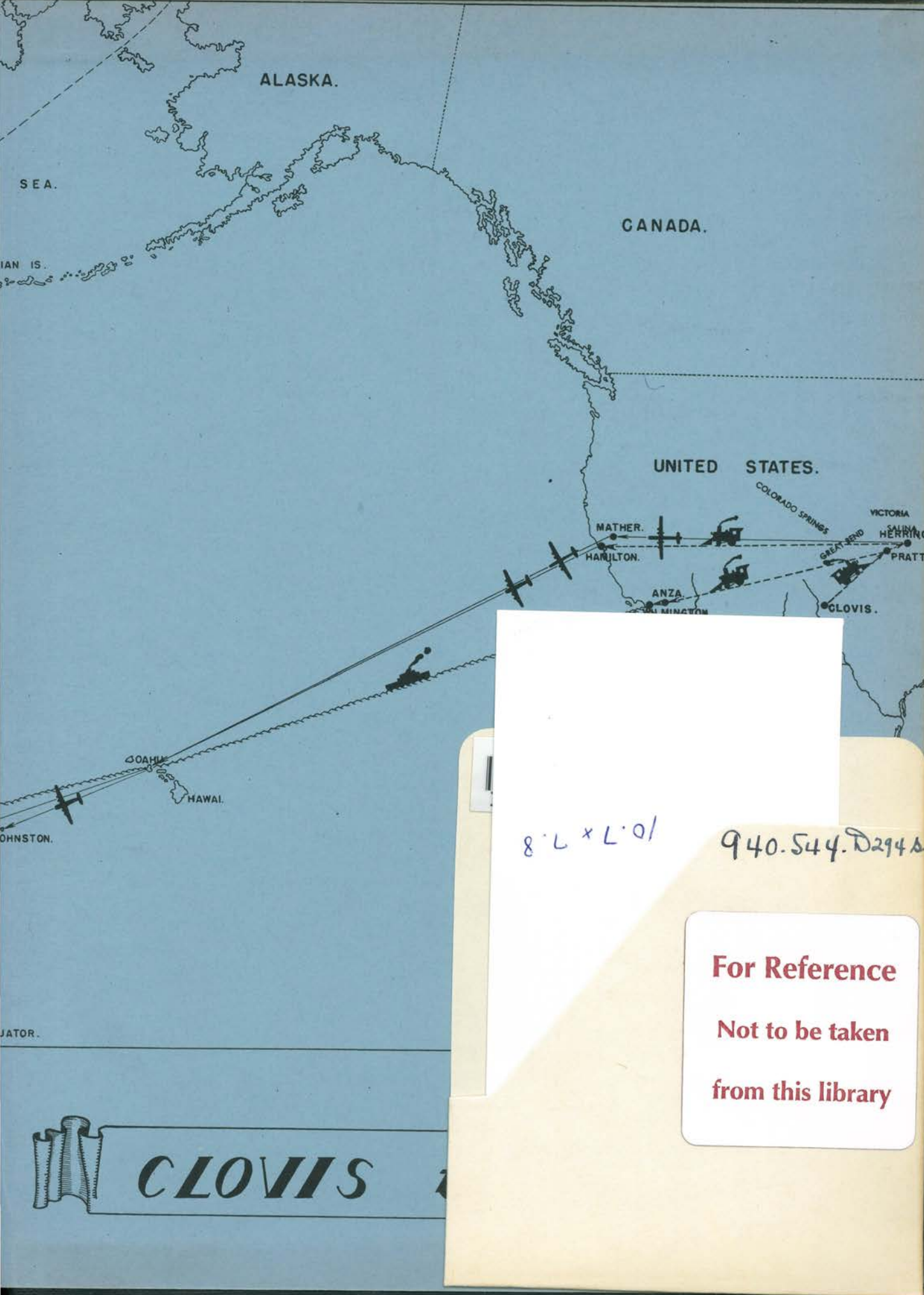
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