

379th BG

General narrative

SUBJECT: Group leader's narrative - Lt.Col. Lewis E. Lyle.

TO:

1. LtCol. Lewis E. Lyle, leader of the 379th lead squadron in the 41st "B" group on the mission to attack the airplane landing ground at Merzhausen states, "thirty-eight of our aircraft took off in the 41st "B" group, including two spares. A/C 128 hit an obstruction while taking off and was abortive. All of the aircraft of the group were diverted to Mendlesham.

2. None of our aircraft is missing.

3. We could not see the runway so we took off on instruments and broke out at 300 to 400 feet. We made our assembly without too much difficulty and departed the field three minutes late. We got inside Molesworth which we could see from the time we left the field.

4. We were in close formation all the way to the target. As we were approaching the I.P. to our target I saw two fighters at about 30,000 feet, leaving very dense contrails behind them. They came on down past us and were going faster than anything I have ever seen. They did not shoot. I did get a good look at them, however, and they appeared to be long nosed FW-190's. Just a few minutes before that the 41st "C" group reported bandits in the area. Near the front lines, coming into the target, there was quite a bit of flak.

5. We had proper interval on the bomb run, which was made in trail of the 41st "A" group. All six of our squadrons got on the bomb run in addition to one stray squadron. Everybody bombed within just a few seconds of each other. The run was good and the weather was perfect. The target was reported to have been blanketed with bomb bursts. I think our bombs hit to the right of the aiming point. The other three squadrons reported excellent bombing. There was no flak on the bomb run.

6. After the target we had some flak but due to evasive action we suffered no damage in our formation. We also ran into some flak north of Koblenz. We let down and made a much better ground speed than anticipated. We asked what the weather was but Cycle wouldn't tell us. The weather reports were poor but we did get the general report that it wasn't very good. We asked if we were to be diverted and we were told to return to our bases and circle our bunchers. Just before we reached the base we were told to divert to Mendlesham. Just as we were getting this message verified on VHF we received an RT message telling us to go to Grafton Underwood. As we were circling to get into the pattern at Grafton Underwood we received another message from Kimbolton on RT. We were told to proceed to Mendlesham. We landed at Mendlesham with a great amount of traffic which could have been avoided if we would have been told to land there an hour before, at which time we were right over that base. Landing was difficult."

SUBJECT: Squadron leader's narrative - Captain Elmer S. Walker.

TO:

1. Captain Elmer S. Walker, leader of the 379th high squadron in the 41st "C" group on the mission to attack the landing ground at Kirch Gons states, twelve of our aircraft took off in the high squadron of the "C" group. None of our aircraft was abortive. All of our planes were diverted to Mendlesham.

2. None of our aircraft is missing.

3. The assembly was good, considering the circumstances. The formation wasn't too good. The route followed was as briefed.

4. We bombed the primary target visually. The ball turret gunner reported that the bombs hit right in the middle of the airfield which was our primary. Due to bomb rack malfunction some of our bombs remained in the plane. Another airfield about 15 or twenty miles straight ahead was chosen on which to drop these bombs. We dropped visually and good hits on the airfield were observed. No flak was encountered at either of the airfields.

5. Some flak was encountered at Bonn on the route out. The route out was as briefed. The friendly fighter support was good.

6. It took quite a bit of time for us to find out where were to land.