

# 457<sup>th</sup> BG

## General narrative

SUBJECT: Report of the operations officer - Mission 24 December 1944 - Koblenz, Germany.

TO: Commanding officer, 457<sup>th</sup> bombardment group (H), A.P.O. 557.

### PART 1 (Morning Take-off.)

1. General - At 1024 hours, the formation began taking off. Seven A/C from this base were airborne before fog closed in and made it impossible for any more A/C to leave the ground. One of these seven A/C crashed and blew up off the end of the runway. Two of the group A/C, having been diverted from the previous mission, took off from other bases and joined the A/C taking off from Glatton.

2. Assembly - These eight A/C assembled on the Glatton buncher at 7,000 feet and continued to circle the buncher, waiting for the other A/C to join them. Word was then received from the tower that mission had been "scrubbed" and to proceed to Ridgewell and land. A little later a "stand-by" was received and shortly thereafter the squadron was advised by Newflick 3 to tack on to Deenethorpe and to proceed with the mission. The squadron flew as high-high squadron. For details of route over England, division assembly, and flight to the target, attention is invited to 401<sup>st</sup> group's report.

3. Bomb run - The squadron took interval behind the high squadron of the 401<sup>st</sup> group, but the lead A/C was forced to abort after having been hit by AAGF and turned the lead over to the A/C flying #3 position (the deputy was not able to take over because of mechanical difficulties). Because of this, the squadron became separated from Deenethorpe and was not able to catch up. A visual run was made on Koblenz. There was about 1/10<sup>th</sup> cloud coverage and visibility was fair. The M.P.I. was not actually sighted because it was obscured by smoke and clouds, and bombing was done by triangulation. No other difficulties were encountered. The lead A/C attacked a target of opportunity at 50-14N 06-45E and returned to base individually.

4. Flight from the target - the other seven A/C, being unable to rally with Deenethorpe, tacked onto the 398<sup>th</sup> group formation and flew the return without incident. The A/C were diverted because of local weather conditions. A normal let-down was made and the A/C landed without further difficulty.

### PART 2 (Afternoon take-off).

1. Assembly - Thirty-four A/C took off and assembled on the Glatton buncher at 7,000 feet. No difficulties were encountered.

2. Route over England - Route over England was flown as briefed altitude, on course.

3. Division assembly - No division assembly was accomplished. Control point #1 was reached on course. Because of the late take-off, word was received to proceed forty miles east of Clacton and jettison their bombs in order to return to base by 1700 hours. After releasing their bombs, the group executed a 180° turn and flew back to the Glatton buncher. Local

weather conditions prevented them from landing, and they were diverted to Eye and Horham. One A/C went in to enemy territory alone and bombed Daun, a target of opportunity.

4. Fighter escort was nil.

5. Comments:

AAGF - Nil.

A/C lost - Nil.

### PART 3

1. Three A/C from the 457<sup>th</sup> Group, having been diverted from the mission of the 19 December, flew as an element with the 388<sup>th</sup> group formation as briefed. They attacked the airfield at Dornstadt. Bombs were released on the smoke markers of the squadron leader.