



HEADQUARTERS 468TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (VH)– JUNE 1944

The History of the 468th Bombardment Group from the date of its activation in September 1943 until May 1944 has been the story of the planning, training, and organization of this Group. However, with the month of June, a new chapter in the Unit's History began. It was in this month that the culmination of the period of development was reached, and the Group began the work for which it has been preparing.

It became evident on the third of June that a raid was to be performed in the near future. On the line, the planes were being brought to top condition by the maintenance Crews and the armament Crews were busy loading bombs into bomb bays. In the Operations and Intelligence Sections, the details of the raid were being worked out, maps and charts were being assembled, and the Briefing Room was being prepared. Finally, at 1400 on 4 June 1944, the first of the Group's combat briefings was held. The target was announced as the Makasan Railway Shops at Bangkok, Thailand and at 2328Z on the following day, the first B-29 took off on its mission. A total of twenty-six aircraft of this Group took off, of which twenty-one completed the mission, dropping a total of 415 500 lb. bombs on the target area. The planes began to return from the mission late that afternoon and the Crews were interrogated by the Intelligence Section and by the various department heads of S-3 and S-4. Consensus was that it had been a very successful mission; anti-aircraft fire was meager and inaccurate, interception by enemy planes was confined to several attacks by two Oscars, and it was believed that the radar bombing had been accurate. Later photoreconnaissance showed that the Aiming Point – a boiler shop – had been virtually destroyed and that other workshops and storage houses in the area had been severely damaged. All of our planes returned safely from the mission and there were no casualties.

Following the Bangkok Mission, cargo missions to our Advanced Base in China were increased. On the seventh of June fifteen B-29s made the trip from B-1 to A-7 carrying fuel and supplies to that Base. A/C 271 crashed on the return trip from A-7 but Major Pattillo and eight members of his Crew parachuted safely to the ground and returned safely to Base. Sgt. Eric H. Tidy's body was found several days later, but the Co-Pilot, Lt. Geoffrey Matthews, is still missing. Lt. Sloan and his Crew also failed to return to B-1 after taking off from A-7 on 8 June and no clue has been received as to their whereabouts.

Preparations for the second combat mission began in the Group on the twelfth of June. Key ground and air personnel went to the Advance Base to make the necessary preparations there, while those who remained in India prepared the planes and the Crews for their trip to A-7. The story of the raid on the Imperial Steel and Iron Works at Yawata on Kyushu Island is contained in the History of the Advanced Echelon, which is attached as an enclosure to this History. (Note: this history can no longer be found.)



Photoreconnaissance of the target following the raid showed that although few bombs had actually hit the target, many other installations of military importance in the area had been destroyed. The inaccuracy of the bombing was believed to have been caused by the fact that the Radar Operators were new and had not been given adequate opportunity for practice with their equipment.

Following the mission to Yawata, the planes were returned to Kharagpur and cargo missions to A-7 were resumed immediately. During the month, the number of planes attached to the Group decreased from 32 to 30. Of these, three were lost on the Yawata raid and two were lost on trips over the Hump. Two B-29s arrived from the States piloted by 1st Lts. Pickett and Doherty. The former had been on DS at Salina, Kansas while the latter came from a Replacement Group. Two planes were involved in accidents at this Base; one had landing gear trouble prior to take-off, while the other could not lower the left landing gear when attempting to land. Both planes were repairable. 36 cargo missions and 2 combat missions were flown in June bringing the total number of hours flown during the month to 1275:20 for our Group.

Strength of the Unit on the 30th of June was 425 Officers and 1843 Enlisted Men. 24 Officers and 22 Enlisted Men were lost in tactical missions during the month.

Organization and establishment of the Base continued with perhaps the most important development being the establishment of a permanent Post Exchange Building where the sale of rations will be transacted in the future. A brick theater building was nearing completion, but meanwhile movies were being shown three times weekly in an open-air, temporary theater. There were no further additions to the Enlisted Men's Day Rooms or the Officer's Club.

Perhaps the greatest subject of conversation and conjecture was the approach of the monsoons and the rainy season. Everyone hoped they would bring a period of cooler weather and we were not disappointed. Secondary to the lower temperature, the comparative absence of dust was appreciated by all personnel. Mud on the shoes can be more delightful than dust in our noses, ears, and air scoop areas of our B-29s.

With two missions behind us we felt that we were beginning to justify our existence. However we realized that the surface had hardly been scratched, and that many long and difficult tasks lay ahead before the final day of victory.

468TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP – ADVANCED ECHELON – MAY 25 TO JUNE 25

The history of the 468th Bombardment Group Advanced Echelon at A-7 for this period from May 25 to June 25 is largely the story of the Yawata raid, the Group's first combat mission from its China Base, over the Japanese homeland.



During the last week in May routine cargo missions from B-1 built up our supplies of gasoline, oil, and assorted cargo. This period was featured by a record arrival on 30 May of 10 more B-29s, nine of which were prepared for an initial trip by the next morning.

The end of May was highlighted by an emergency landing at A-7 by a B-29 from the 462nd Bombardment Group after four of its Crew had bailed out about 12 miles south of this field. The Pilot suddenly spotted the field after the four men had bailed out, and succeeded in coming in for a safe landing on three engines. The men were picked up, just below Pengshan by a jeep rescue party, within an hour after they had jumped. None were injured despite the fact that they had jumped from an altitude of less than 1,000 feet. Our Crews were measuring up to their potential.

Total arrivals of A/C from B-1 on ferry missions for the month of May by Squadrons were as follows:

792 nd Bomb Squadron	12	794 th Bomb Squadron	11
793 rd Bomb Squadron	10	795 th Bomb Squadron	17

Only one A/C was lost during this period, this being the plane flown by Lt. Sims who was forced to abandon ship early in May.

The first sign of the coming combat missions was seen on June 6 when strict rationing of motor vehicle gasoline went into effect. On the following day even more tangible shadows of coming events were cast over the Chinese landscape when 15 A/C, a new high for the field, were brought into A-7 from B-1 with gasoline, oil and dry cargo. Fourteen of these planes were ready for departure to B-1 on the following morning.

This record day was marred by the loss of A/C 271 near Lo-Shan on the trip from B-1 on 7 June. Major Pattillo of the 792nd Bombardment Squadron and 9 members of his Crew parachuted safely to the ground with only minor injuries and were brought out safely by the Chinese in that area. The Crewmembers and the rescue party from A-7 sent to bring them back were the guest of General Han at a dinner at his Headquarters at Lo-Shan. The next day the body of Sgt. Eric H. Tidy was found by the Chinese in the Ta-Tu River a few miles from Lo-Shan. He was believed to have dropped into the swift flowing river when he bailed out. Lt. Geoffrey Matthews, the Co-Pilot, is still missing and there is no clue as to his possible fate.

On 8 June, A/C 314 with Lt. Sloan as Pilot, failed to reach B-1 on the return trip from A-7. At the present time, they are missing and the only lead has failed to produce any results to date.

On June 11 our A/C from B-1 began to bring in personnel from B-1 needed to handle various details of the missions. Preparations for the missions were stepped up all along the line. On June 13, ten A/C came in from B-1 with bombs aboard and their guns loaded for combat. On June 14, eleven more A/C arrived and the total was brought up to 22 on June 15 when a single ship was added to the roster.



At the first briefing to be held in the new Briefing Building on the line at A-7, it was revealed that the target for the first mission out of this field was to be the Imperial Steel and Iron Works at Yawata on the Island of Kyushu, one of the main islands of Japan. At 1624 China time on June 1, Col. Engler took off in A/C 274 with Brig. Gen. Saunders aboard, to lead the mission over Japan. Fourteen other A/C followed at 2-minute intervals without incident and streaked off toward Japan. The fifteenth plane, A/C 229, piloted by Capt. Hughes of the 793rd failed to clear the runway and crashed in a rice paddy a short distance off the south end of the runway, bursting into flames immediately after the left wing struck the ground and broke off. All eleven members of the Crew succeeded in getting away from the burning plane before the gas tanks and the bombs exploded. Some members of the Crew suffered minor burns and cuts but there were no serious consequences from their experience. Three other planes took off an hour later, after the fire had subsided. Those three planes brought the total into the air on the mission up to 18 planes from the 468th Bombardment Group.

Major Brown in A/C 243 arrived back at the Base at about 0100 on June 16, having been forced to turn back when only 80 miles from the China coast because of engine failure. Shortly after daybreak the planes started to return according to schedule. Within a period of about two hours, 14 planes returned to Base and reported a successful mission over the target with almost no A/C interception, only moderate to heavy anti-aircraft fire and considerable automatic weapons fire. Three planes failed to return to Base, A/C 231 Major Akins, A/C 230 Captain Ivanovic and A/C 826 Lt. Pilchard.

On 16 June a crashed plane was reported to have been found at 31^o54'N – 104^o46'E. This plane was later identified as A/C 231. Due to explosions after the crash, identification of the bodies has been difficult but it is believed that the entire Crew was lost. As of 1200, 25 June 1944 no further information has been obtained on the other missing ships.

Only three of the 22 planes, which arrived here from B-1 for the mission, failed to participate in the raid. Two ships were out of commission upon arrival at A-7, while the third ship, A/C 228 had been assigned to fly a photo recon mission a day after the raid, a mission later cancelled because of the condition of the runway due to the heavy rain on the evening of June 15.

All personnel of the Advanced Echelon were commended by Lt. Col. Faulkner for the splendid manner in which each Enlisted Man and Officer carried out his part in the mission despite long hours and heavy work under difficult conditions.

The period of June 17 to June 20 was spent preparing mission reports, preparing the planes for the return trip to B-1 and restoring the Base to its normal operating routine. Extra personnel brought up for the mission were returned to India as fast as space became available on departing planes.

Censorship restrictions were relaxed to permit the disclosure of our presence in China and our participation in the mission over Japan.



This change precipitated a flood of correspondence which had been building up behind the dam of censorship and gave the censors several days of arduous work “in addition to their other duties.” By June 21 the Base had settled down to a normal routine and was prepared for a resumption of the cycle which will lead up to the second raid from this Base some time in the future.

792ND BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (VH) AAF – JUNE 1944

On June 6, 1944 the B-29s made their first raid, a shakedown mission on Bangkok, Thailand. Four Crews from the 792nd participated as follows: Major Van Horne and Crew in A/C 3353, Col. Edmundson and Crew in A/C 6264, Major Brown and Crew in A/C 6243, and Capt. Ivanovic and Crew in A/C 6230. Major McPherson and Crew in A/C 6356 and Capt. Martensen and Crew in A/C 6389 were dispatched for the mission but both failed to take-off due to mechanical difficulties. All four planes returned safely. As Major Van Horne in A/C 353, returning over the Indian Ocean, approached the coast of India, they were advised by radio a line squall was over the Base at Kharagpur and the field was closed. Not having enough fuel left to wait for a later clearance, Major Van Horne headed for the Base at Calcutta.

As he turned on the approach, the B-29 just landing ahead of him had two left engines run out of fuel as they touched down. The plane cart wheeled to the left and struck a one-story brick building about 200 feet from the runway. The building burst apart into a huge cloud of red dust. The plane broke into four sections scattering across the field. The compartments stayed firm, the men stayed strapped in, so all remained healthy.

The tower told Major Van Horne to go around. No way, the airstrip was clear, the B-29's tanks were near empty. The Co-Pilot fired a red flare out his window and Van Horne landed. He taxied clear of the runway at the first available ramp. The Crew then had a nice overnight stay at DUM-DUM. How pleasing it was to sit down to a Swiss steak dinner and fresh eggs with bacon served at breakfast. The Crew gassed the plane up so they could take off early to return to the water buffalo and powdered egg diet back at Base. None of our ships encountered any enemy aircraft nor did they receive any damage due to flak.

On June 7th, while on a routine cargo mission over the Hump, Major Pattillo and Crew in A/C 6271 were forced to bail out. The bailout occurred near Lo-Shan, China. The cause was basically due to a runaway prop. The prop could not be feathered and soon all the oil was used up in attempting to feather the propeller. Nine members of the Crew were rescued in five days. The body of Sgt. E. H. Tidy (Gunner) was found floating in a river 3 miles from the scene of the accident two days later. The remaining member of the Crew, Lt. G. Matthews (Co-Pilot) has not been reported and is still listed as missing as of June 30 1944. 1st Lt. R. L. Cournoyer, Bombardier on Maj. Pattillo's Crew reported that as he floated down, the airplane started to dive straight at him. The airplane passed so close that Lt. Cournoyer's chute was deflated momentarily by the prop wash.



He further stated that the B-29 A/C 6271 did two chandelles (*a sudden, steep climbing turn, which altered the flight direction and gained altitude simultaneously*), dove straight for the ground for about 3,000 feet, pulled out and finally dove to the ground. Lt. Cournoyer said that he did not notice a single piece of material fly off the airplane during the entire period of its pilotless flight. The airplane was completely demolished. Major Pattillo returned to the scene of the crash several days later and found the Form #1 in a rice paddy. It was rather wet, but completely discernible. Two members of the Crew, Sgt. H. Brogden and S/Sgt. T. M. Keegan, received back injuries due to landing in rocky parts of a river. Both men were sent to the Base Hospital upon their return to Kharagpur. Brogden has since been released from the hospital and S/Sgt. Keegan is expected to be released in a few days.

On the 15th of June 1944 three ships from our Squadron participated in the first B-29 raid on Japan. The target was the Imperial Iron and Steel Works at Yawata, Japan. The mission was a success with respect to the airplane. It was the longest combat mission ever flown, roughly around 3,200 miles.

Col. Edmundson returned to A-7 with 1,600 gallons of gas left in the tanks, which was 600 gallons better than the predicted amount that should have been left in the plane upon their return to A-7. Col. Edmundson and Crew in A/C 264, Maj. Brown and Crew in A/C 243 and Capt. Ivanovic and Crew in A/C 230 were airborne on the mission. Major Brown aborted due to a feathered prop. He proceeded as far as the East China coast before he was forced back. Col. Edmundson and Crew returned to base safely, reporting heavy, moderate, inaccurate anti-aircraft fire and weak fighter opposition. Capt. Ivanovic and Crew were never heard from after takeoff. He and his Crew are still reported missing as of June 30, 1944. The following is a list of Capt. Ivanovic's Crew for the takeoff on the mission:

Pilot	Capt, Ivanovic, D. D.	Radar Operator	2 nd Lt. Hymel, R. J.
Co-Pilot	2 nd Lt. McMichael, C. M.	Side Gunner	Sgt. Arnds, R. C.
Navigator	1 st Lt. Fisher, C. A.	Right Gunner	Sgt. Dupuis, J. C.
Bombardier	1 st Lt. Johnson, G. A.	Left Gunner	M/Sgt. Goodroe, J. W.
Engineer	2 nd Lt. Simonson, D. W.	Tail Gunner	S/Sgt. Davis, A. W.
Radio	S/Sgt. Levy, H. G.		

The remainder of the month was spent flying cargo missions to our Forward Base in China. The monsoon season had not fully arrived at B-1 as of 31 June.

Volleyball still continued to be the favorite sport. A Crew volleyball league is being organized to begin about the 10th of July.

The total number of hours of flying time compiled by this Squadron for the month of June was 252:05 hours. The Squadron completed 19 round trip cargo missions this month against 4 in May 1944.



13TH BOMBARDMENT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON – JUNE 1944

The month of June saw the fruition of the many months of training received by the members of the 13th Bombardment Maintenance Squadron. B-29s of the 792nd Bombardment Squadron, serviced by the men of the 13th, took part in the first raid undertaken by the 468th Bombardment Group, which was successfully carried out against targets in Bangkok, Thailand, on June 5th. On June 15th these planes successfully undertook the first raid upon the Japanese mainland since the celebrated exploit of General James Doolittle two years ago. Operating from the Advanced Base in China, the planes flew the longest combat mission yet flown by bombers to hit steel plants at Yawata on the island of Kyushu. It should be noted that on this first test of the capabilities of the B-29 airplane, no losses occurred as a result of mechanical failures among the planes serviced by our unit. Credit is also due to the Armament and Ordnance sections for their work in preparing the planes for the mission. For security reasons the difficult work of arming the planes for both missions was done entirely at night.

During the month we suffered our first fatal casualty, Sergeant David W. McConnell of the Armament section lost his life on the night of June 14th as a result of being struck by a 500 lb. bomb which fell from its rack in the bomb bay of a plane on which he was working. As a result of an investigation conducted on the following day it was determined that he was accidentally killed in the line of duty and that no misconduct or negligence on his or any other person's part caused his death. It is believed that a failure of the bomb release mechanism was the cause of the accident. He was given a military burial on June 15th and steps were taken to place his personal affairs in order.

Some changes in the number and status of personnel on duty with the Squadron took place during the month. Harold V. Olson, Armament Officer, arrived at this Base from the United States on the 19th. Corporal Gerald D. Beavers of the Communications Section went "over the Hump" to the Advanced Base at Peng-Shen. 2nd Lts. Robert C. Geyer, Charles Quinn, Glen J. Miller, Leroy Armstrong, and Walter A. Ziebel received their promotions to the rank of 1st Lieutenant, and many Enlisted Men received promotions to ratings provided for under a new Table of Organization. A serious loss was suffered by the Squadron when S/Sgt. Thomas Ramsey, Mess Sergeant, was transferred for reasons of health. Sergeant Seranie had been named Mess Sergeant in his place. In tribute to the excellent management of the mess by Sgt. Ramsey it should be mentioned that the mess was the subject of a favorable comment by the Air Inspector General when he made an inspection at this base during the month.

Efforts were made to improve living conditions in the Squadron area. A new latrine and shower room were opened for Squadron use and a pathway was constructed leading to it. Roads in the Squadron area were built up and paved, largely with the aid of native workmen. A prefabricated building was erected for us as a day room and is expected to be ready for use within a short time.



Upon their own initiative, many men have improved their tents by installing concrete floors.

The number of cases of diarrhea was less this month than last, due, according to Captain Maxwell, to the cooler weather we have had rather than to improvement in the mess facilities. Several cases of amoebic dysentery have been found. Fortunately no case of malaria has occurred in the Squadron, or any cases of streptococcus sore throat, of which one of the other units in our group has had an epidemic.

793RD BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON – JUNE 1944

The month of June was an active, and because of the loss of two Crews, a tragic month for the 793rd Squadron. During the month up to the 26th of June a total of 240 hours and 40 minutes were flown by the Squadron bringing the total time while in the theater up to 473 hours and 20 minutes. The Squadron led the Group in deliveries of gasoline and oil to our forward China bases for the month of June. On June 10 A/C 6333, B-29 converted tanker, by offloading 21,000 pounds made the record delivery to the Forward Base of the entire XXTH Bomber Command. The pilots were Major Millar and Capt. Michaliszyn. This record still stands, the closest contender being 3,000 pounds short of this mark.

On the 5th of June the first combat mission of the B-29s was flown against the Makasan Railway Shops at Bangkok, Thailand. Although it was termed a shakedown mission by Colonel Engler, Group Commander, it was flown over a 2,400-mile course and the first individual bombing by radar was attempted. On this mission the following planes participated:

- a. A/C 3356, Major Millar's Crew, aborted returning with two engines dead and the other two malfunctioning
- b. A/C 229, Capt. Hughes' Crew, returned unable to find the formations
- c. A/C 314, Major Ladd's Crew, aborted due to engine trouble before takeoff.

The following airplanes flew the mission successfully: A/ C 6265, Lt. Col. East's Crew; A/C 3355, Major Hatfield's Crew; A/C 370, Capt. Darden's Crew; and A/C 826, Lt. Pilchard's Crew.

Many of the planes were very short of gas on the return and monsoon rains were just clearing from the field as Lt. Pilchard, the first plane to return in our Group, came in on his final approach. Capt. Darden was complimented by Colonel Engler for the fine job he did on landing. He came in with two engines completely out of gas and the third out as soon as his wheels touched the ground. Instead of allowing the plane to block the runway while the rest of the Group, short on gas, was circling above, Capt. Darden, with what remaining power he had from his one engine turned the plane and cleared the runway.

On the 7th of June Lt. Sloan's Crew returning from a normal cargo mission to A-7, was reported as missing and to this date nothing but a few unconfirmed rumors have come to light on the location of his Crew or A/C 314.



The following is the list of our first men reported missing in action: 1st Lt. Leslie J. Sloan, Pilot; 2nd Lt. Carl B. Ray, Co-Pilot; 2nd Lt. Frank W. Holmes, Navigator; 2nd Lt. Vincent R. Casazza, Bombardier; 2nd Lt. Robert E. Casey, Flight Engineer; S/Sgt. William C. Sene, Radio; 2nd Lt. Charles D. Gray, V; Cpl. William L. Shufelt, Side Gunner; Cpl. Virgil W. Bailey, Right Gunner; Sgt. Francis D. Reed, Left Gunner; Cpl. Glen H. Moore, Tail Gunner.

In the few days preceding the highly publicized 15th June mission against the Imperial Iron and Steel Works at Yawata, Kyushu, Japan, the ships were ferried with bombs and ammunition loaded to our China bases. Lt. Col. East aborted, as he was unable to get to China. Major Hatfield in A/C 3355 tried two successive days to get over the Hump but aborted. Finally his ship ended up with three engine changes and the unanimous selection by the Crew of the name BELLA BORTION. Hopefully the Bell Corp. will forgive us, as they did not make the engines.

At takeoff, Capt. Hughes in A/C 229 crashed at the end of the runway. As the ship was immediately enveloped in flames, ammunition cooked off and the bombs exploded. It was most certainly a miracle that every member of his Crew got out safely with only minor scratches, burns and shock. Capt. "Doc" Mitchell was right in there with the ambulance and came out as the rest, covered with mud and drenched from head to foot from lying in the rice paddies. The following is the personnel that experienced this accident: Capt. F. E. Hughes, Pilot; 2nd Lt. C. E. Troyer, Co-Pilot; 2nd Lt. M. H. Pickard, Navigator; 2nd Lt. D. C. McComas, Bombardier; 2nd Lt. S. G. Wolf, Flight Engineer; S/Sgt. R. A. Singleton, Radio; Lt. J. B. Jett, V; Sgt. E. A. Shiver, Side Gunner; S/Sgt. B. F. Smith, Right Gunner; S/Sgt. W. P. Scott, Left Gunner; S/Sgt. E. C. Hill, Tail Gunner.

The following aircraft got off successfully and bombed Japan: A/C 336, Major Millar; A/C 826, Lt. Pilchard; and A/C 370, Capt. Matthews. Although the actual damage to the Yawata Works is questionable, the raid was significant from the standpoint that this was the longest raid ever flown, the first land based attack on Japan and took place on the second anniversary of the Doolittle carrier-based attack.

Lt. Pilchard and Crew are still reported missing in action. Although there are six stations, which gave his ship a position fix, the plane or Crew has not been heard from since the early morning of the 16th. The following list includes the Officers and Enlisted Men on A/C 826: 1st Lt. Robert M. Pilchard, Pilot; 2nd Lt. Rai P. Sturges, Co-Pilot; 2nd Lt. John T. Roberts, Navigator; 2nd Lt. Donald R. Mortimer, Bombardier; 2nd Lt. Jack R. Bevan, Flight Engineer; 2nd Lt. H. B. Meyers, V; S/Sgt. Delbert L. Grimes, Radio; Cpl. Lambert A. Pfeiffer, Side Gunner; Sgt. Robert P. Sharples, Right Gunner; Sgt. Ralph V. Ferracane, Left Gunner; S/Sgt William F. Quirke, Jr., Tail Gunner; 1st Lt. Henry Escher, XXTH Bomber Command was along as an observer.

After the return from the forward area many of the Crews were given three day passes to Calcutta, where a great deal of fun was had by all in sightseeing, sleeping, eating, drinking and bargaining.

Lt. Col. John R. East, Commanding Officer, received his promotion near the first of the Month.



This was followed by 1st Lt. Willard W. Holderby whose orders finally caught up with him and were dated 17 March. Then on the 27th of the month the Eagle really began to scream as the following received promotions on the authority of Par 15.0.71 dated 24 June: James H. Evans to 1st Lt.; Jack Bevan to 1st Lt.; Matthew F. Healey, Jr. to 1st Lt.; John W. Hechenger to Capt.; Archie Y. Damron to 1st Lt.; Albert D. Bores to Capt.; John C. Matthews to Maj.; Harold R. Johnson, Jr. to 1st Lt.; Carl B. Ray to 1st Lt.; Clayton E. Troyer to 1st Lt.; Harold L. Meints to Capt.; Rai P. Sturges to 1st Lt.; Robert M. Pilchard to Capt.; William J. Greenwalk to 1st Lt.; William C. Shirar to 1st Lt.; Robert Riley to 1st Lt.; Harold D. Madden to 1st Lt.; Dean S. Ellestad to 1st Lt.; Maurice E. Eigler to 1st Lt.

On the 10th of June 2nd Lt. Curtis P. Vester previously enroute with Lt. Arnold in A/C 208, who is still reported in Cairo, arrived piloting a ship from another Group. During the month the following Enlisted Men received promotions: Joseph M. Johnson to S/Sgt., Len L. Murray to S/Sgt., Dean C. Clarke to S/Sgt., Herbert F. Sukowates to S/Sgt., Kenneth F. Bents to S/Sgt., Paul W. Hartzell to S/Sgt., James E. Foss to Sgt., Abraham L. Bratler to Sgt., Joseph E. Pokraka, Jr. to Sgt.

On the 28th of June Lt. Doherty arrived from the States in A/C 42-6454 and was assigned to the Squadron. He trained in a RTU in Clovis and was sent over as a replacement Crew. 1st Lt. T. H. Doherty, Pilot; 2nd Lt. C. E. Parsons, Co-Pilot; 1st Lt. J. N. Ware, Bombardier; 2nd Lt. W. B. Lowery, Navigator; 2nd Lt. B. W. Williams, Flight Engineer; Sgt. W. A. Sondeen, Radio; Sgt. N. R. H. Ronnquist, Side Gunner; Sgt. F. E. Worth, Right Gunner; Sgt. E. E. Tamminen, Left Gunner; Sgt. D. W. Cole, Tail Gunner. The ship has been assigned to Major Ladd. This brings our current strength up to 81 Officers and 83 Enlisted Men, and 7 airplanes, including personnel reported missing and one B-24 tow target ship.

Our successful operation during the month was mainly due to close cooperation between maintenance and combat personnel. In fact the 793rd Bombardment Squadron and the 14th Bombardment Maintenance Squadron now function as one organization rather than two as originally set up.

14th BOMBARDMENT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON – JUNE 1944

As of 1 June 1944 the total strength, present and absent, was 369 Enlisted Men and 19 Officers. Total strength at month's end was 368 Enlisted Men and 19 Officers. W/O Raymond Cawthorne was moved to A-7 for an indefinite time for duty, and one Enlisted Man was transferred to A-7.

The highlight of the month was our B-29 raid over Yawata, Japan. This was on June 15. The target was the Imperial Iron and Steel Works. The results were said to be good. Two of the 793rd's planes were lost or missing from the raid. One of these was lost in a crash on the takeoff from A-7. This was Captain Hughes' Crew. No one suffered more than slight scratches and burns, which is very fortunate and even miraculous. The other plane that was missing was Captain Pilchard and his Crew. There is some hope that the Crewmembers were forced down in China after the raid, and will turn up one by one.



Another Crew is missing since 8 June 1944 on a “Hump” mission. Lt. Sloan was the Pilot. Nothing has been heard from them yet, but hopes are still high that these Crewmembers will return sooner or later.

Since W/O (j.g.) Cawthorne has gone over the “Hump” for duty at A-7, 2nd Lt. Houpt has been relieved of his duty as a Mess Officer and is now fulfilling the duties of Supply Officer in Cawthorne’s place. Captain Baille, 793rd Adjutant, has been assigned as Mess Officer, in addition to his other duty.

Living conditions in general have improved. The monsoons are beginning so the weather is somewhat cooler. The 14th BOQ has managed for some clothes presses and writing tables. The food at the mess hall has improved greatly. One night real freezer ice cream was served for dinner. Everybody seems to be more adapted to living conditions and there has been less diarrhea this month. Stimulating vaccination shots played havoc with some of the Officers and Men at the last of the month.

794TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON – JUNE 1944

Every one of the Squadron’s nine planes taxied out for takeoff on June 5, the day of the Bangkok raid. One plane was forced to turn back before takeoff because of mechanical difficulties but the others hit the target and returned to Base. More than a third of the Group’s planes over the target were from the 794th.

By takeoff time on June 15 eight of the Squadron’s planes were parked at our Advanced Base. The ninth, A/C 238, was being made over into a tanker at B-1. One of the eight at A-7 was unable to take off, but seven made the raid on Yawata and returned to the base, forming approximately half of the Group’s total number of planes over the target.

Capt. McGill’s Crew worked 12-hour shifts for five days before the raid in order to get A/C 390 in shape. They flew the Hump on the morning of the 15th arriving at A-7 about one o’clock and taking off on the Yawata raid the same afternoon. On their return from A-7 engine trouble forced them to land at Kurmitola where they spent 8 days for repairs.

1st Lt. John L. Gage died on June 18 at the hospital at Chengtu as the result of a ruptured appendix. Lt. Gage was Major Clinkscale’s Co-Pilot and had been with the Squadron since its activation.

Capt. F. W. Nye has been transferred into Group Headquarters as assistant S-3, effective 20 June.

2nd Lt. E. A. Castleberry was transferred into the Squadron 23 June from the 795th to act as Co-Pilot on Crew #1.

2nd Lt. J. T. Hutchinson was transferred to 112 Station Hospital APO 46 on 22 June.



2nd Lt. J. O. Niblock was placed on D.S. at APO 210 on 25 June.

On 2 June Lt. Benedict flying A/C 334 was forced to make a one wheel landing due to failure of the right landing gear.

In addition to A/C 238, A/C 232 has been converted into a tanker.

Total number of hours flown during the month were 387:55. Number of aircraft assigned was 9. Squadron strength, present for duty 74 Officers and 84 Enlisted Men. In hospital, 1 Officer and 2 Enlisted Men, 2 Officers on DS at A-7.

15TH BOMBARDMENT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON – JUNE 1944

This Squadron has been active and busy during the month with other than routine duties. For the first time the men and officers of the unit are witnessing the results of their effort directed against the enemy. Two Wing Missions were run against the enemy during the month. The first mission was over lower Burma against Japan and was historic in that this was the first time the "B-29 Superfortress" was flown in actual combat against the enemy. This mission caused much excitement among the personnel of both the Maintenance Squadron as well as the 794th Bombardment Squadron, the flight echelon to which the 15th is attached. Here at long last we were getting some actual results and a feeling that all the hours of training spent was now producing. Here was a type of plane flying a mission, the performance on which the whole world had been speculating about and awaiting confirmation. The second raid was against Japan's Imperial Iron Works at Yawata on Kyushu Island. Here again was a historical event in that it was the second time the Japanese Home Island had been bombed since Pearl Harbor, Doolittle's raid being the first.

On the first mission the Squadron had 8 of its 9 planes airborne, over the target and returned. In the second mission 8 of its 9 planes went to A-7 (forward area) and 7 of the planes went over the target and returned. This was the best performance of any Squadron in the Group and a fact of which every member in the Unit is justly proud.

Naturally after these raids morale is much higher and routine work seems to move along with less effort. In short, this period of activity has made India a little more endurable to the boys.

The monsoons, although late, have started and already considerable rain has fallen. This accounts for somewhat of a break in the otherwise intense heat. Especially this is true of the nights, which are cooler, affording more comfortable rest for the personnel.

The total strength, present and absent, of the Squadron at the month's end was 362 Enlisted Men and 18 Officers. This includes those at A-7 in the forward area.



795TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (VH) – JUNE 1944

1. The average strength of the 795th Bombardment Squadron for the period 25 May to 25 June was: 74 Officers, and 79 Enlisted Men. Included in this number are 5 Officers and Enlisted Men who are on detached service in the United States. 5 Officers and 6 Enlisted Men were reported missing in A/C 42-62312 on 16 June 1944.
2. The Squadron operated 8 B-29s during the month. An additional one is still on detached service in Salina, Kansas. B-29 A/C 42-6235 was taken from detached service on 11 June and is now with the Squadron. The Squadron is charged with maintenance of B-29 A/C 42-32400, which is used by the 468th Bombardment Group. A/C 42-6231 was lost in China on 16 June 1944. They flew into a mountain returning from Yawata.
3. The Squadron has flown a total of 24 missions between 25 May and 25 June, 25 of these were "Hump" missions. 4 planes were on the Bangkok raid of 5 June. This raid was against railway repair and marshalling yards there. 5 planes were on the Yawata raid of 15 June. This raid was against the Imperial Iron and Steel Works at Yawata, Japan.

Total hours flown for the month was 405.

4. Special Instruction and Classes: a) Bombardiers and Radar men have been receiving special instruction in target identification at Group S-2. b) Radar men have been receiving instructions in the use of the E-68, bombing and other subjects, conducted by the Squadron Bombardier.
5. The Squadron regrets the loss of Crew #6 which was reported missing from the Yawata raid. It was later reported that all men were killed when A/C 42-6231, in which they were flying, crashed into a mountain about 100 miles north of our base in China. If the report is correct, the following men lost their lives in the crash:

Major Kenneth L. Akins	2 nd Lt. Floyd E. Lund
2 nd Lt. Salvador Munoz, Jr.	1 st Lt. Paul R. Aeh
2 nd Lt. Timothy J. Barrett	Sgt. Norvel G. Robertson
Sgt. Arnold H. Mann	Sgt. Home B. Pack, Jr.
Sgt. Sidney Gilman	Sgt. Mell Witcher
S/Sgt. William H. Sorenson	

These men were held in high esteem and they will not be forgotten, as our Squadron endeavors to carry on in the destruction, which they and we came over to deal to our enemy.

6. Our Squadron was honored to have General Saunders and Colonel Engler fly A/C 42-6274 with Capt. Sancken's Crew on the Yawata raid.



7. Our Squadron was pleased to have Major Corey Ford and his staff interview Lt. Col. Sullivan’s Crew on their activities while flying the “General H. H. Arnold Special” A/C (42-6235). Pictures were taken and all comments noted in preparation for a “human interest” story for publication in the United States.

16th BOMBARDMENT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON – JUNE 1944

Total strength for the month of June was 369 Enlisted Men and 19 Officers. A feeling of pride encompassed the 16th Bombardment Maintenance Squadron at the beginning of the month when the maintenance reports for May showed that his Squadron led the Group in the performance of our work.

This month also marked the climax of all the training and preparation heretofore made by all the members of this command. History was made by the “B-29 Superfortress” by two Wing Missions against the enemy. When the men realized that this was the real thing, morale reached a new high. All the men worked long hours cheerfully, no small detail was overlooked, everyone now sensed that the whole world was watching them work and prayed for their success.

The first mission went off without mishap but the second one, which was a raid against Japan’s Imperial Iron Works at Yawata on Kyushu Island, found one of our ships of our parent Squadron, the 795th Bombardment Squadron, missing. It goes without saying that the men have their fingers crossed while sweating out news of the missing plane.

W/O William E. Core, Assistant Armament Officer joined the Squadron on June 18th being detained in winding up his duties in the States.

Many Officers and Enlisted Men succumbed to dysentery. Although it was nothing serious it was quite annoying and many work hours were lost.

Twilight indoor baseball took the attention of many men in the Squadron with very spirited rivalry between the Enlisted Men and Officers. The Enlisted Men showed their superiority and wealth of talent in some hotly contested games.

The end of the month brought heat relief to all of us in some measure because the much talked of monsoons had finally arrived.