

HEADQUARTERS  
2d BOMBARDMENT DIVISION  
APO 558

TACTICAL MISSION REPORT

<u>FIELD ORDER NO.</u>	<u>TARGETS</u>	<u>DATE</u>
526	SIRACOURT FLIXICOURT/DOMART MOYENNEVILLE PETIT BOS TILLENCOURT FEBVIN PALFART BONNIERES	26 MARCH 1944

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2d BOMBARDMENT DIVISION

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HEADQUARTERS 2d BOMBARDMENT DIVISION  
AAF 147 APO 558

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: By Auth of CG :  
: 2d Bomb Div :  
: Initials :  
: Date 16 April 1944 :  
: : : : : : : : : :

8 April 1944

SUBJECT: Tactical Report of Mission, 26 March 1944.

TO : Commanding General, Eighth Air Force, AAF 101, APO 634.

## 1. Data.

a. Date of Mission - 26 March 1944

b. Primary Target and Units Participating -

2nd Combat Bomb Wing  
389th Bomb Group - Siracourt  
445th Bomb Group - Siracourt  
453rd Bomb Group - Flixicourt/Domart

20th Combat Bomb Wing  
448th Bomb Group - Moyenneville

14th Combat Bomb Wing  
44th Bomb Group - Petit Bos Tillencourt  
392nd Bomb Group - Febvin Palfart

96th Combat Bomb Wing  
456th Bomb Group - Bonnières

c. Secondary Target - None

d. Last Resort Target - None

## 2. Narrative.

a. Four Combat Wings attacked No-ball targets at Siracourt, Flixicourt/Domart, Moyenneville, Petit Bois Tillencourt, Febvin Palfart and Bonnières. 185 aircraft of seven Groups were dispatched with three Groups of P-47's giving excellent support.

b. Assemblies were accomplished without incident with the exception of One Group, which, because of an error in the plotting of Splasher 9 by the navigator in the lead ship, did not join Division formation and could not locate the target, returning to base without bombing. The remainder of the Division proceeded on briefed course without incident. After bombing, the units returned to base on the briefed route.

d. The target area was clear. The 389th and 445th Groups bombed the installations at Siracourt with good results; the 453rd bombed the target at Flixicourt/Domart with fair results. The installation at Moyenneville was attacked by the 448th Group with poor results. The 44th Group attacked Petit Bois Tillencourt with good results, while the 392nd Group bombed the target at Febvin Palfart with excellent results.

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Tactical Report of Mission, 26 March 1944 (contd)

3. The anti-aircraft fire in the target area was moderate to heavy and very accurate with sporadic inaccurate gunfire along route. Fighter support was excellent and no enemy fighters were encountered. One aircraft was lost to gunfire.

For the Commanding General:

*Charles B. Westover*

CHARLES B. WESTOVER  
Colonel GSC  
Chief of Staff

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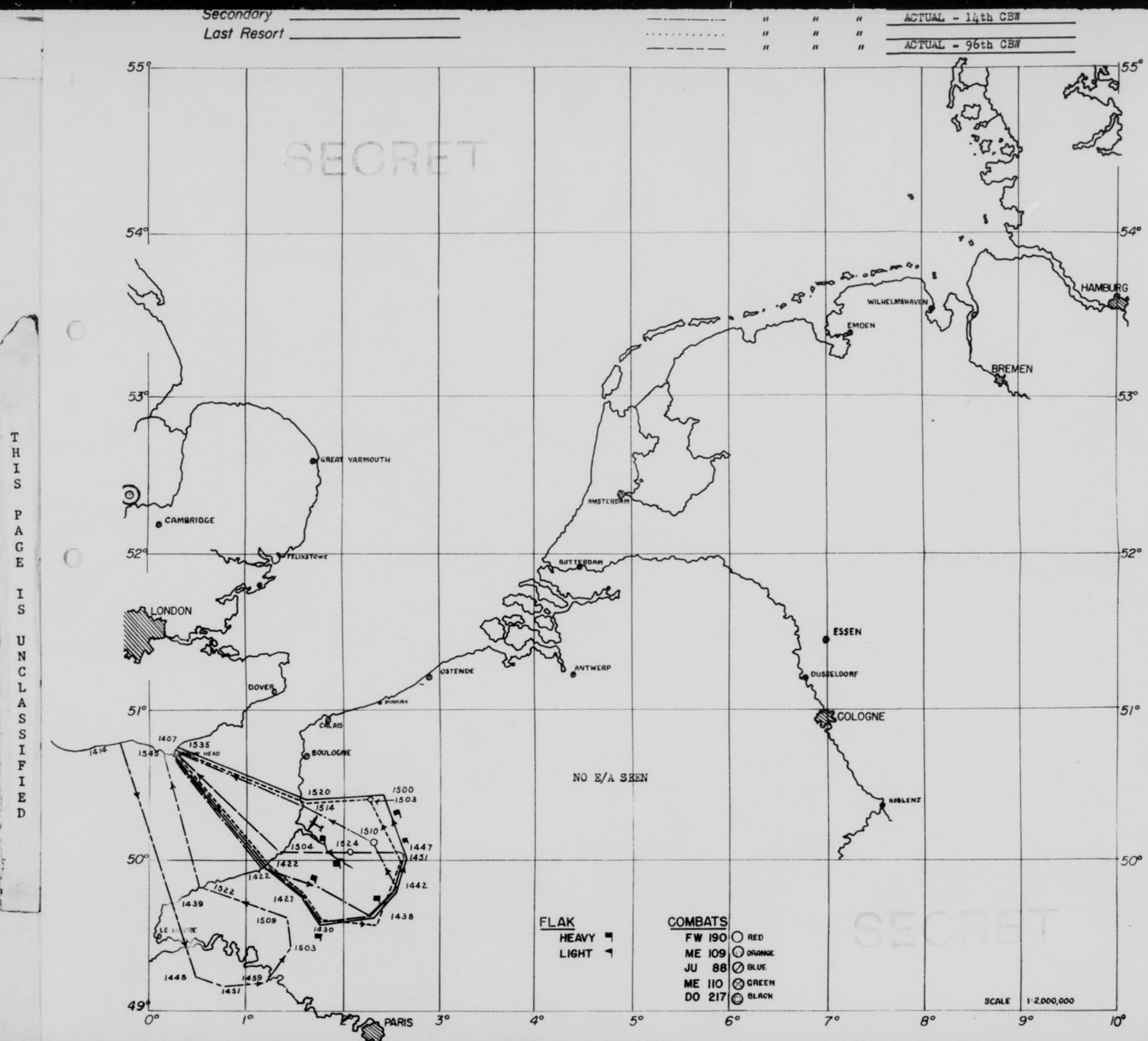
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TARGET		Date	26 MARCH 1944	Route followed by	PLANNED - 2d DIVISION
Primary	NOBALL			" " "	ACTUAL - 20th CBW
Secondary				" " "	ACTUAL - 2nd CBW
Last Resort				" " "	ACTUAL - 14th CBW
				" " "	ACTUAL - 96th CBW







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TACTICAL BOMBING MISSION REPORT - 26 March 1944

GROUP	DIR. OF RUN	LENGTH OF RUN	ALTITUDE	TIME OF RELEASE	FLEW AUTO-PILOT	FLEW MANUAL	RANGE & DEFLEC.	RANGE	NUMBER A/C BOMBED
<u>SIRACOURT</u>									
389th	345°	10 min.	20,000	1503	Yes		4		26
445th	350°	8 min.	20,000	1519		Yes	2	2	26
<u>DOMART</u>									
453rd	320°	2 min.	20,000	1524		Yes	1		11
<u>MOYENNEVILLE</u>									
448th	320°	2 min.	19,000	1458		Yes	1		25
<u>TILLEN COURT</u>									
44th	358°	90 sec.	20,000	1512			2	2	26
<u>FEBVIN PALFART</u>									
392nd	350°	60 sec.	20,000	1534		Yes	2		22

1. This was a visual mission with all groups attacking the assigned primary targets.
2. Two groups hit the target, Siracourt, with good results. One group bombed the target at Domart, results unobserved. Moyenneville was attacked by one group. One group hit Tillencourt. Febvin Palfart was bombed by one group with good results. One group did not attack because they could not locate their assigned target.
3. Three aircraft salvaged their bombs before the target due to battle damage. One aircraft failed to bomb due to a rack malfunction. One lead aircraft had a bombsight malfunction and bombs were salvaged.

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Tactical Report of Mission, 26 March 1944

3. Anti-aircraft Fire Encountered.

Moderate to intense and accurate predictor control fire was encountered during the bombing runs on Target No. 61. Three exceptionally large black puffs were seen in the target area.

Moderate and accurate predictor control fire was encountered during the bombing runs on Target No. 62. One exceptionally large black burst was seen in the target area.

No anti-aircraft fire was encountered at Target No. 36.

Meager to moderate and accurate predictor control fire was encountered during the bombing runs on Target No. 7.

Intense and accurate predictor control fire was encountered continuously from St. Pol to Target No. 87, one A/C being shot down. A spiral of brown smoke was seen coming up from the ground in the target area, the smoke persisting in the sky for a considerable period of time. A piece of cable approximately five feet long with two ball like objects attached to each end was also observed in the target area. This cable was believed to have been fired from the ground as there were no enemy aircraft in the area, and was moving at considerable speed in practically a horizontal direction.

Moderate and fairly accurate gun fire was encountered on route at Oisemont, Abbeville, Neufchatel, and Auchel. Crews report 8 - 12 guns in the vicinity of Auchel.

Meager and generally inaccurate gun fire was encountered at Dieppe, Montdidier, Albert, Hesdin, and Montreuil.

There were also various reports of rockets seen leaving zigzag trails of smoke, and very large black smoke puffs.

Comment.

The large black smoke bursts observed are said to have resembled A/C exploding, and they were probably intended as "scarecrow" flares. It is of interest that various Groups reported seeing four or five B-24s shot down, whereas only one was in fact lost.

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TACTICAL MISSION REPORTDate: 26 March 1944

## 5. Communications.

## a. Communications Channels:

1. Division VHF channel was used with fair results. Bomb Strike report was received by W/T from each group.

## b. Navigational Aids:

1. Splasher and luncher beacons were used with good results. Performance of "GEE" was satisfactory. Fourteen A/C obtained 19ADM's from HF/DF stations. Three A/C obtained 3 fixes from MF/DF Sections "H" and "N".

## c. Equipment Failures and Performance:

1. Failures were of a minor nature.

## d. Radar and Radio Counter-Measures:

1. All A/C participating carried 660 units of Chaff which was dispersed one unit every three seconds from 4936N 0138E until past target area.

## e. Pathfinder Equipment and Performance:

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FORM 7-21		---2d BDE---		---14th CBN---		---96th CBN---			
UNIT		2d BD	389	445	453	444	392	448	458
A I R C R A F T	NO. A/C TAKING OFF	189	27	26	28	28	24	26	30
	NO. A/C DISPATCHED	185	27	26	28	28	24	25	27
	NO. A/C ATTACKING	136	26	26	11	26	22	25	-
	NO. A/C NOT ATTACKING	53	1	-	17	2	2	1	30
	NO. A/C SORTIES	182	27	26	27	26	24	25	27
B O M B S	NO. A/C	136	26	26	11	26	22	25	-
	NO. & TYPE	144x500GP	258x500GP	259x500GP	110x500GP	311x500GP	264x500GP	247x500GP	-
	TONNAGE	362.3	64.5	64.8	27.5	77.8	66.0	61.7	-
	TARGET	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	NO. OF A/C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	NO. & TYPE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	TONNAGE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL TONNAGE ALL TARGETS	362.3	64.5	64.8	27.5	77.8	66.0	61.7	-
	A/C LOST TO FLAK	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
	A/C LOST TO E/A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B A T T L E  R E S U L T S	A/C LOST TO FLAK-E/A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	A/C LOST TO ACCIDENT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	A/C LOST UNKNOWN	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	CASUALTIES - KILLED, WOUNDED, SER., SLT., MIA	1-1-3-10	0-0-1-0	0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0	1-0-1-10	0-1-1-0	0-0-0-0
	CLAIMS - E/A DESTROYED, PROB., DAM., NO CLAIM	0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0	0-0-0-0
B A T T L E  R E S U L T S	A/C BATTLE DAMAGES	25-11-2-0	1-1-0-0	3-0-0-0	9-0-0-0	3-2-0-0	3-6-0-0	2-2-2-0	4-0-0-0
	CAT. A-AC-R-T								

TACTICAL COMMANDER'S REPORT  
6. STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS  
26 March 1944PREPARED BY  
STATISTICAL CONTROL  
2d BOMB DIVISION

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HEADQUARTERS  
458TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)  
BAF 120 APO 558  
Office of the Operations OfficerSECRET  
AUTH: John E. Chamberlain  
INITIALS: JEC  
DATE: 27 March 1944

28 March 1944.

SUBJECT: Report of Operations Officer for the Mission of 26 March 1944.  
(No Bill).

TO: Commanding Officer, 458th Bombardment Group (H).

1. General Narrative: Thirty (30) aircraft took off and a visual assembly was made at 12,000 feet. Assembly was very good and the formation departed on time. The briefed course was not flown because of a navigational error. A detailed description of the mission and the error causing the formation to become lost is outlined in the Group Command Pilot's Narrative, the Lead Pilot's Narrative, and the Lead Navigator's Narrative.

2. Aircraft Not Attacking: None of our aircraft attacked the target. A detailed description of reason for failure to attack is included in the separate report on Aircraft Not Attacking, included.

*John E. Chamberlain*  
JOHN E. CHAMBERLAIN,  
Captain, Air Corps,  
Asst Gp Opns Officer.

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HEADQUARTERS

458TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)

AAF 123

APO 558

Office of the Operations Officer

SECRET

AUTH:

INITIALS:

DATE:

27 March 1944.

SUBJECT: Command Pilot's Narrative (Main Formation) of operational Mission for 26 March 1944.

TO: Commanding Officer, 458th Bombardment Group (H).

1. Contact take off and assembly was started on time. The Group assembled at 12,000 feet forty-five minutes after the lead aircraft started its take off. During the assembly, the group assembly aircraft with its extra flare holes and the use of aircraft assembled using red Aldis lamps to signal unassembled aircraft proved extremely helpful.

2. Departure from Buncher 15 was made thirty (30) seconds early with arrival at Buncher 9 two (2) minutes early. This was caused by a change in winds aloft which affected the entire route to the Beachy Head. Arrival at Splasher 9 was on time as well as was the departure from the English coast. At this point the Lead Navigator believed he was on course although it was later revealed that Splasher 9 had been incorrectly plotted. Departure from the English Coast was made at Salsby Bill instead of Beachy Head as planned. Briefed courses were flown from this point with no "G" box fixes being taken due to technical difficulties.

3. Landfall was accomplished on the French Coast at FeCamp instead of the briefed point. This error was not discovered due to a similarity of landmarks. Route over France was flown as briefed although it was not possible to find briefed landmarks. Approximately 10 miles from the briefed IP, it was not possible to find the briefed IP. Course was continued for one (1) minute and the bombing run started, the lead aircraft giving the IP signals and opening bomb bay doors. Decision was made with the belief that the target would be picked up. Shortly after bomb run was started, no familiar landmarks were observed and the leader decided to turn the lead over to the deputy leader or the leader of the second section, depending upon which one was certain of the formation's position, at that time. However, the lead bombardier requested AFCE be turned on, believing he had spotted the target. This was done. However, the target was not observed and a heading toward the coast was taken inasmuch as instructions were to be clear of the area by zero hour plus 15 minutes. The time over the supposed target position was zero hour plus 12 minutes and insufficient time was remaining to make a second run or to attempt a search mission. Departure from the French coast was made in the vicinity of FeCamp and halfway across the channel, the lead Navigator got a "G" box fix, showing him definitely for the first time, his true position. Course was corrected

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Command Pilot's Narrative - 27 March 1944, (Contd).

to make a landfall at Beachy Head and the return trip to base was without incident except for three bursts of English flak appearing high to the left of the formation in the vicinity of Gravesend.

4. Friendly aircraft seen were: one B-24 formation ahead of us at Buncher 5, a B-17 Group just south of Beachy Head flying a northwesterly course, and several P-47's in the distance in the vicinity of Rouen. No actual rendezvous with friendly fighters was accomplished.

5. Enemy flak encountered southwest of Rouen. It was light inaccurate tracked fire visually controlled. Flak was also observed in the vicinity of Aregued, southeast of Rouen. This was very accurate tracked variety apparently visually controlled. Estimated guns were few. Necessitated evasive action. Although evasive action was taken on arriving and departing the French Coast, no flak was observed.

6. No enemy fighters were observed.

7. Weather on the entire route was fair to good. On the route in, clouds were nil with visibility restricted to 4 - 6 miles by smoke and haze to a point 50 miles south of base. Until condition was encountered on return at the same point, ceiling was unlimited and visibility was increased to an estimated 6 - 8 miles, haze again being the restriction. Temperature at 20,000 was -26° C.

FREDERICK H. O'NEILL,  
Major, Air Corps,  
Command Pilot

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Office of the Group Operations OfficerRECEIVED  
AUTH CO 4586P  
INITIAL WJ  
DATE 27 Mar 44

27 March 1944

SUBJECT: Lead Pilot's Narrative of Operational Mission for 26 March 1944.

TO : Commanding Officer, 458th Bombardment Group (H), AAF 123, APO 558.

1. Take off was normal and assembly good. We took off with thirty (30) airplanes and completed the mission with twenty seven (27).

Our position was the 7th Group in the 2nd Bombardment Division entering France in the trail at two (2) minute intervals. The 458th was the last group in.

2. The navigator had splashers 9 plotted in wrong position on his map and we left the English coast at Selsey Hill instead of Betty Head as briefed. We crossed the Enemy coast near the mouth of the Seine River--about forty (40) miles southwest of the briefed entrance into enemy territory.

Due to our error in position we had no fighter support. F-47's were observed in the distance once. No enemy fighters were encountered.

3. None of our aircraft were lost.

4. Radio performance was satisfactory.

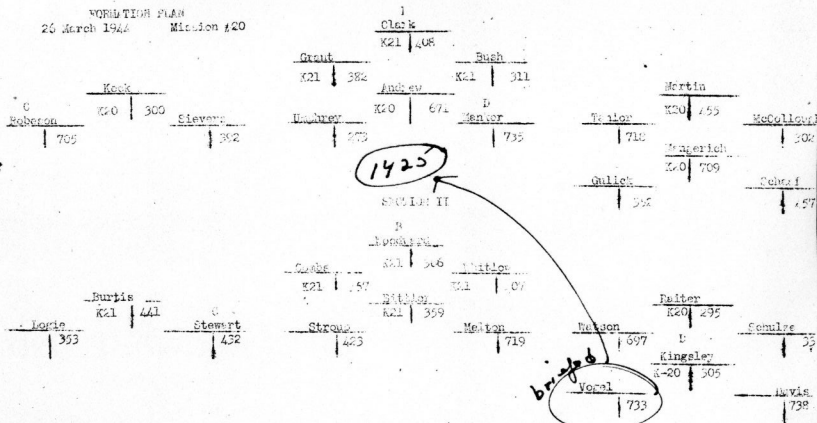
5. We were unable to receive the "C" station on the USS equipment from the English coast and to about mid channel on return.

6. Due to navigational errors we were unable to locate our target and returned with our bombs; however, six planes jettisoned all or part of their bombs upon return flight.

*Philip R. Clark*  
Philip R. Clark,  
2nd Lt., Air Corps,  
Lead Pilot

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WORLDWIDE PLAN  
26 March 1944 Mission #20



EAST		WEST	
1.	408 35	27.	311 23
3.	332 Hanger No. 1	5.	455 33
4.	671 Hanger No. 4	7.	709 27
6.	300 38	10.	302 32
8.	735 47	11.	718 30
9.	273 45	14.	457 31
12.	392 41	15.	352 29
13.	705 49	16.	366 10
30.	733 40	17.	407 22
		19.	351 16
		20.	295 0
		21.	441 17
		22.	303 9
		23.	719 13
		24.	423 13
		25.	305 4
		26.	697 2
		27.	414 14

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By: NND Date: 3/22/02

## 458th Pilot List

DATE	TARGET	PILOT	458th Msn #	Pilot Msn#	Cmd / Inst Pilot	LD	Serial	Last 3	RCL	Sqdn	A/C Msn#	A/C Name	Notes
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	ANDREW	14	1			41-28671	671	K	J4	10	UNKNOWN 001	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	BITTLER	14	8			41-29359	359	J	J3	7	TAIL WIND	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	BURTIS	14	6			42-52441	441	I	J3	11	LAST CARD LOUIE	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	BUSH	14	6			42-100311	311	A	7V	9	YOKUM BOY	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	CLARK	14	5		L1	42-100408	408	D	J4	6	BEASTFACE	Cmd P not listed
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	COMBS	14	ABT			42-100357	357	D	Z5	--	VALE OREGAN	ABORT - NAV SICK SORTIE?
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	DAVIS	14	6			41-28738	738	O	Z5	2	MEAT AROUND THE CORNER	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	GRANT	14	11			42-52382	382	J	7V	12	WURF'LESS	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	GULICK	14	4			41-29352	352	K	7V	6	WOLVE'S LAIR	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	KECK	14	9			41-29300	300	M	J4	12	LORELEI	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	KINGSLEY	14	4			41-29305	305	N	Z5	4	I'LL BE BACK/HYPOCHONDRIAC	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	LOGIE	14	8			42-52353	353	J	Z5	12	UNKNOWN 049	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	MANGERICH	14	8			41-28709	709	I	7V	7	LUCKY STRIKE	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	MANKER	14	5			41-28735	735	S	J4	5	UNKNOWN 005	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	MARTIN, J	14	7			42-52455	455	O	7V	8	PLUTOCRAT	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	McCOLLOUGH	14	6			41-29302	302	P	7V	6	NOKKISH	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	MELTON	14	7			41-28719	719	Q	J3	7	PADDLEFOOT	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	RAITER	14	10			41-29295	295	K	Z5	6	BOMB TOTIN' MAMA	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	ROBESON	14	8			41-28705	705	H	J4	13	YE OLDE HELLGATE	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	SCHAAF	14	9			42-52457	457	Q	7V	6	FINAL APPROACH	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	SCHULZE	14	9			42-52335	335	R	Z5	12	ADMIRABLE LITTLE CHARACTER	see #25 runway assgm
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	SIEVERS	14	6			42-52392	392	O	J4	9	WABBIT TWACKS	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	STEWART	14	6			42-52432	432	P	J3	12	BACHELOR'S PARADISE	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	STROUP	14	5			42-52423	423	R	J3	5	UNKNOWN 031	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	TAYLOR, O	14	8			41-28718	718	M	7V	13	BO	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	UMPHREY	14	8			41-29273	273	Q	J4	10	FLAK MAGNET	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	VOGEL	14	7			41-28733	733	P	J4	7	RHAPSODY IN JUNK	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	WATSON	14	6			41-28697	697	P	Z5	4	DIXIE BELL II	
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	WHITLOW	14	7			42-100407	407	A	J3	4	LITTLE LAMBSY DIVEY	Tail number unclear
26-Mar-44	BONNIERES	WOODWARD	14	4		L2	42-100366	366	M	Z5	4	MIZPAH	