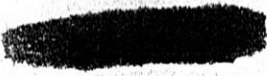


314 TCG / 61 TCS



RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

.....  
: AUTH: CO, 314 TC Gp(Gd):  
: DATE: 2 October 1944:  
: INIT: HT  
: .....

R

CO-TR-CAMH-61-HI  
15 Oct 44

HISTORICAL DATA

61ST TROOP CARRIER SQUADRON, ACF  
314TH TROOP CARRIER GROUP  
ARQ 133

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER

.....  
: : : : :  
: : : : :  
: AUTH: CO, 314 TC Gp(Gd):  
: : DATE: 4 October 1944 :  
: INIT: ZH :  
: : : : :  
.....

UNIT HISTORY

SHEET #1 - Unit History, 61st Troop Carrier Squadron, AAF, Station #538, ETOUSA. Month of September 1944. Prepared by JOE EPSTEIN, Captain, A.C., 61st Troop Carrier Squadron, AAF.

1. Organization.

a. Negative.

2. Strength. 30 September 1944.

a. Officers - 113. Enlisted men - 257.

3. Organization movement.

a. Negative.

4. Losses in Action.

a. 2 C-47 A/C (#42-93001 and 42-92839) were shot down by enemy flak while on Mission "MARKET" #2. A/C #42-93001 crashed 1 mile NW of Wageningen on the route into the DZ. A/C #42-92839 last seen in flames 100' above ground in the area of Opheusden. 10 personnel listed as Missing in Action:

A/C #42-93001

Capt. George C. Merz	Pilot
2nd Lt E.W. Haagenson	Co-Pilot
2nd Lt R.C. Stephens Jr	Navigator
T/Sgt Richard W. Eastman	Crew Chief
T/Sgt William G. Buckley	Radio Operator

A/C #42-92839

Capt. Warren S. Egbert, Jr	Pilot
2nd Lt H.M. Jerome	Co-Pilot
1st Lt Jacob Feldman	Navigator
T/Sgt D.L. DeSantis	Crew Chief
S/Sgt Jacob J. Yapel	Radio Operator

5. Awards and Decorations.

a. Negative.

## RESUME

Operational activity reached a new high this past month of September. The eventful series of "MARKET" paratroop missions to the much-publicized, bloody Arnhem area in Holland was of major importance. From the squadron's operational standpoint the dropping of paratroopers in support of General Dempsey's British 2nd Army salient compared equally in demand and favorably in importance with the paratroop spearheading of the continental invasion.

Supply runs to the British Forces in Belgium started the month off slowly. The climax was reached halfway through the month in the "MARKET" missions. Then the anticlimax came in the resupply missions close up to the fighting lines. In fact, several hours after our aircraft had departed from the riverbed landing-strip near Grave, southwest of the bitterly contested Nijmegen area, the information on its' recapture by a fierce, desperate enemy counter-attack came down through S-2 channels. The freight hauls were in no sense all milk-runs. On several occasions the pilots flew instruments to newly-won, poor conditioned fields. They landed on muddy, slick, runways, ground looping the aircraft to prevent skidding off the end into hedges and wooded places. And not all were fortunate enough to bring their aircraft to a stop within the runway limits. However, only aircraft damages were suffered and no personnel injuries incurred.

More than any other factors pride in operational accomplishments and heavy operational activity display in the men a deep devotional sense of duty and resultantly keep their morale high. Ground crews put in long dreary hours at night readying the aircraft for the next day and then were up for Reveille the following morning and soon hard at work again. The air crews' devotion to duty is evidenced more pointedly at personal risk by their marked success in sortie missions.

The squadron welcomed back to the fold, men returning from leave in the States just prior to the fateful "MARKET" #2 Mission. Tragically tho' the squadron, soon after the happy welcome, was shocked by the sudden loss of two complete aircrews after mission D plus 1, six officers and four enlisted men. These men had all come successfully through the Invasion flights. And we feel, because of the substantialness of the C-47A type A/C and its' ability to absorb punishment, that we can reasonably expect to hear that the loss will not be by death; but that transferred from the Missing in Action list to at the worst, a POW camp in the German interior.

WAR DIARY

DAY September 1st.

1. Entire squadron on alert for impending mission (British paradrop into Belgium). All sections were given sufficient advance notice to effect all general, necessary and preliminary preparations. The Radar section had all its' vital and highly technical equipment set up and checked for operation without the usual inconveniences and mistakes of a last minute rush. The Engineering section efficiently and methodically installed the British equipment - para-racks, jump-mats, cables and static lines. American equipment, unfortunately, is not adaptable to use by the British paratroops. The parachute and personal-equipment section under the combined supervision and direction of CWO Leo Weisend, put full combat equipment on 19 A/C; 18 scheduled for the mission, 1 spare. In addition to equipping the A/C for the mission, A-3 harness was fitted to balance of power pilots. Also all combat equipment was issued to 36 glider pilots who are being transferred for mission-operation from another field. S-2 was prepared for the briefing with maps, escape purses, etc. A/C were lined up on the right-hand side of the SW-NE runway, in taxi position.
2. Officers' Club redecorated and repainted a soft blue color. A bar was installed, complete with iron foot rail, replacing service over the stock-room counter. The work was completed over a 36 hour period, just in time for the customary every-two-week party on Friday night.
3. The days administrative activity:-2nd Lt Herbert B. Wichtendahl trfd to 313th TC Gp per SO 134, Hq 314th TC Gp. 1st Lt Albert K. Rasmussen from SD with Gp Hq to duty. T/Sgt Grover B. Henderson, Jr., and T/Sgt Henry L. Jeffries reclassified to (750), Flight Chief. Cpl Rowland W. Brown reclassified to (2750), Crew Chief.

DAY September 2nd.

1. Daytime found the squadron still on alert. And late that night, after the evening briefing of the entire Group in the war-room the squadron was told to await further orders, that weather was a deciding factor. Two hours after the briefing, the mission was cancelled. Weather and the rapid drive of the Allied forces in Belgium were important elements in effecting its' cancellation. However, the squadron was still in an alerted state with a possible air-landing mission impending, which type mission had undergone extensive pre-training hours during the past month.
2. The days administrative activity:-Sgt Edward Vayda and Cpl Elmer E. Clear returned from Radio Operators School, Station 476.

DAY September 3rd.

1. A day of comparable inactivity in the entire squadron. A day, it seems, devoted merely to being on alert. Somehow it's the missions that never come off that sound most interesting. As in the case of the proposed para-

troop drop in the Ablis-Rambouillet area just two weeks ago at the time of the drive for Paris, we were ready and set for a takeoff on Sunday, September 3, when word came that our Forces were already in the vicinity of the DZ. While awaiting favorable weather (Takeoff was originally scheduled for 0632, and a second mission was planned for 1800 hours that same day) reports located our columns as well inside Belgium, far beyond our target area near the city of Lille.

In Line with developments, the course had been changed once on Saturday from a flight which would have taken us in over the Belgian Coast and through approximately sixty miles of enemy-held territory, to a point on the French Coast (Le Treport) near just-captured Dieppe and thus through our lines to Arras and thence to the DZ. Thus the mission was expected to be a "Breeze", since almost all chance of AA Fire would have been eliminated. Fighter protection was planned for the entire mission. But the Germans collapsed so quickly and completely while the weather delayed our movement that the mission was called off.

As on D-Day, it was planned to use EUREKA Beacons in England and on a boat in the Channel to chart our course for a Landfall on the Continent. In addition to the Beacon at the DZ, there were to be visual aids...Green Smoke, a Red "Y", and a White Tee. On the second mission these colors would have been changed. There was also a Radio Compass Beacon set up only eight miles from our DZ. The lead ship of each element of nine planes was to use REBECCA and IFF; one other ship of the element was to standby on REBECCA in case the equipment of the lead ship went out.

The radio operator was assigned to monitor 5837 K.C. throughout the flight, since any recall or emergency message would be sent in this manner. Interplane communication was planned on "D" Channel of the VHF.

The crew chief was to receive from the pilot and pass on to the jumpmaster the 20 minute warning. Also he was to check on the salvo of the parapacks. Both crew chief and radio operator with the assistance of the copilot and the navigator, if necessary, were to pull in the unwieldy British static lines on the return leg as a timesaving element in preparation for the second mission.

DAY September 4th.

1. The following promotions were made in the squadron effective September 1, 1944:

T/Sgt Henry L. Jeffries to M/Sgt	Cpl Marvin R. Ragan to S/Sgt
Sgt Charles H. McQuinn to S/Sgt	Cpl Ralph O. Hess to Sgt
Cpl William J. Heidemann to S/Sgt	Pvt Leonard L. Collins to Cpl
Pvt Enzo C. Cannarelli to Pfc	

Pfc James R. Robinson was reduced to Private and confined for three months per Special CM O 25 Hq USAAF Sta 538 as of 21 August 1944.

2. QM Supply is foresightedly gathering acorns for the coming winter - sizes were taken up and a requisition submitted for overcoats for the EM personnel of the organization.

S E C R E T

3. Tech Supply underwent a veritable "Spring-cleaning!" All items, spare parts and airplane equipment, were promptly retagged with correct nomenclature and stock number, after having been removed from the dilapidated shelves and rearranged in new Army Air Force shipping cases. Each item has been entered on AAF Form 84 Bin card for location and inventory purposes. Also Tech supply is now the proud owner of an up to date Stock List.
4. Flight operations nil. Restriction lifted from 1800 to 0600 hours.

DAY September 5th.

1. Operational activity confined to taxiing of all A/C from alert positions to regular parking area.
2. F/O William D. Murdock and F/O William R. Marlin, glider pilots, assigned and joined fr Hq, 314th T.C. Gp per SO 136 same Hq.
3. Entertaining movie shown at the post gymnasium, "Follow The Boys", an elaborate, musical spectacle with George Raft and an all-Hollywood supporting cast.

DAY September 6th.

1. 1 Flight of a single craft to Grove. Purpose: To ferry personnel.
2. British paratroopers, taking advantage of the first bit of good weather in a week, returned to pick up their cylindrical parapacks which had been under the ships since the day of the futile mission briefing.
3. Weather also occasioned a hotly contested, wide open soft-ball game between the 1st Lts. and 2nd Lts. of this squadron. The Shavetails nosed out the Silver-bars by a score of 14 to 12.
4. Saltby was paid a real honor on this date when the Group received an invitation from the Ordnance Depot and A.T.S. Station at Old Dalby to attend a Ball in celebration of the Sixth Anniversary of the founding of the splendid A.T.S. Organization. We were the only American Unit invited, and evidently the only Unit present not actually stationed at this Post. Three trucks and two weapons carriers carried us from the Special Service Office on the Field, to the gate of Old Dalby. The squadron was well represented. Among the Officers attending were Captains Bennion, Epstein, Hein, Ewing and Egbert, and Lts. Rogers, Seckel and Curran. The 314th Band Alternated with the Royal Army Ordnance Corps Band of Old Dalby, and was very well received. The majority of the EM were guests of members of the A.T.S. who have been attending our Saturday night dances.
5. The squadron owes its new concrete block walk between the barracks and the sub-orderly room, in large part, to the Communications Section. Barracks #1 and #2 reported at 1830 on Wednesday evening, September 6th, and took a bare hour and a half to complete it. Named "Restriction Lane" by some wit in the section, it is the direct result of the fact that the Wednesday morning inspection wasn't satisfactorily met.
6. Administrative activity: Sgt. Donald L. Livingston reclassified to Cryptographic Technician (805).

DAY September 7th.

1. A/C #43-47970, newly assigned to our squadron, was sent to North Witham, at which station it will undergo a secret radio installation ("GEE" equipment).

S E C R E T

- T/Sgt Gifford L. Boyer was made crew chief of this aircraft.
2. Crash, at 1145 hours, of a British Hurricane, just 100 yards from the "Look" Building (contains administrative offices of the 4 squadrons of the Group). The pilot was instantly killed. Evidently, he was on his downward leg when his engine conked out and he hurtled earthward alongside the NE-SW runway.
  3. Squadron alerted again. Briefing was held in the war room at 1830. Mission of the same type as its' defunct predecessor, however, as might be expected, the DZ was further advanced toward enemy-held territory.
  4. Capt. Epstein, Squadron S-2 Officer, spent the morning exercising the functions of his additional duty at a Special Courts Martial, as TJA.
  5. The S-2 Section saw S/Sgt. Lange busily putting out public releases on individual members of the squadron, in accordance with the order of higher Headquarters. All work, later in the day, gave way to preparations for the impending paradrop.
  6. Capt. Jerome Riley, additional duty - Officer's Club Officer, returned from London with 8 barrels of beer for tomorrow night's party at the club.
  7. Administrative activity: The following below named Officers and Enlisted Men were designated Lead Crew for this organization by Squadron Order #40:

P-Capt. EWING, EUGENE D. O-665542  
CP-2nd Lt. TORRES, GEORGE E. O-745979  
N-Capt. KNUCKLES, THOMAS C. O-733437  
VO-S/Sgt Britton, Vernon H. 18075554  
CC-T/Sgt Wood, Winfield E. 31072377  
RO-S/Sgt. Rubin, Morris 32397451

8. George C. Merz promoted to Captain effective August 25, 1944 per paragraph 23 SO 238 Ninth AF.

DAY September 8th.

1. Mission scheduled for the wee hours was put off for 24 hours, only eventually to be cancelled, after a total 72 hour postponement. Reasons for its' scrapping are in those of its' two immediate predecessors.
2. After four days on the ground without proper run-up of engines it was decided to have a trial flight over the local countryside to check aircraft for performance. All 61st aircraft performed perfectly. No reports rendered by pilots of defects. Upon landing, all airplanes were refueled and made ready for immediate take-off, when and if the go-ahead was given on the mission.
3. TWX, relative to the removal of black and white stripes from underneath wings was complied with. All crews were busy yesterday and today with brushes, cleaning compound, rags, a decontamination unit and a great amount of elbow grease.
4. Both engines of A/C #42-24325 were changed. Engines had 605:30 hours time. Permission was obtained from Wing Headquarters to change engines prior to required time due to character of missions to be performed.

DAY September 9th.

1. Squadron still on alert for paradrop mission, which was postponed for 48 hours.

2. Tonight the field personnel were entertained by British Forces' Old Dalby Dramatic Society of the Central Ordnance Depot. A comedy, entitled "Quiet Wedding", by Ester McCracken was presented. To use a stock phrase, a good time was had by all; audience and players.

DAY September 10th.

1. The paradrop was cancelled.
2. Only flight at the field was non-operational. It was the flight of a Piper Cub, frolicing in the pastures of the calm air over the field.
3. The picture "Show Business" saw Eddie Cantor make a hearty comeback to the applause and appreciation of a warm GI audience.

DAY September 11th.

1. Inactivity abruptly ceased. Wing Mission #552 dispatched 19 of our aircraft on a supply haul to the continent. Fuel was ferried. The transporting of the gasoline, diesel oil and kerosene went off without a mishap - just a milk run. Interrogation of the crews brought forth nothing unusual or of exceptional military value. Also, two single ship training flights took to the air.
2. QM Supply warehouse was broken into and ransacked. Four sleeping bags, soap and toilet paper were found missing. Foot-lockers belonging to men, who are home on furlough, were forced open and rifled.

DAY September 12th.

1. 13 A/C were dispatched at 0800 hours to haul ammunition (approx. 76,500 lbs) from Kemble to a recently won airfield just northeast of the city of Brussels. One A/C RON due to right engine failure.
2. PFC Mack T. Martin was reduced to grade of Private for a breach of discipline.
3. "The Hairy Ape" a picture, adapted from the play by author Eugene O'Neil, featuring virile William Bendix and luscious Susan Hayward was shown at the gymnasium.

DAY September 13th.

1. 10 A/C took off at 0830 hours and 8 A/C at 1255 hours to haul ammunition (91,800 lbs.) from Kemble to Brussels airfield. The AM shuttle RON on the continent due to weather and darkness. The PM shuttle loaded at Kemble; but did not take off for the continent because of weather. The 8 A/C returned to home base due to lack of space at Kemble.
2. Sgt Arlie J. Spears reduced to grade of private for breach of discipline.
3. Tour of Cambridge University was arranged for today by Special Services. Several personnel of this squadron were permitted to make the trip; which they said was interesting and educational.

DAY September 14th.

1. The 8 loaded A/C, returned yesterday from Kemble, carried their load of



ammunition to the continent. Due to fog here, three A/C RCN at Woburn. 15 of the original 18 A/C returned to Saltby from Brussels with 24 evaders and 2 Officers and 2 MM of B-17 units. The evaders were segregated from the Fieldts personnel, fed, then sent on to an established point near London for interrogation. The utmost in security prevails during the return of an evader from enemy or enemy occupied territory.

2. 1 A/C flew to Kemble, on administrative duties.

DAY September 15th.

1. Operational activity dropped off to the test-hopping of a single aircraft.
- 2.

DAY September 16th.

1. 3 A/C were transferred from this squadron to fill operational requirements elsewhere.
2. Single A/C ferried A/C parts, freight and personnel to the continent.
3. Squadron alerted at 1630 hours. Briefing was held in the war room at 1930 hours for paradrop on the 17th of September.
4. End of "Double British Summertime": Tonight at 2359 hours, time will be turned back one hour.

DAY September 17th.

1. Paradrop Mission, "MARKET", was capably and efficiently carried out from beginning to end. Capt. Gordon E. Hein, squadron Operations Officer, ably led the two flights of this squadron. No losses were sustained in the entire 314th Troop Carrier Group. This squadron accurately deposited 334 British paratroopers in the Arnhem area. Only two men were brought back due to mechanical failure.

DAY September 18th.

1. Last aircraft down from Mission "MARKET #2" at 1620 hours today. Two of our 18 A/C failed to return. One A/C made emergency landing at Woodbridge A/D. Lt. Col. Campbell N. Smith, Squadron Commander, led the squadron over today. The Mission, despite losses, was successful. Approximately 250 British paratroopers were dropped in the same area as yesterday.
2. One A/C ferried personnel and A/C parts to Woodbridge.
3. One A/C ferried to Barkston Heath for transfer.
4. Cpl. Joseph A. Novack from duty status to 65th General Hospital for minor abdominal wound received from enemy fire while performing duty as Crew Chief in Mission "MARKET #2".
5. The following officers and enlisted men of this organization reported for duty from the 12th Replacement Control Depot: Captains Eugene I. Turkelson, Edwin H. Greer, Thomas E. Yarbrough, 1st Lt. Lacy C. Myers, Jr., T/Sgt Cecil H. Oglesby, S/Sgts Francis C. Lilly and Frederick S. Higginbotham. They returned from happy, much deserved leave in the United States

DAY September 19th.

1. Scheduled paradrop of Polish Troopers in the Arnhem area failed to materialize today, because of inclement weather. The drop was postponed 24 hours.

S E C R E T

2. The 61st T.C. Squadron was allocated a weekly ration of 548 bottles of English concocted Pepsi-Cola. This ersatz coke to a certain extent helps to alleviate the morale situation. It ties right along with the Red Cross "mud and sinkers", ping-pong and pool tables and the free movies in an earnest endeavour of the Group CO to provide relaxation for the entire Field's personnel.

DAY September 20th.

1. Weather conditions dangerous to mass-flight and the type of mission to be performed effected another 24 hour postponement of the Polish paradrop.
2. Administrative activities: Sgt David L. DeSantis and Cpl Richard W. Eastman reclassified to 2750 (Aerial Engineer). Sgt David L. DeSantis and Cpl Richard W. Eastman promoted to grade of T/Sgt per SO 140 Hq 314 T.C. Gp dtd and effective 15 Sept 44.
3. Train service between the neighboring town of Grantham and London has been resumed as evidenced by the schedule printed in today's daily bulletin. It had been cancelled immediately prior to the momentous D-Day. Its' resumption provides the means for a well spent 24 hour pass.

DAY September 21st.

1. 13 A/C went out on Mission "MARKET #3 - Polish paradrop. Because of unfavorable weather and a miscoded radio F message (which demands that no answer be sent), 10 A/C turned back. Another A/C, which lost the formation due to its' own slowness, also wisely turned back. The remaining 2 A/C also got separated from the squadron serial. However, they tagged onto another serial and went on to drop their sticks in the face of intense enemy small-arms fire.
2. One A/C took off on a test hop.
3. The Following officers and enlisted men from duty to Missing in Action as of 1630 hours 18 Sept 44: Captains Warren S. Egbert, Jr., George C. Merz, 1st Lt Jacob Feldman, 2nd Lts Horace M. Jerome, Ernest W. Haagenon, Russell C. Stephens, Jr., T/Sgts David L. DeSantis, Richard W. Eastman, William G. Buckley and S/Sgt Jacob J. Yapel.
4. Movies of the Awards Presentation by Lt. General Lewis H. Brereton, Commanding General, First Allied Airborne Army, taken by the 314th T.C. Group Public Relations Section; was shown in the gym as part of the day's theatre program.

DAY September 22nd.

1. Two returnees from a 30-day furlough in the States undertook self-rehabilitation in the only flight of the day, namely Capts. Thomas E. Yarbrough and Eugene I. Turkelson.

DAY September 23rd.

1. One A/C ferried personnel and A/C parts to the continent for the purpose of engine-repair to one of our A/C grounded at Brussels.
2. 5 A/C flew local in training.
3. Due to mailing time requirements, today was the last day on which PX Xmas gifts may be ordered.

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

DAY September 24th.

1. 2 A/C flew local training flights.
2. 1 A/C flown and delivered to Cottesmore.
3. The only auspicious event of the day was the well prepared turkey dinner.

DAY September 25th.

1. 1 A/C flew locally in training.
2. Administrative activities: Pfc Orié Griffin (590) reclassified to (060); duty soldier to cook. Pvt. Moscoe G. Belcher transferred to Hq., 314th T.C. Gp. Sgt. Robert E. Muller who was on DS with IX TCC is transferred to Hq. Sq. IX TCC per SO 212 Hq, 52nd TC Wg. effective 23 Sept 44.

DAY September 26th.

1. 12 A/C participated in the Air Landing Mission to Grave, near the tip of the British salient in Holland. Our A/C carried 88 British personnel and equipment of the 2nd Air Landing Light A.A. Battery - a total payload of approximately 59,350 lbs. Heavy ground activity was viewed from the air; but no opposition, except meagre, inaccurate heavy-type flak, was encountered by the A/C. 3 of our A/C flew glider pilots, back from the Arnhem area, to a field in France, then returned to Saltby two hours after the main flight.
2. 1 A/C flew in training to Spanhoe and back.
3. For the Jewish personnel of the squadron, arrangements were made that they might hold their New Year's Services on the Post - Chaplain's Office this evening and tomorrow.
4. An uproarious comedy, "Up In Mabel's Room", featured today at 1400, 1830, and 2030 hours in the gym.

DAY September 27th.

1. 3 A/C, as directed by TC Wg Mission #377, proceeded this afternoon to Barkston Heath to take on loads of ammunition, then returned to Saltby for an 0715 hours takeoff, for the continent, on the morrow.
2. 1 A/C flew to Elmden, 1 A/C to Swinden, 1 A/C to East Wretham and 2 A/C flew locally - all in training.
3. Administrative activities: Pvt Joseph Sinewick from confinement, Sta. Gd. House to SD 314 TC Gp Defense Platoon.
4. Four pilots, 2nd Lts. Charles E. Johnson, George E. Torres, Claude B. Lacey and Harold S. Bateman, celebrated the notification of their promotions to 1st Lts. as of the 15th of Sept., tonight at the officer's club by footing the night's bill at the bar for all officers of the squadron.

DAY September 28th.

1. 15 A/C proceeded to Kemble and loaded up. From there they hauled 40,128 lbs gasoline and 35,148 lbs ammunition to B56C in Belgium. They returned with 302 British 1st A/B paratroopers to Barkston Heath.
2. Administrative activities: Walter J. Sogliuzzo, S/Sgt, reduced to Pvt without prejudice and then promoted to Sgt. in keeping with his reassignment from Mess Sergeant to cook.

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

3. The first dance in almost over a month was held tonight in the officer's club. Females were brought in from the neighboring cities.

DAY 30th September.

1. 15 A/C flew to Remble and took on freight. Because of weather, the A/C couldn't get off for the continent. They returned with their load to Saltby to RON. However, only 14 A/C were loaded. 1 A/C, because of a damaged hydraulic line, flew back empty with its' wheels down - the sensible decision on the part of the pilot, Lt. Joe D. Rogers.
2. 2nd Lt. George H. Johnson, a navigation instructor from the States, joined our squadron to serve primarily as a Navigator.
3. Two 1st Lts., eleven 2nd Lts. and twenty-three Flight Officers, all Glider Pilots and seven Glider Mechanics rejoined the squadron.

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

SPECIAL ACCOUNTS

A Paradrop Briefing:

The assemblage of the entire Group's officer, operational personnel was ready and waiting at 1930 hours. Pencils and writing pads were much in evidence. There were far too many important details to be conveyed, to trust entirely to memory. The pilots or their co-pilots were set to take down all pertinent matter to be used as a check with their respective crew-members. Squadron S-2 officers were set to gather every iota of information for rebriefing, interrogation, overlay, and report purposes. Chiefs of technical sections - engineering, general communications and radar - were there to learn the special preparations required of them. The Operations officers had, prior to the briefing, already been given the overall picture. And they were ready to the extent of having already posted their respective flight-schedules and their A/C parked in taxi-positions. Lt. Col. George F. Faulkner, the much respected Group Operations Officer, cigar in hand and a jest on his lips, stepped to the front to gain the undivided attention of all present. Jest, delivered to the relief and laughter of a tense audience, he proceeded with the terse announcement that the briefing would cover a double mission on the morrow. A British paradrop is scheduled for the morning and a dropping of American paratroopers for the afternoon. Stations times were set at 0430 hours for the AM shuttle and 1430 hours for the PM shuttle. Take-off times for the 36 ships of the two squadrons of the leading serial were to be 0540 hours and 1540 hours. The second serial of the two remaining squadrons were to be in the air and forming 4 minutes after take-off of the last ship of the first serial. One half-hour was allowed for the forming of the entire Group. The formation was to be a train of eight 9-ship elements, each element consisting of 3 ships in a "V" or "Vs".

Distances in statute miles and magnetic headings to March and Aldeburgh, Wing and Command departure points respectively, were given along with the times over each. Then Lt. Col. Faulkner proceeded to the wall-map behind him and traced the southerly course to the drop area - from Aldeburgh, code name "Antiqua", to "Tampa" (a ship check-point in the North Sea); to landfall, "Bermuda", at West Schouwen in Holland; to "Columbia", a change in course 18 S.M. further on; to the I.P., "Ellis Center", (an inverted "Y" formed by both, almost superimposed railway and road-junctions) and thence to the general drop area approximately 5 miles south of the city, Nijmegen. Mileage and courses were defined to all points.

The Group was to fly out at 1500 feet with an I.A.S. of 140 mph. Arriving at the specific drop zones (DZ "Y" for the AM shuttle, DZ "B" for the PM shuttle) at 0817 hours and 1814 hours, the flight was to descend to the drop altitude of 600 feet M.S.L. Then, after the sticks had jumped, make a right-hand turn, climb to 2500' feet and take the same course back, pushing the mercury all the way.

Lt. Col. Faulkner thereupon consulted the British Liaison Officers in regard to the salvoing of the parabundles. It was decided that SOP would hold forth in the jumping (i.e. 20 minute red-light warning, 4 minute stand-up readiness and then finally the green light jump signal) and the bundles would be salvoed by the pilot immediately prior to giving the green light.

The crew chiefs were to be instructed to start hauling in the British static lines with the help of the radio operators as the aircraft was leaving the DZ. This was to be done particularly at that time because the A/C would then be at their minimum speed. The work primarily was a time saving operation. For maxi-

S E C R E T

A Paradrop Briefing: (Cont'd)

minimum time allowed for A/C readiness would be one hour after the landing from the AM phase, in which time the men would have to inspect and gas up all the flyable A/C, remove all the British equipment (lines and pararacks) and install American equipment, load the aircraft and park them.

After the above information was delivered, Gp. S-2, Capt. Willis P. Ryan took over at the Colonel's behest. Capt. Ryan, firstly, put the minds of the men a little at ease in regard to enemy fighter and flak opposition by stating that the entire 8th Air Force and the British Air Defense would supply fighter cover during the entire operation. And the 9th Air Force fighter-bombers would precede our A/C by 15 minutes, cleaning up all ground opposition.

The Captain's analysis of fighter opposition amounted to practically non-committance by the GAF. The anti-aircraft batteries, however, were numerous along the entire route and capable of taking a heavy toll.

Recognition means of the specific drop zones were delineated. DZ "Y" area would be marked with a red-panel "T", a white panel "Y" and green smoke pots. DZ "B" would show a white panel "T", a white panel "B" and violet smoke generators.

Going back, in keeping with the vein of enemy opposition, he cautioned the crews about mistaking the protective delayed action bombs for enemy flak. These projectiles are to be released from friendly craft and are timed to burst below our operational altitudes.

Then Capt. Ryan considered the bleak side of the picture; possibilities of crash landings in enemy territory, bail out cases and any necessitation for emergency landings in the U.K. In the case of the first two, the army's standard Escape and Evasion procedure was outlined - A few of the cautions were:- immediate departure from the location of your plane, after setting it on fire and destroying secret equipment and material; if a jump, the hiding of your chute and then departure; a check on your person for anything which might be of value to the enemy, and its' destruction; approaching a civilian only if he is alone and unarmed; and never putting implicit trust in any native, be friendly and courteous, but wary; and in this particular situation, lying low and waiting till our forces come up. Challenge words and their respective replies were good only in meeting with paratroopers and if they were used within the correct designated time intervals. Examples of same are:

<u>CHALLENGE WORD</u>	<u>REPLY WORD</u>
Uncle	Sam
Troop	Carrier
Red	Beret
Air	Borne

And in the case of capture, the men were reminded that the only information they should and have to divulge is; their name, rank and Army serial number. And should the occasion for emergency landings arise, they were, if possible, to make for the four regular emergency landing fields along the southern coast of England.

The pilots were also instructed to bring all "Refusals" (men who did for any reason at all not jump), if any, to the Group S-2 Office. Then with a few more words of advice, the Captain yielded to Maj. Alexander Helms, the Group Communications Officer. Maj. Helms outlined and matter-of-factly enumerated the radio navigational aids and communications requirements. A medium frequency radio beacon

S E C R E T

A Paratroop Briefing: (Cont'd)

would be in constant operation, throughout the mission, at both departure points. At March the beacon would send out coded "M" transmissions on 1495 KC; at Aldeburgh it would send out coded "A" transmissions on 1688 KC. Air to Sea Rescue Procedure also MF DF operation would be the preset section J frequency of the Liaison set. A "REBECCA" aid would be set up at "Tampa", coded "K". The IFF would be turned on for the entire mission by all the nine-plane element leaders only. For Air to Air and Air to Ground communication channel "D" of the VHF set was allocated. Then a dramatic touch was injected into the enumeration by the telling of the WT coded recall transmission of "Hobknob".

Then Capt. Albert E. Baker came in with the weather, synoptic. In effect he described the weather condition as undependable and variable. Thereupon Lt. Col. Faulkner made the statement that higher Headquarters, aware of the weather situation, notified his office that the mission would be tentative until 0300 hours and, if not postponed before then, would come off.

The briefing was brought to an end with an appropriate morale element. Colonel Clayton Stiles, Group Commander, defined the underlying purpose for the mission, how it tied in with the major activity on the Western Front and its' desired effect. The Colonel also opined that the mission could be most descriptively termed a mission of opportunity. Then, wishing the men good luck, he bid them goodnight. He also might have kept his fingers crossed for himself as he had scheduled himself to lead the Group in.

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

A Summary of the "MARKET" Series:

The squadron, as well as the group, probably had the greatest amount of combat experience in the 3rd week of this month than in any like period in its' history - not necessarily in the number of missions accomplished but in the scope of the campaign planned.

After three alerts at different intervals in the past several weeks, what was to prove the first operation of the new First Airborne Army took place on Sunday, September 17th, when men of the 356th Battalion, 1st Brigade, British 1st Airborne Division, were dropped in the area of Arnhem, Holland. The mission, made in full daylight under a blue, sunny sky, followed a course from the east Anglian coast of England to the delta of the Scheldt River, and thence over the flooded Lowlands to the important Lower Rhine area, thus skipping the difficult water barriers and placing the Airborne Troops in a position to threaten the northern end of the Germans' Siegfried Line.

On Monday, the 18th, the same eighteen planes of the squadron carried British Airborne again - this time elements of the Fourth Brigade - to a DZ very close to that of the first day. On this occasion, however, the luck which had attended the squadron since after the second day of the Sicilian invasion, deserted us. Those in the formation were dismayed to see #001 and #839 fall out for emergency landings. The former, on engine afire, just after reaching the DZ and before all its' paratroopers were seen to leave the plane; the latter a short distance from the DZ on the way back. Listed as missing in action....and whom we all pray will return safely despite the unhappy circumstances under which they went down. They are ten of the most capable and technically proficient men in their various fields that we have in the squadron. Captains Egbert and Kerz (Flight Leaders) and their Co-Pilots, Lts. Jerome and Haagenson; Navigators, Lts Feldman and Stephens; Crew Chiefs Eastman and DeSantis. In the Communications Department we are missing two men to whom we are accustomed to refer to as members of the "original thirteen" (The Thirteen men who came into the squadron on December 2, 1942, to form the basis of the Communications Section; only M/Sgt. Gimbel and S/Sgt. Spitz preceded them). These two men are our Assistant Communications Chief, T/Sgt. William G. Buckley and Staff Sergeant Jake Yapel. Communications will sadly miss such experienced men as these if they are not to come back to us. But more even than this, all men of the squadron will grieve to lose men who have been close friends to us all, and with whom we have lived for the past twenty-one months as comrades, in work and play.

Of the planes which did return, several received bad hits. #970, piloted by Lt. Col. Smith, had a sizable piece of its' left wing blown out; #331 recieved a similar damage; #325 had its' left main gasoline tank pierced in four places by a piece of flak; but #026 was hit worst of all, its' cabin fairly peppered with flak holes and landing gear damaged - necessitating its' landing by Pilot Ferguson at Woodbridge to remove Crew Chief Novack and three paratroopers who were wounded. Cpl. Einarsen, Radio Operator, came off rather lucky; a 30 calibre bullet ripped thru the left elbow of his battle jacket and only made a minor laceration on the arm.

From Tuesday through Friday the squadron stood by each day to take in members of the Polish Paratroop Brigade. On Thursday a takeoff was finally made but due to unfavorable weather the major portion of the squadron, led by Captain Hein, returned to Saltby at 1700 hours - finding a hole directly over the Field and

S E C R E T



S E C R E T

A Summary of the "MARKET" Series: (Cont'd)

letting down from 10,000 feet for a safe landing. Planes #664 and 331, piloted by Lts. Schneider and Seckel (with Cpls. Bevier and Clear as Radio Operators) went over the DZ with other squadrons from the Group and dropped their troopers and parapacks without incident despite very heavy fire around the DZ. #149, Lt. Doversberger piloting, reached Eindhoven but found itself alone and deemed it advisable to return to Base. All planes were prepared for a takeoff on Friday afternoon, the 22nd, but bad weather over the Continent was responsible for another delay. And now the mission has been cancelled altogether, since the 315th Group - which also was unable to make its' drop on Thursday - is to consolidate the "sticks" of jumpers assigned to us with their own. The DZ, incidentally, had been set back to a safer area southwest of Nijmegen from whence the troopers will be taken by Motor Lorry to the fighting front near Arnhem.

The Polish Troops - most come from Russian concentration camps by way of Turkey, Greece, Africa and France and have been training in England for three or four years - have the greatest grudge fight with the Germans of any Nationality we have met, and each day's delay was a severe disappointment to these men. When they did get into the fighting, from all reports, they gave a heroic account of themselves.

S E C R E T

# Operation Market Garden, Sep 1944

## REBECCA SETTINGS

ENROUTE { TRANSMIT 'B'  
RECEIVE 'C'

DZ { TRANSMIT 'C'  
RECEIVE 'A'  
CODED 'K'

