



**A REPORT OF THE ELECTRICAL TROUBLE ENCOUNTERED
BY AIRCRAFT (A/C) 42-63417**

**By: Flight Officer J. W.T. THOMPSON
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The Crew of A/C 42-63417 (*Rushin' Rotation*) took off from base at 0017 the morning of Feb. 1st 1945 with everything functioning properly, and proceeded on course to Singapore. The trip out to our turning point was uneventful with the exception of observing flares, presumably from other B-29s, on two occasions.

The weather was about as briefed except that, nearing Georgetown, it built up considerably at times and consequently we bypassed the rough stuff, and when it looked fairly smooth we went right through.

An hour from the assembly point we started our ascent from our altitude of 6,000 ft. to the base altitude of 20,000. At this time we had under observation four other B-29s. One of them, A/C 42-24703 (*American Beauty*) with Jack Goeringer flying it, was close enough to us to refer to it as a loose formation.

We had just reached altitude and were approximately 10 minutes away from the assembly point when suddenly the front compartment became engulfed in a mass of smoke. Immediately the interphone and command set went dead. Not knowing the trouble momentarily, we headed the ship toward land, about 10 miles away, figuring that if conditions worsened we could always bail out; but we hadn't even completed the turn before we realized what had happened, so we made a 180 degree and started for Georgetown, the secondary target.

A diagnosis of our trouble revealed that we had a sudden overload of our electrical system, resulting in burning out of the two turbo amplifiers and five generators, two of which later began to operate. The radar system was burning to such an extent that it necessitated the use of a fire extinguisher to quench it and all radios and the interphone system. The Radio Operator replaced burnt-out tubes and patched up his equipment, enabling him to transmit our trouble and position and got the receiver to work. It was difficult to pick up anything on it, so at times he had very poor reception, if any at all.

We approached the target area and had it in view for the last forty miles in. Our heading was 360 degrees and we skirted the coastline until we reached a point approximately 15 miles away. Then we swung over to the right, to give us a longer run, then back to the left, picking up a heading 335 degrees into the target. The Automatic Flight Control Equipment (AFCE) was out so we made a manual run, doing evasive action up to 30 seconds from the release point, then straightened out for "Bombs Away". No flak was observed.

I had given orders to the Navigator to go back and instruct the Gunners to keep the AFCE equipment off unless we were under direct attack, because I figured that turning on the equipment would result in using more power than our few generators could stand.

**The Story of The “General Billy Mitchell Group”
468th Bomb Group (VH) – From the CBI to the Marianas**



Immediately after bombs away, two fighters were seen climbing toward us from three and nine o'clock, the one at nine just reaching our altitude of 19,500 and turning in for a pass.

Their speed was not excessive because of their climb, so I increased power to 2300 R.P.M. and 39” manifold pressure and dropped the nose, swinging out toward the sea. We lost 5,000 ft. and indicated 275 M.P.H. for approximately 10 minutes. At the end of that time we lost sight of the fighters, so I decreased power and took a headlong for home.

Our bombing results were good for the first 2 bombs, which landed in the target area. Due to a malfunction, the last 2 bombs hung-up for an instant, resulting in their landing over the aiming point in the water.

The trip home was uneventful and we landed about 1500.

Below: L to R front: Thompson-Flight Engineer; Brown-Bombardier; Reida-Pilot; Marsh-Navigator; Popiak-Co-Pilot. Back Row: Nichols-Radio Operator; Mulligan-Senior Gunner; McConnell-Right Gunner; Petras-Tail Gunner; Copeland-Radar Operator. 792nd Squadron.



468th Bomb Group photo