



### HEADQUARTERS 468<sup>TH</sup> BOMBARDMENT GROUP – MAY 1944

During this month the strength of our Bomb Group increased from 209 Officers and 952 Enlisted Men to 404 Officers and 1843 Enlisted Men. This large increase was due to the arrival of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Maintenance Squadrons as well as the arrival of some Combat Crews. Of these, 14 Officers and 150 Men were sent to our Advanced Base, A-7, in China to establish and prepare that Base for future operations.

On May 1<sup>st</sup> there were 11 B-29 aircraft on the field, while on May 31<sup>st</sup> this number increased to 12.

Colonel Howard E. Engler, C.O. of the Group, arrived during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of the month and assumed command, relieving Lt. Colonel T.S. Faulkner, Deputy Commander.

Three B-29s from this group were lost in May. Two losses occurred in Karachi, India while the planes were enroute to Kharagpur. It was in one of these crashes that Lt. David A. Castleberry courageously saved the lives of two other members of his Crew. Although the other Karachi crash was minor in comparison, the B-29 involved, 63369, was not repairable.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> loss took place on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May near Sadiya, Assam, India when A/C 255 crashed on its maiden voyage over the Hump. All Crew members and passengers, with the exception of the Radar Operator, Lt. R.M. Pottol, returned safely.

Officers of the various departments of S-2, S-3 and S-4 were established in a large E-shaped building which had been built on the east side of the main runway. The building is of steel and wood construction, having been prefabricated by the Italians and used by them in Eritrea prior to its shipment to the present location. The front wing of the building has been divided into sections, which serve as offices for Group Operations, Base Operations and Base Weather. The north wing is occupied by the Intelligence Section, while S-4 and the various squadrons have offices in the Central Wing. Communications and Cryptographic Offices are in the south wing.

Another large building is being completed near the north end of the E-building. It is of corrugated iron construction and is to be used as a Briefing and Interrogation Room.

Operations of the month included 40 Cargo Transport missions to the Advance Base, and 35 Practice Radar Bombing missions over the northern Bay of Bengal area. In compliance with an order from 20<sup>th</sup> Bomber Command, a local flight of 9 planes in formation was made to determine certain performance data. Following this flight a critique was held in which all aspects of the mission were discussed. The biggest mission of the month occurred on the 30<sup>th</sup> when 10 B-29s took off for the Hump mission. Three routes were used on these cargo missions, one of which passed over enemy territory in Northern Burma, while the other two routes were further to the north.



The total number of hours flown by the Group since its arrival in this theater is 1048:30.

Perhaps one of the greatest problems – peculiar to us but normal to our location – is the one which has confronted the Maintenance Crews in the form of dust and heat. The high temperatures have made it impossible for the men to work on the planes during the midday, and the frequent dust storms have made it necessary for them to take the utmost precautions in protecting all openings on the planes from the infiltration of fine sand.

With the large numbers of Indians, whose political sympathies are difficult to determine, working in the barracks area and on the line, the security problem has also been great. A Crew member is on duty at each of the B-29s at all times and he is assisted in their protection by Military Police and guards furnished by the Indian Army. Security of operational and intelligence information has been reinforced by restricting all personnel from the S-2 and S-3 Offices, with the exception of those men who work there. All personnel have been cautioned not to discuss the B-29 or their work in the barracks or mess halls or anywhere where a wrong person might hear their conversation.

Although no organized recreational program was established, almost everyone took part in some form of athletics voluntarily; the principal sports were baseball and volleyball with an occasional football game. A temporary PX building was designated where rations of beer, candy, fruit juices, and such were sold. Plans are being made for 8 Enlisted Men's Day Rooms as well as for an Officers' Club. These facilities are to be set up as soon as buildings are available.

As the 468<sup>th</sup> became properly manned at our first overseas Base, we began to look forward to participating in actual combat operations in the near future.

#### 792<sup>ND</sup> BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON – MAY 1944

On May 1<sup>st</sup> two A/C from the 792<sup>nd</sup> were dispatched to make the first trips over the Hump to our Base in China. Lt. Sims' Crew was in A/C 6255 and Lt. Good's Crew was in A/C 6362. Fifty miles north of Jorhat, Lt. Sim's Crew was forced to bail out. The plane was a total loss. Members of the Crew were picked up within two days. Lt. Pottol, Radar Operator, was found drowned in a river near the scene of the crash. His parachute was not on his person at the time. A copy of the report of the bailing out is attached to the Group history for May. Lt. Good and Crew completed the trip to A-7 and became the first Crew to fly the Hump in a B-29. On May 2<sup>nd</sup> Major Van Horne and Crew arrived in A/C 3353. May 4<sup>th</sup> Col. Edmundson's Crew and Capt. Skelley's Crew arrived in A/C 6264 and A/C 6230 respectively. Major Pattillo and Crew arrived in A/C 6271 on May 5<sup>th</sup>. Major McPherson and Crew arrived in A/C 6356 on May 9<sup>th</sup>, completing the movement of our A/C from Salina to Kharagpur.



The major difficulties to date seemed to be the cylinder head temperature. In Cairo, Egypt some of our planes were forced to take off up hill. Take offs were thus much harder on engines and cylinder head temperatures were over the prescribed top of 2,500.

The Crews then started ferrying gas to our Advanced Base at A-7. One of the difficulties encountered on these trips so far is that the plane is forced to take on an excess load of gas on the return trip due to inaccurate weather forecasting. This difficulty will minimize as weather Officers become more familiar with the peculiarities of the climate in our new location and area of operation.

Upon arriving at Kharagpur the Combat Crews were impressed by the fact our British allies in charge of the Base had provided balloons to surround the field, attached to cables at low altitude, to prevent low level strafing and a Canadian Fighter Unit standing by near the Base to defend us from high level attacks. They were nice friends to have around.

#### 13<sup>TH</sup> BOMBARDMENT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON – MAY 1944

In the early morning of Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the troop train arrived at the town of Kharagpur in the Province of Bengal. The Squadron detrained at 0830 and proceeded by truck convoy to Kharagpur Army Air Base. This ended 3 months of an odyssey, which brought the 13<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Maintenance Squadron halfway around the world.

The Squadron found a squadron area prepared for immediate habitation. Through the efforts of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Charles Quinn and S/Sgt. James Benson, of our supply system, both of whom had arrived much earlier in an advance party, tents had been pitched in the area and were ready for occupancy. These tents were of British manufacture, designed for tropical climates, and were long enough to accommodate 6 men. The Enlisted Men were immediately assigned to tents by section. Officers were assigned quarters in barracks of a native type of bamboo and cement construction with thatched roofs. The remainder of that day was spent by all men bathing and scrubbing away the accumulated dirt of several days of train travel, setting up their sand-fly bars and otherwise making their quarters livable.

On the following morning at 0900 a meeting of the Squadron was held in the Squadron area. At this meeting Capt. Elbert H. Greene of Group S-2 spoke on the necessity for silence in the matters of military information in this locality. And Capt. Donald O. Howard, Medical Officer, spoke to the men on the subject of safeguarding their health from the danger of heat exhaustion, malaria, dysentery, venereal and other diseases prevalent in this climate. The rest of the day was spent by most of the men in becoming oriented to their new surroundings. Many who were still unaccustomed to the heat were suffering discomfort. Within a few days the various sections in the Squadron began to return to their respective specialties. Squadron began to return to their respective specialties.



Men not needed in their sections for the first 2 weeks were assigned to digging slit trenches in the Squadron area, in the event enemy planes made an attack.

For the 1<sup>st</sup> two weeks the shortage and inadequacy of facilities for shower baths caused some inconvenience, especially since excessive perspiration and large amounts of wind-blown dust made frequent shower baths necessary. Some relief was provided by bringing water into the area by truck and thus making helmet baths possible. Eventually a shower room near the Squadron area was completed, and although its size was such that it was constantly crowded, it did much to relieve the problem of personal cleanliness. Laundry service was arranged by the Squadron supply section. In addition to this, many of the men found that individual laundry service could be had through natives in the locality.

During the early part of the month the Squadron ate in the Mess Hall of the 14<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Maintenance Squadron, which, together with the 16<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Maintenance Squadron, had come from Salina, Kansas by way of the Pacific. Having arrived at this Base 1 month before our arrival, they had their mess hall well set up and in operation. Meanwhile our own mess hall was being readied for use. S/Sgt. Thomas Ramsey and the personnel of the mess section had to start with practically nothing, building most of the benches and tables, and encountering difficulty in obtaining transportation and many materials needed, notably wire screen and fly dope for fly control. On May 14<sup>th</sup> meals were served in the new mess hall. Many difficulties continue to confront the mess section in its preparation of meals. The rations, according to S/Sgt. Ramsey, are poor and the meals are difficult to balance. About 80% of the fresh vegetables are of poor quality, and at times, breakfast meats, such as sausage and bacon, are not available. The scarcity of ice often makes it impossible to chill the iceboxes sufficiently for proper preservation of food and serving of cool beverages. The construction of the building and arrangement are poor. Yet it is a tribute to the willingness and efficiency of the mess personnel that in spite of these handicaps the meals are well prepared and palatable.

The Medical Section, under Captain Maxwell, has been forced to operate practically under field conditions due to lack of supplies and equipment. Even so a necessary instrument, such as a microscope, could not be obtained until very near the end of the month. Many cases of heat exhaustion, due to loss of body salt through perspiration, showed up soon after arrival. This situation improved as the men became accustomed to the climate and began to take salt tablets regularly. Cases of athlete's foot were found to be usually very severe because of the excessive sweating partially attributable to the heavy footgear worn by the men. A number of cases of Dhobie Itch, or Marking Nut Dermatitis, appeared during the month. This is reported by Captain Maxwell to result from the use, by native launderers, of the juice of the betel nut to mark clothing. Tropical diarrhea and a few cases of amoebic dysentery appeared. This is considered partly due to minor faults in the facilities for cleaning mess gear. Steps are being taken to eliminate these problems.



The Supply Section has encountered some difficulty in securing mess equipment. Clothing is readily obtainable, but some trouble has been experienced in getting sizes ordered. In addition to supplying our Squadron, duties now include supplying the 792<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Squadron. The limitation of weight in flying to this Base from the US made it impossible for members of the 792<sup>nd</sup> to receive their full issue of equipment before leaving. In the supplying of these shortages, the Supply Section has been handicapped by the failure of forms 32 and other records to arrive.

Notable changes in the personnel on active duty with the Squadron are the addition of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Charles Quinn and S/Sgt. James Benson of the Supply Section, Lt. Robert E. Wirth, Administrative Officer, and nine men of the Radar section, all of whom preceded the Squadron. Lt. Robert C. Geyer, RCM Officer, arrived on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Losses to the Squadron include two Officers, Lts. Brown and Pidhayny, and 37 Enlisted Men from various sections, who during the month were sent on detached service “over the Hump” to the Advanced Base in China.

The payroll for the month of April was paid, in Rupees and Annas, on Saturday, May 15<sup>th</sup> and the payroll for this month was signed on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Under a new Table of Organization, containing a small number of new specialty classifications, many men were reclassified.

#### 793<sup>RD</sup> BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON – MAY 1944

During the month of May, with the arrivals of the majority of the B-29s bringing the total number of ships on hand to 8, the Squadron strength is now 72 Officers and 78 Enlisted Men. Everyone who was in the Squadron in Salina, Kansas has now completed the overseas movement with the exception of Lt. Arnold’s and Lt. Saunder’s Crews.

There were 11 corporals promoted to Sergeants, 3 Sergeants promoted to Staff, 1 Staff to Tech and T/Sgt. W. Kolynich received his Master Sergeant rating.

Total flying time accumulated while in the theater to date is 182 hours. Five cargo operations trips have been made over the Hump, all crossings successful and uneventful, except that Lt. Pilchard and Lt. Sloan and Crews were in the forward area for 9 days accomplishing an engine change. Fifteen bombing and gunnery training flights have been flown in addition to the number of transition and test trips. The 793<sup>rd</sup> was assigned the first tanker, and Capts. Joyce and Michaliszyn have made one trip over the Hump with this stripped B-29.

Many of the Crews are now attempting to find names for their ships – the only ones so far are Major Miller – A/C 3356 “The Georgia Peach” made at home and flown by a hometown boy – and Major Ladd – A/C 314 “Totin’ to Tokyo” with a pair of dice, 7 for Crew seven and 11 for the eleven members.



At the end of the month, the 793<sup>rd</sup> was assigned to lead the largest Group formation attempted in this theater. Major East was to fly the formation to conform with a number of Bomber Command provisions to determine the length of time needed for assembly, fuel consumption, practice formation and evasive action.

<u>Ship Nos.</u>	<u>Pilot</u>	<u>Crew</u>	<u>Ship Nos.</u>	<u>Pilot</u>	<u>Crew</u>
42-6256	Major East	1	42-6333	Capt. Michalyszyn	5
	Capt. Berman	10	42-63355	Major Hatfield	3
42-6376	Capt. Matthews	3	42-93826	Lt. Pilchard	6
	Capt. Darden	4	42-6314	Maj. Ladd	7
42-63356	Maj. Millar	2		Lt. Sloan	14
	Lt. Bores	13	42-6229	Capt. Hughes	9
42-6333	Capt. Joyce	11			

#### 14<sup>TH</sup> BOMBARDMENT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON – MAY 1944

As of May 1, 1944, the total strength was 374 Enlisted Men and 19 Officers. Some enlisted personnel were transferred from Squadron to A-7 (our Forward Base), but there was a net gain of 3 because of newly assigned men.

The Squadron is pretty well set up for quarters. Slit trenches have been dug in case of air attack. The unit has its own mess hall; the 793<sup>rd</sup> Bombardment Squadron eats with the 14<sup>th</sup>. The food has been fairly good considering conditions. Scarcity of ice sometimes makes it impossible to have cold water and other beverages at mess.

The personnel on the line have been kept busy, and have found it necessary to put in 12 to 16 hours a day at times. Most of the work here is done between sundown and sunrise for two reasons: First, because the planes are always available and second, because it is cool enough then to work. The extreme heat makes it impossible to work efficiently during the day. Toward the end of the month there was some rain, which caused the temperature to drop considerably. These are said to be "pre-monsoon" rains.

There was some diarrhea this month, especially among the Officers. No definite conclusion was drawn as to why this sickness was present only among the Officers.

Because of the high temperatures during the week, the work schedule is arranged so as to have a siesta from 11:30 to 14:30.



### 794<sup>TH</sup> BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON – MAY 1944

Itineraries of two Crews not included in the April History follow:

**Crew #4, Crew Commander Capt. Schonlau, left SHAAF on April 13<sup>th</sup>, arriving at Presque Isle, Maine the same day. On the 15<sup>th</sup> they took off from Presque Isle, making a brief stop at Gander Lake, Newfoundland, and landed at Marrakech, Africa on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Leaving Marrakech on the 18<sup>th</sup> they reached Cairo, Egypt on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Here they were held up by 20<sup>th</sup> Bomber Command order and by the rupture of two gas tanks. They were unable to leave until May 3<sup>rd</sup>, and were forced down the same day in Lydda, Palestine where an engine change delayed them 8 days. They left on May 11<sup>th</sup>, arriving in Karachi, India the same day. Leaving Karachi on the 13<sup>th</sup>, they arrived at Kharagpur the same day.**

**Crew #6, Crew Commander Capt. Feeley, left SHAAF on April 13<sup>th</sup>, arriving at Presque Isle the same day and Gander Lake on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Due to illness of two Crew members they were held up at Gander Lake until May 17<sup>th</sup>, when they took off for Marrakech and landed there on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Leaving Marrakech the next day they reached Cairo on the 20<sup>th</sup>. They left Cairo on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, landing in Karachi, India the same day. The following day they took off from Karachi and arrived in Kharagpur.**

**During the month the Squadron performed 8 round trip missions over the Hump to A-7, plus numerous training missions and local flights. Total hours flown were 194. Number of aircraft assigned was 9. Squadron strength, 77 Officers and 93 Enlisted Men. There were 7 radar Enlisted Men on DS in Salina, Kansas. On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, Lt. Burke, Squadron Adjutant, departed for D.S. at A-7. Crew #10, Crew Commander Capt. Yeates, was transferred to the O.T.U. SHAAF. Salina, Kansas in April.**

### 15<sup>TH</sup> BOMBARDMENT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON – MAY 1944

**Unit arrived at APO 493, New York, NY on May 2, 1944 and was quartered at Salua Air Base. As of May 1<sup>st</sup> the total strength, present and absent, was 340 Enlisted Men and 17 Officers. Total strength at month's end is 330 Enlisted Men and 14 Officers. Loss of personnel from the organization was due largely to transfer to the forward area at A-7.**

**The Squadron has been busily engaged during the month in discharging its duties as a Maintenance Squadron in maintenance of planes. It has also been busily engaged in establishing quarters for its personnel and otherwise getting set up at this new location.**

**The organization was handicapped somewhat at first by the heat, not being accustomed to it, and also the prevalence of fine dust being blown ahead of a prevailing wind.**

**Because of the heat and the area being newly established, sanitary conditions have been checked constantly and comparatively little sickness has occurred.**



Duty hours are interrupted from 11:30 to 14:30 for a rest period during the extreme heat of the day.

#### 795<sup>TH</sup> BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON – MAY 1944

The average strength for the month of May was 63 Officers and 70 Enlisted Men. Those on detached service are: 6 Enlisted Men (Radar Section): Crew #5 with 5 Officers and 6 Enlisted Men; Crews #10 with 5 Officers and 5 Enlisted Men, and the Squadron Adjutant.

There are 14 completely trained Combat Crews of which 2 are on detached service. There are 2 Officers and 2 Enlisted Men acting as alternates.

The Aircraft assigned the Squadron are: A/C 6365, A/C 6358, A/C 6231, A/C 6274, A/C 6253, A/C 6242, and A/C 6235. A/C 6235 is on detached service at Presque Isle.

The flying time for the month of May, through the 25<sup>th</sup>, totals 226:30. During this time 31 missions were flown, 22 of which were successful. Of these, 11 were practice bombings and 7 were completed successfully. 20 were Hump missions, of which 15 were completed.

Of outstanding contribution to the Squadron was the action of Lt. Castleberry, who rendered a performance "beyond the line of duty" at Karachi, India. He has been recommended by the Board of Awards and Decorations to receive the Soldier's Medal. Lt. Castleberry is now Asst. Operations Officer.

The Squadron has 2 softball teams, recently organized; one team is all Officers and the other all Enlisted Men. Some stiff competition can be expected in the near future.

#### 16<sup>TH</sup> BOMBARDMENT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON – MAY 1944

On May 1<sup>st</sup> the total strength, present and absent, was 368 Enlisted Men and 18 Officers. Three Officers and 41 Enlisted Men were transferred to A-7, our forward Base, reducing our strength to 327 Enlisted Men and 15 Officers at month's end.

The Squadron carried on its usual garrison duties of aircraft maintenance in a very creditable manner. The aircraft this Squadron is assigned to lead the group in hours flown and missions completed.

Working hours were revised so that the men do not have to work in the torrid heat and dust during the early afternoon from 11:30 to 14:30.

Most of the work on location site, and establishment, has been completed. The men are becoming acclimated to their new surroundings and once more are functioning smoothly.



Two enlisted men of this Squadron were forced to bail out over the jungle while flying in Northern India on the way to A-7. The experience of one of the men is described below.

**SOMEWHERE IN INDIA – MAY 1944**  
By Sgt. William J. McCarthy

I was a passenger on plane A/C 255 going on a mission to APO #210. We left Kharagpur at 0700 on May 1, 1944. Due to the heavy load the take-off was a long one, which required most of the runway. I was seated in the Radar section of the plane, along with S/Sgt. Frank J. Lewis, the Crew Chief, Radar Officer Lt. Robert M. Pottol and the other passenger, Cpl. Armando J. Maceyra. After about 4 hours in flight, we were at an altitude of 23,000 feet and had flown over the first ridge of the "Hump", when I was told by Cpl. Maceyra, who had a headset on, that we were feathering #1 engine and the Pilot had decided to turn back. The Pilot had contacted an airfield to make an emergency landing, but was told they were closed. Shortly after this, #2 engine began to smoke and we were fast losing altitude. Soon after this, the bell sounded from the Pilot's seat warning us to prepare to bail out. Sgt. Lewis disconnected his headphone and told Cpl. Maceyra and myself to bail out. We were flying at an altitude of 11,000 feet at this time. After Sgt. Lewis had knocked open the pressure valve we gained altitude quickly and bailed out at 18,000 feet.

How did I feel when told to bail out? Well, I wasn't scared. I didn't hesitate, none of us did. To me it was just an order and I took it in the same way I might any order given me in the Army. Cpl. Maceyra and I began to tighten our leg straps and I followed Lt. Pottol out of the Radar section to the door from which I bailed out. On bailing out I had a little difficulty getting clear of the door as the force of the wind from the speed on the plane was pushing me back. I finally got loose and jumped out. While hanging in mid air I had no sensation whatever. I counted to 15 slowly and pulled the ripcord. The snap of the chute was terrific, and as it snapped open my web belt, with canteen, knife, ammunition pouch and medical kit pulled loose and dropped away.

After that everything was very quiet and on the way down I hit a cloud heavy with moisture which tossed me back and forth quite a bit and I became air sick. I floated down through one cloud after another and as the air became clearer I saw about 7 chutes floating down below me and our plane flying in a straight line in the other direction. I later found out that the Pilot and Co-Pilot were still in the plane and bailed out at 4,000 feet. I took notice of the ground below as I approached it and tried to guide my chute to land nearer the others. The ground as I neared it appeared like a meadow, which I was soon to find out was far from a meadow. The wind tossed me about a few times, which confused my sense of direction as to where the river was that I had passed.



I landed very hard on my back in elephant grass and bamboo growth, which was about 15 to 20 feet in height. I was dazed for a few seconds, but detached the chest and leg straps of my parachute at once. I reached for the jungle kit on the bottom of my chute and took out the machete and leather gloves and began to make a clearing in which to lay out my chute. After this was completed, I returned to the tree, which I had missed by a few feet, and after making a clearing opened my ration kit and ate some malted milk tablets. I climbed the tree and looked for a clearing or a river, but the outlook was discouraging. While up in the tree, I began to yell and call out as loudly as I could; after about 10 minutes, I got down on the ground and began to hack a path, first to the east about a hundred yards, then to the west, north and south. It began to rain and since the brush and growth was full of thorns and hard to cut being wet, the task became harder and after an hour of hacking, I got tired and returned to the tree and began to shout.

After what seemed a long time of shouting and yelling I finally heard someone answer my shouts. He continued to shout back to me until he was about 100 yards away. Since he couldn't get through to me I told him to keep calling to me and I would cut my way through the jungle in the direction of his voice. I reached him at 2:15 pm and it was Lt. Bloes, our Bombardier. I remember the time because it was then that I set my watch with his. Lt. Bloes removed the map from his money belt, after looking it over we carefully decided that our best bet was to walk to the south. After a short distance we found a short stream and followed it until it ended. We climbed a tree nearby and after about a half an hour of looking over the landscape for an open field or river, we came down and since it was raining very hard, decided to spend the night under the shelter of the tree.

Lt. Bloes and I had just one bar of K ration between us for supper and since I had no canteen, I shared his canteen just taking a few sips of water. Neither of us had much sleep that night between the rain and the mosquitoes. At 0600 Tuesday morning we started out in pouring rain toward the south following animal tracks. At noon Tuesday we came to a small clearing and shortly afterwards heard the sound of an airplane motor. Looking up we saw a C-67. Lt. Bloes began to wave the orange colored poncho, which was in his jungle kit while I lighted a fuse and held it high.

The plane saw our signals and tilted its wings letting us know that we had been spotted. After circling a few times, one of the men in the plane threw down a shoe. Lt. Bloes picked it up and found in the toe a message stating that one of the Crew was hurt and was about 300 yards northeast of us. As the plane continued to fly over us the pilot and other men in the plane would point out the direction we were to go. We started out in the direction but the jungle was most difficult to get through. At about four o'clock it looked as if we were getting nowhere since we had to change our direction so many times in order to find a place that could be hacked through. Finally we hit an animal trail that brought us out of the jungle to a place that was much easier to get through.



Soon we had overcome the most difficult places and came out to a meadow. It was just about 1700 when we heard the sound of a C-67 and after lighting a fuse, we soon had the plane circling over us. The pilot dropped a note saying the injured man was now about 500 yards west of our position and threw down two boxes of K rations and two canteens of water. Since we were now in an open field with the underbrush only four feet high, the going was much easier. Running most of the way, we kept yelling to the injured man and by 1800 were shaking hands with Sgt. Lewis, the Crew Chief who had hurt his knee when landing. The members of the C-67 had furnished him with cigarettes, water and K rations. Shortly after landing, Sgt. Lewis had made a half tent shelter with his parachute to protect himself from the rain. We spent the night with Sgt. Lewis for the pilot of the plane had told him to stay put as a rescue party was on the way.

Wednesday morning at about 1030 we saw two natives coming our way with Cpl. Maceyra, Sgt. Ernie Dunlevy and Lt. Bob Harden. They had met with the natives the day before and had spent the night with them. The natives were taking them to Lokinpur where a fighter squadron was stationed. They had come upon us unexpectedly as they were not looking for us. We joined the other members of the Crew and with the help of the natives were soon out of the jungle. We rode across the river in their dugout canoes. We walked about 12 miles in the pouring rain and in mud over our ankles. Although the walk must have been very painful to Sgt. Lewis he refused to let us carry him. We entered the town of Lokinpur at 5 pm. We were then taken by bus to the airfield about 3 ½ miles from town. We were taken to the dispensary of the 88<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, after seeing the natives who had brought us out of the jungle receive a reward of 50 rupees each. The Enlisted Men and Officers of this Squadron were more than kind and did their utmost to give us comfort and medical attention. On Thursday May 5<sup>th</sup> after lunch, we left Lokinpur Camp and were taken by plane to Jorhat. At Jorhat we were taken to the station hospital and remained there until Friday at 1300. After being discharged from the hospital we were taken to the Jorhat airfield. Due to lack of transportation we stayed at Jorhat until noon Saturday when we took off in a C-46 for Kharagpur. We arrived at Kharagpur at 1600.

I sustained only badly torn legs due to the thorns encountered in every part of the jungle. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the people who have given so much time and good sense to get the jungle kit together. I make only two suggestions: that a short pair of leggings and a whistle be added to the jungle kit.

Adding to Sgt. McCarthy's comments some forty five years later, Lt. Dick (Smitty) Smith, Co-Pilot on this Crew, adds some personal experiences: After assuring all Crew members were out, he bailed out, leaving the Pilot, Sims, as the only one left to step out. After his chute opened he broke through a layer of clouds, and saw the plane, in flames heading for him. In his words "it was the biggest and ugliest B-29 I ever saw." Smitty took the Lord's name in vain. But the Lord overlooked it so the plane passed below Smitty as he dropped. Sims, who was still with the plane, remarked later "I could count the nails in your shoes."



Breaking through the last layer of clouds Smitty saw the plane crash directly under him. He landed within 100 yards of the wreckage on the other bank of a nearby river. Because of his nearness to the wreckage he was spotted by an American plane from a Base nearby and a native soon showed up to guide him to a spot where he could be picked up. He rejoined Sims very soon afterwards and both were, after a day or so, on their way back to Kharagpur.

Editor’s comment: You possibly have noted negative remarks in the History so far about conditions and other countries’ forces we were served by. There were many problems to overcome but all troops were coping very well. For instance: There was no electrical power available in camp when we first arrived. Our dentists were all set up to drill our teeth with a bicycle powered by some dedicated GIs pumping away to drive the rear wheel that in turn powered a V belt pulling a much small 2-inch pulley. The ratio was good enough to drive the drill at a very high speed.

Ice was unavailable, but we were able to buy it from Calcutta. The only problem here was we paid for a 50 lb. chunk that was packed in a gunnysack of sand. When received at our Base, there was only a 25 lb. chunk left. We enjoyed what we received but things improved very much when our electric generators arrived from the States. Ice cream was at the top of the list.

Please note the improvement of morale, as indicated by the Historians’ comments, as we began Combat Operations. The American Spirit came alive when everyone became more involved in the job we came to do. Our ground Crews were very important to the effort and worked night and day to keep our planes on the ready when needed.

PICTURE BELOW: No sooner is the mission accomplished than an artist in the Squadron is painting another bomb on the fuselage.

Each camel represents a round trip over the Himalayan Mountains (called the HUMP).

During these trips we were usually hauling fuel and bombs for an upcoming mission over Japan, Sumatra (now Taiwan), Mongolia or occupied ports along the Eastern Chinese Seaboard. After the 3<sup>rd</sup> trip, the mission was flown.

ATC eventually did most of the hauling, using other aircraft, so more attention could be given to using B-29s for combat missions only. Some of our pilots assisted ATC with this job also, using C-46 and C-109 aircraft. We wish we knew the guy’s name as he sure took pride in himself and his work.



Picture courtesy HUGH MORSE- Warner-Robbins, GA, First Photo Lab.