Goodrich’s crew was the next to last to leave Salina, KS in A/C 42-6242 with a black Cocker Spaniel named “Duke” on board. This was the first airplane received by the 795th Bomb Squad and had 481 hours at the time of departure from Salina, KS. They took the normal route to Presque Isle, ME. At Presque Isle, they added to Group staff passengers, Major Meyers and Lt. Col. Smart to their crew list. These two had been on Capt. Anderson’s crew that crashed at Presque Isle. Goodrich’s crew flew to Gander Lake, Newfoundland, and Marrakech, Morocco where they were grounded for 9 days for aircraft modifications. On the next leg of their journey to Payne Field, Cairo, Egypt, they lost an engine. They used an engine delivered to them by the Air Transport Command. During engine slow time over the Suez Canal, they hit a vulture damaging one of the cylinders of the new engine. While this cylinder was being replaced, the crew was able to visit the sites of Cairo and the Pyramids. After this engine repair, they made a flight to Karachi, India for an overnight stay. A flight from Karachi to Kharagpur included an overflight of the Taj Mahal. Upon arrival at Kharagpur, #242 required many days of additional maintenance before the first mission on June 5 1944 to Bangkok.

This plane was named “Monsoon Goon.” On the Bangkok mission, Goodrich’s crew lost the cover for one of the top gun turrets. This cover struck the right horizontal stabilizer, and the #3 engine developed an oil leak. After the Bangkok mission, #242 was sent to the Base Depot for conversion to a tanker. The conversion required removal of all armor plating, armor glass, gun turrets, gun computers, and gun sights with the exception of the two 50 caliber machine guns in the tail turret. Two 600-gallon fuel cells were installed in each bomb-bay, and suspended from the bomb racks. At this time, #242 was remained the Esso Express, and used by the 795th Bomb Squadron as a tanker for hauling aircraft fuel from Kharagpur to A-7 in Chengtu, China. Nearly every crew in the squadron had their crew photos made in front of this plane. Nearly all of the pilots were checked out on this aircraft.

#42-6828 was brought to Kharagpur by Roger Parrish’s crew on July 5 1944. This was the first B-29 made at Boeing’s plant at Renton, Washington, and was painted © 2010 New England Air Museum. All rights reserved
olive drab. At that time, it was assigned to Goodrich’s crew, and named the “Monsoon Goon.” The Monsoon Goon was returned to the US on Dec 15 1944 with a record of 5 combat missions from India and China and 2 Hump trips.

Aircraft 42-6242 was returned to the U S on Nov. 24, 1944 after 30 Hump trips. The crew that flew 242 back to the States included Capt. Gust “Gus” Askounis, pilot, and 1st Lt. Arnold V. Noyes, Flight Engineer. The aircraft was delivered to Kelly ACFT, San Antonio, Texas on Dec. 8, 1944. This aircraft ended up as a fire drill aircraft at Lowery AFB, Denver, Colorado. According to Arnold Noyes, it was not fit to give to I. R. A. N. (Inspect and Repair As Necessary). This aircraft retained the honors of having the most flying time of all aircraft in the 468th Bomb Group at that time.

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42-6242 – Esso Express