



**HEADQUARTERS 468TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (VH)
Office of the Intelligence Officer
Smoky Hill Army Air Field**

**Herewith memoranda setting forth the History to 27 Nov 1943 of Squadrons 792,
793, 794, 795 as submitted to Group S-2 by the individual Squadrons.**



HISTORY OF THE 792ND BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON 9VH)

The 792nd Bombardment Squadron (VH) was activated on May 29, 1943, by General Order No. 78, Headquarters, 2nd AF, Fort George Wright, Washington, although it did not operate as a unit until September 15, 1943. The nucleus of the Squadron was formed by Special Order No. 149, Headquarters, Army Air Base, Great Bend, Kansas, ordering one-half of the personnel of the 676th Bombardment Squadron (VH) that station, to Smoky Hill Army Air Field, Salina, Kansas. The change of station was made on September 19 with Captain Henry R. Staeben commanding the march. Our present strength at this time was 28 Officers and 223 Enlisted Men.

Upon arrival of Smoky Hill Army Air Field, Lt. Col. James V. Edmundson a veteran of the Southwest Pacific, assumed command and operations started almost immediately with the assignment to the squadron of one B-17F, and later of two B-26Cs, two more B-17F's and one B-29. Training in transition, bombing, instruments and navigation of flying personnel began immediately. Our training program has been continuous, consisting of Group ground schools in subjects such as Chemical Warfare, Aero-Medics, and First Aid and Squadron Schools of Navigation, Intelligence, Armament, Aircraft Identification, and Engineering. Our Squadron Schools have maintained a regular schedule with other subjects being covered on non-flying and bad weather days or when ships were out of commission. Maintenance work on the airplanes being performed chiefly between the hours of 2400 and 0600.

Additional personnel have been gradually assigned for duty until the morning report for November 8, 1943 shows 89 Officers and 374 Enlisted Men total strength.



**HISTORY
OF
793RD BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON
SHAAF**

October

**Compiled by:
Lt. Joseph T. Houston
Historical Officer**



A. Organization

1. Activities of Organization

- a. **Designation** To be known as the 793rd Bomb Squadron, 468th Bombardment Group (H) was the first official action to be taken by this squadron.
- b. **Date** The date of activation and designation of the 793rd Squadron was September 15th, 1943.
- c. **Place** The Squadron came into being as a result of a division of the 444th Bombardment Group in Great Bend, Kansas.
- d. **Authority** This Squadron was activated under orders Issued by the Headquarters, 444th Bombardment Group, Great Bend, Kansas. The orders are of records of that organization dated September 15, 1943.
- e. **Sources from which personnel was obtained** The main source of personnel at that time was the 677th Bomb Squadron, 444th Group. However, other personnel was obtained both from the Training Centers in the capacities of instructors and from other combat organizations of the Second Air Force in the form of newly made Officers and Enlisted Men. Graduates of the different training centers of the United States, new graduates, that is, were later brought into the organization and they now form the majority of Officers in the 793rd. However, with the experienced personnel already on hand to supervise their instruction they are fast becoming full-fledged members of the Squadron. A few of the personnel were brought in from other combat organizations and are now undergoing their combat training again. Several Officers, pilots who had been instructors, either in Transition Schools or in Training Centers, were made available to us to take over responsible positions within the Squadron.
- f. **Names of Key Personnel** The following men form the nucleus of the 793rd:
- Major John R. East – Commanding Officer
Major John R. Miller, Jr – Operations Officer
Capt. Cecil C. Metz – Navigation Officer
Capt. Arthur R. Kingdon – Bombing Officer



Lt. Bernard Padden – Engineering Officer
Capt. Charles B. Golden – Executive Officer
Lt. Robert E. Smith – Armament Officer
Lt. E. C. Myland – Communications Officer

2. **Mission of Organization** The primary mission of the 793rd at this time is combat training. Training that will enable us to shoulder our part of the war effort and to hasten the day of inevitable Victory.

3. **Growth of Organization**
 - a. **Strength of Personnel** The 793rd now consists of 84 Officers and 372 Enlisted men.
 - b. **Facilities available** From the looks of things our facilities both for personnel and material is inexhaustible. Because of the vastness of the B-29 project and the final mission to be accomplished, it is absolutely necessary that we have priority on everything.

4. **Station of Unit**
 - a. **Date of arrival** The Squadron arrived by motor convoy at Smoky Hill Army Air Field, Salina, Kansas on Sunday, September 19, 1943.

 - b. **Reason for change In Station** The only activity which resembles a change in station by this organization was our move from Great Bend, Kansas. However, we, as members of this Squadron, were actually never stationed there, but it is worth noting insofar as it will always be remembered.

 - c. **Conditions of installations** This, I believe, was the biggest disappointment on our arrival at Smoky Hill. Carelessness on the part of other organizations here before us led to quite a bit of confusion insofar as equipment, such as desks, tables, chairs, stoves, electrical fixtures, etc., was concerned. The Officers were sadly lacking on all of these and in some instances were unable to be obtained. Dust and grime were inches thick in all places and constituted a major problem. The removal of innumerable shelves and other unnecessary fixtures also constituted another major problem. As the walls of the buildings are solely of Celotex, great care had to be taken to insure that other holes weren't knocked in them. A great



many holes were found on our arrival and each had to be plugged up. As far as quarters were concerned, we again ran into the same situation – filth, poor construction of the buildings themselves, as is plainly shown in the cheapness of the materials used and the apparent haste in which they had been thrown together. All of this combined with the fact that Winter was coming and coal stoves were to be used, again causing a dirty atmosphere, made the whole prospect for efficiency and well-being gloomy.

5. Relations with other organizations

- a. **Responsibility to higher command** As a member of the 468th Group, the 793rd Squadron is responsible and accountable to that organization and to an even higher authority, the 58th Wing.
- b. **Relations with organizations performing similar missions** Insofar as only having the same mission to accomplish, our relations with the other Squadrons to this date, have been negligible.

B. Major activities

- 1. **Primary Objective** As has already been mentioned, the primary objective of this Squadron is to train ourselves and our subordinates efficiently and competently under direction of those higher commands. In cases where this primary objective cannot be reached, that is, in individuals unable to learn or be taught, those will be disposed of and replaced.
- 2. **Plans and Procedures established** The extensive plans for combat training was a Group and a Wing coordinated effort and is too lengthy to be shown here. However, it brings to mind a passage from the Bible: "...And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." (John 21:25)
- 3. **Difficulties encountered** Until the present we have had no serious difficulties. Our personnel has in most all cases justified their being selected for this organization. Our training program is



progressing and a reasonable amount of interest is being shown by the personnel attending the lectures, as is evidenced by the number and seriousness of the questions asked the instructors.

The only real threat of difficulty that has arisen so far has been flying conditions – weather. The navigators have been somewhat hampered by the shortness of their celestial flights but as we progress in our training stages, this will be overcome. The difficulties met on our arrival at Smoky Hill as regards offices, have been altered and they have now assumed the look of a place in which work can be done efficiently.



**794TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H), AAF
Smoky Hill Army Air Field**

**Salina, Kansas
1 November 1943**

794TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON HISTORY

The 794th Bombardment Squadron was activated on August 1, 1943 by authority of Special Order No. 78, 2nd Air Force, Fort George Wright, Washington.

Actual organization was as of 15 September 1943, on Special Order No. 149, Par. 1, Headquarters, Army Air Base, Great Bend, Kansas. All personnel being drawn from the 678th Bombardment Squadron stationed at the Army Air Base, Great Bend.

Strength at time of organization was twenty (20) Officers and on hundred seventy eight (178) Enlisted Men.

By same order, this Squadron was ordered to proceed to Smoky Hill Army Air Field, Salina, Kansas as part of the 468th Bombardment Group.

Captain Charles H. Reeves was Squadron Commander, Lt. John F. Burke, Adjutant, and Sgt. Gottlieb G. Knoll, 1st Sgt.

Squadron was in place on September 19 and began training as B-29 Operational Training Unit.

Lt. Col. Edward C. Teats, formerly a member of the 19th Bomb Gp, and a veteran of the Philippine and Southwest Pacific campaigns, assumed command on the 19th of September on verbal orders Commanding Officer, 468th Bomb Gp.

New Officers and Enlisted Men began arriving, and by 25th September strength was 47 Officers and 239 Men.

Captain Charles H. Reeves was appointed Squadron Operations Officer, 25th September.

First promotion order for the Enlisted Men of the 794th became effective on 20th September, 60 men of the Squadron receiving promotions.

Lt. Col. Teats relieved of command by order of the 58th Bomb Wing and Major Robert S. Clinkscales, also a veteran of the Southwest Pacific, assumed command as of 28th September.

On 1st of October the Squadron strength stood at 256 Men and 57 Officers.

Lt. William Stewart, one of the original officers of the 794th relieved of assignment and transferred to 58th Bomb Wing, to assist in service tests on B-29 airplane.

Lt. Eugene Wornall and Lt. Stevens, long members of the 794th were relieved of assignment and sent to 18th Repl. Wing.



Basic: 794th Bomb Sq History (Continued)

30 Enlisted Men joined us as of the 9th of October, bringing Squadron strength to 59 Officers and 314 Men.

Results of monthly inspections of group messes showed the 794th Mess leading the group.

Lts. Estey and Christy promoted to Captains and 2nd Lt. Land to 1st Lt.

Captain Reeves, former Squadron Commander, relieved of assignment 794th, and assigned to 58th Bomb Wing.

Strength of Squadron on 31 October was 85 Officers and 356 Enlisted men.

**JOHN F. BURKE
2nd Lt., Air Corps
Historical Officer**



THE HISTORY OF THE 795TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON

The 795th Bombardment Squadron (VH) was activated on May 29, 1943, by General Order No. 78, Hq, 2nd A.F., Fort George Wright, Washington, although it did not come into being as an Organization until September 15, 1943, at which time Special Order No. 149, Hq., AAB, Great Bend, Kansas, was issued ordering certain personnel of the 679th Bombardment Squadron (H), that Station to form the 795th Squadron at Smoky Hill Army Air Field, Salina, Kansas. The change of station was made on September 19, 1943, by 85 Officers and 215 Enlisted Men by means of truck convoy and privately owned conveyance. Capt. Sidney L. Fouts commanded on the march and upon arrival at the new station, Major Henry H. Sullivan assumed command.

Operations started almost immediately upon our arrival at SHAAF, with the assignment to the Squadron on September 22, 1943 of a YB-29 super bomber and a B-17F bomber for the training of flying personnel in transition, navigation, instrument and bombing. A shortage of Pilot Officers, notwithstanding, twelve to sixteen hours a day, 7 days a week, soon became routine operations. Ground School, airdrome defense training (carbine and pistol firing, chemical warfare decontamination instruction), was maintained withal. September 23 brought two more airplanes to the Squadron, type B-26Cs. Continuous daily and evening operations required maintenance work on the airplanes to be performed between 2400 and 0600 o'clock. On October 11, another B-17F type airplane was assigned to the Squadron, bringing our total airplane allocation to five each of three different types.

Additional personnel were gradually assigned for duty, until the morning report for October 14, 1943 showed 65 Officers and 331 Enlisted Men total strength.