

HEAD QUARTERS
NINETY SECOND BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) AAF E-A-2
Office of the Operations Officer.
APO #557
13 May 1944

SUBJECT: Report on Planning and Execution of Operations of Mission 12 May 1944,
Merseburg, Germany.

TO : Commanding Officer, 92nd Bombardment Group(H) AAF, APO #557.

1. Comment on Planning and Execution.

a. The bomb loading for this operation was received from Headquarters 40th Combat Wing by Capt. Smyrl at 2300 hours 11 May 1944. The order called for twenty-eight (28) plus six (6) spare B-17's to be loaded with 16 X 300 GP Bombs each with 1/10 second nose fuse and 1/10 second tail fuse, plus two(2) PFF A/C.

b. The Field Order was received from Headquarters 1st Bomb Division by Lt. Col. Keck at 0045 hours, 12 May 1944. Flight plans and details of the mission were completed, briefing being set for 0545 hours and take-off time 0840 hours.

2. General Narrative.

a. Lead Group (40th Combat Wing)

(1). Take-off was accomplished by sixteen(16) B-17's and three (3) spares from the 92nd Bomb Group plus two (2) PFF aircraft. The lead ship took off at 0854 hours climbing on an assigned magnetic heading of 270 degrees, and returned to the 40th Combat Wing Buncher for assembly at 13000 feet. After completion of the group assembly, the formation departed the buncher at 1007 hours flying as lead group of the 40th Combat Wing. The high group rendezvoused with the lead group along the first assembly leg. The route over England was followed according to the flight plan, but the 92nd (Lead) group departed the coast three (3) minutes late, as it was necessary to "s" along the route to enable the Low Group to catch up and get in Combat Wing formation.

(2). The enemy coast was crossed at 1116 hours, 20,200 feet, and the formation proceeded along the proposed route over Germany reaching the I.P. at 1353 hours. Visual conditions in the target area were good except for ground haze. The lead bombardier in the PFF ship made a visual bombing run over the primary target and the bombs were released at 1403 hours from 25000 feet on a magnetic heading of 45 degrees. After bombs away the wing rallied and started descending to 20,000 feet. The enemy coast was crossed at 1604 hours and the English Coast entered 1625 hours. The formation reached the base at 1655 hours and the first ship landed at 1658 hours.

b. High Composite Group (40th Combat Wing).

(1). Take-off was accomplished by twelve (12) B-17's and three (3) spares from the 92nd Bomb Group beginning at 0840 hours. These aircraft assembled over the 40th Combat Wing Buncher at 14000 feet to form the lead and low squadrons of the High Composite Group. Six (6) aircraft from the 306th Bomb Group joined the formation at assembly to form the high squadron. The high composite group departed the buncher at 1008 hours and rendezvoused in wing formation with the lead group along the first assembly leg. The High Composite Group flew to the I.P. in combat wing formation and made a visual bombing run on the primary target. Bombs were released at 1404 hours from an

altitude of 26,100 feet on a magnetic heading of 40 degrees. The High Composite Group rallied with the lead group after bombs away and returned to base which was reached at 1655 hours.

- c. Intense accurate flak was encountered by both lead and high groups in the target area.
- d. Enemy fighter opposition was nil.
- e. Fighter rendezvous and support was good.
- f. V.H.F. Communication was satisfactory.

3. Aircraft Not Attacking:

- a. Of the twenty-eight (28) B-17's, two (2) PFF and six (6) spares that took off from the 92nd Bomb Group, twenty-eight (28) B-17's and two (2) PFF aircraft attacked the primary target.
- b. Aircraft #42-31765 returned early before becoming dispatched and A/C #42-102582 aborted after becoming dispatched. Spares replaced both of these aircraft.
- c. Of the six (6) spares that took off, four (4) returned unused. (42-97848, 42-97288, 42-97299, 42-97227).

4. Aircraft Lost.

- a. Aircraft #42-30644. This aircraft was last observed leaving the formation immediately after the target with two engines feathered.

5. Statistical Summary (includes two PFF aircraft).

	LEAD GP.	HIGH COMP GP.	TOTAL
a. Number of A/C taking off.....	21	15	36
b. Unused spares.....	2	2	4
c. A/C taking off less unused spares.....	19	13	32
d. Number of A/C dispatched.....	19	12	31
e. Number of Sorties.....	19	11	30
f. Number of A/C attacking.....	19	11	30
g. Number of A/C not attacking.....	0	2	2

Number of A/C Lost.

- a. Aircraft #42-30644 lost due to AA fire.