

HEADQUARTERS
NINETY SECOND BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) AAF
Office of the Operations Officer

E-D-4

APC #557,
21 May 1944.

SUBJECT: Report on Planning and Execution of Operations of mission
20 May 1944, Orly, France.

TO : Commanding Officer, 92nd Bombardment Group(H) AAF, APC #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 2250 hours, 19 May, 1944. The order called for twenty-four B-17's to be loaded with 6 X 1000 lb. GP bombs each with 1/10 sec. nose fuse and 1/100 sec. tail fuse, and twelve (12) B-17's to be loaded with Max. M-47 IB's.

b. The Field Order was received in two sections from Headquarters, 1st Bomb Division by Capt. Smyrl. Plan "A" was received at 0225 hours, 20 May 1944. Plan "B" was received at 0150 hours, 20 May 1944. Flight plans and details of the mission were completed, briefing being set for 0400 hours and take-off time 0655 hours.

2. General Narrative.

a. The 92nd Group was to furnish three (3) groups of twelve (12) ships each to form the 40th "B" Combat Wing. The twelve (12) aircraft which composed the high group took off beginning at 0655 hours.

b. At 0711 hours, the lead group began taking off. Visibility at this time became very poor due to low hanging patchy fog which began sweeping across the field. The seventh ship, No. 42-2001, in attempting to take-off crashed off the end of the runway and exploded. This aircraft did not become airborne. The next aircraft, No. 42-37934 commenced his take-off run but stopped approximately half way down the runway apparently having seen red flares fired by our take-off controller and received our control tower radio message to stop take-off, because of the afore mentioned accident. The pilot of the next aircraft, No. 42-97489, in line for take-off did not see the aircraft on runway due to poor visibility and presumably did not see the signals fired by take-off controller. This aircraft started his take-off and crashed into aircraft No. 42-37934 which resulted in explosion and complete disintegration of both aircraft. The remaining four (4) aircraft which were to form the low group, did not take-off due to the accident.

c. The eighteen (18) ships from the 92nd Group which completed take-off assembled over the 40th Combat Wing Buncher at 15,000 feet as a single group. The 92nd Group departed the buncher at 0825 hours as a single eighteen (18) ship formation which made up the entire 40th "B" Combat Wing. The route over England to the Coast deviated from the flight plan in compliance with an order from 40th Combat Wing Headquarters. At 0852 hours, the 92nd Group rendezvoused with and behind the 41st Combat Wing, and the English Coast was

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departed at 19,000 feet, 0857 hours. The Enemy Coast was crossed at 0929 hours, 24,500 feet. The formation reached the IP at 1006 hours and a visual bombing run was made on the primary target. Bombs were released on the lead ship at 1013½ hours from 25,000 feet on a magnetic heading of 345 degrees. Flak encountered in the target area was moderate and innacurate. After leaving the target, the group flew the proposed route back to the Enemy Coast which was departed at 1050 hours. The English Coast was entered at 1110 hours, and the base was reached at 1150 hours. Aircraft No. 42-97244 blew out a tire on landing and blocked the only runway in commission making it necessary to divert the remaining eight (8) aircraft to Basingbourne.

3. Aircraft Not Attacking.

a. The 92nd Group planned to dispatch thirty-six (36) B-17's to fly as the lead, low and high groups of the 40th Combat Wing "B". After eighteen (18) aircraft of the high and lead groups were airborne, aircraft No. 42-2001 crashed at the end of the runway while attempting to take-off. Aircraft No. 42-7498 crashed into aircraft No. 42-7934 on the runway and further take-offs were prevented.

b. The eighteen (18) aircraft that did take off flew as a single eighteen (18) aircraft group.

(1). Of the eighteen (18) B-17's that did take off, seventeen (17) attacked the primary target.

(2). A/C No. 42-1898 aborted shortly after assembly with an engine failure and landed away from base.

4. Lost Aircraft.

None.

5. Statistical Summary (No PFF A/C included).

	Lead Gp.	High Gp.	Low Gp.	Total
a. Number of A/C taking off.....	6	12	0	18
b. Unused Spares.....	0	0	0	0
c. A/C taking off less unused spares..	6	12	0	18
d. Number of A/C dispatched.....	6	12	0	18
e. Number of Sorties.....	5	12	0	17
f. Number of A/C attacking.....	5	12	0	17
g. Number of A/C not attacking.....	1	0	0	1

Number of A/C Lost.

None.