

398th Operations Officer's Report

12 September 1944

Target: Chemical Plant, Oil Refinery
Brux, Czechoslovakia

HEADQUARTERS 398 BOMBARDMENT GROUP

(E-B-1)

Office of the Operations Officer

APO 557 U.S. Army

12 September 1944

SUBJECT: Operations Officer's Report on Mission 12 September 1944

TO: Commanding General, First Bombardment Division, APO 557

Commanding General, 1st Combat Wing, APO 557

1. SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS:

(A) Data:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| (1) Date of Mission: | 12 September 1944 |
| (2) Target Assigned: | Brux, Czechoslovakia |
| (3) Target Attacked: | Brux, Czechoslovakia |
| (4) Units Participating: | 37 A/C of this group, including 2
PFF formed the 1st "A" CBW |
| (5) Failed to take-off: | 42-97387 |
| (6) Lost: | 42-102597 |
| (7) Returned Early: | None |

Lead Group 1st "A" CBW [601st]

Take-off was normal and assembly excellent and as briefed. Departed point "A" on course and 45 seconds early. 1st CBW assembly was excellent. Division assembly at Gromer was on time and on course. 1st CBW fell into correct battle order and proceeded to climb on course. At control point 2 1st "A" was 3 minutes late due to wind change.

At approximately 5300 N - 1200 L 41st "A" and "B" CBWs were hit by ME 109's. 1st "A" CBW high was hit by 2 fighters. Wings were at 26,500' at time of interception.

Approximately 1 hour from IP one A/C in the high group aborted because of loss of an engine. High group leader called for fighter support but failed to make contact.

Four minutes before IP Swordfish Able lead notified Swordfish high and low to be ready to take interval at IP. Difficulty was encountered by Swordfish Able lead to take correct interval behind the 41st CBW due to

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the 41st "B" CBW being broken up by fighters. However correct interval was made and visual run into target was made until the last 15 seconds when obscured bombing method was used. Bombing run was at 26,000'. A diving turn to the left and losing 1000' was made off the target with no flak being encountered during this maneuver.

As lead wings turned south at briefed route after target and no contact could be made with Division leader, 1st "A" and "B" CBWs proceeded back on briefed route with no difficulty being encountered.

One ship dropped from the lead group on route back due to anoxia which proved to be fatal to one crew member.

PFF run into target was impossible due to both mickeys being out in wing lead and deputy lead ships.

Flak encountered over target was intense and fairly accurate. No flak was encountered over entire route except over briefed target.

Fighter support was excellent.

Weather was as briefed.

Swordfish Able lead was unable to make contact with Buckeye Red or Division Commander before run on target was made.

Division lead was excellent, following briefed course to target without deviation. 1st "A" CBW lead from target to base.

Communication was fair.

High Group 1st "A" CBW [602nd]

Take-off and assembly as briefed. Left Gromer, England. Followed briefed route to target. Encountered enemy fighter opposition north of Berlin, lead aircraft was fired upon. One FW 190 claimed by T/Sgt. Hancock, top turret operator on aircraft 2543-B 602nd squadron.

Bombs away on primary at 1216. Dropped on smoke marker left by lead group.

Flak was heavy and moderately accurate.

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Return to England and base as briefed.

Low Group 1st "A" CBW [600th]

Take-off and assembly as briefed. Formation went well and according to plan. We turned on the IP and spaced ourselves approximately a mile behind the lead group. Due to the failure of the bomb bay doors to open the deputy lead was called to take over. However, his doors would not open so we again resumed the lead after having cranked the doors down by hand. The target was obscured by clouds so the bombardier dropped the bombs on the sky marker dropped by the lead group. The strike was unobserved.

Just before bombs away we received a direct hit knocking out the oxygen system on the left side of the aircraft and wounding the engineer who had just completed cranking down the bomb bay doors. We then dived to fifteen thousand feet, gave the engineer first aid and took up a heading of 270 degrees alone. About thirty minutes from the target we were joined by Maple "H How" but were unable to contact him by radio.

We were separated over Belgium and so came home alone according to the briefed route.

We landed about four minutes before the formation.

Edwin B. Daily
Major, Air Corps,
Operations Officer

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