

MY 2nd TOUR OF DUTY

Written by Thomas J. Hansbury

MY 1ST MISSION COMPLETED

MAY 28, 1944

GERMANY 9HRS 30MIN- My second bombing tour with the Eighth Air Force begins on the day of May 28, 1944(my birthday) when we bombed an oil refinery at Zeitz, Germany. Total hours airborne were 9½. This was a very easy raid compared with any of those on my first tour, 42 & 43. We met little flack and no enemy fighters, but honestly I sweated it out. It was the deepest I have ever penetrated Germany. I could hardly believe that Jerry did not intercept us, this was due to our fighter escort, P-47's & 51's. They are my friends for life.

Bomb Load- 10-500lb GP This target and others today were requested by Brother Joe. The entire 8th hit synthetic oil plants in and around the Zeitz area and a damn good job was done by all.

MY 2ND MISSION COMPLETED

MAY 29, 1944

GERMANY 9HRS 30MIN- Again we went to Germany. Target, an aircraft repair shop. Today I thought for sure Jerry would come and greet us but again our fighter boys kept them away. The flack was a lot heavier but we're lucky. Its hard to believe that so many bombers go over now a days, as far as the eye can see there are bombers and fighter escort planes. It's a great sight to see. We don't swear them out, like in the old.

Bomb Load- 52-100lb. Incendiary. Yes we hit the target today and I hope it stays hit. I don't like these long runs; I can't take it any more.

MY 3RD MISSION COMPLETED

MAY 31, 1944

GERMANY 4HRS- Into Belgium today, Beatrix. Target rail center, very cloudy. Bombed by P.F.E. Again no Jerry and little flack.

Bomb Load- 3-2,000lb GP

MY 4TH MISSION COMPLETED

JUNE 3, 1944

FRANCE 6HRS- Today was in France. The target was heavy gun installations in the Calais area (Brecht) Again we bombed by P.F.E. No flack but three Jerries came up to greet us. (ME-2or410's) They did no harm and soon seven P-47's chased them off.

Bomb Load- 10-500lb. GP

MY 5TH MISSION COMPLETED

JUNE 4, 1944

FRANCE 8HRS- Again we went into France, Bourges. Today we were on O2 for 6hrs and bombed an airfield and harrack. I mean we aimed at it, but not a single bomb hit its mark, honest. I'd hate to be that lead bombardier, what an ass chewing he must have gotten.

Bomb Load- 312-20lb Fragmentation

MY 6TH MISSION COMPLETED

JUNE 6, 1944

D-DAY ZERO HR.-0632- Today and to bomb Berlin is why I came back to England. While I was at 1500ft looking down at our boys in the landing barges, I wished them the very best and hoped against hope that our bombs would make their landing easier. But they beat us to our target (Caen) and we were forced to return to our base with our load. What I saw was a great sight and hard for me to put in writing. This I will leave for Ernie Plye.

Bomb Load-12-500lb. GP

MY 7TH MISSION COMPLETED

JUNE 7, 1944

FRANCE 6HRS. - Again our target was one that would help a great deal, that our troops could move along with less interference caused by the Germans. Our target, a large rail and road center, in a town called Lesieux and we hit our target smack on the button. Again we saw hundreds of landing barges. Navel vessels of all types shelling the Germans and our fighters giving them wonderful cover.

I saw pictures of our boys invading islands in the world over and often wondered and wished if I'd ever actually see and take part in it. Yesterday and today my amazement came true and it sure felt good to be a part of such a noble deed. I only hope we can do more to help these unsung heroes. But to us they are great and now that they got their hands in this affair over here, I'm sure it won't be long before it's over.

Bomb Load- 12-500lb. GP

MY 8TH MISSION COMPLETED

JUNE 12, 1944

FRANCE 6HRS- It looks like we're going to be bombing France for sometime to aid our boys on the ground. Although we, the 789th Bomb Squad, did not hit the target, the squads did a damn good job. Its hard to believe that we could miss an airfield with all those bombs but we did and will continue to do unless we give some other bombardier a fair chance. Our target was near the town of Eureux. Air base and landing strips to aid our invasion forces in France.

Today flack shot up Lt. Grace, which was very heavy and very accurate. He could not make it back to England but landed at out new airfield in France, only two days old. Ten days sooner and he and his crew would have been POW in German hands, but today June 13, 1944 he and his crew are back at his home base in England.

Bomb Load- 48-100lb. GP

MY 9TH MISSION COMPLETED

JUNE 14, 1944

FRANCE 4HRS- The target today was some secret German installation near the town of Beauvior. We had a 4 to 6/10 cloud cover to interfere with our bomb run. Although I did not see or hear any official report as to the effect of our bombs, most pilots and bombardiers seem to believe it was very good. I do hope so. No Jerries were encountered but flack was heavy and accurate. Two planes damaged no casualties.

Boy these Jerries are damn good with their flack and we came close to getting it today. Flack stay away from my door.

Bomb Load-10-500lb. GP.

MY 10TH MISSION COMPLETED

JUNE 15, 1944

FRANCE 6HRS. - France again. A mighty important target, the GAF Air Depot for all planes going to the invasion coast. Boy we sure knocked hell out of it. Flak was plenty, heavy and very accurate and again we came home without a scratch. We also had our very good friends, the P-47, 51, 38's with us. Therefore we had no trouble with the Jerries.

Bomb Load- 12-500lb. GP.

MY 11TH MISSION COMPLETED

JUNE 17, 1944

FRANCE 7HRS 40MIN- Again we went to France only six miles south of Paris and we could see the famous Eiffel Tower. Today we hit a large airfield and we did a good job. Flak was good. We lost our number two engine before we reached the target and we sure sweated it out. We left our formation and made the trip, 50 miles from target to target and back to base on our own. Just like in old and this time of all, we had no fighter cover. Except we made a belly landing and all got shook up a bit. LT. Count is OK, not as good as LT. Bader.

Bomb Load- 10-500lb. GP.

MY 12TH MISSION COMPLETED

JUNE 18, 1944

WESERMUND, GERMANY 8HRS- First we went to Tubeck, could not see target. Plenty of flak, man this was a rough one. Then to Hamburg, no target. One B-244 down, plenty and more flak. Then to Tubeck again, more flak, and on to Wesermund. A good visual target and we hit it. Although our bombs would not release, Van Veen (radioman) went into the bomb bay and released them by hand.

Bomb Load- 40-100lb Incendiary.

MY 13TH MISSION COMPLETED

JUNE 22, 1944

FRANCE 6HRS- Today just as we got to the E.C., we got flak and they kept us in range all the time we were flying over France. Also to make things worse, our heated suit system went out just as we left our base and believe me it was damn cold. We blasted out target and came home with some holes in our ship and one engine out and no brakes. Rough. This one reminded me of old when it was cold and had our plane shot up. But I sure wish they would get their eye off us, they are coming to close.

Bomb Load- 20-250lb. G.P.

JUNE 29, 1944

TARGET-OSCHERSLEBEN- Today the target was Germany and because I am on plane guard this week, I was not permitted to fly at anytime this week. My crew went on this; their fourteenth combat mission, and were seen exploding over the target. Some returning crews say they saw two boys' bail out, others say none, and still others say five and six.

JULY 2, 1944

Well I haven't done anything since my crew went down except sweat out my transfer. I sure hope I get it before they put me on another crew. I wish that I could go on a mission tomorrow then maybe I could forget about it for a while. Since they went down I wrote twenty-two letters. I don't know what I wrote about but I hope the people I wrote to don't think that I am crazy.

Had a few beers tonight. It didn't help. Only a mission will do the trick, I hope.

MY 14TH MISSION COMPLETED

JULY 8, 1944

FRANCE 8HRS- Today I started again. I'm on another crew now, Lt. Dye pilot. I sure sweated it out and flak was plentiful. We got a few holes and big ones just behind my turret. Close, but I had closer and now that I am back on the ball, I feel great. We hit our target, a railroad bridge and a hanger on an airfield.

Today was the first mission since my crew went down and I don't believe I ever sweated out a mission more so then this. I am now on Lt. Dye's crew. They have 24 missions in already, so before I finish I will have to get on another crew.

Bomb Load- 8-1,000lb G.P

MY 15TH MISSION COMPLETED

JULY 11, 1944

GERMANY 9HRS 30 MIN- Target today the city of Munich, Germany and what a mission. The crews that went to Berlin say that this city is a lot rougher that it. But I still want to go to Berlin and return to see for myself. I can't say much and today's mission except flak was intense and heavy over the target. And in route to and from we were on oxygen, 5hrs. 45min and that isn't good.

Bomb Load- 2-500lb Incendiary, 5-1000 G.P. Pilot- Lt. Dye

MY 16TH MISSION COMPLETED

JULY 12, 1944

GERMANY 9HRS 30MIN- Munich again and everything just as it was yesterday. We flew the exact same route and flak was just the same. We also had our friends the fighter escort boys along. Our Sqd.789 lost four ships on these two mission. Man I'm about ready for the sack now and about two days of solid sleep would fix me up for a nice short mission, I hope. Oh yes, I'm on the home stretch now.

Bomb Load- 2-500lb. Incendiary, 4-1000lb. G.P.

MY 17TH MISSION COMPLETED

JULY 16, 1944

SAARBRUCKER 7HRS- Germany again and believe me they sure put up the flak. We also saw some ME-2 or 410's. But they gave us no trouble, in fact, 4 P-38's took after them and that was the last we saw of them. Bomb load today was 12-500lb. G.P and the target was hit very well, railroad yard. Crossed through six countries today. Pilot LT. Dye.

MY 18TH MISSION COMPLETED

JULY 25, 1944

FRANCE- Today we bombed the German lines just west of St. and did a perfect job. Our target area was 1.6 miles by 1.6 miles. I saw two B-24's explode but most of crew got out. Flak was perfect. I got a small hole in the rudder and just under my turret. Bill was waiting to see me when I got down.

Bomb Load- 312-20lb. Fragmentation. Pilot Lt. Dye.

MY 19TH MISSION COMPLETED

JULY 28, 1944

GERMANY- Well today I went to Bremen. My last trip there 4-17-43 and this one only differed in fighters, none. Escort all the way in and out. But man oh man the flak. How any ship can go through all that stuff and not get it is something we can't understand.

Bomb Load- 16-200lb. G.P, 4-500lb. Incendiary. Pilot Lt. Dye

MY 20TH MISSION COMPLETED

AUGUST 1944

GERMANY 6HRS 30MIN- Hamburg and believe me it was rough. The crew that slept in the hut with is blew up over the target. We lost five crews today. Lt. Bell, my new pilot. He and his crew are OK, it was their first mission.

Bomb Load- 10-500lb. G.P.

MY 21ST MISSION COMPLETED

AUGUST 1944

GERMANY 6HRS- Today we started for Berlin but after 40 min. inside Germany we were called back and so we dropped our bombs on some town and I believe we cleaned it out. Almost got to Berlin today, maybe tomorrow.

Bomb Load- 2-500lb. Incendiary, 4-1000lb G.P Lt. Bell Pilot

MY 22ND MISSION COMPLETED

SEPTEMBER 1944

GERMANY 8HRS 30MIN- Today was pretty easy and not much to report. Only a little flak over the target and more in route. Just to damn long to be in the air. We had our O2 masks on for six hours.

Bomb Load- 10-500lb GP Lt. Bell Pilot Target Kansruhe

MY 23RD MISSION COMPLETED

SEPTEMBER 1944

GERMANY- Again we went to Kansruhe, but today there was a lot more flak and a few Jerries. Again it was six hours on O2 and it was kind of rough.

Bomb Load-10-500lb. G.P Lt. Bell Pilot.

MY 24TH MISSION COMPLETED

SEPTEMBER 1944

GERMANY 6HRS 30MIN- Today we went to Mentz in Germany and believe me it was a hot one with flak in and out, but no Jerries, thank goodness.

Bomb Load- Pamphlets. Lt. Bell Pilot

MY 25TH MISSION COMPLETED

SEPTEMBER 1944

Germany 8hrs- Today was one of the roughest and toughest mission I was ever on. How we ever got back I don't know, we had holes all over us. Today was #50 in heavies from Britain. LT. Bell Pilot.

MY 26TH MISSION COMPLETED

OCTOBER 1944

GERMANY- Today we went to Metz and it's the same old story, flak and fighters but we came through OK. Lt. Bell Pilot.

MY 27TH MISSION COMPLETED

OCTOBER 1944

GERMANY- Today we bombed a canal at Minden, Germany. We bombed by P.I.F., but we did hit it. Lt. Bell Pilot 3-2000lb G.P.

MY 28TH MISSION COMPLETED

OCTOBER 1944

GERMANY- Hamm today and everything went along OK. We got number three engine shot out by flak but that came anywhere close to us. Everything is going along just swell. Lt. Bell Pilot

MY 29TH MISSION COMPLETED

OCTOBER 30, 1944

GERMANY-Cologne, heck this was a mean one, flak, flak, and more flak. Oh it's not to bad and I felt I would finish OK. Lt. Bell Pilot

MY 30TH MISSION COMPLETED

NOVEMBER 9, 1944

GERMANY- Again we went to that nasty place, Cologne, and it was just as it was yesterday. Rough in the E.T.O. Lt. Bell Pilot.

MY 31ST MISSION COMPLETED

NOVEMBER 16, 1944

ACHEAM- This was the one that everyone in the U.S.A.F wanted to go on, because it was in direct support of our boys on the ground. I will tell you all about it when I get home. Lt. Nicholson Pilot 312-20lb Frag.

IN GOD WE TRUST

YOU'VE HAD IT, T.J., NOV 16, 1944

FINISHED MY SECOND TOUR IN THE E.T.O

D.F.C. (CLUSTERS)

AIR MEDAL (TEN CLUSTERS)

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