

Sgt. Lloyd Hall flew as engineer with the Hysong crew in the 708th Squadron between August and December, 1944. This diary covering his tour of duty with the 447th was provided by Ms. Susan Gillis.

MY SERVICE IN THE ETO

by Lloyd Hall

To make this record complete I will start at the conclusion of our O.T.U. training, for at that time we were supposed to be prime "Flak bait." Yes, after flying three days out of every five and sleeping through long hours of ground school during the other two for four months we were ready to go overseas and tangle with "Jerry." So we left Drew Field and all the mosquitoes and arrived at Hunter Field, GA on the 23rd of June 44.

Hunter Field - what a place! We were there for three weeks out of which we had six days of furlough. Just enough time to go home and bid my family and friends farewell. While at Hunter we were thoroughly processed and made ready for what lay ahead of us. Aside from that, the time was our own and we got plenty of welcome rest. We had been there just a few days when my old friend McDowell arrived. He was on a B-26 crew as an engineer and loved it. Their little Scotty mascot, MacTavish, made a big hit with everyone. After returning from our furloughs we left for the Port of Embarkation (POE) on the 8th of July and arrived at Camp Kilmer, NJ on the 9th. I believe that this camp was named after Joyce Kilmer the writer of the poem "Trees." Our stay at Kilmer lasted only five days, during which we were given final instructions for the voyage upon which we were about to embark. There were a lot of Italian prisoners working there as general duty men. They were full of praise for the United States and couldn't say enough against Il Duce.

On the 14th we left Kilmer for New York arriving the same day and boarding the "Acquatania" (Aquitania) at Pier 15 on the Hudson River. The Red Cross women met us at the pier with coffee and donuts, candy and lemonade. The next morning we left under cover of a heavy fog and when it cleared we were standing far out at sea with no land in sight. We had hoped to fly across but were destined to spend a week at sea instead. It proved to be a good voyage, however, and the time passed rapidly with card games and plenty of magazines.

On the 23rd of July we dropped anchor off Gourock, Scotland near Glasgow. The "Queen Elizabeth", was there waiting for us. When we left New York she was still tied up in pier. Both of us made the trip without convoy or any escort. At Gourock we boarded a train for Stone, England. The trip was across some of the most beautiful countryside I have ever seen. Upon arriving at Stone we were billeted in a hotel, Howard Hall, with four men to a room. The quarters were nice. It was there that I was introduced to my first straw pillow, a perfect article for solid comfort. Howard Hall being no different than any reception center, we had details, including K.P., every day of the five that we were there. When we left

Stone it was to go to our permanent base. So we said, "Goodbye" to a lot of old friends who were going to other bases and proceeded to ours, 708th Sqdn, 447th Bomb Group, Rattlesden, England, near Stowmarket. The nearest city is Ipswich.

Well, here we are. Where is our plane? Oh! We must attend school for five days and fly some practice missions before becoming operational. So we did just that and with our ground school completed we were assigned to ship 185 for practice. On the 6th of August, we pulled a practice mission as a complete crew in 185. I had flown a few practice missions with a skeleton crew previous to this, however.

7th of August. Hysong and Morrison pulled their first mission. We all anxiously awaited their return and were greatly relieved when they got back safe and sound. Of course we asked all kinds of questions but they were able to give us little satisfaction because it had been a "no-ball" mission.

11th of August. Our first mission. Belfort, France, railway marshaling yards. It was long trip way down near the Swiss border taking nine hours. We blew the railway yard all to Hell, saw no flak, but were all mighty tired when we got back to roost. A No-Ball! Fenstermaker didn't fly on this mission because we are flying nine man crews.

12th of August. My 24th birthday, no celebration! Just a year ago I was standing watch on the boat on the way to Alaska. No celebration then either. Everyone was seasick or on the verge of joining those that were.

13th of August. According to all the superstitious ones, this should have been our day for bad luck. Our crew number is "13", the date was the "13th" and "13" crews from our squadron took off on the same mission. This, however, proved to be another "no-ball." We bombed the German escape routes from Falaise at Dreux, France (officially Seine R. area), just behind their front lines. Our target was a bend in a road and we just blew it sky-high. We saw flak but it wasn't close. Coatney was the "ramp-rooster" on this trip.

14th of August. One year ago I landed in Kodiak, Alaska. Today we got two day passes to London. We stayed at the Regent Palace Hotel and took a tour of London.

18th of August. The Germans have come out with jet propelled fighter planes. Intelligence has reports of three types and they are the fastest things on wings yet. So today we bombed one of their bases at St. Dizier. We made the first pass then another wing came in at right angles. The airport was left in shambles. We saw no flak but there were two or three rockets near the target. Coatney was "ground-pounder" again.

19th thru the 22nd of August. Bad weather. No missions

23rd of August. Slow timed a plane with a skeleton crew.

24th of August. We started out on our fourth mission to Brux, Czechoslovakia, to bomb an oil refinery. But when about 40 miles South of Berlin #2 engine was running rough that we had to feather it. Then we started to fall behind and lose altitude. So we salvoed the bombs into a field, we could have hit a railway yard but had no bombsight. Even without the bombs we were unable to keep up with the formation, so we turned around and headed for home. It was a long trip across enemy territory to make alone and we were all quite apprehensive. Finally, however, some P-51s joined us and gave us escort to the Danish coast. We saw plenty of flak on the way in but none of it came near us. On the way out there was no flak. We were given credit for the mission. This trip Lang stayed on the ground.

25th of August (Reichlin). Our fifth mission. Another Jerry air field about 30 miles NNW of Berlin. This job was a beauty. The whole field just burst into flames and blew up. There must have been large supplies of oil there for the fire spread fast and the smoke rose to 15 or 20,000 feet. We saw plenty of flak but it missed us completely. Lang was "ground pounder." Henningson's crew came off their target with one engine shot off, another with the prop shaft broken and a third with the oil system shot out. The plane was also all shot to Hell. Bu

t they managed to get out to the channel and went down about 30 miles from Holland. When they hit the water all of their engines were out.

26th of August. We were sent out to bomb Jerry out of his strong hold on the Brest peninsula where he was holding out against the allied ground and sea forces. When we got to the target area, however, the cloud cover was too heavy for us to bomb through. So we brought the bombs back. Saw first con-trails. Henningson's crew was picked up and all were ok. This was our 6th mission and Lang stayed on the ground again.

27th of August. This was to be it. Our 7th mission and the target - Berlin! We crossed the North Sea and ran into heavy clouds over Denmark. But we ploughed on right through them. That was mighty risky business and I felt as though I had eyes all around my head. The formations got quite broken up and planes were buzzing around in all directions. It was a messed up affair. By approximate count, I judged that there were about 2,000 heavies in the area, both 24s and 17s. The clouds proved to be too heavy so we brought the bombs back. But we were credited with the mission. Fenstermaker stayed on the ground. Lt. Bowers failed to return from the mission. It is believed that he collided with a 24 in the clouds and blew up. It was his 35th mission.

28th of August. Flew a practice mission. That made six straight days of flying for me and I was getting plenty tired.

31st of August. Left on pass in the afternoon and spent the night in London.

1st of September. Left London in the morning for Melvern hoping to locate the 53rd Gen Hospital and Hopewatt. In Birmingham I befriended a Medic with whom I spent the rest of the day. He introduced me to another Medic from the 53rd who took me to the hospital and got me quarters for the night.

2nd of September. After breakfast I went to the hospital to see Hope only to find that she was on a 5-day pass. So I went back to London and spent the night at the Regent Palace.

3rd of September. Bought a radio and returned to camp with a short stop in Ipswich.

6th of September. We were scheduled for a mission to Berlin in the morning, but it was scrubbed. In the afternoon we were again called out to bomb Bremen. That too was scrubbed.

8th of September. This was to be our 8th mission. The target was a tank factory at Mainz, Germany and we blew it to Hell. Both going in and coming out we saw quite a bit of flak but none of it came close. Coatney stayed on the ground.

9th of September - (Grassy) A supply mission. We flew down across France almost to the Swiss border near Geneva on what was probably the easiest mission of the tour and the most enjoyable. At the IP we started in over the target at 500 ft. When the supplies were dropped it was a beautiful sight. All the chutes were colored which lent a carnival air to the whole episode. The Marquis were out in the open waving to us and it made one feel good to be able to help those courageous people. There was no flak at all and the fighter escort had a great time hedgehopping. Lang stayed down.

10th of September. This was our 10th mission and another Jerry airfield at Giebelstadt, Germany. The target was completely demolished and we saw no flak at all. Fenstermaker was "ground pounder."

11th of September. Our 11th mission and the target an oil depot at Fulda, Germany. All went well on the way in but when we got to the target all hell broke loose. The flak just poured up and we got ours. I was watching the bombs in the bomb bay to see that they all got out okay when a shell burst right below the plane blacking out my vision. I thought that the ball turret was gone and I called to Knute on the interphone. Thank God he was all right. Then the bombardier said that we were off course so we're going out to the secondary target. Just about then, #4 engine went out and a piece of flak landed in Jake's lap. We

started to drop behind and to lose altitude. So we salvoed our bombs in procedure, hitting a road. We followed the formation and caught them when they came off their target. By pouring on all the power we could we managed to keep up with them quite well. But our troubles began to pile up. #4 was out, #3 was smoking and #2 oil pressure was going out. Then we discovered that our hydraulic lines had been severed leaving us without brakes. So we left the formation and headed for our emergency field in England. After landing we were interrogated and given supper. Then a plane from our field came and took us home. We had been reported as going down. But we fooled them. Lost 2 of our planes. Lang was on the ground and sweating us out.

12th of September. The 12th mission and Bohlen again. The target was supposed to be same oil depot but we went on by for another wing was making its run when we got there. So we went on to the last resort (Bohlen) and the results didn't look very good. The flak was heavy but we got through all right. Fighters hit the wings ahead of us but none bothered us. The escort shot down 175 Jerries. Coatney waited for us on the ground and when we got back he informed us that we had made Sgt. on the 11th

13th of September. Started on 13th mission on the 13th of the month. We were to bomb Stuttgart but got only to about 4 degrees plus 5 minutes over France and had to turn back because #2 prop was running away and we were unable to keep up with the formation with the bomb load. So we jettisoned our bombs over the channel and returned to the field. Lang was taken off the crew. I don't think that we got credit for the mission.

17th of September. We were going to try to get #13 in again. This time it was to be a bunch of flak guns at Arnhem, Holland. We were up in formation at the buncher when #2 supercharger cut out. So I changed the amplifier. But that did no good. Then #4 prop governor started spewing oil and shortly afterwards #3 manifold pressure started fluctuating. So we aborted. A good thing that we did too, because #4 governor oil line was broken completely off and we would have lost all of our oil in a short time.

19th of September. Lt. Hysong learned that he made 1st Lt. on the 17th.

20th of September. Still trying to get in the #13. We were scheduled to bomb a tank depot at Kassel, Germany. It was scrubbed however, for bad weather. Lang left for duty on mediums.

21st of September. Still trying for #13. This time the target was to be Ludwigshaven, Germany. There were supposed to be 200 flak guns at the target. This one was scrubbed because of weather, too. #13 must be a jinx. I was awarded the Air Medal today.

22nd of September. Scheduled to hit Kassel again. This time we made it. So #13 is behind us. The flak on the target wasn't bad but over the Rhine on the way back flak came up and just about got us. We had trouble getting our bombs off and had to salvo them after we had passed over the target.

23rd of September. Today we had a practice mission and our new Commanding Officer addressed the squadron just before supper. The ground crew is putting a new #1 engine on our plane. Joe Salsi dropped in on his way to London.

24th of September. Rained all day so spent the day on the ground and attended ground school in the afternoon. We have heard that Lang went to Italy.

25th of September. We were dragged out of bed at 4 a.m. for a maximum effort mission against Ludwigshaven, Germany. The load was 1,000 pounders. On the way over the weather didn't look too good. The clouds were thick and high. The temperature was about -40 degrees Celsius at 26,000 ft. But we went in and bombed at that altitude by P.F.F. The flak was heavy but not accurate; however, we picked up one or two small fragments in the right horizontal stabilizer. Coming away from the target we were right behind another group and the flak was hitting right in their chaff, which was coming back onto us. So we did a little evasive action and got away from there in a hurry. There were a couple of men from this station wounded, but not seriously. When returning we met a lot of B-24s going in to the same target which was an aircraft assembly plant. This mission (#14) wasn't bad at all.

26th of September. Mission #15 to Bremen, a FW190 (German fighter) plant. The load was 1,000 pounders again. We flew across the North Sea and went in over Germany Northeast of the Dutch-German border. Everything went well until we got to the target. Then we saw the flak. It was as thick as I have seen. But being the highest plane in the formation we got through okay and got the bombs off. Some of the planes didn't get their bombs away so they had to go on to the secondary target. They got hit hard and on the way home we saw one of them with smoke pouring out of the right wing. All of a sudden it exploded and went down in flames. No chutes came out. There were 11 planes lost, one unaccounted for.

27th of September. Went to London on pass with Morrison. Saw a show at night.

28th of September. Morrison and I went through London Tower and found a wonderful little restaurant. We met some friends and learned that Decillis and Shimshock had blown up over Warsaw. Stephenik got an ME109 on the same mission. At night we went to a good show.

29th of September. Took the train to Ipswich where we saw a swell Vaudeville, then took the bus back to Stowmarket. On the way a low flying buzz bomb went right over the bus. I was damn thankful that it kept on going.

30th of September. Scheduled to fly a practice mission in the morning but it was scrubbed and in the afternoon the same thing happened. Received the first Oak Leaf Cluster and got paid.

1st of October. Sat on the ground all day long.

2nd of October. Mission #16 to Kassel, Germany to hit the tank factory again. While assembling over the field, two planes collided and went down. We don't know just how many survived but it was very few. McGuire was killed in that accident. Then at the target another plane went down in flames but all the crew bailed out okay. On the way home, a plane from our squadron had three bad engines. The crew bailed out near Brussels and let the plane crash. We were all glad to get rid of that old clunker.

3rd of October. Mission #17. We were supposed to hit an airfield in Germany, but the cloud cover was too heavy so we went onto the secondary target at Nurnberg. There had been no flak at the primary target but there was plenty at the secondary. A plane ahead of us got hit in #4 engine and started smoking badly. It dropped out of formation and I expected to see it burst into flame. But it recovered all right and came back into formation. We picked up a little flak ourselves. The clouds were too heavy there also. So we went on to Ulm and dropped our bombs on the town. There was no flak there but on the way out when passing over the Siegfried Line, flak came up and it was very accurate. We used evasive action but the flak stuck right with us and we picked up some more, however, no harm was done either time. Our lead plane ran out of fuel and landed in Belgium. This was a long mission and it seemed as though we flew all over Germany before we got back. The Swiss Alps looked pretty sticking up through the clouds.

4th of October. Scheduled to hit Coblenz but the mission was scrubbed. In the afternoon we went to ground school.

5th of October. Mission #18 to Munster, Germany to hit an aircraft factory. Jake flew as co-pilot with another crew and a new pilot flew with us for his first mission. We expected to run into fighters but luckily saw none. The sky was black with planes and the fighter escort was large. When we came off the target there were big fires all over the city. The flak was fairly heavy and right on our left wing, but we came through untouched. I am now due for another Oak Leaf Cluster and are half way through the tour.

6th of October. Mission #19 to Berlin. Target, a tank factory. Five 1,000 pound bombs. This mission was Hell. We had trouble from the time we left England, until we were back on the ground again. Over the North Sea, #4 oil temperature went up and the oil pressure went down while #1 carburetor air temperature went up to about 90 degrees. All the way over and into Germany, all engines were at over boost so that we wouldn't lose the formation. Once into Germany, we were

able to cut down to maximum cruising settings and #4 oil pressure and temperature bettered itself. Just after the IP we started to drop behind so gave her another boost. Just as we entered the flak area the German fighters jumped the last formation and knocked down every bomber in a few seconds. Then our fighters took them on and kept them busy. We got the bombs away all right but the flak was heavy and accurate (400 guns), we lost #4 engine with a shot through the oil system. Before we knew what had happened, the oil was gone and we were unable to feather the prop so we had to let it run at a low r.p.m. When leaving the flak area, I noticed that my oxygen was gone. So I called to the pilot that I was coming out of the turret and that everyone had better check their oxygen. The pilot and the navigator said that their oxygen was out also and the pilot said that we were going to head for lower altitude. The navigator went on emergency oxygen and the co-pilot and I got the pilot hooked up on another line. Then I got a big emergency bottle between my knees and got back into the turret for we expected fighters to jump us. The pilot called in for fighter support and in a short time we had some P-51 s circling protectively about. Then we started throwing everything we didn't need overboard to lighten the load. From there on out to the coast everything went well. Over the North Sea we threw out all our ammunition and contacted another 17 that was standing by to report our position in case we went down. Then #4 engine started vibrating so that it seemed that the plane would fall apart. We all prepared to bail out and thought that we sure would have to. But finally something broke in the engine and it stopped vibrating. The prop continued to windmill and there was a little fire on the nose of the engine. The fire went out by itself however. Shortly after that we sighted England and breathed much more easily. In about 15 minutes we were over the field and then on good old Terra Firma again. I had a fierce headache from going without oxygen so long but otherwise was just as good as when we started (lost 1 plane).

7th of October. Mission #20 to Mersburg, Germany. Jake flew with another crew again and we had 1st Lt. Lubinsky as co-pilot. It was his first mission and what a mission. All went well until we got to the target. Then we ran into heavy flak. We got through all right although we did get several holes. No serious damage was done however. The target was an oil depot. (Lost 1 plane)

8th of October. Scheduled to hit Mersburg again but the mission was scrubbed due to weather. In the afternoon we had a meeting about defense against German fighters. Then we went to an awards meeting.

9th of October. We didn't go on a mission today but I flew with the pilot and co-pilot slow timing a plane. The bombardier went along as navigator and Willie flew on a mission with Hawkins' crew. It was a milk run. I flew the plane a little but hedge-hopping the clouds at about 7,000 ft.

12th of October. Sent all day on train between here and Malvern, and slept in a barracks with the medics at the 53r General Hospital.

13th of October. Looked up Hope Wall and spent the morning visiting with her in her ward. In the afternoon we went to town and saw a movie then went to a hotel and drank and talked about old times and all that we have been doing. Then we had supper at the hotel (Partridge) and took a taxi back to the hospital.

14th of October. Took the train to Ipswich where Morrison and Fenstermaker and I went to a movie. Then back to camp.

15th of October. Mission #21 to Cologne. The allied air forces are hitting Cologne with huge fleets of bombers day and night. It wasn't a rough mission but I saw one plane go down in flames.

16th of October. Slow timed our own plane. The first time that she has been up since the Berlin raid in which we got all shot up. She flew well but there were a few minor "bugs" remaining.

17th of October. Mission #22 to Cologne again. We are still pounding that city unceasingly. Our plane dropped propaganda newspapers instead of bombs. While over the target a piece of flak came down through the dome of my turret making a hole about 8" inches long and 3 inches wide and hit me squarely on the top of the head. My flak helmet stopped it but was knocked from my head and I was slightly stunned for a second. From now on I will never go without that helmet. Lt. _____ was our navigator because Willie was grounded. Over Germany he had an attack of appendicitis so we left the formation as soon as we were out of the target area and rushed him back to the field. As soon as we landed an ambulance took him off to the hospital.

18th of October. We left for Southport by plane to start a 7 day rest leave at a rest home. In the afternoon we took a ride around town in a horse drawn carriage and got the lay of the land. That night we went to town to a public dance. During our stay we had a wonderful time just doing as we pleased and eating wonderful food.

25th of October. We headed for camp. Our furlough over and far from rested but satisfied that we had had a marvelous time. The train ride was long and tiresome. When we got back we found that Hawkins' crew had completed their tour and were celebrating in the beer hall. So we joined them. Morrison learned that he had made S/Sgt. on the 18th.

26th of October. Mission #23 to Hanover, Germany. Lt. Neal flew with us to get in his last mission. Before leaving England we discovered an oil leak in the #4 prop governor oil line. It wasn't bad so we decided to continue on. However, just before reaching the target it got quite bad and the congealed oil piled up on the cowling. On the way back the oil had all leaked out and we were unable to feather the prop. So it windmilled for a short time then started to freeze. Vibration set in and I thought that we were in for another session like the Berlin mission.

But this time the engine broke up right away. We had dropped behind so we came on home alone.

27th of October. Slow timed a plane.

28th of October. Schedule to fly practice mission but it was scrubbed.

29th of October. No operations today. Was awarded the second Oak Leaf Cluster.

30th of October. Mission #24. An all out offensive planned against Germany. We were to hit Merseberg and expected to run into fighter opposition. So the sky was full of fighter escort. However, we turned back at 7 degrees 10 minutes. East because the cloud cover was too heavy for bombing.

31st of October. Mission to an oil field in Poland (10 V2 hrs), scrubbed. I am not sorry. 1st of November. We attended lectures on air-sea rescue and aircraft identification.

2nd of November. Mission #25 to Merseberg. All went quite well until we were almost to the target then our formation began to lose planes. But we stuck together and went over the target with a 5 plane formation. Everything happened, two planes went down right ahead of us, one plane left the formation and fighters knocked it down before you could snap your fingers. Another plane left the formation before we got to the target but it never got back to the base. The flak was terribly heavy but we paid little attention to it because the sky was full of enemy fighters. We received no serious damage although we did pick up a little flak. Luckily the fighters didn't hit our little formation. Our fighter escort did a beautiful job. Knute was about to shoot down an ME 109 when someone else got it and it blew up right in front of him. This was the biggest air battle of the war. We lost 41 bombers and got 208 enemy fighters with a loss of about 26 fighters. The bombers accounted for 53 of the enemy fighters. Coming home, #3 engine developed carburetor ice and started to vibrate badly. So we feathered the prop until we got down to lower altitude. Other than that, everything was all right.

3rd of November. Morrison, McQuade and Williams were supposed to fly with Lt. Russell but the mission was scrubbed. In the afternoon we collected ration money and travel money for our rest leave and went to a P.O.W. lecture.

4th of November. A year ago today I landed in the States upon returning from Alaska. Our crew didn't fly today.

5th of November. Mission #26. We were supposed to hit the front lines near Mertz but the cloud cover was too heavy. So we went on to Ludwigshaven. Just before reaching the target, #2 engine started to shoot oil "like mad." So we feathered the prop and as we later learned, just in time. For something had

broken inside the engine and it froze up tight. By doing that we dropped behind and lost altitude. So we salvoed the bombs just outside the town and turned back and returned to the base by ourselves.

6th of November. Mission #27 to Neurmunster, Germany, where we hit an aircraft parts factory. All went well except that after dropping the bombs we were unable to close the bomb doors. Then we discovered that we had a fire in the Bombay. It wasn't serious and I got it out quite easily. Then I got out into the Bombay and tried to crank the doors closed but no luck. I nearly froze out there at 27,000 feet with the doors open. So we had to land at the base with the doors open.

7th of November. Flew a practice mission.

8th of November. Took off for a big raid against Merseberg and expected a lot of fighter opposition (500). But we were recalled due to bad weather when about halfway across the channel. Those that went on over the target were hit by the fighters and 5 bombers were lost besides 42 fighters. Two enemy jetties were knocked down.

9th of November. Took off to raid the front lines again but we had engine trouble over the field and had to feather #2 and return. So we missed out on a nice no-ball.

10th of November. We were supposed to test hop a plane but I got out of it because the engineering officer went along.

11th of November. Mission #28 to Oberlahnstein. The mission was practically a no-ball but we saw a plane go down over England before we headed for the continent. Only 7 chutes came out before it blew up.

12th of November. Mission scrubbed.

13th of November. Ground school in the morning and a camera gunnery mission in the afternoon. The fighter didn't show up though so we just flew around chasing B-24s all over the sky and flying the wings off them.

16th to 18th of November. Pass to London. Met Hobby and spent the pass with him.

21st of November. Mission to Merseberg again but we ran into bad weather conditions so the target was changed and we dropped our bombs on Koblenz, Germany. There was no flak at the target but we did pick up some on the route in.

25th of November. Mission to Merseberg again. This was #30 and our bombardier's (Charlie's) birthday. We expected to be hit hard by fighters but none showed up, thank God. As it was, the plane on our right wing went down in flames, it was our old plane. We came off the target without a scratch but our #2 engine had been using an enormous amount of fuel. So we had to land at Laon, France to refuel. While there the field closed in so we had to remain overnight. Along with another crew from our field, we were taken into town and put up for the night in a Chateau. After supper we went into town and found a small cafe where we got some wine.

26th of November. After breakfast we walked around town and finally collected an entourage of French children. Charlie had a great time talking with them and after dinner they brought back a lot of their friends to see Charlie because he could speak French. Shortly after that we left for England. When we got to the base it was closing in and we had to make three attempts before getting on the ground.

27th of November. We left on pass for London. This will probably be our last pass.

30th of November. Mission #31 to Lutzkendorf. This time we had our left wing man go down in flames over the target. For the days total operations we lost 56 bombers and 30 fighters with only 4 enemy fighters knocked down. That flak is HELL!

2nd of December. Practice mission.

3rd of December. No-ball mission against German marshalling yards scrubbed. Just our luck.

4th of December. Mission #32 to hit the marshalling yards at Mainz, Germany. It was practically a no-ball. Morrison finished his tour today.

6th of December. The group flew another mission to Merseberg today. We didn't fly but our plane went along being flown by a new crew on their 1st mission. I regret to say that they failed to return. We had hoped to fly our last mission in the old girl, but!

7th of December. We were scheduled for a no-ball to Hamm, Germany, but the mission was scrubbed. So we had ground school and an awards meeting in the afternoon.

8th of December. No mission today. Morrison left for home today. This afternoon we had our first snow flurry while we were attending a lecture.

10th of December. Flew mission #33 today. Our last mission. The target, Koblenz. The flak was light but accurate and we very nearly got hit but got out without a scratch. Our tour is over and we are all safe. Thank God.

11th of December. Checked in our flying equipment.

12th of December. Started doing general duty today.