



THE 447TH GROUP'S RETURN TO THE ZONE OF THE INTERIOR, AND ITS DEACTIVATION.

The month of June, 1945, found everyone busy with the details of preparation for the welcome trip home. It was then thought that the Group would go home for a period of rest, reassemble at Drew Field, Tampa, Florida, and prepare for redeployment to the Pacific Theatre.

Planes were put in the highest state of mechanical perfection while crews were trained in all details of the trip home. Records were put in order, clothing examined and packed, and the thousand and one odds and ends cleaned up for the day of departure.

Finally, after a long period of waiting, the weather cleared and in the early morning of June 29th the first B-17s took off on the first leg of the journey home, each plane bearing 20 persons. The following day the rest of the planes took off, leaving not an aircraft remaining on the field.

Some of the planes went to Valley, in north west Wales, while others made the longer jump to Prestwick near Glasgow, Scotland. After another period of waiting for the weather, all planes proceeded to Iceland, then across the North Atlantic to Goose Bay, Labrador. From there the route took them to Bradley Field, Conn., the last stop as far as the flying part was concerned.

All went to Camp Miles Standish, near Boston, to prepare for the trip to Reception Centers near home for the purpose of getting Rest Leave orders, etc.

Meanwhile back of Rattlesden, the Ground Echelon personnel began preparations for the trip home by water. The shifting of Personnel from group to group continued at a steady rate, thus causing a few headaches here and there. At the same time, the disposition of equipment and packing were begun.

Finally, and again after much waiting, instructions to move came for Headquarters for two of the bomb squadrons, the 708th and 710th. It was on the morning of July 31st that the convoy moved out of Rattlesden and boarded a train at Elmswell for the trip to

Liverpool, where the Liberty Ship, Joseph T. Robinson, was boarded. She sailed shortly after midnight, August 1st for home.

The trip was quite uneventful. The food was good, and the only complaint concerned the over-crowded condition, caused by a larger loading of passengers than the ship was designed to take. Besides the 447th units on board, there were many casualties from the various bomber and fighter groups in England.

On Sunday morning, August 12th, the Joseph T. Robinson pulled into Boston Harbor, personnel were loaded on a nearby train for the short trip to Camp Miles Standish. By the next afternoon all were on their way to Reception Centers, near home, for rest leaves and furloughs.

Several days after the 708th, 710th and Headquarters left England, the remaining two Squadrons, the 709th and 711th sailed also from Liverpool aboard the Army Transport, Benjamin R. Milan, leaving the harbor at 1830 on 3 August.

On 15 August, the Benjamin R. Milan entered Boston Harbor and in due time the trip was made to Camp Miles Standish on the outskirts of the city.

From there, as is the case of the first two squadrons, all personnel left in short order for Reception Centers near home in order to obtain rest and recuperation leave.

In the meantime, the war in the Pacific had ended and almost all personnel, on reporting to Reception Centers after completion of leave and furlough, found themselves in the discharge line. But a few unfortunates had to make the hot and uncomfortable trip to Drew Field in Tampa, Florida, to wind up the business of the Group. Among these were the editors of this unofficial history, who put it together from the scant material available, and amid the confusion of dozens of opened boxes of group and squadron records and property.