

# TARGET VICTORY

A REPORT OF, BY AND FOR  
COMBAT FLYING PERSONNEL  
CONFIDENTIAL

WEEK ENDING  
FEB. 25,  
1945

## "Your Hat, Sir"-- 44th Sgt. Eager

Bailing out of a crippled Lib that threatened to explode over France after a mission in the Berlin area, Col. Eugene H. Snavely, commanding 44th Bomb Group, had to leave behind his favorite "30-mission" hat.

At a briefing last week, he commented that the route was similar and jokingly asked that if anyone was forced down in that area, they try to recover his pet headpiece. The plane piloted by 1st/Lt. Walter Franks was badly damaged, and the crew was forced to bail out in the same area.

As S/Sgt. Donald H. Ennis, nose-gunner, floated down, he was met by MPs, who on questioning told him they had at their headquarters a hat which they had removed from a crashed plane. Investigation disclosed that Col. Snavely's name was in the hat.

When Sgt. Ennis arrived back at his base a few days later, he astounded the Colonel by knocking at his door and announcing, "Sir, Sgt. Ennis reporting with the Colonel's hat as ordered."

## 2AD TOPS 8AF BOMBING

### LEAD MONTH'S ACCURACY

Reward of the week to the "Bombs on the Target" Lib crews was the revelation by Air Force headquarters that their efforts have placed 2AD bombing accuracy at the top of 8th Air Force.

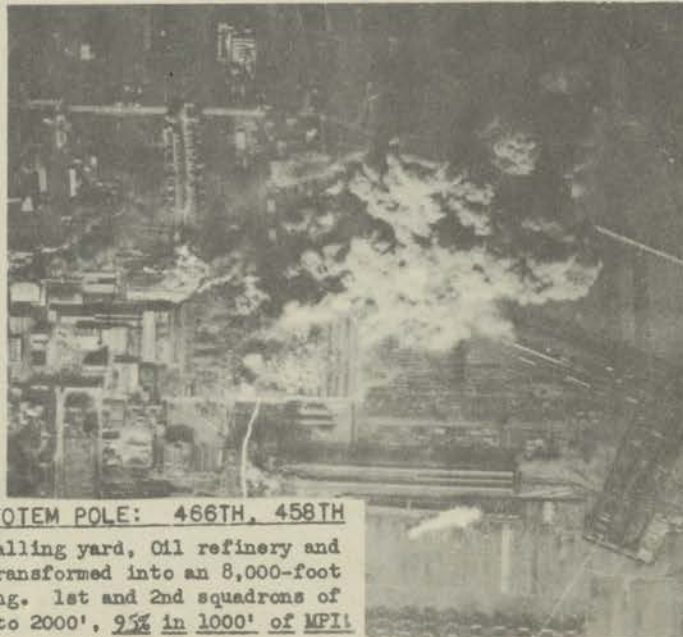
Accuracy scoring in 500-foot, 1000-foot and 2000-foot circles around assigned MPIs (8AF Operational Analysis Section ratings) was led by the 2AD Libs, for the month of January, after scoring equally with 1st and 3rd Divns. in November and December. A steady trend of improvement was cited since August.

Lead crews deserve particular credit for this war-shortening accomplishment, but counting as heavily is the teamwork displayed by each crew, which combined creates the pattern of aiming upon which 8AF strategy is built.

### FLING AT LOW-ALT

Additional milestone of the week was the low-level "Isolate the Front" attack of Feb. 22, slashing rail-yards and exploding vital ammunition supplies from altitudes as low as 5200 ft.

All Groups gunned for records, & 2AD stock boomed.



PRESTO! PEINE BECOMES A TOTEM POLE: 466TH, 458TH

In the space of a breath, Marshalling yard, Oil refinery and Components plant at Peine are transformed into an 8,000-foot monument to 2AD precision bombing. 1st and 2nd squadrons of 466th Group each hurled 100% into 2000', 95% in 1000' of MPI!

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ERRATUM: In Feb. 3 "Target: Victory", photo caption on front page "20th Wing Best Bombing", the B pennant was awarded to 446th Bomb Group, not 448th as printed.

## Ground Becoming Safe

Accident prevention ideas used at 2AD during the first month of 8th Air Force's Ground Safety drive evidently paid off. 2AD had the lowest injury rate (8.1 accidents per 100,000 man days). Other air divisions rated 8.4 and 11.1 in January.

Slipping and falling is still the leading booby-trap of lost time accidents in 2AD -- causing 30% of all our disabling injuries.

## Silver Star to 2 Gunners of 445th



S/SGT. WATSON



S/SGT. PALM

Even after being painfully wounded, short of oxygen, and with their B-24 threatening to explode, S/Sgt. Maynard B. Watson, tail-gunner, and S/Sgt. Elroy W. Palm, waist gunner, successfully fought off attacks of FW 190s, enabling their plane to return to safety. Both have been awarded Silver Stars for gallantry in action.

Over 100 fighters attacked the 445th Group, the first wave lobbing explosive shells into their bomber, wounding both waist gunners, one of them fatally. Oxygen, hydraulic and intercom lines were severed. Watson, in the tail, destroyed one German fighter and damaged others before a 20-mm shell blew him out of his turret. Wounded, he resumed battle beside Palm, who had destroyed at least one FW 190 also. Here in the waist Watson destroyed another FW, so close he could watch the pilot's face.

The battle over, they put out a fire before collapsing from wounds and lack of oxygen. First aid was given by Bombardier Lt. John F. Leahy and Radioman T/Sgt. Eugene A. Atkinson.



### MUNITION-STORE BLAST BOUNCES GROUNDED G.A.F.: 491ST

Eschwege's marshalling yard and trans-shipment storage catch 97% in 2000', 90% in 1000' from 491st Lead; 100% in 2000', 80% in 1000' from High Right; 50% in 2000' from Low Left. Blast rocked the bombers at 10,000', and ground trembled under Ju88s seen on airfield, upper left.

## Crew Chief's 115 Raids, No Turnback



Never has the experience of one of his aircraft turning back for mechanical trouble been known to M/Sgt. Stephen J. Dergo, 392nd Bomb Group. He has piled up 115 consecutive missions as line chief on five aircraft and is still going. One Lib was lost in combat; three have been transferred or retired.

For his mechanical achievement, the Bronze Star was presented recently by Brig. Gen. Leon W. Johnson, 14th Combat Wing commander.

While he always had a yen for machinery, Dergo before the war led a choir of 86 voices in Detroit, Mich., on tours, and making broadcasts.



MAGDEBURG/ROTHENSEE

## MAGDEBURG HEAVILY HIT THRU FEB. 10/10

During the cloudy weeks, 2AD attacked targets at Magdeburg on five days in February, using H2K.

Clear weather reconnaissance now shows:

### MAGDEBURG RAIL GOODS YARD:

Damage severe. Main station and adjacent rail sheds gutted or destroyed. Goods depot gutted. A locomotive roundhouse destroyed. Damage to rolling stock and rail lines: 40% unserviceable.

### MAGDEBURG/ROTHENSEE OIL REFINERY:

Roofs stripped from Tail Gas separation, Oil Loading house, and Stores. Probable damage to foundations. Air intake pipes cut, and fresh craters in rail tracks adjoining the refinery.



SCHWABISCH-HALL A/F:

Jet plane center's hangars, workshops, radio station and offices half to totally destroyed after Feb. 25 attacks by 467th, 466th, 458th.

## FIRST PRUs OF WEEK'S MISSIONS



GOTTINGEN M/Y:

Single-Group attack by 44th (see page 6) disrupted all passage, destroyed many cars, locomotives, engine sheds, cut 100% of through running lines in railyard.



NORTHEIM M/Y:

Choke center between Paderborn and Hanover completely blocked. Heavy damage to locomotive depot, roundhouse, cars and sidings. 446th, 448th hit it.



HILDESHEIM M/Y:

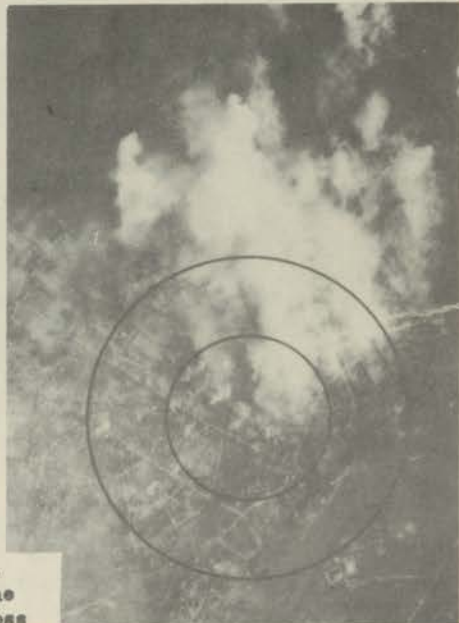
Wagons and storehouses still burning after 458th, 467th Groups attack. Explosion craters leave sidings 100% unserviceable.



ASCHAFFENBURG M/Y:

491ST, 392ND, 44TH, 93RD

"Thirty miles away, we could still see smoke billowing from the target". A perfect mission by all 4 Groups on this target -- each had at least one squadron scoring 100% in 2000' and over 90% in 1000' -- with not one gross error! Of 11 squadrons, all but one hit 90% or more in 2000' (11th hit 63%).



# FEB. 25 IN 1945 RETURNS TO HEX HUNS AS IN '44



## TANK AND ARMOR WORKS: 446TH, 448TH

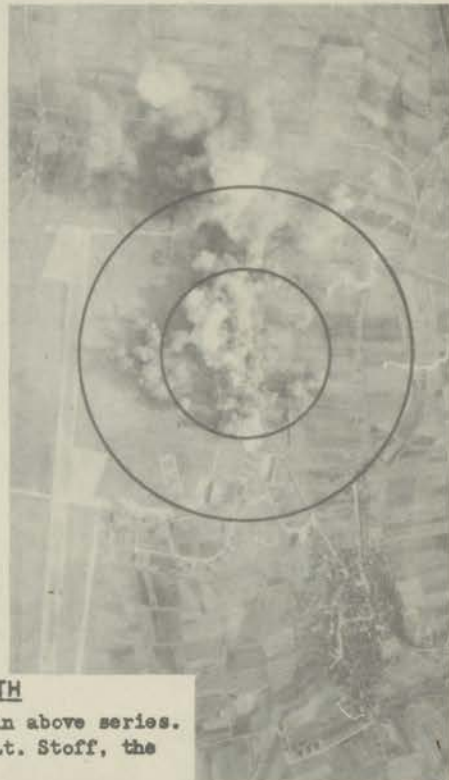
Key priority plant at Aschaffenburg. 448th's three squadrons averaged 96% in 2000', two averaged 89% within 1000'. 446th Low Left hit 100% and 50%. Lead squadron missed thru an accidental early release. The pinpoint target was thoroughly gutted, as trio of photos above very well demonstrate.

2AD scored its all-time Division record for bombing accuracy this week on Sunday, February 25, 1945. This day concluded a rare and well-timed visual bombing week for 8AF that guaranteed Allied superiority on the Western front.

February 25 in 1944 completed the historic "Big Week" of 8AF attacks on German aircraft industries (2AD hit Furth this day, Gotha the day preceding). This long-awaited visual break in 1944 guaranteed Allied air superiority over Europe for the first time.

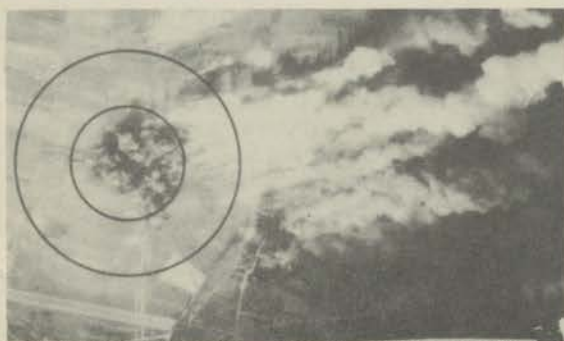
This crushing date belongs in infamous German history with November 11, 1918; June 6, 1944 -- but only February 25 appears magically on two successive years with such similar significance. In 1944 it led to D-Day. In 1945 to -- V-Day?

In establishing its all-time bombing record on February 25, 1945, the entire 2nd Air Division averaged (including two zero gross errors) 84% inside 2000', 56% within 1000' of all MPIs! Of 35 total squadrons attacking, 33 successfully hit the targets. The two squadron errors were caused by enemy action and an accidental early release. These high scores are achieved not by a few standout jobs, but by commendable high performance throughout all Groups of the Division.



SCHWABISCH/HALL EXPERIMENTAL PLANE CENTER: 466TH

Patterns of 466th Bomb Group sprint down the plant area in above series. Lead by bombardiers Lt. Polish, Lt. Hansen, Lt. Peters, Lt. Stoff, the Group's 4 squadrons averaged 99% in 2000', 82% in 1000'!



GIEBELSTEDT A/F: 389TH, 445TH, 453RD

Another experimental plane center ripped by Feb. 25 aiming. 389th Lead scored 100% in 2000', 98% in 1000' -- Group averaged 93% in 2000'. 445th High Right hit 92% in 2000', 87% in 1000'. 453rd Low Left made 100% in 2000', 45% in 1000'.

467TH, 458TH: SCHWABISCH/HALL

Following the attack by 466th Group shown at top of page, 467th's three squadrons averaged 100% in 2000', 78% in 1000'. 458th Lead hit 98% in 2000', 50% in 1000'. Incendiaries piled on to complete the destruction.

# BEST HIT BY A GROUP THIS WEEK



GOTTINGEN IS --



-- GETTING IT!

## AMONG THE TORRID, 44<sup>th</sup> HOTTER!

LOW LEFT HAD  
TO AIM AT SMOKE

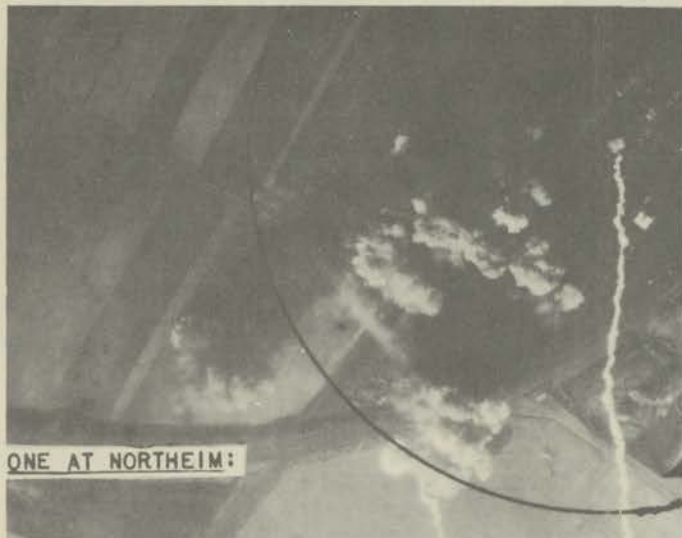
Strategically as loaded as Hunland's furious efforts could make it, Gottingen marshalling yard looked like a bombardier's dream. This traffic was routed between the Ruhr and Magdeburg.

At seven thousand feet (a new sensation in a heavy bomber over Germany), 44th Bomb Group had this target all to themselves. Lead squadron (bombardier, 1st/Lt. A. L. Holt) rifled 100% in 2000', 90% inside 1000' of the MPI. High Right (1st/Lt. K. R. Poulsen, lead bombardier), piled on 100% in 2000', 87% inside 1000'. Rounding out a perfect Group score, Low Left (1st/Lt. W. E. Laughlin, lead bombardier) socked another 100% into 2000', but with the smoke from all that Lib-battering our best bomb judges can't tell what number got within 1000' and 500'. It's obvious no bombs were wasted.

Final reconnaissance (photo on page 3) defines the damage as exceptionally heavy for a single-Group attack -- Locomotive Sheds 50% knocked out -- through running lines, 100% unserviceable -- Marshalling yard 30% gone -- 81 wagons ripped up, including flak and tank wagons -- at least 10 Locomotives damaged.

On this day nearly every Group made spectacular hits -- but 44th's all-squadron consistency takes the Group championship of a munition-mauling day.

# BEST RUNNER UP OF THIS WEEK



ONE AT NORTHEIM:

## 448th Says "We're Good" 4 Times

Rolling up their record score on two targets, the 448th earned second highest Group average of the week.

At Kriensen rail center, Lead and Low Left both bullseyed 100% in 2000', 98% and 80% (respectively) within 1000'. High Right's hits were smoke obscured. Lead bombardiers were Lt. Moll, Lt. Pollio, and Lt. Palmer. Sidings and facilities in locomotive, terminal and servicing departments were 25% to 80% knocked out.

A fourth squadron (Lt. Pearce, lead bombardier), attacking Northeim as High Right with another group, wound up the day's hit parade with another 100% in 2000', 65% inside 1000' of the MPI. Group average, 100% (in 2000') and 81% (in 1000')! Incidentally, the Rhine push is succeeding -- could this have something to do with it?



THREE AT KRIENSEN:



HILDESHEIM M/Y: 467TH, 458TH

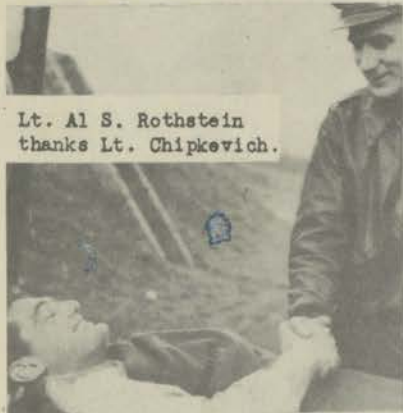
PRU (page 3) showed 65-foot crater near goods depot, other craters 45 to 55-feet, from explosion of ammunition loads here. M/Y sidings were left 100% un-serviceable. Three of 467th's four squadrons averaged 100% in 2000', 90% in 1000'. 458th's second squadron had 100% in 2000', also a full 100% inside 1000'!



NORTHEIM: 446TH, 392ND

Only 446th (aided by one squadron of 448th, top of page), connected here -- Lead and Low Left getting 98% in 2000', 85% in 1000'. PRU on page 3.

# "JUST PRACTICING," CATALINA RESCUERS SAVE BOMB CREW



Lt. Al S. Rothstein thanks Lt. Chipkevich.



Fresh and green to ETO flying procedures, a newly arrived 2AD rescue crew was sent into the air for local familiarization. Their Catalina amphibian did not yet have full equipment for radio and navigation, but they could hear the tower reporting a Fortress crew down in the North Sea, and they volunteered to help.

They reached the dinghy, and managed a landing in 10-foot waves, that damaged their big flying boat and silenced their only radio. They brought back eight survivors, using only a "Gibson Girl" radio for aid.

The Cat crew, above, are (kneeling) 2/Lt. Stanley R. Wilson, navigator, Sgt. P. A. Zink; (standing), 2/Lt. Donald E. Combs, pilot, Sgt. I. Effer-son, 2/Lt. Edward A. Chipkevich, co-pilot, Sgt. F. E. Glasser, Cpl. E. W. Sarp, Sgt. John E. Dawson.

# 4 Tag on Jerry's Wing, Save Necks

Returning home out of ammunition after destroying 7 Huns (including an Me-262 Jet), four P-51s led by Capt. Thomas R. Bell, 4th Fighter Group, were dived on by seven FW 190s, guns blazing.

"If we ran, we'd be cold meat," Bell related, "so we turned into them and bluffed with empty guns. They broke up and began flying string formation.

"We pulled up and each flew tight formation on a Jerry's wing. The others couldn't get behind and fire for fear of hitting their own planes.

"I waved at the Hun beside me -- he waved back, but I'll bet he was getting madder every minute. They coaxed us east, we coaxed west. Finally they started to break off, so we beat them to it, hightailing out of there."

With Bell were 1st/Lt. Carl G. Payne, who shot down the Jet, 2nd/Lt. Gordon A. Denson, his first mission (shared 3 MEs with Capt. Bell), and 2nd/Lt. Arthur Bowers, who destroyed 3 on the ground. Their 7 credits brought the 4th Group's total victories to an even 800 (519 in air, 281 on the ground by strafing).



TARGET:  
VICTORY'S

NOMINATION FOR  
OUTSTANDING

## "MAN-OF-THE-DIVISION"

1ST/LT. LOUIS A. ORSINI  
446TH BOMBARDIER

Angry flak over Kaiserslautern destroyed the No. 2 ship, No. 3 had to abort with damage. Group lead missed the MPI. Spearheading 446th Low Left squadron was 1st/Lt. Louis A. Orsini, coolly synchronizing his first lead.

Thirty seconds before bombs away, a flak hit shattered the Lib's nose, blasting Orsini from his position at the bombsight. He recovered too late for further corrections -- but his bombs scored 98% in the 2000' circle, 40% within 1000' of the important MPI. The Lib caught 70 flak holes, and

the right waist gunner was seriously injured. Orsini climbed back to apply his first aid knowledge to the bleeding man's pressure points, and they got him home safely.

Orsini lamented all the way back those few corrections that might have knocked out Kaiserslautern's railhub target more thoroughly. Next time out, the target was Hermann Goering's steel works at Hallendorf. No candy target, either -- but this time he got 97% of his squadron's hits into 2000', and 79% within 1000' of the MPI. Nearly twice as sharp as before.

His cool determination began to be noticed at 446th -- other bombardiers could rival his aiming, but they owed something of inspiration to this man who couldn't be satisfied with less than a perfect job. Third time as lead, the weather spared the primary, and teeming Lauta aluminum works looked up as a target of opportunity. Orsini's squadron's bombs whistled thru the vital plant like it was a vacuum cleaner.

446th was in a "hot" streak. They won the first "B" bombing pennant for topping 20th Wing's accuracy. Then came Wing, Division and Group leads for Orsini on Magdeburg (twice) and Munster. Clouds hid them 10/10, so it had to be H2X. For days and days,



no word of results, and then came the PRUs. Bam! Heavy damage right thru the clouds. Nobody could say which were 446th bombs, but Orsini led the division, and the fellows at the Group have faith in his lead. He's squadron bombardier now, and the new boys cluster around him for advice.

We've nominated Orsini as representative of the 2AD bombardier who by doing his job a little better than well is making "Bombs on the Target" history for the USAAF. We could have selected at the same base Lts. T. G. Brown, or Sadler, Horean, DeVeau -- you may know a couple in your Group just as good. Capt. G. W. Murrie, 446th Group Bombardier, says, "We're satisfied if all our bombardiers want to be just like Louis Orsini."