



Headquarters U.S. VIII Fighter Command Narratives of Operations

The Narratives of Operations of Headquarters U.S. VIII Fighter Command, of the Eighth Air Force, U.S.A.A.F., were one of the many typed reports issued in the wake of bomber-support and fighter missions, flown by the Command from bases in Great Britain, over the period 1943 to 1945. Other typed reports concerning the missions of the Eighth Air Force included Daily Intelligence Operations Summaries, Reports on Operations, and Digests issued by the Headquarters and its subsidiary Commands, Combat Wings, and Groups.

The Narratives of Headquarters U.S. VIII Fighter Command were swiftly issued by the General-Commanding following an operation to a wide distribution of parties, ranging from government, diplomatic and military. The security level was not high, so the Narratives came under the *Confidential, Destroy or File* listing. They were therefore reports fresh from the operations, of interest, but read with the proviso that subsequent reports would corrected or amended. They were therefore deemed not to be employed for records purposes. In this series of Narratives issued on the web, the Editor has corrected and amended the reported Pilot Casualties and Combat Claims of the Narratives with sources from published lists. The Pilot Casualties are drawn from data provided by the eminent historian and author, Roger Freeman. The Combat Claims, which the Narratives list are often inaccurate, so they are corrected with data drawn from many sources, including the works of Kent D. Miller. The Narratives themselves can be perused in various organizations, the Editor consulting the fascinating Missions Folders of the Eighth Air Force held by the Public Records Office, at Kew, London, under the Air 40 Files, for these purposes. To his regret he notes that the first of the series, from March to June 1943, are missing. Also, for some unaccountable reason, the Headquarters state that no Narratives were issued over the crucial period 6th - 19th June 1944. Hopefully, they make interesting reading. The Glossary of Terms are issued at the end of this document.

Headquarters U.S. VIII Fighter Command Narratives of Operations Intelligence Summary # 150

VIII FC F.O. 286 - VIII Air Force F.O. 538
IX FC F.O. 117

1 April 1944

~~Statistics - U.S. Fighter Groups~~ **Part I: Heavy-Bomber Attack on Targets in Southern Germany**

Statistics of U.S. Fighter Groups

Heavy-Bomber Support Tasks:	Penetration	Target	Withdrawal	Type 16	Total
VIII FC Missions by Groups:	4	2	3	-	9
IX FC Missions by Groups:	-	2	-	-	2
P-47 Sorties: -	123	-	109	-	232
P-38 Sorties: -	-	-	-	-	0
P-51 Sorties: -	16	179	-	-	195
Total: -	139	179	109	-	427
P-47 Thunderbolts Cat.E : -	1	-	1	-	2
P-38 Lightnings Cat.E : -	-	-	-	-	0
P-51 Mustangs Cat.E : -	-	2	-	-	2
P-47 Cat.E or damaged Cat. B: -	-	-	1	-	1
P-38 Cat.E or damaged Cat. B: -	-	-	-	-	0
P-51 Cat.E or damaged Cat. B: -	-	-	-	-	0
Personnel Casualties MiA: -	1	2	1	-	4
Personnel Casualties KiA: -	-	-	-	-	0
Personnel Casualties WiA: -	-	-	-	-	0
Personnel Casualties KiFAC: -	-	-	-	-	0
Personnel Casualties IiFAC: -	-	-	-	-	0
Combat Claims (Air): -	0-0-0	5-1-4	0-0-0	0-0-0	0-0-0
Combat Claims (Ground): -	0-0-0	0-0-4	9-1-13	0-0-0	9-1-17
Enemy Aircraft Seen (air): -	2	42+	-	-	44+
Enemy Aircraft Seen (ground): -	-	50+	40 T.E.	-	90+
U.S. Bombers seen Shot-down: -	-	1	-	-	1

Miscellaneous Ground-Targets: 1 Flak-tower, 1 gun-empacment and airdrome buildings, all damaged.

1. Summary of Fighter Escort

Second Task Force (2nd Division 3 CWs): Pforzheim:

Second Task Force, consisting of three Combat-Wings of 2nd Bomb. Division, was dispatched to targets at Pforzheim and Grafenhausen, in Southern Germany. The 353rd Fighter Group escorted from 08.55 to 09.15 hours: three boxes of B-17s were seen to abortive sortie and, when a fourth turned back, the Group escorted them back to the enemy coast. The Group turned inland and rendezvoused with two Combat-Wings of 2nd Division B-24s at Oudenaarde. Escorted with a P-47 Group to Enghien, 09.15 hours, and then swept Ghent area. No enemy aircraft were seen. The 56th 'B' Group escorted from Roulers 09.10 hours to Trier at 09.50 hours. The 56th 'A' Group, seeing the B-17s aborting, rendezvoused with the B-24s at Brussels at 09.40 hours. Left the bombers when south-east of Namur at 09.55 hours. The 352nd Group were with the B-24s from 09.20 hours, from Brussels to the Weiswampack area at 09.31 hours. Bombers were scattered and their formations were poor. The 354th Group, IXth Fighter Command, was told at 09.00 hours that the B-17s had aborted, and to proceed to the Second Air Task Force. Group was vectored several times, and engaged 30-plus Me 109s. Second Combat-Wing of B-24s were found at 11.30 hours, near Strasbourg, and escorted to Charleville at 12.15 hours. The 363rd Fighter Group, IXth Fighter Command, sighted some B-24s near Baden. Bombers took 330° heading course and went over Nancy from Lake Constance. Bombs were dropped on an unknown target shortly after leaving Lake Constance. Stayed with bombers to the vicinity of Laon, which was reached at 12.20 hours. Many planes observed on an airdrome at Luxembourg. Strafed them with claims and four destroyed. The 357th Fighter Group returned when Leader's transmitter went out, and formation was broken due to cloud overcast. Two boxes of B-24s were found south of Stuttgart, and north of Lake Constance, these being under attack. Enemy aircraft were engaged and dispersed. The 78th 'A' Fighter Group was unable to make rendezvous along the planned course. The 82nd Squadron strafed the airdrome near Verdun: claims 5-1-13 plus damage to ground-installations. The 78th 'B' Fighter Group flew the planned course but made no rendezvous. The 361st Fighter Group swept the area north and south of Luxembourg. Sighted approximately 150 B-24s at 12.20 hours, without escort. One squadron stayed with the first Combat-Wing to Dunkirk, reached 13.20 hours, two squadrons to Brussels, 12.50 hours.

Point of Interest: (1) With weather over Continent that was flyable, enemy reaction was not strong or aggressive.

2. Bomber Report

Two hundred and forty-five B-17s and 195 B-24s were dispatched to attack a target in south-western Germany. The operation was hampered by adverse weather conditions, with heavy cloud layers making formation flying very difficult, and undercast and ground haze hindering the bombardiers. Clouds caused B-17s to abandon the mission over France. B-24s went considerably south of the assigned target, and bombed Pforzheim, Grafenhausen, the Strasbourg area, and Schaffhausen (Switzerland), dropping 484.0 tons of bombs. Preliminary assessment of photos indicates that the bombs of one group fell in the wooded area 3 miles south-east of the city of Schaffhausen. Those of the remaining 13 aircraft fell in the city area. There was slight enemy air opposition. Anti-aircraft (A.A.) fire was intense and accurate at Darmstadt and moderate, but accurate, at Stuttgart, Mannheim and in coastal areas. Five B-24s were lost to Flak, two to enemy fighters and Flak, and four to unknown causes.

a. Penetration-Support 2nd ATF 2nd Division: Pforzheim



VIII FC 353rd FG 47 P-47 Thunderbolt 08.13-10.02 F.O. 286 0 - 0 - 0 - No casualty H-BS: Pforzheim

(A) 353rd Fighter Group, Captain Robertson leading (B) 47 P-47s, up 08.13 down 10.02 hours (C) 1 abortive sortie (D) Field Order # 286 Penetration Support 2nd Task Force to targets in Southern Germany (E) thru (H) nil (I) Landfall-in Nieupoort at 08.47 hours, 20,000 feet. 'Goldsmith' 1-1 aborted just prior to landfall-in. Informed on 'C' Channel by bombers that they were seven minutes late. Orbited and picked up three Combat-Wings, 3rd Division B-17s, at 08.55 hours, at 18,000 feet. 'Goldsmith' 1-3 and 1-4 aborted next and when 'Goldsmith' 1-2 turned back in the vicinity of Oudenaarde, the Group escorted them to the enemy coast. Then proceeded back inland, picking up two Combat-Wings of 2nd Division B-24s, escorted by P-47s, in the vicinity of Oudenaarde at 09.10 hours, the bombers at 17,000 feet, then leaving them in the vicinity of Enghien at 09.15 hours. Swept north around Ghent, one flight going down to 10,000 feet to investigate an airdrome there. No activity observed. Landfall-out Blankenberge, 09.25 hours, at 15,000 feet. Bomber formation was extremely loose. No enemy aircraft seen. No Flak until bombers approached Brussels. Good 'C' Channel contact with all Combat-Wings.



VIII FC 56th 'A' FG 32 P-47 Thunderbolt 08.18-11.20 F.O. 286 0 - 0 - 0 - 1 Cat.E H-BS: Pforzheim

(A) 56th 'A' Fighter Group, Colonel Zemke leading (B) 32 P-47s, up 08.18 down 11.20 hours (C) 1 abortive sortie (D) Field Order # 286 Penetration Support 2nd Task Force to targets in Southern Germany (E) one P-47 Cat.E (F) nil (G) 2/Lt. Thomas P. Owens, 61st Squadron, missing (H) nil (I) Landfall-in Blankenberge at 08.56 hours, at 19,000 feet. B-17s aborted, so rendezvous made with B-24s in the vicinity of Brussels, 09.49 hours, at 18,000 feet. Escort broken when south-east of Namur at 09.55 hours, at 18,000 feet. Landfall-out Calais to Dunkirk, 1038-10.45 hours, from 12,000 to 15,000 feet. P-51s also seen. Escorted 2nd Division B-24s. Bomber formation loose. One FW 190 was seen at 3,000 feet in Lille area. One single-engined yellow-colored plane seen at 4,000 feet in the vicinity of Lille. Flight dispatched to investigate plane, but it was lost in haze over town. About 3 miles north-east of Lille, seven dummy Ju 88s were sighted on a field adjacent to an airdrome. Ten single-engined and four black twin-engined enemy aircraft seen on airdrome, believed to be Valenciennes. Lieutenant Owens was apparently hit by small-arms fire, and plane was burning around the turbo-regulator. Pulled up to 1,000 feet, rolled over and crashed in flames: no chute seen.

— Cat.E 01.04.44 2/Lt. Thomas P. Owens † 56th FG 61st Sqn. P-47D-15: 42-75839 Flak: Lille □Neuville



VIII FC 352nd FG 47 P-47 & P-51 08.20-10.50 F.O. 286 0 - 0 - 0 - No casualty H-BS: Pforzheim

(A) 352nd Fighter Group, Lieutenant-Colonel Richmond leading (B) 30 P-47s and 17 P-51s, up 08.20 down 10.50 hours (C) 6 abortive sorties (D) Field Order # 286 Penetration Support 2nd Task Force to targets in Southern Germany (E) thru (H) nil (I) Landfall-in Blankenberge, 18,000 feet, at 09.00 hours Group Leader was advised by the Controller that one box of bombers had aborted, and that the remaining two were seven minutes late. Group orbited in the Ghent area and, due to weather conditions, made rendezvous south of Brussels, at 18,000 feet at 09.20 hours, with two Combat-Wings of B-24s, scattered, and in poor formation. Escort was continued until the re-call was given by the Controller in the Weiswampack area, at 16,000 feet, at 09.31 hours The 56th 'B' Group was observed with the bombers during our escort, and upon leaving. The Group swept the area south of the bomber penetration-route on the withdrawal. No enemy aircraft observed. Landfall-out north of Dunkirk at 12,000 feet, at 10.07 hours R/T and fighter-to-bomber intercom. were good.



VIII FC 56th 'B' FG 23 P-47 Thunderbolt 08.27-11.20 F.O. 286 0 - 0 - 0 - No casualty H-BS: Pforzheim

(A) 56th 'B' Fighter Group, Captain Lamb leading (B) 23 P-47s, up 08.27 down 11.20 hours (C) 2 abortive sorties (D) Field Order # 286 Penetration Support 2nd Task Force to targets in Southern Germany (E) thru (H) nil (I) Landfall-in south of Ostend at 09.05 hours, from 16,000 to 19,000 feet. Rendezvoused at Roulers, 09.10 hours, at 18,000 to 19,000 feet. Escort broken at Trier at 09.50 hours, from 14,000 to 19,000 feet. Landfall-out Gravelines, Le Touquet, Berck-sur-Mer, at 10.30 hours, from 9,000 up to 15,000 feet. Saw P-47s with 'PE' markings near Trier and P-51s. Four Combat-Wings of 2nd Bomb. Division were escorted, Lib formations were loose. No enemy aircraft seen. Fighter-to-bomber intercom. good. Heavy freight-traffic observed in area between Trier and Le Touquet.

b. Target-Support 2nd ATF 2nd Division: Pforzheim



IX FC 354th FG 48 P-51 Mustang 08.08-13.45 F.O. 117 2 - 0 - 2 Me 109G No casualty H-BS: Pforzheim

(A) 354th Fighter Group, IXth Fighter Command, Lieutenant-Colonel Howard leading (B) 48 P-51s, up 08.08 down 13.45 hours (C) 4 abortive sorties (D) Field Order # 117, IXth Fighter Command, Target Support 2nd Task Force to targets in Southern Germany (E) thru (G) nil (H) Claims 2-0-2 Me 109Gs (I) Landfall-in Ostend at 08.45 hours, and proceeded on briefed course. At 09.00 hours, Group Leader received the call that the bombers had turned back, and later received at call that 2nd Task Force were continuing to target, and requested escort. At the briefed Rendezvous Point, no bombers were found but information was received stating the bombers were between points 'O' and 'P'. Course was reversed at 09.30 hours, and Group flew for 20 minutes to point 'O'. No bombers sighted so the course reversed at 09.50 hours and Group returned to the rendezvous. Group of P-51s sighted at 09.45 hours, going inland to target. At 10.00 hours, a radio-relay reported that the bombers were 5 minutes short of point 'Y'. While going to this point, 30-plus Me 109s, flying in formation, were sighted. The 353rd Squadron was dispatched to engaged them. The balance of the Group continued on course to the vicinity of Bunxburg, and still did not sight the bombers. At 10.45 hours, the course was reversed and the Group proceeded to the target area. At 11.00 hours, large bursts of Flak were sighted and Group Leader assumed it to indicate the position of the bombers. Continuing on the course, two Combat-Wings of B-24s were overtaken at 11.30 hours near Strasbourg. Escorted them until 12.15 hours, when in the vicinity of Charleville. Crossed out enemy coast at 13.10 hours when over Blankenberge. Large number of planes parked at airfields at Metz, north of Nancy and Mannheim. West of St. Omer, in woods, are probably located several A.A. batteries of light and heavy guns. Another battery of light Flak observed in woods at Merville.

■ Claim 01.04.44	Lt. Eagleston	354 th FG	353 rd Sqn.	1 - 0 - 1	Me 109G	Neustadt
■ Claim 01.04.44	Lt. Hunt	354 th FG	353 rd Sqn.	1 - 0 - 1	Me 109G	Neustadt
■ Claim 01.04.44	Capt. Emmer	354 th FG	353 rd Sqn.	0 - 0 - 1	Me 109G	Neustadt



VIII FC 4th FG 47 P-51 Mustang 07.37-13.00 F.O. 286 3 - 0 - 2 Me 109G No casualty H-BS: Pforzheim

(A) 4th Fighter Group, Colonel Blakeslee leading (B) 47 P-51s, up 07.37 down 13.00 hours (C) 1 abortive sortie (D) Field Order # 286 Target Support 2nd Task Force to targets in Southern Germany (E) nil (F) one P-51 damaged Cat.A (G) nil (H) Claims 3-0-2 Me 109Gs (I) Landfall-in at Knokke at 08.31 hours, 20,000 feet. Swept to Frankfurt, beyond Mannheim to the north, then south again beyond Ludwigshafen, but nothing was seen. South of Stuttgart and north of Lake Constance, two boxes of Liberators were sighted in poor formation, at 19,000 to 21,000 feet, and were seen under attack from above by 4 to 6 Me 109s. On the first pass, one Liberator was seen going down with two engines afire: four men left the ship at 16,000 feet, and three chutes were seen later. Group engaged enemy aircraft down to 7,000 feet, destroying three, and damaging one. One grey-blue Me 109 was engaged from range of 25 feet, seen with letter 'G' in black in small white circle on tail. Only two other P-51s seen. Accurate Flak from river east of Ludwigshafen damaged one of our aircraft at 23,000 feet. Group left bombers after combat with Antwerp area. One Me 109 on 'deck' damaged. Out between Le Touquet and Ostend, 12.21 hours, from 11,000 up to 15,000 feet.

[Accredited Claims: Miller List credits 4th FG with 3-0-3 air & 0-0-1 ground: Ed.]

■ Claim 01.04.44	Capt. W.D. Beeson	4 th FG	334 th Sqn.	1 - 0 - 0	Me 109G	N. Lake Constance
■ Claim 01.04.44	Lt. R.K. Hofer	4 th FG	334 th Sqn.	1 - 0 - 0	Me 109G	N.W. Lake Constance
■ Claim 01.04.44	Lt. N. Megura	4 th FG	334 th Sqn.	0 - 0 - 1	Me 109G	N.W. Lake Constance
■ Claim 01.04.44	Maj. G. Carpenter	4 th FG	335 th Sqn.	0 - 0 - 1	Me 109G	Antwerp
■ Claim 01.04.44	Lt. C.F. Anderson	4 th FG	335 th Sqn.	0 - 0 - 1	Me 109G	Antwerp
■ Claim 01.04.44	Capt. D.S. Gentile	4 th FG	336 th Sqn.	1 - 0 - 0	Me 109G	S.W. Stuttgart
↓ Claim 01.04.44	Lt. R.F. Nelson	4 th FG	336 th Sqn.	0 - 0 - 1	Ju 88	Belgium



VIII FC 357th FG 48 P-51 Mustang 07.49-09.35 F.O. 286 0 - 0 - 0 - 2 Cat.E H-BS: Pforzheim

(A) 357th Fighter Group, Major Hayes leading (B) 48 P-51s, up 07.49 down 09.35 hours (C) 3 abortive sorties (D) Field Order # 286 Target Support 2nd Task Force to targets in Southern Germany (E) two P-51s Cat.E (F) nil (G) Capt. David T. Perron and 2/Lt. Elmer D. Rydberg, both of 362nd Squadron, missing; both seen in the vicinity of Doullens at 08.55 hours. (H) nil (I) Majority of the Group made landfall

estimated to be near Cayeux-sur-Mer at 24,000 feet, at 08.25 hours Group made 180° turn in the vicinity of Doullens, crossing out near Cayeux at altitudes from 4,000 feet up to 36,000 feet, at about 09.00 hours Intense light Flak encountered north-east of Ault. Layers of altocumulous cloud, 3/10th to 5/10th cover, from 7,000 up to 12,000 feet, and heavy 10/10th haze from 15,000 up to 36,000 feet extended from mid-Channel to over the Continent. Leader's transmitter went out, consequently the formation as a Group could not be maintained in the overcast, and Group became separated into flights. The order to return was transmitted on radio by Leader's wing-man upon Leader's signal. Upon descending through undercast on the return, the bombers were seen in mid-Channel climbing easterly into the overcast at about 17,000 feet.

—	Cat.E 01.04.44	Capt. David T. Perron	Y	357 th FG	362 nd Sqn.	P-51B-5: 43-6792	Wx: □ Doullens
—	Cat.E 01.04.44	2/Lt. Elmer D. Rydberg	Y	357 th FG	362 nd Sqn.	P-51B-5: 43-6629	Wx: □ Frevent



IX FC 363rd FG 54 P-51 Mustang 09.00-14.06 F.O. 117 0 - 1 - 4 Various 4 Cat. A: FlakTS 2nd ATF Pforzheim

(A) 363rd Fighter Group, IXth Fighter Command, Colonel John R. Ulricson leading (B) 54 P-51s, up 09.00 down 14.06 hours (C) 10 abortive sorties (D) Field Order # 117, IXth Fighter Command, Target Support 2nd Task Force to targets in Southern Germany (E) thru (G) nil (H) Claims 0-1-4 aircraft on the ground (I) Landfall-in 09.00 hours, at 23,000 feet, south of Ostend. Flak moderate, heavy, and inaccurate. Told by 'Ragbone' to circle between Ghent and Brussels for 3 minutes, then told that bombers were 6 to 7 minutes late. At 09.15 hours, 'Ragbone' called and said to stay within radio range for next few minutes. Orbitted and continued on course. Ground observed near rendezvous point (Trier). No bombers seen. Circled 5 or 6 minutes and took 90° degrees course to Rhine River. Crossed the Rhine in the vicinity of Oppenheim, turned south along the course of the Rhine River, and followed to target. Evaded Flak north of target. Sighted bombers at 10.15 hours, near Baden. Bombers took 330° heading and went over Nancy from Lake Constance. Bombs dropped over small unknown target when a short time after leaving Lake Constance. Escorted bombers until 12.20 hours, when P-47s picked them up in vicinity of Laon. Landfall-out east of Calais, 15,000 feet, at 13.10 hours The 380th Squadron was 'bounced' by four Me 109s, and forced to drop tanks: the place unknown, and before the Rendezvous Point. Two planes continued on and rendezvoused with the bombers. About 20 miles east of target, encountered two-plus Me 109s resulting in claim by Lt. Owen. Lieutenants Schmidt and Smutz strafed an airdrome at Luxembourg, where 50 planes were lined-up wing-tip to wing-tip, resulting in claims above. Entire line strafed at 400 m.p.h. Flak heavy, intense, and accurate at Frankenstein. Heavy, moderate, and accurate at Abbeville. Heavy, moderate and inaccurate at Ostend. Four P-51s damaged Cat.A due to Flak.

■	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. Owen	363 rd FG	380 th Sqn.	0 - 1 - 0	Me 109G	Borden
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. Schmidt	363 rd FG	381 st Sqn.	0 - 0 - 2	Unident.	Luxembourg
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. Smutz	363 rd FG	381 st Sqn.	0 - 0 - 2	Unident.	Luxembourg

c. Withdrawal-Support 2nd ATF 2nd Division: Pforzheim



VIII FC 78th 'A' FG 51 P-47 Thunderbolt 10.10-13.44 F.O. 286 5 - 1 - 13 T.E.F. 1 Cat.E HB-S: Pforzheim

(A) 78th 'A' Fighter Group, Major Stump leading (B) 51 P-47s, up 10.10 down 13.44 hours (C) 3 abortive sorties (D) Field Order # 286 Withdrawal Support 2nd Task Force from targets in Southern Germany (E) one P-47 Cat.E (F) 6 P-47s damaged (G) 2/Lt. Calvin C. Webb, of 82nd Squadron, missing (H) Claims 5-1-13 aircraft, all on the ground. Ground and/or water targets claimed by Group (aircraft excluded). Damaged: one Flak-tower by Lt. Hagarty, of 82nd Squadron; one gun-emplacement by Lt. Hewitt, of 82nd Squadron; sundry airdrome buildings shot-up by Lts. Yound and Keller, both of 82nd Squadron (I) Landfall-in Dunkirk, at 10.48 hours, at 18,000 feet. After take-off 'Parker' called that the bombers were 17 minutes late. Group continued on course for 20 minutes beyond the Rendezvous Point to near Kaiserslautern, but was unable to contact the bombers. Returned, crossing out east of Ostend, at 12.35 hours, at 10,000 feet. The 82nd Squadron, on the way back, strafed an airdrome believed to be near Verdun, on which were seen 40-plus twin-engined enemy aircraft, some painted black others camouflaged grey. Enemy aircraft were lined-up around the field, and our aircraft flew down the lines firing: the pilots believe that they hit more targets than those listed above. R/T good. One large merchant vessel seen entering Boulogne Harbour. Note: six P-47s assessed damaged Cat.A due to Flak: Ed.

—	Cat.E 01.04.44	2/Lt. Calvin C. Webb	Y	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	P-47C-5: 41-6535 MX-1 Flak: □ Armentieres
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[Accredited Claims: Miller List credits 78th FG with 6-0-8 ground: Ed.]

↓	Claim 01.04.44	Capt. D.W. Boone	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1/3 - 0 - 0	Unident:	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Capt. D.W. Boone	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1/3 - 0 - 0	Unident:	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. B.M. Watkins	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1/3 - 0 - 0	Unident:	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Capt. D.W. Boone	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	0 - 0 - 1	Me 410	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Capt. D.W. Boone	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	0 - 0 - 1	Ju 52/3m	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. B.M. Watkins	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	0 - 0 - 2	Unident:	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. P.H. Hazlett	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1 - 0 - 0	Ju 87	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. P.H. Hazlett	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1 - 0 - 0	Unident:	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. K.R. Wagner	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1 - 0 - 0	He 111	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. B.M. Watkins	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1/3 - 0 - 0	Unident:	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. C. Webb	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1/3 - 0 - 0	Unident:	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. C. Webb	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1/3 - 0 - 0	Unident:	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. B.M. Watkins	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1/8 - 0 - 0	Do 217	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Capt. D.W. Boone	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1/8 - 0 - 0	Do 217	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Capt. W.E. May	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1/8 - 0 - 0	Do 217	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. C.R. Clark	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1/8 - 0 - 0	Do 217	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. H.L. Eakes	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1/8 - 0 - 0	Do 217	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. J.J. Hockery	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1/8 - 0 - 0	Do 217	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. R.V. Hearne	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	1/8 - 0 - 0	Do 217	Verdun

↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. C.W. DeWitt	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	$\frac{1}{8}$ - 0 - 0	Do 217	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. C.W. DeWitt	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	0 - 0 - 1	He 111	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. D.D. Hagerty	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	0 - 0 - 2	Do 217	Verdun
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. C.G. Godard	78 th FG	82 nd Sqn.	0 - 0 - 1	Ju 88	Verdun



VIII FC 78th 'B' FG 24 P-47 Thunderbolt 10.14-13.09 F.O. 286 0 - 0 - 0 - No casualty H-BS: Pforzheim

(A) 78th 'B' Fighter Group, Major Gilbert leading (B) P-47s, up 10.14 down 13.09 hours (C) 2 abortive sorties (D) Field Order # 286 Withdrawal Support 2nd Task Force to targets in Southern Germany (E) thru (H) nil (I) Landfall-in over Nieuport at 18,000 feet, at 10.50 hours Flew planned course to Rendezvous Point, where 'Parker' informed 'Bakehouse' that bombers were late. Group continued on to a point 10 miles north of Trier, but did not make rendezvous. Turned back at 11.30 hours Crossed-out over Nieuport, 12,000 feet, at 12.13 hours No enemy aircraft seen. R/T good.



VIII FC 361st FG 45 P-47 Thunderbolt 10.41-14.00 F.O. 286 0 - 0 - 0 - No casualty H-BS: Pforzheim

(A) 361st Fighter Group, Lieutenant-Colonel Kruzel leading (B) 45 P-47s, up 10.41 down 14.00 hours (C) 6 abortive sorties (D) Field Order # 286 Withdrawal Support 2nd Task Force to targets in Southern Germany (E) thru (H) nil (I) Landfall-in over Ostend at 18,000 feet, at 11.19 hours Proceeded on course arriving in the vicinity of Luxembourg at 11.50 hours Group orbited, and swept north and south of that area, finally sighting approximately 150 B-24s in that vicinity at 12.20 hours, from 15,000 to 17,000 feet. First Combat-Wing of B-24s flying in two sections, escorted by one squadron to Dunkirk, 13.20 hours Second Combat-Wing were about 30 miles in-trail, flying in three separate sections, was escorted by other two squadrons. Broke escort with second Combat-Wing when in the vicinity south-west of Brussels at 12.50 hours Out Gravelines and Dunkirk 13.20-13.25 hours, at 15,000 feet. No enemy aircraft seen. Bombers without escort when picked up, except for two P-51s on the first Combat-Wing.

Headquarters U.S. VIII Fighter Command

Narratives of Operations

Intelligence Summary No. 150

VIII FC F.O. 286 - VIII Air Force F.O. 538

1 April 1944

Part II: Fighter-Strafing Attacks on German Airdromes

Statistics of U.S. Fighter Groups-

Fighter-Bomber Tasks:

Fighter-Bombing

VIII FC Missions by 2 Groups:	2
P-47 Sorties: -	47
P-47 Thunderbolts Cat.E : -	0
P-47 Cat.E or damaged Cat. B: -	0
Personnel Casualties: -	0
Combat Claims (Air): -	0-1-0
Combat Claims (Ground): -	8-0-2
Enemy Aircraft Seen (air): -	8
Enemy Aircraft Seen (ground): -	31
Bombs Dropped: -	22 x 6 x 20-lb. Fragmentation-Clusters.

Miscellaneous Ground-Targets: Six locomotives destroyed, 6 locomotives damaged, 13 locomotives probably damaged, 1 tug-boat destroyed, 6 tugs, 9 barges, 1 Radar-installation, 1 M.G. emplacement, airdrome buildings, 1 light-Flak emplacement, barracks, Flak-tower and draw-bridge, all damaged.

1. Summary of Fighter-Bomber Attacks

The 356th Fighter Group made landfall-in north of Ijmuiden at 08.37 hours, at 21,000 feet. Flew to the end of assigned area. Ten P-47s carried fragmentation bombs. Four P-47s, in the lead, dropped bombs on Diepholz airdrome with unobserved results. Rheine airdrome was strafed, and four Me 410s destroyed. Two P-47s bombed a tug-boat north-west of Meppen: results not seen. Many ground targets strafed. The 353rd Fighter Group, made landfall-in Haamstede, 08.32 hours, at 17,000 feet. Strafed Gütersloh airdrome, destroying four aircraft there. Trains and power-boats attacked between Bohmte and Osterkappel. One flight was 'bounced' by two enemy fighters in the vicinity of Kampen. One enemy aircraft was probably destroyed.

a. Fighter-Bombing 356th FG: Diepholz Airdrome



VIII FC 356th FG 32 P-47 Thunderbolt 07.48-11.06 F.O. 286 4 - 0 - 2 Me 410 1 Cat.B F-BA: Diepholz

(A) 356th Fighter Group, Lieutenant-Colonel Tukey leading (B) 32 P-47s, up 07.48 down 11.06 hours (C) 4 abortive sorties (D) Field Order # 286, Fighter-Bomber attack on Diepholz airdrome (E) nil (F) two P-47s damaged Cat.A and one Cat.B (G) nil (H) 4-0-2 all on ground. Ground and/or water targets claimed by Group (aircraft excluded). One locomotive destroyed (shared) by Capt. Ogden and Lt. Warren, of 359th Squadron. One locomotive damaged (shared) by Capt. M. J. Burke and Lt. W.L. Farmer, of 359th Squadron. One locomotive damaged (shared) by Lt. Col. Baccus, Lt. Meholic and Lt. Wadlow, of 359th Squadron. One locomotive damaged (shared) by Lt. Col. P.E. Tukey, Lt. J.A. Smith and Lt. C.B. Earnheart, of 359th Squadron. One locomotive damaged by Lt. Weber, of 359th Squadron. One locomotive destroyed (shared) by Capt. J.N. Wood and Lt. E.N. Parham, of 361st Squadron. Four locomotives destroyed and two damaged, and several freight-cars damaged by Capt. D.J. Strait and Lts. J.V. Jack, R. Gibson and E. G. Dendle, of 361st Squadron. One tug-boat destroyed (shared) by Lt. Col. Tukey, Lts. Smith and Earnheart, of 359th Squadron. One power-driven barge damaged (shared) by Lt.Col. Tukey and Lts. Smith and Earnheart, of 359th Squadron. One radar-installation damaged by Lt. Smith, of 359th Squadron. One machine-gun emplacement damaged, and two German G.9s shot by Capt. Ogden, of 359th Squadron. One light-Flak emplacement and barracks damaged by Lt. Weber, of 359th Squadron. One tug-boat damaged by Capt. J. B. Stratford, 360th Squadron. Two barges damaged by Major J.N. Thomas and Lt. A.B. McLaughlin, 360th Squadron. Two tugs, four barges, one Flak-tower and drawbridge damaged (shared) by Capt. Wood, Lieutenants Parham, S.H. Hewett, D.F. Thwaites, T.F. Bailey, W. Burns, R.C. McDowell and E.P. Lee, of 361st Squadron. (I) Landfall-in north of Ijmuiden at 08.37 hours, at 21,000 feet, to the east of assigned area. One section of 4 P-47s, in lead-squadron, dropped fragmentation-clusters on Diepholz airdrome with unobserved results. Dive began at 17,000 feet and ended at 7,000 feet. Commenced 80° dive-angle with half-roll. Rhine airdrome strafed, and claims of Me 410s resulted as listed below. Top-squadron's section of 4 P-47 bombers had two bombers bomb a tug-boat on the Dortmund-Ems Canal, just north-west of Meppen. Results not seen. Began glide at 4,000 feet, and dropped bombs at 1,400 feet. Angle of glide 40 to 45-degrees. Other two aircraft jettisoned bombs near Geringhusen at 19,000 feet, to attack train. Group split-up in the vicinity of Dümmer Lake area. Landfall-out north of Ijmuiden between 10.15 and 10.30 hours, from 7,000 up to 21,000 feet. Primary targets were difficult to pin-point because of a cloud cover. As a result, only Rhine and Diepholz were hit. Flak, intense, accurate and light at Ijmuiden, and in the railroad-yards of Rhine and Lingen where Flak-cars were observed. One large vessel with three destroyer escort in Rotterdam harbour. One destroyer seen at anchor at 52.52 North-04.54 East. Yellow lights seen near Rotterdam. Area to north-east of Amsterdam flooded from Zuider Zee to two miles inland. At 10.36 hours, a B-17 was seen at 3,000 feet, 20 to 30 miles off the English coast, headed due east. Pilot thought it had a triangle on the tail. R/T normal. Ten P-47 Thunderbolts with M1A1 cluster consisting of six 20-lb. ANM-41 instantaneously-fuzed bombs. Eight planes bombed the primary targets, and two jettisoned bombs in English Channel due to inability to see any primary targets.

[Accredited Claims: Miller List credits 356th FG with 4-0-0 air & 0-0-2 ground: Ed.]

↓	Claim 01.04.44	Capt. H.A. Ogden	356 th FG	HQ Sqn.	1 - 0 - 0	Me 410	Wunstorf
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. R.B. Warren	356 th FG	359 th Sqn.	2 - 0 - 0	Me 410	Wunstorf
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt.Col. D.A. Baccus	356 th FG	359 th Sqn.	1 - 0 - 0	Me 410	Wunstorf
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. J.J. Meholic	356 th FG	359 th Sqn.	0 - 0 - ½	Me 410	Wunstorf
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. J.J. Meholic	356 th FG	359 th Sqn.	0 - 0 - ½	Me 410	Wunstorf
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. H. Weber	356 th FG	359 th Sqn.	0 - 0 - ½	Me 410	Wunstorf
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. H. Weber	356 th FG	359 th Sqn.	0 - 0 - ½	Me 410	Wunstorf
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. Wadlow	356 th FG	359 th Sqn.	½ - 0 - 0	Me 410	Not admitted

b. Fighter-Bombing 353rd FG: Gütersloh airdrome



VIII FC 353rd 'C' FG 11 P-47 Thunderbolt 07.50-11.23 F.O. 286 4 - 1 - 0 Various No casualty F-BA: Gütersloh

(A) 353rd 'C' Fighter Group, Captain Ettlesen leading (B) 11 P-47s, up 07.50 down 11.23 hours (C) 2 abortive sorties (D) Field Order # 286, Fighter-Bomber attack on Gütersloh airdrome (E) nil (F) two P-47s damaged Cat.A (G) nil (H) Claims 4-0-0 Ju 88s on the ground, 0-1-0 Me 109 in the air. Ground and/or water targets claimed by Group (aircraft excluded). Eight locomotives probably destroyed by Capt. Ettlesen, Lt. Thacker, Lt. Carter sharing three of these, and Lt. Kelley sharing four of these. One locomotive was probably destroyed by Lt. Kelly. One locomotive probably destroyed by Capt. Starn, Lt. Johnson and Lt. G. S. Wright. Three locomotives probably destroyed (one each) by Lt. Kinnard, Lt. Johnson and Lt. J. C. Wright. Two tug-boats strafed (one set on fire), one barge damaged by Capt. Ettlesen. One tug-boat set afire, one barge damaged, by Lieutenant J. C. Wright. Several sundry buildings strafed at Gütersloh airdrome. (I) Three flights of three P-47s each made landfall-in Haamstede at 08.32 hours, 17,000 feet, arriving in the assigned target area at 09.10 hours. Strafing various targets with the above results, leaving the Dümmer Lake area at 09.46 hours. Landfall-out north of Ijmuiden at 10.40 hours, 16,000 feet. Heavy frost on the ground and 10/10th undercast, base 3,000 feet, and tops at 6,000 feet, made spotting of targets difficult. Approximately 25 enemy aircraft observed on Gütersloh airdrome, mostly Ju 88s, a few Me 109s and FW 190s. An airdrome, possibly Diepholz, was attacked but no aircraft seen except dummies. Several trains and two power-boats, with barges, were strafed between Bohmte and Osterkappel. One flight, returning, low on ammunition and fuel, was 'bounced' by two black Me 109s when in the vicinity of Kampen. These enemy fighters, apparently manned by inexperienced pilots, were easily evaded: one claimed as probably destroyed. Flak, heavy and accurate, was encountered as follows: 80 bursts from 4 gun-positions at s'Hertogenbosch about 19,000 feet, one aircraft received battle-damage. North of the Ruhr, 80 bursts from 4 gun-positions at 16,000 feet. Forty bursts from 4 gun-position at Lingen on way out at 16,000 feet. Twenty bursts from 4-gun position between Lingen and Zwolle at 16,000 feet.

[Accredited Claims: Miller List credits 353rd FG with 0-0-1 air & 4-0-0 ground: Ed.]

■	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. C.E. Carter	353 rd FG	Squadron	0 - 0 - 1	Me 109G	Dummer Lake
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. J.D. Kelly	353 rd FG	Squadron	2 - 0 - 0	Ju 88	Gütersloh
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. W.E. Kinnaird	353 rd FG	Squadron	1 - 0 - 0	Ju 88	Gütersloh
↓	Claim 01.04.44	Lt. J.C. Wright	353 rd FG	Squadron	1 - 0 - 0	Ju 88	Gütersloh

Hq. VIII FC Reg. File 23112 📄

The Foregoing is subject to Amendment and should not be used for Record Purposes.

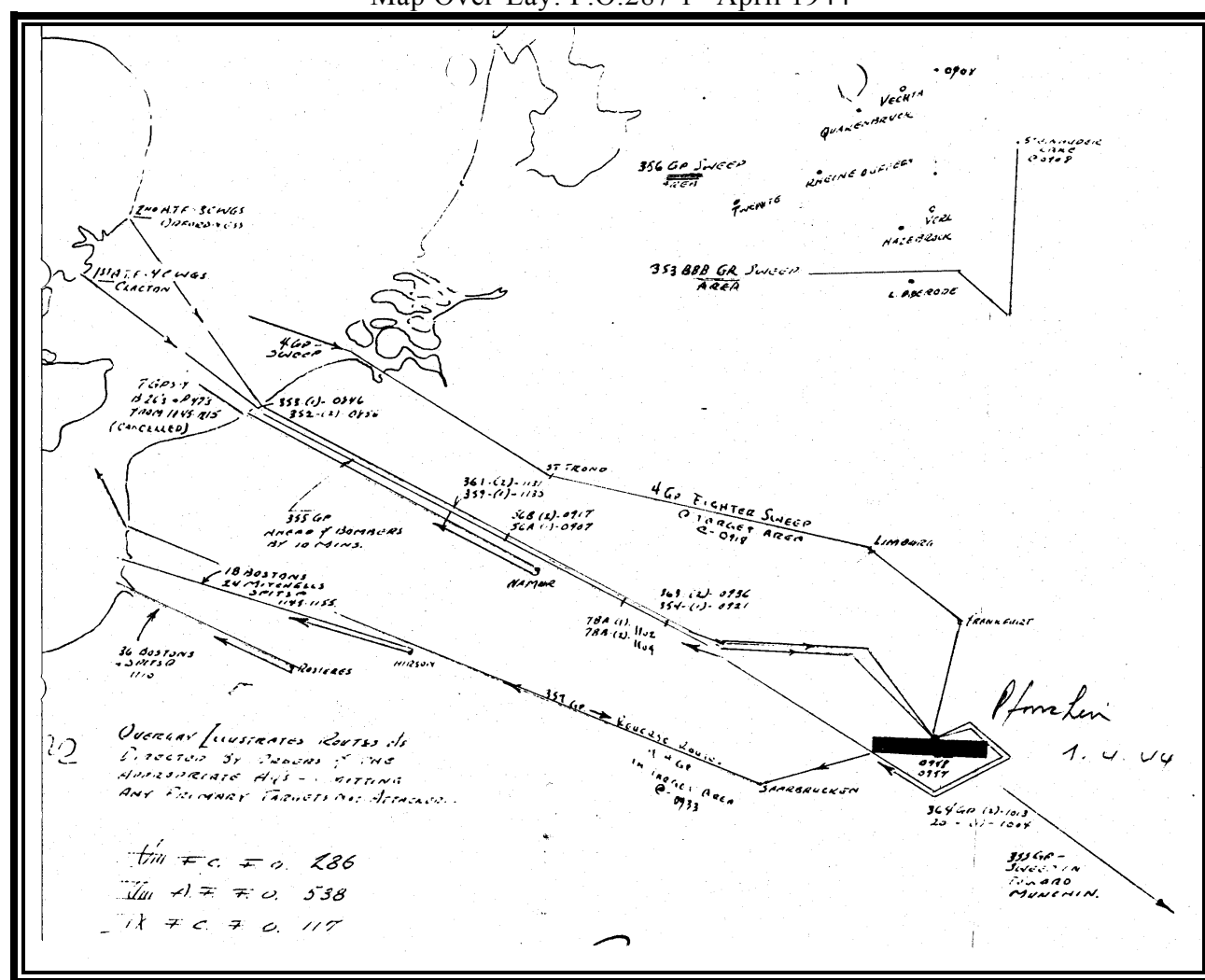
By Command of Major-General KEPNER

Signed: Laurence K. Callahan
Colonel. G.S.C.
Asst. C/S, A-2.


U.S. Eighth Air Force Diary of Fighter Operations: 1st April 1944. Field Order # 287. Total 429 airborne: 418 airborne less spares, spotters and relays: 36 aircraft did not complete the mission: 382 aircraft completed the mission out of 386 credited sorties on Heavy-Bomber Support: Targets of opportunity in Southern Germany. Bombs dropped by Fighters: 16 x 120-lb. frag. clusters. Total aircraft Cat.E : 4 (one to Flak, 3 to causes unknown). Aircraft damaged: 14 less than Cat.E. Casualties: 4 pilots MIA. Combat claims 16-2-17 (in the air and on the ground). Ref: PRO AIR 22/350.

See Over-Lay next Page:

Map Over-Lay: F.O.287 1st April 1944



Reading the Narratives and their Keys. **Title-Line** is commenced on the left margin by the U.S. VIII or IX Fighter Command Logo. The Narratives including the operations of the U.S. IX Fighter Command from October 1943 when its Groups were subordinated to the Eighth. Paragraph 'A' reads the Fighter Squadron or Group; Paragraph 'B' the Force number, including the abortive sorties, and type of aircraft of the force; Paragraph 'C' times of first-up and last-down in GMT; Paragraph 'D' mission Field Order Number; 'H' tri-numbered Claim and Enemy-Aircraft type or task [destroyed - probably destroyed - damaged]; Paragraph 'E & F' gives short summary of Aircraft Loss Categories; Paragraph 'I' reads Task with Target and/or Area of Operation. The Tasks are coded as follows:

Logo	A	B	C	D	H	E & F	I
 VIII FC Pas-de-Calais	78 th FG	48 P-47 Thunderbolt	16.44-18.25 F.O. 81		1 - 0 - 0	FW 190	No casualtyF-Sw:

Mech:	Mechanical or Engine-Failure
Wx:	Adverse Weather
Cmbt:	Air Combat
H-BS	Heavy-Bomber Support
M-BS	Medium-Bomber Support
L-BS	Light-Bomber Support
F-BS	Fighter-Bomber Support
F-Sw	Fighter-Sweep (R.A.F. 11 Group 'Rodeo')
Cat.A	Damaged: repair on site by operating Unit.
Cat.AC	Damaged: repair on site not by operating Unit.
Cat.B	Damaged: repair at Maintenance Unit.
Cat.C	Damaged: repair for Ground Instruction purposes only.
Cat.E	Written-off: salvage impossible.
Cat.E1	Written-off: use of components possible.
Cat.E2	Written-off: salvage of scrap possible
Cat.Em	Written-off: missing on operational flight
ASR	Air-Sea Rescue
CE	Close-Escort
EC	Escort-Cover
HC	High-Cover
EPJ	Emergency Parachute-Jump

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