

Dear Evelyn,  
I know Ed only  
flew the first 7  
missions with us, but  
I thought your family  
would like what I  
wrote to record what  
went on up there.  
I'll make this short  
so I can get it in  
the mail.

Thank you,  
Louis W.  
Considine

from the desk of

Mr. Louis Considine

P-47 Thunderbolt



Mr Louis W. Considine  
5108 Meadow Cv  
San Antonio, TX 78250-4524



The image shows the front cover of an antique book. The cover is bound in a dark, heavily marbled paper with a complex, organic pattern of light and dark spots. A central, rectangular label with a decorative border of repeating fleur-de-lis motifs is pasted onto the cover. The label contains the title 'Composition' in a large, bold, serif font. Below the title, there are two lines of text: 'Property of' followed by a horizontal line and the name 'LOUIS CONSIDINE' written in blue ink; and 'Subject' followed by a horizontal line and the text 'TRADE TECH II' written in blue ink. The book's spine is visible on the left side, showing some wear and a small piece of paper or tape.

# Composition

Property of

LOUIS  
CONSIDINE

Subject

TRADE TECH II

## OPERATIONAL MISSIONS

TARGET	DATE
① WILHELSHAVEN, GERMANY	11-3-43
② GELSENKIRCHEN, GERMANY	11-5-43
③ BREMEN, GERMANY	11-26-43
④ BREMEN, GERMANY	11-29-43
✓ ⑤ SOLINGEN, GERMANY	12-1-43
✓ ⑥ ST. JEAN D'ANGELY, FRANCE	12-5-43
⑦ BREMEN, GERMANY	12-13-43
⑧ BREMEN, GERMANY	12-20-43
✓ ⑨ OSNABRÜCK, GERMANY	12-22-43
✓ ⑩ VACQUARÈTE, FRANCE	12-24-43
⑪ BORDEAUX, FRANCE	12-31-43
⑫ KIEL, GERMANY	1-5-44
⑬ LUDWIGSHAVEN, GERMANY	1-7-44
⑭ FRANKFURT, GERMANY	1-29-44
✓ ⑮ BRUNSWICK, GERMANY	1-30-44
✓ ⑯ WILHELSHAVEN, GERMANY	2-3-44
✓ ⑰ FRANKFURT, GERMANY	2-4-44
✓ ⑱ WIZERNES, FRANCE	3-19-44
✓ ⑲ FRANKFURT, GERMANY	3-20-44
✓ ⑳ BRUNSWICK, GERMANY	3-29-44
• ✓ ㉑ SORAU, GERMANY	4-11-44
• ✓ ㉒ BERLIN, GERMANY	4-18-44
• ✓ ㉓ KASSEL, GERMANY	4-19-44
• ㉔ HAMM, GERMANY	4-22-44
• ✓ ㉕ TOUL, FRANCE	4-27-44
• ✓ ㉖ BERLIN, GERMANY	5-8-44
• ✓ ㉗ STETTIN, GERMANY	5-13-44
• ㉘ LESSAY, FRANCE	6-5-44
• ✓ ㉙ CAEN, FRANCE	6-6-44
• ✓ ㉚ LA POSSONNIERE, FRANCE	6-15-44
• ✓ ㉛ VILIN COURT, FRANCE	6-16-44
• ㉜ NOYEN, FRANCE	6-17-44

- #1 Wilhelmshaven, Germany - Nov. 3, 1943<sup>2</sup>
- #2 Eelsenkirchen, Germany - Nov. 5, 1943
- #3 Bremen, Germany - Nov. 26, 1943
- #4 Bremen, Germany - Nov. 29, 1943
- ~~#5 St. Jean D'Angely - Dec~~
- #5 Solingen, Germany - Dec. 1, 1943
- #6 St. Jean D'Angely, France - Dec. 5, 1943
- #7 Bremen, Germany - Dec. 13, 1943
- #8 Bremen, Germany - Dec. 20, 1943
- #9 Osnabruck, Germany - Dec. 22, 1943
- #10 Vacquerette, France - Dec. 24, 1943
- #11 Bordeaux, France - Dec. 31, 1943
- #12 Kiel, Germany - Jan. 5, 1944
- #13 Ludwigshaven, Germany - Jan. 7, 1944
- #14 Frankfurt, Germany - Jan. 29, 1944
- #15 Brunswick, Germany - Jan. 30, 1944
- #16 Wilhelmshaven, Germany - Feb. 3, 1944
- #17 Frankfurt, Germany - Feb. 4, 1944
- #18 Wizeerness, France - March 19, 1944
- #19 Frankfurt, Germany - March 20, 1944
- #20 Brunswick (Stedof), Germany - March 29, 1944



MISSION #1

Nov 3, 1943

Wilhelmshaven, Germany  
6 hours.

After being recalled from several missions in the month of October, we finally got our first one in. Our bombardier was one up on us as the result of his October 20 mission to Duxen, Germany with another crew. It's a short one today. Only six hours of which 35 minutes were over enemy territory. It was 35 minutes of thrills though. We crossed the North Sea north of the main land before heading south into the target area of Wilhelmshaven. We had a good position flying in the number two spot of the lead squadron lead group. It was one of the first P. F. F. missions and the first one with B-38's to escort. Our opposition was light, but still sufficient to give a few scares to a green crew. A couple of ships went down in flames and a couple of more crashed into each other in the heat of battle. Our escort kept the major part of the fighters off, but a few came thru. We almost got it once. Two Jeries were keeping me busy

while a third tried to come up under. Our ball turret gunner saved us with his famous "Flip the tail, skipper." A shower of 20 mm. filled the spot just vacated by the Dauber's evasive action. A funny instant occurred at this point. Our left waist gunner Ekke's ammo was thrown out the window. His long arm was seen by the ball gunner scooping up the flying links like a star field spearing a hot liner. Ekke was also kidded a lot about pointing and laughing at the enemy fighters as they attacked instead of firing at them. It did look funny, but it was very dangerous because he had lost his oxygen connection and didn't know what he was doing. The return trip was uneventful. The flak was the thing that interested me most. I also was interested in destructive 20 mm. that looked like a string of Christmas tree lights as they kept coming closer with each burst.

MISSION #2

NOV. 5, 1943

Elsenkirchen, Germany  
6 hr. 15 min.

The briefing room went completely silent when the layout was placed on the map early this morning. Men followed a low murmur of comment all over the room and the terrifying words "Happy Valley" spread like wild fire. The target for today - Elsenkirchen, Germany, deep in the heart of the dreaded Ruhr. I knew we were up against our first real test today - maybe our last. We took off in the early morning mist that seems to be around every morning. I kept a constant lookout for fighters as we crossed the North Sea. Soon we could pick out groups of four snow white con-trails weaving their way across the path of our formation. Our escort was on the job as usual. I got my first view of the Zider Zee as we crossed over it. Our escort left here, but another bunch took over a few minutes later and then a third bunch took over as we turned south in to Germany.



MISSION 2  
PAGE 2

Breaks in the clouds gave me my first view of our enemy's home land. It looked so nice and peaceful from our five mile altitude. Before we reached the I.P., flak filled the <sup>surrounding</sup> sky like a thick blanket. The further we went, the thicker it became. It was almost a solid wall of steel and I still don't see how we came through it for 45 minutes practically untouched. A couple of small holes in the nose was our only damage. Our pilot nearly flew into a string of predicted flak that was to the left and level. We got him on the ball in a hurry. There wasn't any fighters over the target, but one made a head on attack just after we left the target. I told the rest of the crew off for letting him get through unnoticed. He nearly scared the life out of me when he came out from under us at less than 500 yards. I couldn't fire because he came between us and our #4 ship. Our #3 ship was hit and lagged behind all the way to the French Coast. We were attacked at this point by a dozen Jetties and they knocked him

MISSION 2  
PAGE 3

down. Several chutes were seen coming out of <sup>the</sup> battered wreck as it plunged earthward out of control. We counted seven. A minute or two later P-38s showed up and they would have saved the "Fast Worker" if they had been on time. However, life and death is only a matter of seconds in the clouds. We were glad to get this assignment over with and were less eager to tackle the remaining twenty-three. We lost our first crew since joining the squadron. I didn't miss them because I didn't know any of them very well. They were a hard luck crew all along. It was their fifth mission. I wonder if we'll last that long. They say the first five are the hardest. That's where they lose by far the most planes.

ending

t.

ow  
teally  
one  
into  
left  
a hurry.  
but one  
the  
ing him  
life  
us  
because  
#3

ray  
this  
him

MISSION #3

NOV. 26, 1943

Bremen, Germany

7:00

Today we saw the Luftwaffe in action for the first time. I mean the real Luftwaffe. My first two trips we had meager attacks from a few planes, but today they shot the works to protect their most important port - Bremen (my most dreaded target now). It was our first mission in three weeks. We missed the Norway mission because we were on our first 48 hour pass in London. I wanted to go to Norway too. The rest of the time we were practicing on a new secret weapon. I enjoyed the rest, but was anxious to get started again. I didn't care for the target however. We flew high squadron high group, tail-end Charley. It was a terribly lonesome feeling looking back into the cloudy sky and not see any of those big, friendly ports trailing along. I hated flying back there. Low squadron. Low group is purple heart corner. Tail-end Charley of that squadron is almost a death warrant. . .

We took off in the early morning again and headed across the North Sea. We crossed over Holland and Western Germany. All was well as long as our small force of P-47s and Lightnings were around. We were without escort as we entered the target area however. Con-trails, clouds, and frosted windows made visibility difficult. Then they struck. From all over the sky, tiny specks turned into FW 190s, Ju 88s, Me 109 and 110s. There was well over a hundred in three concentrated attack on our low and lead groups. We were lucky. Only a few of the bandits came up to tackle our group. The scene below was the real thing though. Then came the flak. It was thick and plenty accurate. Large bursts <sup>scattered</sup> its deadly pieces everywhere. Our ship suffered a few hits. One just missed our co-pilot. We were lucky again to come out <sup>of</sup> half hour battle safe and sound. I don't know how

#3  
Page 3

many of our planes went down ~~that~~ today or how many Jerries hit the silk, but the toll was heavy on both sides. We hit our target though and that's what we went after. We headed out over the North Sea and on to our home base. We had the third one over with now. I'm a little more scared now. The future isn't any too bright, but I'm sure we have the crew to do the job. We've got a great bunch, but still a little green,

MISSION # 4

NOV. 29, 1943

BREMEN, GERMANY

6:30

Bremen again!! After only two days rest we have to go back to that place. It's a good thing we had that three weeks rest between #2 and #3. We needed it today. I thought the last one was a tough one. Today we really had it. We flew in purple heart corner and took over the #2 spot. I'm sure glad we weren't in back, it was bad enough up front. I was never so scared in my life. Everything seemed to go wrong. We got along fine as long as our escort was near, but they couldn't take us into the target area because of their limited range. A couple of minutes after our last escort turned back, our right waist gunner called out fighters at 11 high. It was an extremely cold day. Our ~~thermometer~~ <sup>thermometer</sup> dropped to the bottom long before we reached our bombing altitude. I had a small bag of salt to rub the frost off my windows. They would freeze up almost as fast as I'd clean them however. It was at least 70 below. Thick con-trails rolled off our wings almost as dense as the solid layers of clouds that spread

#4  
PAGE 2

endlessly to the distant horizon. I was really scared even before the first planes attacked. I knew they would be up and it was almost impossible to see out. Then they came. About 30 Ju 87s dove down on our nose. That was there only pass. They aren't much at altitude, but they sure did their part in the ground war against France, Poland, and Russia. It wouldn't have been bad if they were all that came up, but seconds later we were in the center of a regular bee hive of single engine F.W. 190 and Me 109s. Then the twin engine Ju 88s and Me 110s joined in with their long range rockets. They sat out of range of our 50s. Flak followed soon after, but I was too busy with the continuous attacks of the deadly fighters to note much of flak. A Me 110 closed in on us at about 8 o'clock. It was too far to the left for me to fire at so I called the skipper to flip the tail. We bounced around like a cork on the ocean as the rockets and canon shells wizzed by at all angles. Jerry kept sneaking

# 4  
Page 3

upon our con-trails and jumping out at us from the clouds below. I didn't know until now that my guns and those of our top turret was the only ones on the ship that weren't froze up. Every few seconds I could hear the chattering of the engineers twin fifties as another Jerry tried to score a hit in one of our four engines or gas tanks. Lucky for us they didn't succeed. I kept calling for evasive action as they came within range. Begging for help. Help I knew I couldn't get, but it didn't matter then. All I could do was sit and shoot and hope and curse a little at the Jerries as they came in at us two at a time, four at a time, twelve at a time. The Dauber kept answering my calls by bouncing the ship up and down, to the right and left. The 20 mms. always filled the area we just left. One false move on my part would have ended it for all of us. Then my right gun failed to respond to my pull on the trigger. I got a little more scared. The flak was thicker and



Bombardier said "Bombs Away". I remember it all now, but it's so mixed up. I knew it all happened, but I don't know what order. Then my left gun acted up a lot. I had to hand charge it after every burst. I couldn't fix it. I couldn't take the time. They kept pouring in, one after the other. All tail attacks. It wasn't nice looking up the barrels of those blinking 20 mms. with both guns out. I had my hands full and more. The windows kept freezing so I could ~~hardly~~ hardly see out. I guess I was too busy to be scared. I was sure glad when the ~~condoms~~ <sup>condoms</sup> broke and I could see the dark waters of the North Sea below. Jerry gave up his attacks. We were safe for a while anyway. No escort showed up however and I became really scared as I realized what I had been through. I don't know what I would have done if I knew I was doing half the fighting instead of an eighth. Our waist gunners were well hid behind all the armor plate and flak suits they could find. I don't blame them at all. I'm dead tired.

MISSION #5

DEC. 1, 1943

SOLINGEN, GERMANY

6:00

I was glad when I saw this target up in the briefing room. I had enough of Bremen for awhile. I hope I never go to that place again. We had a nice trip into the target. We didn't have any fighters at all and our escort was about perfect. We went pretty far though and didn't carry any bomb bay tanks. I didn't like that from the beginning, but when we got to the French Coast on the way out, I didn't like it at all because we were nearly out of gas and we had 200 miles to go yet. We lost an engine over the target. The flak wasn't too bad, but it was accurate enough to get our #3 engine. We left the formation right on the French Coast. Several fighters came up to attack the stragglers. Spitfires chased them away before they got near us however. Thanks to the R.A.F. We were still in trouble though. We threw all of our ammo over board. I had a time getting my 1000 +

MISSION  
#5  
PAGE 2

rounds out my little window, but I finally got it out. I shot the hundred rounds in chutes of each gun. We got across the old Channel with out ditching and landed at a Spitfire base near Dover. Our gas tanks were dry ~~now~~ when we pulled up to park. A B-24 blew up just as it was coming in for the landing. So close and yet so far. A couple of T-6s ditched off shore. We all ~~stayed~~<sup>STAYED</sup> over night at the base and flew on home the next day. We came with another crew because they wouldn't let us take off with three engines. We had to leave "Miss Bea Harv" behind. It was our first trip without our regular plane. We also had a different Co-Pilot. Oh yes - I got the Air Medal today.

MISSION #6

DEC. 5, 1943

ST. JEAN D'ANGELY, FRANCE

6:00

Another easy one. This time a real milk run. I like these French missions. This was a long one however. We hit an airport near Bordeaux. I should say that was our target because we didn't bomb today due to the heavy overcast. We can't bomb unless we can see the target clearly in any occupied territory. We had a little flak over three or four cities along the route, but it was always light and very inaccurate. I was sure glad of that. There was no enemy attacks either. We didn't get any escort most of our trip either so I'm glad that Jerry was on the ground today. I saw enough of him over Bremen. One plane got off by itself and ran into a lot of flak. It must have crossed over part of Bordeaux. I wish they were all like this one. Only nineteen more to go. It looks a lot smaller than the 25 I started with.

MISSION # 7

DEC. 13, 1943

BREMEN, GERMANY

6:00

It wasn't Friday today, but no one can get around it being the 13th. No, not even on our seventh mission. I wondered early this morning what would win out, the lucky seventh or the unlucky 13th. The name Bremen was enough to convince me right off that it would be an unlucky day. It was.

Bremen is unlucky any way you look at it. This is one time I would really have loved to stay at home. We took off in the early morning and crossed the cloudy sky above the North Sea. It was nice and clear as we crossed the German coast north of Bremen. The clouds towered high over the continent and we were forced to fly over 30,000 feet to find a clear sky. Before we reached the target area, our Co-Pilot found the engineer in the tunnel leading to the nose of the ship. He was out and our Bombardier gave him oxygen and artificial respiration all the way back to base. It wasn't until then that I knew for

sure he had died from anoxia. In the  
meanwhile we had bombed the target and  
lost an engine to the heavy ~~burst~~ curtain  
of flak. The Jerries hung over the town.  
We limped home by ourselves. Two P-47s  
picked us up over the North Sea and  
took us as far as the English Coast.  
We landed safely at our base, but it  
was too late for Barrett. He had been  
dead for two hours. He was gone ~~for~~ <sup>two</sup>  
minutes after he lost his oxygen con-  
nection. He was blue when they took  
him from the plane. I didn't get a  
chance to see him up close. There  
was a large crowd and I didn't get  
to close. I think it's best that I  
didn't.

MISSION # 8

DEC. 20, 1943

## BREMEN, GERMANY

7:00

We had a 48 hour pass after our last one. None of us could enjoy ourselves, but it was nice to get away from camp, the planes, and all the things that would remind us. We had to reorganize our crew. Ekke took over the top turret while one of the tail gunners off a crew that went down took over Ekke's waist position. We weren't quite the same bunch that started off on other missions. We all could feel the difference. We were veterans now for one thing. We had been ever since that fourth one for that matter, but now we had met the real grimness of war. The target was Bremen again. Of all places to go they have to keep sending us back there. They will scare us to death before long if Jerry doesn't get us first. Today was our hardest battle to date. Even worse than our fourth if that's possible. It was about the same as before. Jerry waited until our escort turned back, then swarms of them came in for the kill. Mostly F. W. 190s and

#8  
PAGE 2

Me 109s. There was a few of the rocket firing Ju 88s and Me 110s. The clouds and contrails offered excellent cover for the attacking planes and Jerry made full use of it. My windows were frozen all most completely threw out the battle that followed. I did my best to clean them and fight off the darting attackers, but it was impossible to do a good job. All the guns except mine and Ekki's were frozen too. That made matters worse. The two of us did the best we could to shoot up the twisting, turning, darting devils that nosed into us. Again and again they came in, but we came thru undamaged by there gunfire. The smell of gun powder gave me a head ach as it found its way into my oxygen system. A Me 110 pulled up near our plane in a spot Ekki or I couldn't fire at. They let loose their rockets at our lead formation. All we could do was



watch and pray. We didn't have much time for either however because Jerry kept pressing his attack from all angles. A rocket was heading for our waist and Mac was so scared he couldn't warn us. He finally got it out though and we pulled up just as the flaming ball sailed beneath us. Several times I could see 20 mms. bursting all around our tail, but I couldn't locate the bandit. He must have been hiding in our thick con-trails that followed us like a stray pup. I couldn't even see our wing ships nine-tenths of the time. I almost shot upon when I saw it's wing come out of the con-trails. I thought it was Jerry at first. My right gun jammed when I called for evasive action in the middle of the battle. The bouncing plane twisted my links so they wouldn't feed. I had to depend on my one gun because I couldn't take time to fix it. Luck was with us. It held up to the end, I think I got two or three of the devils, but I was too busy

to watch them go down or not. All I wanted to do was keep them away. Another Me 110 set out of range and fired a rocket from the right wing, then the left, then the right then the left, then both at once. Finally he pulled away and went down to reload. I don't know how I managed to look at him for that long. It seemed like <sup>an</sup> hour to me, but it must have been a couple of seconds. A Me 109 pulled up at 7 level and shot two rockets at our lead group. Neither Eck or I could fire at him. He was over too far and low. Why weren't those ball guns working. He could have had some beautiful shots today. I didn't notice the flak today. The rest of the boys said it was as thick and accurate as ever. It was bad then. Our escort showed up and took us on home safe from then on. It was a battle of an hour. I don't see how well make it at this rate. I hope we got enough of the target so we won't have to go back for a few months.

MISSION # 9

DEC. 22, 1943

OSNABRUCK, GERMANY

5:45

Another milk run. I'm glad of that too. I didn't think it would be so easy when we left this morning, but it was. We only had a few burst of scattered flak and not an enemy fighter came near us. Our escort was with us all the time. I really sweated this one out all the time we were over enemy territory too. I still remember the day before yesterday. I guess I was even more scared today than on that one because I had more time to sit and sweat. When they are in for the kill I don't have time to be scared. I'd rather not have them around at all though. Not even one or two. I've seen enough of what one of them can do.

## VACQUARETTE, FRANCE

4:40

It was the night before Xmas and all  
threw the house, not a creature was stirring  
~~and~~ except me. The rest are all in bed try-  
ing to catch up on their sleep after our  
third mission in five days! It was an-  
other easy one, but we are all suffering from  
the last Bremen raid. It took a lot out  
of a fellow. We bombed the new secret  
launching sites of the new German secret  
weapon. It's believed to be rockets.  
It was the first raid by heavies on these  
targets. We went in at 12,000 feet. I  
didn't care for the low altitude, but the  
enemy must not have wanted to give  
away his location because they didn't  
fire any flak at all at us. No fighters  
came up either. We crossed over Abbeville,  
the home of Goings famous Yellow  
Moses. It looked deserted below. We couldn't  
locate our target, so we carried the bombs  
back. It was short and easy. I like em  
that way. I got a cluster to my Air Medal.

MISSION # 11

~~50~~ DEC. 31, 1943

BORDEAUX, FRANCE

7:45

We had another easy run today. They had a big Naval battle in the Bay of Biscay. The Royal Navy did a good job of it too. They chose our wing to finish up the job today because we have the best record over here. The rest of the 8th bomb different targets in southern France as decoys. Our target was a ship loaded with crude rubber that was beached near Bordeaux on the estuary. We were to destroy it before they could unload the precious cargo. We failed.

Our crew was the second element lead for the first time. I don't like it because it means we'll be up in the lead spot now any day.

That will mean I'll have to stay over here a couple of months longer at least. Just after take-off, our number four engine caught on fire. We had some anxious minutes for awhile, but we landed okay. I thought we would get out of going, but they rushed us over to the "E Ball" (Clark Gable's favorite). We didn't care much about going today because we would be without fighter cover most of

the time. I didn't like the "8 Ball" because it had the old type oxygen system. We had to carry three or four extra masks because they would keep freezing. We finally caught up to the formation at the English Channel. We had trouble getting up into position, but we finally made it. It was a nice clear day, very few clouds anywhere. The Brest Peninsula slid under us. P-47s and Spitfires gave us three helpful escorting and carried us across the main land. It was only a short hop and they soon turned back. We carried on alone. I didn't like that at all. As we were coming out over the Bay of Biscay, we were joined by a plane that looked to me like a Me 110. It flew formation with us for about 20 minutes, then peeled off. I could see its twin tail then. It must have been radiating our position, speed, etc. We kept a close lookout for fighters from then on, but none came. The sky clouded up more as we pulled further away.

#11  
PAGE 3

from the main land and soon we were flying over ten tenths cover. We couldn't locate the target through that, so we started the long trip back. The wing had split up into groups to bomb the target and we were two or three miles apart. Soon ~~we~~ spotted a Ju 88 flying real low above the clouds. It must have been two thousand feet below us. Then two more Ju 88's came along flying towards the tail in the same plane as the first one, going the same way. The ball turret operator helped me keep track of them. They didn't bother us, but they gave the group behind us a real goingover. They shot them up a lot from reports. An hour or so later we were flying along so nice when all at once we went into a dive for about a thousand feet. I didn't know what in the world happened. We salvoed our bombs and bomb bay tank and feathered an engine. I don't know what all happened, but our Co-Pilot accidentally hit the automatic pilot for one thing. That's what sent us

#11  
PAGE 4

into the dive. We were all ready to bail out or ditch. I would prefer ditching because we were way out over the Bay of Biscay yet. We finally got straitened out and back into formation. It seemed like hours before we finally got back to the Brest Peninsula. We were met by our escort again. They took us safely across the land area again before swarms of Jerry's came up. Quite a battle developed behind us. I tried hard to warn the rest of the crew, but my intercom was out. I couldn't say a word. We made number 11 safely and are getting right up to that half way mark. I was ready to hit the silk twice today. Jim fired. It was a long day. The longest so far.



MISSION #12

JAN. 5, 1944

KIEL, GERMANY

8:00

We had another 48 hour pass after the last one. Orr, Zuehead, and I went to London. We had a swell time celebrating the New Year. We met some swell people and the prettiest girl in England. About a dozen girls I've had up for us to kiss. Some fun. We missed out on yesterday Kiel raid, but they are sending us right back today. We crossed the North Sea all the way to Denmark. It was our first trip in this area. We left England at about 2000 feet and climbed to altitude out over the sea. I like flying low. It's the only time I do like to fly. I hate altitude. We lost most of our formation in the thick clouds and a few to engine trouble. When we finally got to the coast of Denmark, we only had five in the high squadron, four in the low and four in ours. Seven had turned back out of our group. A B-24 flew formation with us for about 20 minutes, but aborted. We were ahead of schedule and flew back and forth along the coast three or four times until it was time for our wing to go in. We crossed a couple islands before finding ourselves over the main land. The four planes in our low

945

#12

PAGE 2

squadron were two or three miles behind us. I was sure we would have a lot of trouble today. I didn't put too much faith in our escort. We were told P-51s were going to help us out. It was the first time we were scheduled to have them. They look a lot like the Me 109. Kiel is still a long way to come on one engine. I spotted two Jerrys over an airfield coming up after us soon after we crossed over the snow covered main land. They were joined by another, but didn't seem to want to fight. They stayed way out from us and I could hardly follow them. They gave up and disappeared. We reached the east coast safely with only a few bursts of flak to bother us. I saw the Baltic Sea for the first time. Visability was very good. We saw several ships in the harbors below. Then we turned south along the coast. A few minutes later we saw the B-24s enter the flak area of Kiel. It was a heavy wall of black, heavy, accurate flak that resembled Bremen's defense. Soon those big red and black bursts were popping too close to us. It was plenty bad. Bomb

away. We were all glad of that. It took a lot of worry out of us when the big ones were dropped. I never gave it much thought one way or the other, but the rest of the crew really gave a sigh of relief when they were target bound. To me it meant the trip was half over. As we pulled away from the flak area, I could see the huge billowing black smoke coming up to meet us out of the grey smoke screen that covered the city. Fighters started hitting the Libs ahead of us. Still no escort. It looked bad with our weakened formation. We were sure to be hit. The 110's were giving the Libs a real going over and several of each were seen spinning earthward. There was fires all along the path of formations from Kiel to the North Sea where the wreckage crashed into Mother Earth. None of that was as sickening as the sight of the burning parachutes as several of the crewmen tried in vain to save their poor lives. Not long after, several of the twin engine devils started in on us. We had a time of it. Much of the fighting was up ahead. A 110 came in at our tail at seven

#12  
PAGE 4

and a little low. I called for evasive action as I opened up with both .50's. He kept coming in <sup>as</sup> and I poured the lead at him. His right engine began to smoke heavily. Then I spotted four single engine planes bearing in on us. I couldn't tell if they were friend or foe. I just kept on firing at the 100, asking for evasive action, hoping the others were P-51's. As they got nearer they did turn out to be Mustangs. The Me 110 spun off earthward as the 51's followed him down. About the same instant an other 110 pulled up at five low. I swung my guns up in that direction to ward off the attack. I fired around 50 rounds before four more P-51's took over and sent him earthward. I think I got one of his engines before they showed up, but I'm not sure. That was about the end of the fighting as far as we were concerned. The 51's took over from then on. Oh, those beautiful Mustangs. I love them. By this time we were out over the North Sea and on our way home. It was a new high for me. Eight long hours.

Mission #13

Jan. 7, 1945

Ludwigshafen, Germany  
7:00

Ekka got a write-up in the Stars and Stripes after the last one. It went something like this "E. K. Carter of Bull City, Neb. said, "I saw two Ju 88's come at us and then four P-51's jumped them. There was only small pieces left falling earthward." That's not his exact words, but news men always change things a little. We kid Ekka a lot because they were Me 110's instead of Ju 88's. We had the old battle on our hand today. Is 13 stronger than seven. Our 13 mission on Jan. 7. The last time it was thirteen that won. It was different today. The rest of the crew called it 12B. Once off the ground I forgot about it being 13, 12B or whatever you want to call it. It was a real milk run except for some real heavy, accurate flak over the target. We returned in fine shape, except for being lead tired. It's our second long trip in three days and I'm going to bed real early tonight. Now in fact. A P-38 flew formation part of the way back. It lost an engine and needed protection.

Mission # 14

January 29, 1944

Frankfurt, Germany

6:40

It finally happened. We made lead crew after our last one. I've knew it was coming and now it's happened. Maybe it was in our favor though. They kept us off the raid to Oesersleben on the eleventh. From all reports, it was really terrific. Our squadron lost two planes. The first time that ever happened and the first plane we lost since Nov. 5. The group lost eleven all together. The eighth lost sixty bombers. Our navigator went with another crew and got credit for a plane. We had three weeks rest before this one. It will take ages to finish at this rate. We lead the high squadron today. It's nice having those six planes behind. It was an easy run today. Not much opposition. I had a devil of a time of it however. We had a different plane today. Our old battle wagon blew up in a million pieces over the target on the eleventh. There was more clouds in the sky than I ever saw today. We lost all our ~~high~~ low squadron, half our squadron and all the low group before we left Eng-

land. The clouds were even thicker over Europe. I had my aldis lamp going constantly trying to keep the planes together as we plunged through cloud after cloud. When we crossed the target, we had 30 instead of 60 planes in our wing. The rest were lost and turned back. Most of the 8th turned back because of the weather. We were one of the very few groups to cross the target. We may have been the only one in fact. The flak was really bad over the target. It was our only opposition though. No fighters came up. I was glad of that too because I didn't see a bit of escort all the time we were over the continent. We would have been in fine shape for a major attack if they came up. No escort, our wing all split up, and enough cloud cover for the whole air force. I don't see why the weather man didn't stop this one. It's the worst weath we went in yet. Damb and I had quite a argument when we were back in England. I'm sure I won out.

Mission #15

Jan. 31, 1944

Brunswick, Germany  
7:00

We were really surprised when they got us up for this one early this morning. We didn't expect to go again for a week or so more at the earliest. We were glad to get the chance however. That is, we were until we saw them unroll the layout and spread it across the map of Europe. It fell on the town of Brunswick. They could cancel that one any time. We were all hoping they would too. Brunswick was one of the January 11th targets. Everyone had memories of that one. Too many memories. It seemed like ages before we reached a point south east of Hanover. Up to this point it was just a long and very tiresome trip. Nothing had happened to speak of. It was our second trip as a lead crew. Our escort had been very spotty. It wasn't around most of the time and we hadn't seen any on the last hundred miles or so. Our bombardier asked for a fighter check to break the monotony of all those oxygen checks. I always started them off. This time I was



#15  
PAGE 2

about to report the usual when it all happened. It was sort of strange the way Jerry sort of popped out at us. I just pressed the button to speak when I noticed a dark speck on one of the clouds below. Then another and another until there was about twenty. I reported one, two, four, etc. as they kept coming up. Soon there was a regular bee line below and I said that there's a whole mess of them at six low. Everyone went on the double alert as I followed their course. Soon other bunches were report all around the clock. We were lucky to be in the high, squadron, high group this day. We only had two attacks today. One on the nose by a Me 110. He came in pretty close, but didn't hurt anyone. The other was a sort of tail attack. He turned off before he was close enough to do any damage. Below us, however, raged the bloodiest battle I've seen or been in. I saw more planes go down today than ever before. They all went down in flames too. It was

#15  
PAGE 3

enough to make anyone want to stop flying. I guess I saw more today because I had more time to watch than usual because the lack of fighting in our group. It was hard to sit and watch unable to aid the poor devils below. I tried to keep my eyes to the rear in a constant search for the enemy, but I couldn't. I was drawn to the scene below by the almost constant sight of those big babies falling earthward in a sea of flame. I tried not to look, but I couldn't help myself. There was a steady stream of parachutes blossoming out and heading down into the thick cloud cover below. Several of them burst into flames soon after opening. That ~~must~~<sup>must</sup> have been quite a sight for those poor devils dropping thru space to see their buddies enveloped in flame by their burning chutes. They must have done a lot of thinking on the way down. I saw a pilot in a Me 109 make a

#15  
PAGE 4

pass and get a Fort, then he'd circle and come through again and another Fort spun off in flames. A third time he circled and again he came barrolling through. Another Fort plunged down in flames. Then I lost track of him as I took a good look at the surrounding sky for an other Jerry that might think our crew a good target. It's then that I spotted a number of con-trails on the very distant horizon. As they came nearer, Jerry gave up their fight and disappeared. We hoped against hope that the new planes were friends. We wouldn't do so well if they were German. They had already taken about half of our lead and low groups. Luck was with us as they turned out to be those beautiful pin-up girls, the P-51 Mustangs. We made a big swing to the north and dropped the eggs. The flak wasn't too bad. We headed for home. Our escort left too soon to suite me. P-38s & P-47s took over though.

MISSION # 16

FEB. 3, 1944

WILHELMSHAVEN, GERMANY

\* I WILL BE 21  
AT MIDNIGHT. WWC

Wilhelmshaven. Our first target came up for another beating. We flew lead in the "8 Ball". I didn't like the old oxygen system at all. My fears were justified soon after we left Holland and were somewhere over Western Germany. First Kelly passed out from anoxia. Mac started up to aide him. He must have stepped on the spinning ball turret on the way to the radio room. He struck his head and lost his oxygen walk around bottle. He was out too. Damb didn't waste time or words. He peeled off in a sharp dive all the way down to 12,000 feet. Well all had too many memories of our last experiences with anoxia. Most of the crew came to the aide of the injured men and they were soon back to consciousness. In the meantime I was a little worried when I spotted four planes flying overhead. We were in between two layers of clouds and I doubt if they spotted us. They didn't bother us anyway. I was glad of that because I was the only one at a gun position. Our ship was alone and heading for England at the time. We soon left Holland behind and two P-47a escorted us home. We got credit for this one. I didn't think we would, but some kind soul thought we should.

## CREW

	Pilot	
LeRoy C. Daub	-----	Baltimore, Md.
	Co-Pilot	
Edward Assenheimer	-----	Fulton, New York
	Bombardier	
Ray Marlett	-----	Elizabeth, N. J.
	Navigator	
Gerry Palmer	-----	Detroit, Mich.
	Engineer	
John Barrett	-----	Newport, R. I.
	Radio Operator	
Victor J. Kelley	-----	New York City
	Ball Turret	
Charles C. Gilmore	-----	Ironton, Ohio
	Right Waist	
Edward K. Carter	-----	Fall City, Neb.
	Left Waist	
Ray T. Haman	-----	Vaiden, Miss.
	Tail	
Louis W. Considine	-----	Lansing, Mich.