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Apr 1944

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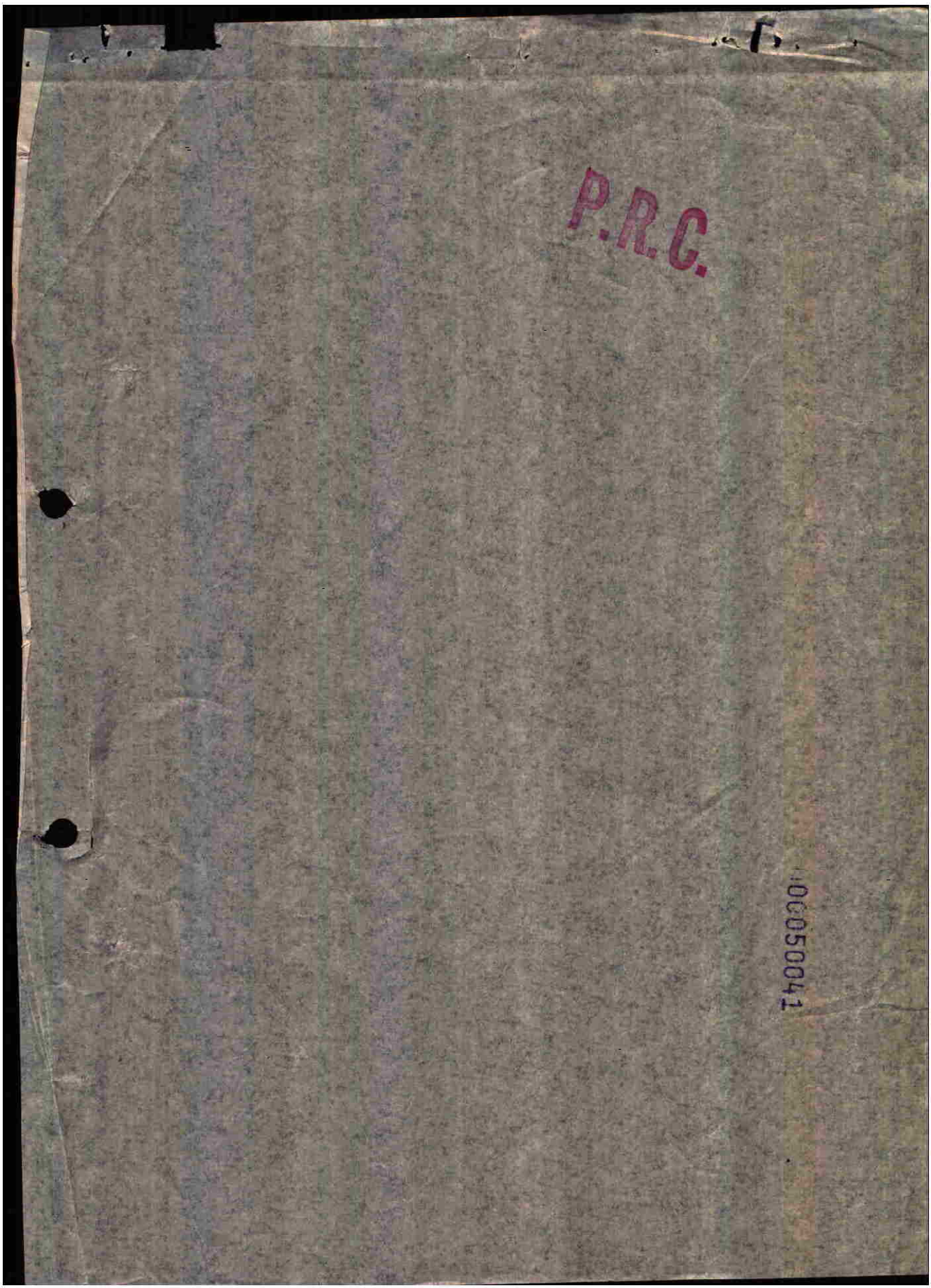

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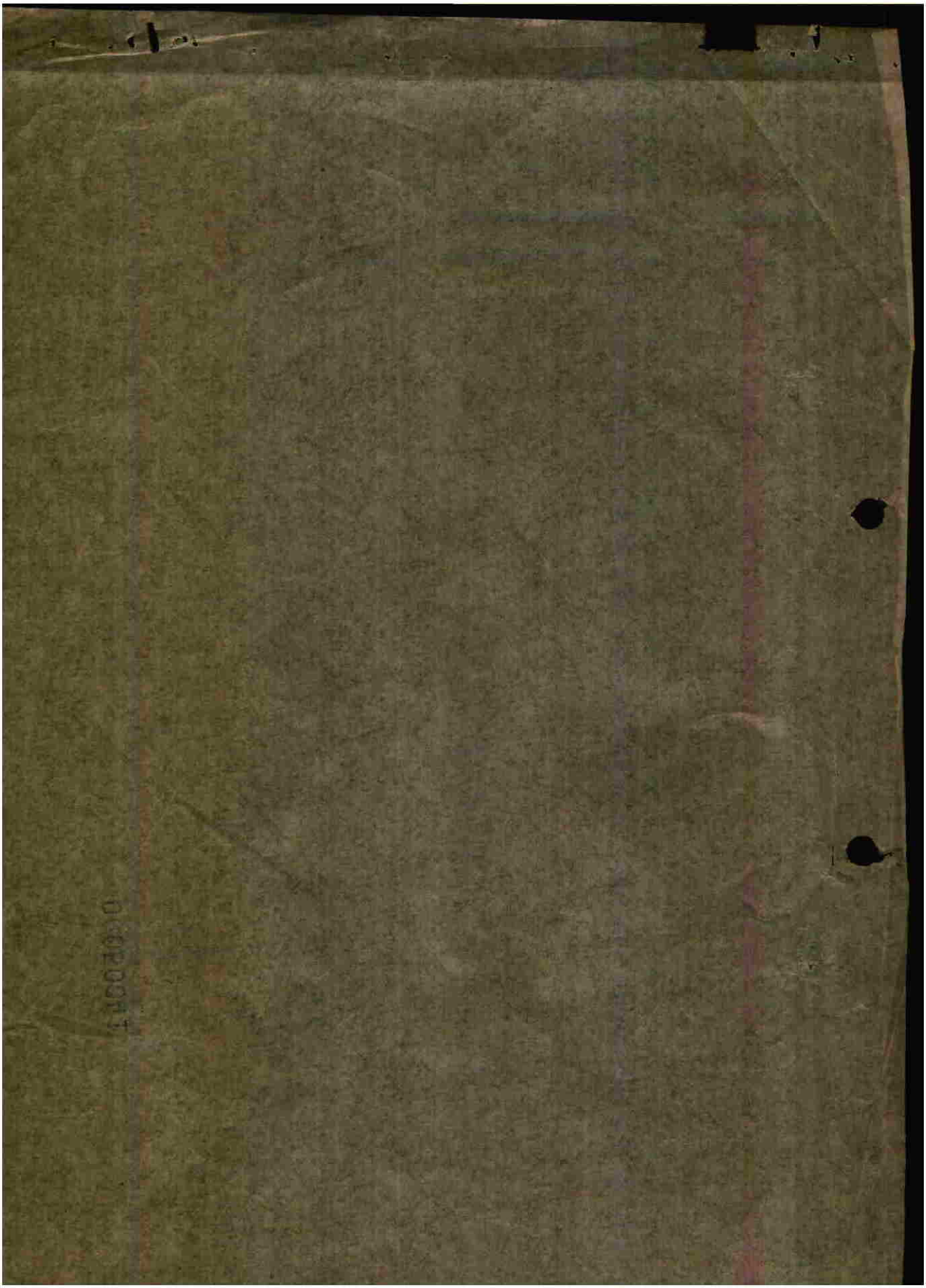

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822ND BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (M), 38TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (M)
ARMY AIR FORCES

A.P.O. 713, Unit I,
1 May, 1944.

SUBJECT: Unit History.

TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces, Washington, D.C. (Thru VBC).

History in quadruplicate is transmitted herewith. April history for this Squadron in accordance with AR 345-105 and Fifth Air Force Reg. 20-8 is transmitted herewith.

For the Squadron Commander:

Karl D Henze

KARL D. HENZE,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Squadron Historical Officer.

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UNIT HISTORY

DESIGNATION SHEET

FIFTH AIR FORCE

V BOMBER COMMAND

38TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (M)

822ND BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (M)

A.P.O. 713
UNIT NO. I

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APRIL OPERATIONS

1 April
FFO 92-C
TUMLEO ISLAND

The Squadron was ordered to send six airplanes to make a medium altitude bombing attack on supply and personnel areas on Tumleo Island off the coast at Aitape, New Guinea. Five planes reached the target area. On the approach to the target the life raft on the lead airplane, piloted by the Commanding Officer Captain Payne, broke loose and damaged its left elevator. The airplane plunged down out of control and the radio-gunner, Technical Sergeant Weslie H. Brown, parachuted out and landed on the mainland near Tadji, New Guinea. The pilot regained control of the airplane before it hit the water. Three of its 500 pound bombs broke loose and fell out during the plunge and the pilot jettisoned the other two and flew directly back to base. The other four planes dropped 15 bombs on Aitape, nearby villages on the mainland, and on Tumleo Island with unobserved results. Lt. Hagie dropped three bombs from 150 feet and as they were instantaineously fused, it is remarkable that no damage was done to the airplane. The Navigator said he thought each bomb explosion would burst the bulkheads out of the bomb bay. It also strafed the coastline. Two airplanes, believed to be enemy fighters, were seen several miles away but the Group was not intercepted. Photo 4 taken by airplane 864.

It was obvious that Sergeant Brown would fall into the hands of the enemy and after the landing of our forces at Tadji, a Javanese named Soegoto was taken prisoner on 22 April at Korsko Village who apparently had seen Sergeant Brown after his capture by the Japs. The following is from the Preliminary Interrogation of PW 26-P-509, 27 April, 1944, ATIS Detachment No. 26, APO 705. "PW states that approximately one month ago a white man was brought in as a prisoner by men from the KURITA Unit. He was brought in by car and as the road runs only up to the river (an hours walk) he presumes that he was picked up somewhere between KURITA Unit Headquarters and the river. He was brought to the Headquarters where the PW states that other coolies saw the Japs beat him until he was senseless. He was beaten all through the night and when he lost consciousness water was thrown on him to revive him, then he was beaten again. The next day they took him by truck back towards the place where they found him. PW thinks that he was dead when they took him back." No other crews are known to have gone down in this area. Lt. Hamilton, one of the navigators in our Squadron, asked the PW to describe the white man and from his description it seems almost certain that it was Sergeant Brown. At this time, 20 May, we have no further information and no positive proof that Sergeant Brown is dead. However, it seems sure that he must be.

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FFO 92-1

A special courier to Saidor was flown without incident.

3 April,
FFO 94-D
Hollandia

The Squadron was ordered to send 10 "strafers", (B-25 G-1's) to participate with the Group and with other medium attack and heavy Groups in a minimum altitude bombing and strafing attack on Hollandia, Cyclops and Sentani Airdromes in Dutch New Guinea. Medium bombers had not yet hit these targets and while the heavies had bombed them on March 30th and 31st destroying or damaging a total of 165 airplanes on the ground and with our fighters destroying 24 enemy airplanes in the air, there was still some apprehension as to the amount of opposition that might be encountered. All air crews participating were briefed by the Group Commanding Officer and other Group officers on the night before the strike and again by the Squadron Intelligence officer, Lt. Marshall, before taking off. The crews were pretty sober-faced as they left for the line. Close cover was provided by a Squadron of P-38's which was comforting. The Squadron's 10 planes flew up the Markham River to Gusap where the fighters joined the formation, then down the Ramu River to Annanberg where the Group made a Wing formation, with the 345th Bombardment Group (M). The formation proceeded up the Sepik River and passed Southwest of Lake Sentani where it swung around to the East for the run over the target. 10 ships abreast bombed and strafed the full length of the three airdromes, across the Northeast end of Lake Sentani and along the road to Pim. Airplanes, motor trucks, stacks of supplies and fuel drums and a control tower on the old Hollandia Strip were all bombed and strafed. A camouflaged freighter of about 2500 tons in Jautefa Bay was strafed as the Squadron left the target area. Antiaircraft fire on our Squadron was meager and inaccurate. The P-38's were shooting down and chasing away the last of the 60 fighters that tried to intercept the earlier bombers as we made our run. 26 Jap fighters were shot down that day. We contributed to the destruction of at least 8 airplanes of the 73 destroyed on the ground that day. All crews agreed it was the most destructive strike they had been on. Many stacks of supplies and stores and many barges, in addition to those in the line of attack, were seen.

Photo 364 taken by airplane No. 837
Photo 417 taken by airplane No. 809 C.I.U. T49 Target Chart
Photo 428 taken by airplane No. 812

4 April
FFO 95-B
Humboldt Bay

Nine strafers took-off to take part in a strike on some of the many profitable targets seen the day before in Humboldt Bay but had to turn back because of bad weather.

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5 April, FFO 96-E Humboldt Bay	Eight airplanes strafed and dropped 40 x 500 pound demolition bombs on villages, supply dumps, barges and jetties along the Northwest side of Humboldt Bay with much destruction. A large fire was started. Oblique photos of the shore line were obtained for use of the ground forces.
	C.I.U. T-49 Target Chart.
6 April, FFO 97-F Tadji	A strike against Tadji was planned but weather prevented take-off.
7 April, FFO 98-F Hollandia	A strike against Hollandia was cancelled because of bad flying weather.
8 April, FFO 99-E Cape Moem	Eight strafers started up the valley to make the attack on supply areas in Humboldt Bay Area. About 40 miles South of Aitape they were forced by bad weather to turn back to the secondary targets on Cape Moem near Wewak, New Guinea. 40 x 500 pound bombs were dropped from minimum altitude and the target was strafed starting several fires. Japanese propaganda leaflets were dropped.
9 April, FFO 100-F Pro Village	Nine airplanes dropped 40 clusters of incendiary bombs on a area 2000 feet by 3000 feet near Pro Village on the coast East of Aitape, New Guinea. No fires were observed. It had been raining heavily the past few days and the kunai must have been pretty wet. A large barge in Doguto Bay was strafed by one airplane but no damage could be seen.
FFO 100-K	One airplane flew an early morning weather recco to Burui on the Sepik South of Wewak without incident.
10 April, FFO 101-F Muschu Island	The mission to bomb Muschu Island was cancelled before the airplanes took-off.
11 April, FFO 102-E Boram	Six airplanes took-off to make a medium altitude attack with 100 pound smoke bombs on a supply and personnel area South of Boram Penninsula in the Wewak Area. Bombing was made difficult by heavy clouds over the target and no results could be observed. Two Jap fighters intercepted the lead flight and each made two passes. The bombardier of the lead airplane was slightly wounded by one bullet. Our fighters started in pursuit but did not catch them. Our gunners fired on them but did not claim any hits.
12 April, FFO 103-E Hollandia	Six airplanes made a medium altitude bombing attack on target 3X, a stores and personnel area Southwest of Hollandia Drome. 30 x 500 pound demolition bombs hit in the target area

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and were seen to start one fire and to destroy two buildings. Moderate but inaccurate antiaircraft fire was received.

C.I.U. Target Chart T-49

Airplane 835 with Pilot, 1st Lt. M. L. English; co-pilot 2nd Lt. L. T. Coby; navigator 2nd Lt. E. J. Hohman; radio-gunner T/Sgt. H. B. Kirk; and turret-gunner S/Sgt. P. J. Molica; were seen to make a crash landing in a kunai flat reported to be 4 miles North of Charapa in the Sepik Valley South of Wewak. This was Jap patroled territory. The cause was not determined but an excellent wheels up landing was made. All members of the crew climbed out on the wing and appeared to be uninjured. The other planes of the flight dropped carbines and all the supplies they had with them.

FFO 103-N — One airplane loaded up at base with more arms, ammunition and supplies and dropped them about sunset to the crew of the crashed landed airplane.

14 April, FFO 105-H Aitape — A mission against the Aitape Area planned for this day was cancelled before the airplanes took-off.

FFO 105-K — One airplane bombed and strafed airplane 835 to prevent it falling into Jap hands. An area of 50 miles around it was searched for the survivors but they were not seen. Messages in Pidgin English directing natives to search for the crew were dropped at Timbunke and Tambunum.

15 April, FFO 106-H Pro Village — Six airplanes dropped 30 x 500 pound demolition bombs on the Pro Village Area North of Tadji Airdrome and strafed the coastline from Tadji Houses to the Nigia River mouth. Oblique photos were taken of the shore line for use of our ground forces.

Photo 365 taken by airplane 767.

16 April, FFO 107-D Humboldt Bay — Six airplanes took-off to attack target 6X, a supply and personnel area in Steber's Plantation West of Humboldt Bay. Four reached the target and dropped 40 x 260 pound fragmentation bombs in the target causing much damage and starting several fires. Weather on the return from the target had closed in and 1st Lt. L. R. Boyd lead his flight beneath the clouds and just above the tree tops to base. 1st Lt. J. H. Thompson flew just above the water and through rain down the Rai Coast from Astrolabe Bay, landed at Finschafen, and returned to base. The Squadron was greatly relieved and perhaps a little proud to have all its planes return safely as the weather was so severe that many were lost.

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Photo 10 taken by airplane 606. C.I.U. T-49 Target Chart.

FFO 107-L — One airplane carried out a search for a B-24 crew West of Hansa Bay and searched the area where Lt. English had gone down for signs of survivors. None where seen.

17 April, FFO 108-K — Two airplanes searched the South coast of New Guinea for airplanes and crews missing from the mission of the day before.

19 April, FFO 110-P — One airplane participated in the search for airplanes and crews still missing from mission 107-D by searching the Area from Kerema to Kikori.

21 April, FFO 112-M — One airplane searched for an airplane reported wrecked on Valif Island and found it but no evidence of survivors could be detected. It spent some time searching for Lt. English's crew but saw nothing. About this time an Australian landed on the Sepik River and brought out a native for interrogation. The native told him that his people tried to help our airmen but there were so many Japs in the area that they could not conceal our airmen more than 2 or 3 days before the Japs would discover them.

21 April, FFO 112-B Tadji — Five airplanes dropped 25 x 500 pound demolition bombs and Jap propaganda leaflets on a kunai patch south of Lemieng Villages, near Tadji Airdromes.

22 April — Allied troops landed at Tadji and at Humboldt and Tanahamerah Bays at Hollandia.

FFO 113-D Hansa Bay — Six airplanes took-off to make a medium altitude attack on the Jap barge repair depot on the South side of Kairiru Island and to strafe any barges and luggers in Kairiru Strait. Rain covered this target so the formation hit a personnel area in Potsdam Plantation east of Hansa Bay. The bombardier overshot and 13 bombs hit in the water and 17 hit on land. The chagrin of feeding fish to the Japs instead of Japs to the fish was considerable.

Photo 15 taken by Airplane 768.

FFO 113-K — Two airplanes made successive reccos of the central Bismarck Sea without incident.

24 April, FFO 115-K Hansa Bay — Six airplanes dropped 30 bombs at a personnel and supply area at Hansa Bay and crews were disappointed as 11 hit in the water.

Photo 30 taken by airplane 768.

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25 April
FFO 116-J

One airplane made a weather reconnaissance of the Bismark Sea without incident.

26 April
FFO 117-L
Drop Supplies

An attempt was made to drop supplies to our troops at Hollandia Airdrome as a land slide had cut off their motor road to Tanahmerah Bay but weather prevented the airplanes from going beyond Saidor.

27 April
FFO 118-L
Drop Supplies

Better weather enabled 9 of our planes to drop supplies from about 100 feet on Hollandia Airdrome. Our troops covered the airdrome and many of the parachuted supplies were pulled out of the air by eager infantry before they could hit the ground. Copilots were affraid to drop some of the boxes that had no chutes for fear of hitting the troops so let them go at the end of the strip. Crews said the "enemy smiled at them" and everyone was pleased to have given our ground troops help that was so obviously appreciated.

Photo 6 taken by airplane 877 (incorrectly shown as 827) CIU T-49 Target Chart.

28 April
FFO 119-A
Wakde Island

Six airplanes started out to strafe and drop parafrag bombs on Wakde Island. This was the first strike by medium bombers on the Island and as it was 620 statue miles from base care was taken not to use the "gas burners". Planes took off the night before and landed at Gusap so they could be topped off with gas before take off. Five planes got off and Lieutenant Behrens forced by engine failure over Hollandia to jettison his bombs and turn back to land on one engine at Tadji Airdrome. Although the strip had been taken by our troops only six days before and was not in good shape to handle a medium bomber, Lieutenant Behrens set it down and stopped it without injury to the crew or damage to the airplane. 4 airplanes dropped 120 x 23 pound parafrags on the strip and an equal number jettisoned in the sea due to failure to release. The area was strafed. A small amount of machine gun fire was received. All airplanes returned to base with ample gas to spare.

Photo 13 taken by airplane 812 T-CIU 50 Target Chart.

29 April
FFO 120-H
Maffin Bay

Six strafers were sent to strafe and drop 180 x 23 pound parafrag bombs on villages along the Maffin Bay Southwest of Wakde Islands and to take pictures of the certain part of the coastline for the use of the ground forces. The success of the day before in gas consumption eliminated the need to land at Gusap on the way up but crews were told they could land there on the way back if gas was low. None did and most still had lots of gas left. Bombs and native propaganda leaflets in

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Maley were dropped as ordered, pictures were taken and the second flight strafed on through Sarmi Village making an entire run of 28 miles. Many targets of opportunity were seen and some had to be passed up as bombs had already been dropped. The most distant target for medium bombers in Dutch New Guinea was hit successfully and without casualty. Fighter escort was provided.

Photo 247 taken by airplane 876 T-CIU 50 Target Chart.

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APPENDIX

APRIL HISTORY

a. Photos and target charts in envelope.

b. Statistical Section.

1. No changes in organization occurred during April.

2. Strength	Officers	Enlisted Men
a. 1 April	75	275
b. Net Change	-7	X12
c. 30 April	68	287

3. The squadron was in camp at Nadzab, New Guinea during the month of April.

4. Training.

a. Aircraft

	Serviceable		Not Serviceable	
	1 April	30 April	1 April	30 April
B25-D	1	2	2	2
B25-G-1	15	16	2	

b. Air Crews.

	Pilots		Air Crews other than Pilots	
	Trained	Untrained	Trained	Untrained
1 April	30		15	
30 April	30		15	

c. Combat missions occupied most of the time of the combat crews. A few practice bombing missions were run and bombardiers did some practice in the bomb trainer. 14 missions involving 91 sorties were flown over enemy target areas. Crews were briefed and went to the line for four missions that were cancelled. Airplanes took off twice on combat missions but were forced to land because of weather. This involved 18 sorties. 12 search, dropping and weather reconnaissance missions involving 20 sorties were also flown over enemy held territory. A total of 229 x 500 pound demolition, 300 x 23 pound parafrags, 54 x 100 pound demolition, 139 x 100 pound incendiary clusters, and 60 x 100 pound smoke bombs were dropped on enemy targets. 66,290 rounds of .50 calibre and 10,780 rounds of .30 calibre ammunition were expended in strafing and aerial combat.

5. Awards.

a. There were eighty eight recommendations for awards submitted during the month of April. There were no awards published in General Orders for any members of this squadron for the month of April.

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6. Squadron Events.

First Lieutenants Barnard, Helmer, Self, Second Lieutenant Hof and Staff Sergeant Bowman were assigned to Headquarters V Bomber Command. Sergeant Repko, Corporal Robinson and Private Delehanty were transferred out of the Squadron while we received Private First Class Russell from the 71st Bombardment Squadron (M).

Lieutenant McLean was promoted to Captain and Lieutenants Weldon, Oldham, and Myers were promoted to First Lieutenant. Stewart, Flaherty, Davis, Hinson and Gac were promoted to Technical Sergeant and Sebastian, Mitchell and Solinka were promoted to Staff Sergeant. Photo gunner Griffin was promoted to Sergeant.

Fourteen officers and 11 enlisted men left on leaves and furloughs while 8 officers and 18 enlisted men returned. Six officers and 5 enlisted men were on detached service in Sydney for short periods which perhaps should be called "leave on per diem".

The finishing touches to the squadron area were completed during the first three weeks and (unfair?) advantage was taken of the several new enlisted men to do most of the road and area surfacing, fencing and walk building. Certainly the new men made the work team. Tents were pretty well completed and several gardens were planted in the squadron area and on "the line".

A B-24 which had crashed on the end of the runway on take off blew up and flattened the line chief's jeep and knocked several men flat who had started to run. The men were repaired more easily than the jeep. Lieutenant Losberger, Ordnance Officer, bewailed the honesty of man when the windshield was stolen from the jeep.

The Medics served combat liquor to air crews but it is rumored they drink as much themselves. They continued to take care of the minor ailments, served as duty crew on the line, and kept the area sanitary.

Chemical warfare worked up a chemical defense plan, erected gas alarm posts throughout the area, trained decontamination crews and gas sentries. A gas mask inspection was held and impregnated clothing collected and stored. Sergeant Goehle by great effort and perserverance above and beyond the call of duty managed to obtain Sergeant Mitchell's and Corporal Serino's impregnated clothing. The men in Chemical Warfare found some Jap slit trenches and barbed wire in the rain forest nearby.

Lieutenant Richards and Johnson were surprised in the showers one afternoon by a small fish about 1 1/2 inches long on the floor. Evidently it did come through the showers as they were just open nipples without heads.

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(Unbelieveable quantities of trash and gravel came through so why not fish?). After a brilliant maneuver the fish was captured and being found friendly was turned loose to pursue its idyllic existance in the squadron drainage ditch.

Lieutenant Henry was flying with Lieutenant Kenealy as Co-pilot over the Wewak area when a Zero seen closing fast from 3 O'Clock. Henry screamed at Kenealy "For God's sake do something". With both waist and turret gunners alert there was nothing Kenealy could be expected to do but with fine disregard for personal safety he carefully turned toward the approaching fighter and with great coolness and precision thumbed his nose at him. Thereupon Lieutenant Henry exercised admirable restraint and did not crown Kenealy.

Incoming mail greatly improved during April but most of the movies shown were either old or of poor quality.

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