



***Harley Tuck's Wartime Diary*** stands as one of the most remarkable pieces of writing to come out of the 447th. In its detail is a wealth of information about the early days of the group, and about the man, himself.

The diary was originally transcribed by Mr. Tuck's son, Harley Tuck, Jr., and has appeared from time to time on the Internet. We are thrilled and honored to provide the diary with a permanent home in our collection here.

Sgt. Harley Tuck was Radio Operator/Gunner on the Gilleran crew, 708th Bomb Squadron, arriving at Rattlesden in November 1943, and flying until shot down and captured on 22 April, 1944.

The combat diary appears here in three parts, through the courtesy of Mr. Harley Tuck, together with photos provided from the collection of Mr. Russell Chase.



The Gilleran Crew, probably taken at Harvard in 1943. Harley Tuck is second from right, front row. The crew is:

2d Lt. Thomas W. Gilleran, Pilot  
2d Lt. Henry E. Mamlock, Co-pilot  
2d Lt. Richard L. Lazarus, Navigator  
2d Lt. Marion O. McGurer, Bombardier  
S/Sgt Charles H. McHugh, Engineer  
T/Sgt Harley Tuck, Radio Operator/Gunner  
S/Sgt Eugene A. Kealer, Ball Turret Gunner  
S/Sgt Fred T. Hawley, Waist Gunner  
S/Sgt M.D. Harris, Waist Gunner  
Sgt Neal R. Dill, Tail Gunner

*Photo: Mr. Russell Chase*

### **Kearney Neb. November 9 1943**

Took off from Harvard A.A.B. at 1330, landed at Kearney Neb. 35 minutes later. An uneventful trip, all I did was to tune in some music on the liaison receiver. We were off duty all afternoon looking around camp. The fellows treat us nice here. Kearney Neb is our staging area for overseas movement. Where the heck are we going? Guesses right and left. The driver of the truck that hauls us from place to place seems surprised at the way Crew #5 gets along together, we are just a regular gang and have lots of fun.

### **Kearney Neb November 10 1943**

Got up today at 7:45. The officers called for us at 9:00 to go to the briefing and processing building. First a show down inspection, then thru all the stalls checking our records. Got out about 2:15 P.M. to load all our bags on a truck + head for the barracks. After chow in Service Club I went to Radio Building No#1 and spent 2 hrs. taking tests on ROG's duties. I think I came out O.K. I'm to go back tomorrow morning at 8 for code + blinker check. Didn't want supper, went to the show + met Dill + Hawley there. Went to P.X. got some pop, came home + tried on all the new equipment. Bed at 10:30

### **Kearney Neb. November 11 1943**

Got up at 7:30 to go to the Communications to finish the tests. After being there for ten minutes I was called out to attend lectures on escape procedure. Later Maj. General Street spoke to the group commenting on our training and he wished us all the luck in the world. After the talk I went to the dentist, then back to the radio school until 1:30 P.M. At 2 the crew drew our guns, ammunition and long hunting knife. I spent the rest of the afternoon shopping around in P.X. The whole group attended a briefing at the war room at 7. They tell us, we're going to England but I don't believe it. The whole announcement is fishy. Bed at 11.

### **Kearney Neb. November 12 Fri**

Out of bed at 9:30, breakfast in the Service Club + reported for roll call at communications. We were informed we won't be moving until at least Sunday. I exchanged my G.II watch that was running too fast in for a good one, and worked on the "Hi Jinx" for a while this morning. The afternoon was spent reading in the library, working around the barracks, fooling around in the P.X. etc. At 7 Fred, M.D. + Dill + I went to town. Kearney about 18000 souls. First we skated for a while; was I a sight, almost falling down most of the time, then we bowled a line until 12. Got some pie + milk; came home + to bed by 1:15 A.M.

### **Kearney Neb. November 13 up at 10:30**

Another day of inactivity, going between the P.X. library + barracks. We have worked in the ship a good share of the afternoon loading baggage. I have to stand guard over these ships tonight because I drew the lowest card. Tonight at 9 we had a good imitation physical exam, + T.W.G. [*Lt. Thomas W. Gilleran, pilot*] told us we were leaving the field tomorrow headed for our P.O.E. I've got a hunch it isn't going to be Presque Isle or some other point in Maine as we were told. Oh, well, nobody knows. While writing this I'm listening to the liaison radio receiver to a station in Montreal, Canada. Some life. The crew is glad we're leaving the field, we've been inactive so long. Bed at 10:15

### **Kearney Neb. - Ft. Wayne Ind. November 14 Sun**

Got up at seven, left Kearney at 8:30, headed for Syracuse N.Y. We have a lot of rations, all our baggage, and a lot of other things. I received a message from Topeka Kans, the 21st Wing ground station ordering us to stop at Ft. Wayne Ind. We landed at 3:15 PM, the second ship down. Later Capt Smith, operations officer. called a meeting + told us we'd leave tomorrow. This cross country hops are a lot of fun, but no time for play as I have to guard that frequency all the time. Tomorrow T.W.G. says he'll take us over the Niagara Falls. Bed by 8:00

### **Ft Wayne Ind - Bangor, Me. November 15, Mon**

1943 Got up at 6 this morning. Left Fort Wayne at 9, headed for Presque Isle Maine. We didn't get to see Niagara because of the ground fog. Flew altitude for an hour to get over some bad weather. I worked pretty hard sending the position reports in. Landed at Bangor Maine at 4:00 E.W.T. had a short physical, went to the P.X. to get supper. It started to snow so the EMs went out to the ship to put all the covers on the turrets, windows and wing covers on to keep the ship from icing up. It got pretty cold out there. At 8PM Mac [*Sgt. Charles H. McHugh, Engineer*] + I went to Operations to be briefed. Lt. Laz [*Lt. Richard L. Lazarus, navigator*] + I went to a separate building to be briefed. They gave us more data than we could digest, we have another one before we leave. Got lost coming back to barracks. Feeling kind of excited by prospect of going across. Bed at 11.

### **Bangor, Me. November 16 Tues.**

Climbed out of bed at 8 this morning to go to radio school at 9. Code practice in the morning and afternoon with a little bit of procedure mixed in. An A.T.C. man is instructor, a swell fellow who knows his business. It has been snowing all day, with freezing weather, altho very nice outside. The crew, 6 of us went to the show tonight + wandered over to the P. X. afterwards. All the grub we bought was on Mac; hot dogs milk shakes + pop. I haven't been too busy tonight. Gene [*Sgt. Eugene A. Kealer, ball turret gunner*] is guarding the ship now, my turn day after tomorrow, maybe we'll be in England by then, I hope so. If we go to England I've got about 2 months of school ahead of me, so I hope we go on to Africa or some where else; why should we use jungle hats in England? Bought a carton of candy in P.X.. The P.X. here as in Kearney is selling cartons of candy + gum to combat crews going across. Bed at 10:30

### **Bangor Me. November 17 Wed.**

Out of bed at 700 to relieve Gene at the plane. At 9 I went to radio school until 1030 then out to the ship to get the calibrations and M.O. settings for all the frequencies I'm going to use on the way to U.K. From noon until 2:30 the enlisted men + T.W.G. sat in a booth shooting the bull. This is about the first time we had ever had such a long talk with our pilot. He told us a lot about his ideas + past life. Going thru Cadets he was as much as a G.F.U. as possible + still not wash out. Going to England as we seem to be will mean a 2 month stretch of schooling for the whole crew before any operational missions. I sort of hate to look forward to more school. Maybe we'll stay in U.K. for a week or two + go on to Italy or Africa. Saw another show, "Son of Dracula", (no good) and to bed by 11 P.M.

**Bangor Me. November 18 Thurs.**

Got up just in time to go to school at 9. Stayed there until 11, went to P. X. + fooled around until about 3. Hightailed it out to the barracks and slept until 5. I had supper and went out to the ship. After playing the mandolin for an hour I read for a while. Those negro wards seemed to be going round and round the ship as long as I played. They seemed to like it O.K. This camp is really pretty nice. A good P.X. noncoms club, pretty good chow house with good grub. We wake up in the morning to the roar of a cannon going off and the bugle. All thro the day the bugle is blowing, it sure is pretty. I'm writing this in the ship as its my turn to guard it tonight. I've read a while by flashlight, and then hit the hay about 8 P.M.

**Bangor-Gander Lake Newfoundland November 19**

Fri. Harris woke me up at 6. I hightailed it over to the barracks + packed, got breakfast and went out to "Hi Jinx" with the rest of the crew at 7 AM. We took off for Gander Lake A.A.B. Newfoundland at 9:45. kings were sailing O.K. all the way. I tuned the liaison transmitter up on voice + sent in position reports and E.T.A.'s to Stevenville + Gander for the pilot. We used the trailing wire antenna, 190 ft. The range on voice is about 180 miles in poor weather, which we had. Lazarus, the navigator, got us over Gander at the exact E.T.A. Landed at about 1500 E.W.T., the pilot was briefed + was given 10 cartons of cigarettes, as cigarettes are rationed here. Newfoundland time is E.W.T.+1 1/2 hours. Actual flying time from Kearney is about 11 hrs. Half of the field is run by R.C.A.F. + the rest by the U.S. Army. After getting bunks went to chow, P. X. and canteen. Bed by 7:30.

**Gander Lake November 20 Sat.**

I jumped out of bed at 9:30 this morning. Went out to the ship for a while, then ate chow. At one I went to briefing and they told us about what to expect going across and all the stuff we would need to know. Dismissed about 3, went to the ship again got some stuff out of my B4 + A3 bag that I'd use going across. It is definite we won't leave tonite at 12 because of weather. I'm glad because this post is pretty nice. After supper as we were standing in line at the theater we met a Canadian soldier + got to talking to him. An interesting fellow and very nice. He's from B.C. Canada, been in Army four years. After the show we took him to the P.X. talked + got acquainted, ate a lot. In all ways he is just like any American. We went bowling after exchanging our home addresses. After bowling we parted at 1130, promising to write each other. Bed at 12.

**Gander-Nutts Corner Ire. November 21 Sun**

1000 gals in tokyo tanks

1100 gals in main tanks for takeoff

Got up this morning at 900 went out to the ship to relieve Gene. Read until 12 when Harris relieved me for chow. The rest of the crew came out with me at 2 + worked on the ship until 6 packing and cleaning the ship up in order to go across. We took off at 10P.M. GCT the 21st for Prestwick Ireland. The trip across was uneventful, I guarded 6500KC all the way across, switched to 4220 voice when we got near Nutt's Corner Ire.

## **Mon Nutt's Corner**

We landed at 800 GCT in the morning Nov 22, 11 miles from Belfast Ireland called Nutt's Corner. We didn't get to bed until just after noon, local time, 12 GCT, 900 local. It rains almost every day here. The countryside from the air is pretty green. We slept for 4 hours on beds with 3 cushions for mattresses, have blankets for bed covers. The blankets are rough, but not too bad after you lie still for a while. The blankets aren't too warm, but we have 5 of them so it's not too bad. After sleeping for 4 hours I got up and went to chow. The grub here is not much to talk about, mostly meager and flavorless, but it is G.I. grub and it does fill you up. Fred + I went for a walk as soon as the blackout started, about 6, trying to find the P.X. the British call the "Naffie". We met a small red haired English gal from London+ talked with her the rest of the evening. She talks fast + with that lingo of hers neither of us could keep up with her. I had some tea and cakes, the tea was very weak, the cakes were as if someone had forgotten the baking powder. They were an inch thick but still "flat." Beryl seemed to be pretty nice, 23 yrs, and full of common sense. Fred and I are going to take her to the show tomorrow night, at her suggestion. Bed at 11. The first night in Ireland, too.

## **Tues. November 23 1943**

We got up at 8 this morning at the orders of the P.A. system. A truck came up a little while later + took us out to "Hi Jinx". We stayed out there until T.W.G. came out and told us we wouldn't take off today. We didn't get back to the barracks or hut for a long time as it was raining a heck of a lot, we didn't get a ride very soon. I spent most of the afternoon playing cribbage with Fred. At 6 Fred, M.D. + I went to the "Naffi" + sat back in a corner + let some limey explain the English monetary system. He was a darned nice chap + helped us a lot. Beryl dropped in at 6:40 + we sat around talking until 8 + went to the show. M.D. and I walked Beryl back to within 100 yards of her barracks. Got back to the barracks at 10:30. Ireland isn't bad, altho its always raining it seems. I wish I could go to Belfast but no passes are issued to us + it's hard for us if we are caught in town without a pass. These Irish Jails are supposed to be pretty rotten. Bed 12.

## **Rattlesden, Eng. Wed November 24 1943**

Thanksgiving Eve and the cooks promised roast turkey tomorrow  
I got up this morning at 8 when all the combat crews of the 447th were ordered to be ready to ship out. At 10 we were out preflighting the ship. We took off at 10:30 headed for Rattlesden, England; landed about 1:30. All the country was really beautiful that we passed over. All or most of the houses were red brick. This field is about 40 miles N.E. of London. It seems funny to be occupying a Field that might be bombed in the future. This 447 Group is the only outfit on this field; we keep our own ships, it ought to be swell. The grub is swell, at least this afternoon's meal was tops. The ground echelon + stuff that is coming by boat aren't here yet. There are a lot of small towns around here, we are supposed to get passes soon. From what the fellows say that have been here a while the people's morals are very poor in surrounding towns, London included. Bed at 8:45

### **Burtonwood, near Liverpool Thursday. Thanksgiving November 25**

Got up this morning at 7:15 because the radioman, pilots and co-p's + navigator were supposed to be briefed at 8:30. After being briefed we took off at 11:00 after a lot of dillidallying for Burtonwood, a modification center for bombers someplace up near Liverpool. Got there at 4, but had circle around the field because of ground fog for 1-1/2 hours. Got down at 5:30. We all had hopes of getting a Thanksgiving dinner but by the time we got to the mess hall we had roast beef. We were very disappointed. They then dumped us in trucks + took us 14 miles to a place to sleep. A G.I. camp between Manchester and Liverpool. Pretty good beds. Got to bed about 10 P.M. Going up we passed over a lot of beautiful country, some large old English churchyards and churches with graveyards around them. I bet some were hundreds of years old. This is my first time away from home on Thanksgiving + I'm kind of homesick. Bed at 10

Near Liverpool

### **Burtonwood Eng back home November 26**

The Major came around + woke us up at 8. Went over + got breakfast across the street. Poor grub. Soon afterward we got in trucks + went back to Burtonwood. It took an hour for T.W.G. to get a ship to take back to Horham. For the time being we were going to act as ferry crews. We took off at 11, landed at Horham about 25 miles south east of Rattlesden. A group of six ships were coming back from a bombing mission. All accounted for, but an ambulance was following one of them. After waiting for trucks an hour + a half we headed back for home. It took two hours before we got to the mess hall + stormed it. Nothing to eat since breakfast. Read for a while, brought diary up to date, etc. I've got to go to school tomorrow, hope it's interesting and beneficial. This English monetary system is pretty bad for me, altho I'm just beginning to see some light thru the dim overcast. Bed at 9:00

Sat.

### **Rattlesden November 27**

Jumped out of bed at 630 in order to get breakfast before going to school. Code occupied us all morning and some of the afternoon. I got back to the barracks at 4 PM. After reading a while Capt Smith came in + put the fellows in the barracks on detail. We were out there sweeping mud off the street about as fast as the trucks tracked it on. It was sort of futile if you ask me. After chow the officers came out + took over our job. We were put to loading cement blocks 3'x3'x2", weighing 150 lbs on a 6x6 truck. Dolan was driving + in his spare time he was making out our ration cards for gum, candy, cookies + smokes. I gave mine to Mac. Ever since we've been here we've been walking around in mud up to our ankles. It sure is hard to keep clean + I succeeded very well in getting good and dirty. The ground crew are supposed to get here two days from now. Bed at 11

### **Rattlesden Sunday November 28**

I happened to wake up at 7:25, just in time to get up and get dressed to get to school on time. All morning there was code classes, afternoon was spent on QDM, QTF procedure. These English instructors surely know their business. Most of them have been in the Air

Force a long time as radio operators. The instructor we had this afternoon had a rank equivalent to captain, but he wasn't the least bit strict on discipline. He is really just a swell fellow. I went back to radio school at 7, then a lecture at 8. At 8:20 some captain stepped up + told us to go home. TWO, the rest of the EM's went to the Red Cross Rec Hall + drank tea + coffee for an hour and shot the bull. Then came back to barracks + am going to hit the hay. I sent a telegram home saying I'm O.K. and all that, changed my \$30 to English pounds. £8-11' to be exact. Bed at 10:15

### **Rattlesden November 29**

Up at 7:35; school at 8. Same old stuff, W/T procedure, code checks until noon. Afternoon we had a talk by a couple fighter pilots that would escort us in P-47's as soon as we start our missions. They were a couple of quiet guys, they told us how they came up + where they would fly to protect us. They also asked us not to shoot at them; some B-17 crews had shot at them in the past. To help us be able to recognize P-47's we all went outside + they buzzed us + flew around + over us about 20 feet off the ground doing someplace around 350 M.P.H. A beautiful sight, a plane going directly overhead, 20 feet above you, then a second later a big roar + the plane is a mile away. After Supper I went back to school at 7. Limey luey's gave us code checks + practice until 8:30. These fellows are nice instructors + sure know their stuff. Bed at 10

### **Rattlesden Tues. November 30**

7:15- Aircraft Identification for two periods in the morning along with code and procedure. Same classes in the afternoon. The ground crew got in this morning sometime. It sure is nice to see some of the old fellows I knew back at Harvard. The mail came in too. One of the men brought in the sack that had been laying near the orderly room for a few hours, went thru it + got all the mail for the barracks + put all the packages + stuff back in the bag + carried it back. I've got 2 packages but we'd better not take them because they've got a list of all receivers of packages. We are supposed to get passes to London after our first mission. The ship "Hi Jinx" is supposed to be back from modification in a day or so. I'm feeling kind of lazy, the only exercise we will get is walking, it's a mile from here to the mess hall. Plenty of mud, too much in fact. It rains almost every day. 1130

### **Rattlesden Wednesday December 1**

7:30, Same school all day. Went back at 7 for lectures on procedure, got out at 9. The lectures are interesting and toward the last became one good bull session. The two English lieutenants, the instructors, are swell fellows, good sports and a heck of a lot of fun to talk to. I got two packages from home today. One from Alice, the other from Grandmother Johnson. The one from Johnson's is a scrap book. Alice included a knife, fruit cake and some other things. It sure is nice of her. I have had no chance to get something for her. Suppose I can get something here and get it there just after Christmas. I sure hate to disappoint her. A ship, B-17 landed with one engine feathered on its way home after a raid. No one was injured + they told us a lot. B. 1130

### **Rattlesden December 2**

730 I was feeling pretty good when I got up. Didn't go to chow, straight to school. I had

quite a bit of fun after school, we got off at 3:30 the first time R.O.'s got off early all this week. I came back to the barracks + played cribbage until supper, then the show afterwards. M.D., Fred + I went to the R.C. Rec Hall after the show + got some tea. I have a cold and didn't get anything besides tea. For some reason I still don't like the stuff but at least it was hot. I should write a letter to the Johnsons, Roy's + Lamoine's. Dashed off a V mail to Mom and Dad. Got some presents from Alice and the L.U. Tuck's incorporated today. It's still muddier than all heck and wading around in overshoes all day is hard work. Sent off quite a few Christmas cards. Oh yes, we'll be wearing flak suits + helmets on all our raids. B.11

### **Rattlesden December 3**

9-45 For the first time since we've been here I got to sleep in. The bed sure felt good. Went to school at 10, took the radio equipment tests and a written test. Came out O.K. The Limey lieutenant told us we didn't have to go to school anymore as far as he was concerned. All afternoon it has been raining; Fred + I played cribbage until 4 PM, went to the Red Cross Rec Hall and got some tea. On the way back I stopped at mess hall + ate. After chow spent a quiet evening writing letters and Christmas cards. We're supposed to start practice missions soon. One gunner with 25 missions said Jerry loves to tackle new outfits. The first 4 or 5 trips over will be hardest. After that we'll sit back and sweat it out. B.10

### **Rattlesden Saturday December 4**

1015 Went up to finance and got my per diem money 1650 or £2-12' 2, approximately. Came back + played cribbage until 1215 when the whole crew went to chow. Now they are feeding us pretty good. After lunch M.D., Mac, Fred + I took our helmets, oxygen masks up to respective places to be fixed. We got back in time to get in the chow line at 4:45. After supper we went over to the theater + sat from 545 until 7. No show so we came back to the barracks. I played more cribbage, a shilling a game, lost three, won one. Fred had a lot of luck tonight. Lt. H.C.M. came in and told me I'd have to get up by 6:30 to go to Burtonwood again. We fly someone's ship up there + try to bring our ship back. Packed my field bag in preparation. B.1200

### **Rattlesden December 5 Sunday**

6:30 This morning to go to Burtonwood. The C.Q. woke me up. I got over to the officers barracks to walk with T.W.G., Mamlock + Laz to the mess hall. Good chow this morning. Got out to the ship we were supposed to take up to B.; Mamlock + I pulled the props thro, then T.W.G. showed up and told us the trip was cancelled. We jumped into the jeep + went back to our barracks. I played cards the rest of the day and read. A show was scheduled tonight, Fred, M.D. + I sat in the theater from 530 to 630, no show. Got more books from the rec hall. I played more cards with Fred for an hour + a half + then got ready to go to bed. I wanted to go to Burtonwood pretty bad. We haven't flown for 2 weeks + I'm getting kind of restless for something to do, especially to try some of the stuff we learned in school here. B.1030

### **Rattlesden December 6 Mon**

Got up this morning when Mac and Dill tipped my bed over about II :30 AM. All day I

didn't do anything except play cards with Fred. Just after chow (supper) the whole crew went to the theater and sat from 530 to 745, saw "China. " We then went to the Red Cross Rec Hall, got something to eat, then we got books from the R.C. library + came back to the barracks to read and play cards until. Lt. Mamlock came in at 9 and told me our crew couldn't fly until I completed my schooling. I was supposed to be thru 4 days ago. I'll go see about it tomorrow. Bed at 12.

course. Quite a few bicycles are being swiped or borrowed. It sure keeps the M.P.'s busy looking for them. The crew is supposed to go to Burtonwood as soon as the weather is clear.

### **Rattlesden Tues December 7**

7:45 Got up early to go to radio school and find out what's wrong with the records. They had me down for needing a lecture that I had already had. Everything is O.K. now. Got back to the barracks at 1030 after buying my weeks rations + selling the cigarettes to T.W.G. After lunch we took our helmets to the welding shop + had them altered; then to the paint shop to put "Hi Jinx" on them in yellow. One of the fellows does it on the side to earn a little extra cash. We are supposed to get them tomorrow.

Fred + I skipped supper in order to get seats at the theater. When we got there some lecture on rubber dinghies was in progress. A lot of fellows went in + got seats. Fred + I went in too. I felt sorry for that captain giving the speech, everybody filing in all the time. We saw Dianna Durbin in "First Love," a very good show. It was a modernized version of "Cinderella." Went to R.C. + got supper, tea + sandwiches, went back to barrack to read until 11.

### **Rattlesden Wed December 8**

9:45 Got up, went up to the paint shop to see if my helmet has been completed yet. It hadn't. After chow Fred + I washed up + showered in water almost ice cold. Went to a P.W. lecture at 3:00, after this I went to the base photo lab to have my picture taken in some English civies. They looked like some of these zoot suits some people wear. The pictures are supposed to be for enabling us to fake passports in case we are forced down in France or Germany. I think its some idea. While Fred went to Mass I went to R.C. library + read until 7:30 when F. showed up. We stuck around listened to piano music + read until 10:30, then came back to the barracks + played 3 games of double solitaire. Mac says he and I are to go to this gunnery school at Oxford tomorrow. Bed at 1130

### **Snettisham On North Sea 8th Air Force Gunnery School December 9 Thurs**

We got up this morning at 8:40 to go to school at 9. T.W.G. pulled us out of an Aircraft Rec class to see about some flying equipment at A.C. supply at 930. Mac + I went back to the barracks + got ready. We left the field at 1:20. One of the trucks went in the ditch: we had to go back + pull him out. That delayed us an hour. There was a glider field with gliders like Wellington's; an ammo dump spread on both sides of the highway for 4 miles or so, well camouflaged. At one town the kids asked us for gum when we stopped. We gave all of it away but when we started to go some guy threw a dozen sticks on the ground + the kids, girls + boys, fought for the gum. At many places we saw groups of all kinds of tanks, mobile guns + trucks; an invasion force, I guess. We got here at 6, ate

chow, then went to the show in the mess hall. I went back to barracks + got some soap + went over to the shower room. 1st shower in 3 weeks; it sure felt good. B 10:15

### **Snettisham Friday December 10**

Got up this morning at 7:20 to go to school without breakfast. It seems as if 2 meals a day is O.K. because I don't keep too busy; By noon I have a good appetite. From 8 to 10 we had malfunctions on 50 cal, at 1 a we had skeet. I got 1 S out of 22, next to the highest man with 16. I was proud because everybody ribbed me quite a bit. After lunch we met at 1:00 to shoot 50' s. We didn't because some tanker directly off the beach about 4 miles had got stuck when the tide had gone out. This camp is situated on tide flats. At high tide the water comes up within 50 yds of the buildings, at low tide the water is out about 3 miles, + civilians are out on the sand digging clams. Some fellows back from combat talked to us until 3:45 when we were excused. I went back to the barracks + read until chowtime, then after eating went to the small library + read until bedtime. B:900

### **Snettisham Sat December 11**

7:30 We stood around in a hut until 830 for the instructors to come. Then shot skeet until 10. I didn't do so hot. Malfunction range until noon. All afternoon we shot 50's. I shot about 200 rounds at a small wood airplane about 200 yds away that went around a track + a lot at a 10 ft sleeve towed by a British Lysander. Went to reading room just after supper + read until 8:30. Last night a couple Ju-88's came over some fields to the south of us. We could see the flak + search lights focused on them. Today we heard that both of them were shot down. So far we have not been in actual contact with Jerry + I'm itching just a little. This place is almost directly across the North Sea from Germany. B-900

There seems to be no public health department here in England.

Meat and milk bought outside of army camps is very likely to be diseased; the English people use it anyway.

### **Snettisham Sun December 12**

Got out of bed this morning at 745 just in time to get to the skeet range before the instructors. Skeet 8- 10; malfunctions 10-12; shooting 50's all afternoon. I shot about 350 rounds. It was a lot of fun but that shooting of the 50's is awful hard on your ears, even if they are plugged up with cotton. Standing behind the firing line you can feel the concussion against your clothes + eardrums whenever guns shoot. At chow tonight the instructor that was superintending the shooting sat by me in the mess hall. He commended me as being the best shot out of the whole class. I swelled up like a balloon I guess. That's the way I felt. Read in the library from 5: 15 until 9:30. Dill's class is to go back to Rattlesden by truck tonight at midnight. I hope T.W.G. has had a chance-to go to Burtonwood to get 145. B 10:00

### **Rattlesden December 13 Mon**

Got up at 11pm Dec 12 to get packed + get in trucks to go to Rattlesden. Got home at 3:30 after 2-1/2 hr trip. Went to bed and woke up at 10: 30 when P, CP ,N + RO1s were to meet at briefing room. After a few minutes we found out nothing was going to happen so we came back. We were called out again at 1, still no soap. Fred went to gunnery

school today, Gene would have gone too but he's on a practice mission with some other crew. I went up to P.X. + got my week's rations; came back + started to get cleaned up. A fellow came in and wanted an R.O. to go on a ferry trip. T.W.G., Mamlock, and Laz were going too but on a different ship: we got them to trade R.O.'s so I could go with T.W.G. We took the Colonel's ship to a modification center about 15 miles from here. Had chow there in the noncoms' mess, good chow too -- started back at 745 + got here at 9:25 after stopping at a Pub, giving some gum away to some kids + etc. B 1030

#### **Rattlesden Tues December 14**

Got up this morning at 6, ate breakfast for the first time in 2 weeks and got to the briefing room at 6:50. At 7:30 all but P, CP, + N's were excused to go to school. The R.O.'s sat in room 13 for an hour shooting the bull. We broke up to get back to the orderly room to get in the pay line. £15-13' 9d. I signed a couple of statements of charges in Kearney. We should get flying pay + Nov's pay at the end of the month. I've got a bad cold + am feeling pretty low. Night before last a Ju88 came over + we had an alert while I was at gunnery school Everybody got in the bomb shelters. The Ju88 was shot down by a Mosquito + crashed about 4 miles away with a big explosion. Gene saw it all + said it was thrilling. The Ju88 was held in searchlights until downed after dropping a big bomb in Ipswich. Stayed in barracks rest of afternoon, skipped supper + headed for bed about 730 to read for a while.

#### **Rattlesden December 15**

Got up just in time to get to briefing room at 8. A lot of officers got up and said a lot of nothing until 845 when all R.O.'s were told to go over to the Equip. room. We did + just sat around for an hour, then went in to the code class + heard a lecture by a 25 mission man about emergency procedure. A good lecture. At 11 all gunners with some instructors went out to a ship, wrote our names on a sheet of paper + went to chow. At 1 :30 we met at the briefing room again + soon after took off on a practice mission. I got my 1st QDMs on this trip. We flew formation most of the time. On the way down thro the overcast I gave the pilot a QDM + we came home on it. With my cold my ears hurt on the way down but cleared up soon after getting on the ground. Today is the 1st time I've flown in Hi-Jinx since going up to modification center; she already has 5 combat hours, not a scratch + a lot of headsets + mikes have been hooked by the group that borrowed her. B 830

#### **Rattlesden December 16 Thurs**

I crawled out of bed at 6 to go to breakfast. We had to be up at the briefing room at 7 + made it. Trucks are hauling us from the mess halls to the briefing room now. We were told we would fly; got all our stuff out to the ship + and got her started. No.3 engine's throttle wouldn't close so mechanics started to work on her. We got it fixed, then the flight was called off. I stayed out on the ship to work on some antennas that were broken. I worked until 12:30, got a good appetite + ate. Went to the gym with R. Chase and fooled around with the basketball for an hour, went to a class + skipped out after signing roll. Then went to the R.C. + had two cups of tea, went to show + then the barracks to get ready for bed. A lot of stuff has been swiped from the ship when she was lent out to the other group. Rudisill hooked 4 mikes, 4 headsets + saved them for us. Good old Rudy.

We should get them replaced. Feeling pretty good today. B 11 :30

### **Rattlesden Friday December 17**

6:00, meeting at the briefing room at 8:30. M.D. + I went out to the ship +.talked to the crew chief + helpers for a while. 10-12 lectures on dinghy equipment + dinghy radio. Didn't do anything all afternoon except read and play cards. Fred got back from gunnery school at 2. Played cards + read after supper. Ping says his pilot told him we'd be doing operational missions in a week. I'd like to start soon just to get them over with. For the last 3 months ships have averaged 50 rounds a mission because of the fighter protection provided. I got a lot of pictures from the family. They sure make me homesick, but I wouldn't lose or sell them for anything. I'm over that cold now, just rarin' to fly tomorrow as scheduled. Some Englishmen should see these fellows gambling; a weeks wages changing hands 10 times in 10 minutes. As a rule I stay strictly out of them, except a few penny games for amusement to pass time. B 1030

### **Rattlesden Sat December 18**

7:00 in time to get breakfast and briefing at 8:30. Most officers showed up 15 minutes late. We didn't fly so we had a couple classes in the morning. Afternoon was spent washing clothes and cleaning up. About 4 all the fellows got together + mopped + really got the barracks clean. The 1st sergeant was in for a while. That guy seems to think the ground crew's life is worse than ours, air crew barracks are the dirtiest and all that. Back at Harvard he made our life miserable with inspections and G.I. parties. He's starting to do it here too. We are trying to figure something to put him in his place. One thing wrong is an old Army man should be 1st sergeant, this guy has been in for 2 years and a low I.Q. to top it off. B - 10

Notes written down at spare times:

[ nothing written ]

### **Rattlesden Sunday December 19**

Got up at 7 to go to chow when T.W.G. came in and insisted we get up to march to chow. All of the combat crews had to get up and march to chow because of all the people that were late yesterday morning. Briefing at 8:30 .The weather was kind of bad. We were told to come back at 11:15 for briefing again to fly. We did. A large formation of 18 ships took off + we flew for 4 hours at medium altitude. Spitfires, P 51s + P47s dove on us for a couple of hours to give us a class on aircraft rec and practice on tracking. The P-51s gave us a good time, coming pretty close at times. About 10 B-261s came up and joined the formation for a while then passed on. Later I was trying to tune up on low frequency + insulation caught on fire. Mac saw it before I did + put it out. Landed about 5:30, ate + went to the barracks and played cribbage for an hour with Fred. Maj. Lund came in + inspected the barracks + went back out pretty quick. B 9:30

### **Rattlesden - Langford Lodge Monday December 20**

Woke up at 5:30, ate chow and was at the briefing room at 6:45. 18 ships took off for a practice mission at about 8 and landed about 1120. As soon as our crew came in the briefing building Capt. Richards asked us if we would like to go to Langford Lodge. P,

CP, N +RO of our ship took off at 230 with 4 other skeleton crews in #185. Didn't do much of anything on the way up. Landed about 5:30 + trucks took us to the operations office + then to the mess hall + quarters. After dumping all extra stuff + changing to O.D.'s we, R. Chase, R. Palumbo + I got in a G.I. truck and came to town. Belfast, Ire. is a big town from what we could see. We stopped a lot of girls + talked with them or they stopped us with definite intentions to earn a little money. I met a nice girl + we walked around for an hour then she went home. R. Chase + I went to A.R.C. for a while then went to our beds, also A.R.C. B. 0115

### **Langford Lodge + Belfast. Tuesday December 21**

Climbed out of bed at 7:45, got dressed and went down to the R.C. building to get breakfast. Palumbo, Chase + I went up to the Grand Hotel looking for our officers. I found T.W.G. Mamlock + Laz eating up there + talked with them for a while. The 3 radiomen caught a bus for Langford Lodge at 9 that went out through Nutt's Comer to the base, about 15 miles. After getting cleaned up + eating we headed for flight control office, we were late but not as late as Maj. Rawl + 3/4 of the officers. At 1 we were told to go back to town because England was having too much bad weather. The 3 of us hit town about 3 o'clock after catching a ride in the officers bus. We first got a room in the best hotel in town, then had tea, chased around for a while looking the town over, then supper. We were a bunch of wolves the rest of the night, up till about 12 when we went to bed.

### **Langford Lodge -Rattlesden Wednesday December 22**

A chambermaid woke us up by knocking on the door, then hollering at us at 7:45. We had breakfast in the hotel dining room. It was a very skimpy breakfast + it cost £1-2' for the 3 of us. The bus took us to the field + as usual we were late to the flying control, the rest of the EM's + officers were later. It took us until 2:30 to get everybody present and ready to go. The P ,CP ,N + I took "Hi-Jinx" + flew her back. The magnetic compass was off a long ways, we didn't have the schedule for splashers so the navigator couldn't get bearings + fixes on them. I got QDM's all the way back; we flew some pretty bad clouds + there was a low ceiling. We landed in the dark without trouble, T.W.G. greased her in. Chase + I had to do some talking to get supper as it was after 7:45. The knife Pop made for me came. It's a beauty + a darned fine one. B- 10

### **Rattlesden December 23 Thursday**

Managed to get out of bed at 7:30 in time to eat and get to briefing room by 8:30. After taking role we went to the theater for a lecture on ditching, then back to the briefing room for dinghy equipment, then chow. At 1:30 all R.O.'s went to room 13 to shoot the bull. About half of us are having trouble tuning the xmitter to low frequencies on the fixed wire antenna. The instructor took us out to a ship + tuned that xmitter up O.K. but all transmitters aren't alike, some will and do but some won't. T.W.G. gave me a compass about 1/2" across, for cross country travel if we're ever forced to bailout over Germany or France. It has a luminous dial + should be very handy. This group is now operational, altho all that any planes have done is yesterday they went out and hunted for a dinghy from a plane that ditched. Went to the show tonight, the first in about 2 weeks. B 9:45

### **1st mission Rattlesden December 24 Friday**

The C.Q. came in this morning and told us to get on the beam, today we got our first mission. All crews were briefed at 7:30, gunners at the main briefing room at 7:30, then they went out to the ship. I had to go to a separate R.O.'s briefing. After collecting all my stuff; got out to the ship #184 to wait 45 minutes for the guns to be brought out. Took off at 12, got over the target about 3:15 dropped all bombs O.K. after going over target twice. Almost no flak even near us, no enemy fighters, a lot of P-38's escorting us were buzzing around. The target was gun emplacements from which the Germans were supposed to be able to bombard cities in England as far away as London with some sort of rockets. It is all supposed to be pretty secret; even our ground crew doesn't know what we bombed. M.P.s are standing at all doors of the briefing building. We landed at 5:05 after an uneventful trip. B-11

### **Rattlesden Christmas Day December 25 Saturday**

About 9 o'clock some of the fellows came in and said there was a swell breakfast served, I got out of bed about 10, got cleaned up in time for lunch. We were expecting turkey and got beef stew. Played cards all afternoon after a 10 minute meeting, of all the crews in the briefing room. There was a swell turkey dinner for the evening meal. It is pretty definite that we won't fly tomorrow as it 's 711 Squadron's turn to make a mission. Tonight the time is passing very slow, just because of homesickness and inactivity. I have £22 I'll send home as soon as I get paid for this month and flying pay for last month. Just before we took off yesterday for that mission nobody was around to help us do their work: we had to work a lot longer than we should have. When we came down everybody wanted to know everything about our trip + were dying to help us. Human nature, I guess. B 10:30

### **Rattlesden December 26 Sun**

Got up at 7, went to breakfast and got to briefing at 8:30. I had one class in the morning, from 9-11 the whole crew was out to the ship except T.W.G. practicing dinghy drill, cleaning gun receivers and all odd jobs. Spent most of the afternoon playing cards and reading and writing letters. Got to bed about 11.

[ same page ]

1/4/43 Some of the planes of the lower echelon were throwing out some sort of metallic powder to throw off the anti-aircraft guns controlled by radar. On every mission every crew member is given gum and chocolate to eat whenever we want to. Upon landing we have sandwiches donuts and coffee before interrogation.

### **Rattlesden December 27 Mon**

Raked my weary bones out of that comfortable sack at 7, limped painfully (?) down to chow and got to the theater at 8:30 the appointed time for all the yellow squadron combat crews to meet and take roll, making the latest announcements. We were ready to go out and Lt Jarrel says "and the radio operators have an all day schedule they are to meet. Report to Equipment room immediately. " R. Chase and I did, no classes, went out to my ship just in time to see Trobaugh off in it headed for Honnington on a ferrying job. We stopped at Chase's ship + shot the bull with their crew chief; came back to the line and

went to a 10 minute lecture, then chow. T.W.G. drops in barracks + says I am to go to Langford Lodge: I got all packed up then we got bogged down in the mud the trip cancelled, I went to a show and played cards with Fred until 11, Bed 1105

### **Rattlesden Langford Lodge December 28 Tues**

Out of bed by 8:10, Fred + I went directly to briefing at the theater for role call, arriving just in time. After the usual daily announcements and all, T.W.G. was told he was going to Langford Lodge as soon as possible, along with the CP, N + RO and another skeleton crew. Maj. Newman and his crew went with us to Bovington, a field south of London, then north to Valley, Wales to pick up Lt. Huff's crew who just came in from the States. Huff had left about an hour ahead of us for Rattlesden. We took off very soon headed for Langford Lodge. Landed about 4, got cleaned up; took the 6 o'clock train for Belfast, got to talking to an old Irishman who worked on the base. The train was old + a door on the side of each coach. Went to a show, got a bed at A.R.C. + got to bed by 12 Midnight.

### **Langford Lodge-Rattlesden December 29 Wednesday**

Woke up this morning at 845, got up, dressed and got down to the bus station by 9. Took the bus out + got there at 10. Waited at operations until noon, went to the mess hall, ate + met T.W.G. as I was coming out. We took off at 1, I was in the engineer's position for the first time. It was really thrilling, the way T.W.G. and Mamlock worked together, checking all the instruments and controls, got the ship lined up with the runway and opened up to take off. The runway that we took off on ended 'about 100 ft. from the lake in Northern Ireland. At 200 ft over the lake T.W.G. banked the ship around at 60 degrees, got on course + headed for home. I listened to music over the liaison receiver all the way back, landed about 4. Played cards a while after getting something to eat in the A.R.C. Jimmy Boyd has had a few beers + feels good + got in an argument with R.J. Small. Bed at 11:30

### **Rattlesden December 30 Thurs.**

Got up at 715 this morning. Ate and got to the theater by 8.30 for roll call. As we were going to the theater, the ships from our group were gathering over the field headed for some target on the Ruhr river area in Germany. After role call the E.M.'s were excused, came back to the barracks and played cards till the 1st class, 10-11 o'clock. Most of the afternoon the crew was out in the ship working on the gun receivers, getting them clean + cleaning up the ship. At 5 the fellows started coming in. Two of the ships came in with number 3 engines feathered. All were accounted for, with a couple crew members wounded by flak. They encountered no fighter opposition, just flak. Fred + I went around to some of the ships + looked for flak holes: we found some too. After chow I wrote letters + hit the hay at 8:45  
3rd raid of Group

### **Rattlesden December 31 Friday**

Lt. Jarrel came in and woke all of us up at 2:30 for a mission. We ate at 3, briefing at 4. After getting all our crap we went out to #217, a 710 ship. Our crew was an extra crew to take the place of any ship unable to take off. Takeoff was scheduled for 7:30, we stayed

in the ship until 8. All the guns were dirty, no crew chief or armorers were out there, until the last minute. Things were really a mess. At 8 am we came back to the barracks + slept until 11; got paid and ate. Terry came in and took our names at 1245 for not being at a meeting in the street. Later a luey came in when we were in bed + told us to go down to armament because Maj. Lund + Capt. Foley were going to check all barracks. We went down to armament + slept for a while + played poker until 430 when we went out to the runway + watched the planes come home from the mission. They bombed a bomber + pursuit training school in Cognac, France. "Hi Jinx" was flown by Lt. Rozmus + crew with quite a few flak holes. Both fighters + flak. 1 ship lost. B 9:30

### **Saturday January 1 New Years Day**

This morning I didn't get up until 9:45. Didn't do anything after lunch when we came back to the barracks and cleaned it up a bit. Briefing at 2, one crew got a 2 day pass to go to London. Mac, M.D. Fred + I went out to "Hi Jinx" to see if they had started to patch her up. They had fixed oxygen leak + interphone cables that had been cut by a piece of flak. Turkey for dinner tonight to start new year off right. After chow went to show "San Francisco" with M.D. + Fred, This last raid that the fellows went on was pretty bad; but for some reason, I'm not worried a bit about the next, the sooner the better because after 25 we can go home. Lt. McGurer told me this afternoon that we were on the alert for a mission. Since then I've heard rumors to the contrary. If they wake us up at 2:30 AM we'll know. B 10

### **Rattlesden Sunday January 2**

Got up at 7:15 to eat chow and get to the theater for briefing which lately have turned out to be roll calls. I had a class on the camera operation at 11. It lasted 15 min. At least 3 ships in each group have cameras which start taking pictures when the first bomb that is attached to the camera switch with a string drops out. It continues for 10 minutes to get the results of the raid. It is very successful. After the missions we can see the pictures we take in the crew library. We didn't do much all afternoon except read and play cards. I heard from a good source that on the last mission one of the top turret gunners was hit on the head with a 20 m. shell. This fellow had his crash helmet on. The total results was a dented helmet and a headache. B-8

### **Rattlesden January 3 Monday**

Fred and I jumped out of bed at 8: 10, got dressed, walked a half mile to the mess hall, ate a breakfast of a sort and got to the theater for roll call at 8:33. A Record? Crews 2, 3 + 4 got 2 day passes to places off the base + not to London. The 1st sergeant received orders to have the passes made out by 9, but when the fellows showed up he said: "He didn't think it was important." These fellows were mad + didn't get off until 1:30. Maj. Lund was mad at the 1st sergeant who did the same thing with our furloughs in Harvard. He, the 1st sarge, is going to get injured during some blackout but he won't get a purple heart for bruises. Played cribbage + 500 all afternoon, went to "China Girl" after supper with Fred, came back to barracks to find we are alerted for tomorrow. The weather is clearing up so we'll probably go. B-8:30

### **Rattlesden January 4 Tuesday**

Lt. Dalzell woke us up at 3, ate at 3:30, briefing at 4. We gunners were told we were to bomb Kiel. We got out to the ship #207 by 5 AM and had enough time for once to get dressed in electric suit, shoes, gloves, and put the guns in. Take off at 8, leaving English coast at 10, I.P. 11:30 and bombs away at noon. We met no fighters, saw a few FW 190's + ME 109's that stayed way out of range. It was a good thing as the tail guns didn't work and the ball turret's oxygen supply had a severe leak so Harris couldn't stay in it. There was quite a bit of accurate flak. We bombed thro a partial overcast at 24000 ft. It was -52 degrees C outside. A lot of fellows suffered minor frostbite about their necks when they got down. Landed at 1500, ate donuts coffee + sandwiches served by Red Cross at the briefing room; ate supper, cleaned guns and bed about 9:30.

### **Rattlesden January 5 Wednesday 1944**

The C.Q. came in and woke up crew 7, Small, Hess, Zesuit, Boyd, Hill and Bently at 12 midnight for a mission. We didn't get up until 7:30, briefing at 8:30. I went to school most of the morning. Our crew cleaned guns after lunch for an hour or so. All of us were pretty tired from the raid yesterday and have taken naps whenever possible. The men got back from their mission at 4. They bombed a FW assembly plant in Bordeaux, France, meeting some fighters. Small and Zesuit got a FW 190 between them. 2 other 190s were brought down. Zulo's crew got in trouble+ headed back for land as they were over water. As Crew #5 we are expecting a 2 day pass soon. Hi Jinx is getting patched up pretty fast, she'll be ready to go when we get to go. B. 9:30

### **Rattlesden January 6 1944**

Got up at 730 this morning, in the dark. There is no electric power on the field. Roll call at 8:30 as usual in the theater. Another crew got a 2 day pass. They seem to be forgetting crew #5 wants passes too. Went to radio school from 9 to 11:20. Lt. T.W.G. hurt his ankle when he was on a little ferrying job at Honnington yesterday. He went on sick call this morning with a sprained ankle. Lt. Mamlock was out hunting a 1st pilot in case we have to go on a mission tomorrow or in the near future. In the mess halls for breakfast and supper light was provided by candles that were swiped as soon as we were thro eating to light the barracks. The mess officer was yelling + objecting; according to Lt. Dalzell. I guess he wanted his candles. I'm going to bed early because there's nothing to do. "Hi Jinx" should ready to fly tomorrow afternoon. B-8:30

### **Rattlesden January 7 Friday**

Got up at 8: 15, the C.Q. was late waking us up. Consequently we took our own darn time eating breakfast; walking into the theater 15 minutes late. A lot of fellows came in after our crew came in so Jarrel couldn't start the role call until about 9 o'clock. I was told to be at the equipment room at 11:30 to fly as radio op on Lagasse's crew on a practice mission to check the lead ships as they do every day. We got back down just before the fellows returning from their mission. No planes were lost, fighter protection all the way in and out. They bombed some city in the interior of Germany. After chow Harris, Mac and I went to the show, after which a G.I. magician gave a pretty good show. Came back to the barracks to find out I take a mission tomorrow with some other crew. Today is the first time I've ever flown with another crew. B 9:30

### **Rattlesden January 8 Sat.**

The C.Q. came in at 5:45 to wake us up for the inspection by the Colonel at 9. We got things real clean as only crew #5 is in this Barracks now, Small and crew 7 are in London now. It turned out that the lieutenant making the inspection commended the barracks on our cleanliness or something, I went to code class an hour this morning, spent the afternoon playing poker. Time seems to go very slow during periods of inactivity. Lately we've been playing cribbage, rummy, 500, and poker to pass the time away. Went to the show "Behind the Rising Sun" with Dill, came back + played some more poker until 10. We are not alerted for a raid and will get to sleep until 7:30 tomorrow. Hi Jinx is ready to go now. I didn't make that mission that was scheduled for today because of the bad weather. B 11

### **Rattlesden January 9 Sunday**

Got up at 8:30 this morning, dressed and got Fred out of bed and managed to get down to the theater on time with him. No ground school today. Everybody except Mac, TWG + Laz went to Protestant church this morning at 9:30, the rest went at 11. Since we've been going on missions there's a lot of fellows going to church, and the greatest percentage are combat crew members too. Cleaned guns and worked on the interphone system of ship most of the afternoon. Played rummy with Fred and MD for an hour after supper. Read a while and hit the hay as soon as the fellows get thro playing blackjack on my bed. B-830

We are supposed to go on a 2 day pass Tuesday.

### **Rattlesden. January 10 Mon.**

I got up this morning at a quarter to seven, dragged Fred out of his sack; got down to the chow hall at seven and to the barber shop at 7:30. The shop didn't open till 8 but we got in at the first of the line. I got my hair cut and went over to briefing at the theater to tell Jarrel where Fred was. It was O.K. by him. We had a class in aircraft rec in the theater at 10 when we were told that we'd fly in the afternoon. We had to put the guns in for the flight. We were up in the air for an hour during which time I was listening to a British radio program which featured songs like "Deep in the Heart of Texas". Pretty good. All of us did a good job cleaning our guns for the mission tomorrow. Dill came in at 9 saying that we'd go on pass tomorrow instead of going on the mission. The whole crew would rather go than let someone else let get all shot up. We'd be willing to forfeit the pass. B 10

### **Rattlesden January 11 Tuesday**

We got up at 7 o'clock this morning, had roll call in the officers barracks at 8:30. Afterwards all of us went back to the barracks to get ready to go to town. I walked down to operations and got the passes. Crew #5 left at noon by G.I. truck from the mess hall. We didn't have to show our passes. We got to Stowmarket at 1230, caught a train for Ipswich after waiting 15 minutes. It took 20 minutes to go to Ipswich about 17 miles. As soon as we hit town we got beds in A.R.C. got supper there and went to a show. Mac went to a dance instead, getting to bed at 11. The trolleys in this town are as modem as anywhere, good service too. Most of the people seem pretty friendly, contrary to what

most of the fellows say. The first impression of the town gives us a good impression of things. Gene + Dill went to London to spend their passes.

### **Rattlesden January 12 Wednesday**

At 8 the four of us got up and had breakfast at the A.R.C. Service Club. It wasn't a bad breakfast, stretched sausages, potatoes, bread toast butter and jam. Afterwards we went out and bought souvenirs, pilots caps and squandered money in general. I spent about £10 for a necklace, brooch and purse, but they are all well made, and very pretty. I think I'll send the brooch to Mom, purse to Lois and necklace to Alice. I guess the jewelry is pretty expensive for the Britishers but the Yanks spend their pounds like water. After lunch the four of us started walking to see the town. We went thro a park with a big pond filled with Mallard ducks + geese. Really beautiful. On the grounds was a mansion that was an art gallery and very old domestic furniture dating back to 13th century. We found another museum and went thro it in a half hour when 2 days wouldn't have been enough time. Natural history, zoology and gun collections filled most of it. A show finished up a swell day. B 11

### **Rattlesden January 13 Thurs.**

M.D. and I got up at 7, took a shower and shaved, Fred and Mac got up at 8:45. Soon afterward we went to the A.R.C. Service Club to get breakfast. M.D. and I went off shopping while waiting for the two to finish their coffee; stopping at a jewelry store. Met them at the train station, leaving at 1015, getting to Stowmarket at 1045 where we met the rest of the crew, including the officers back from London. After waiting a while we got a ride to the base in the mail truck. A class from 330-530. P.W.+ naval ident. Charlie Hams had to ditch on the last mission when Col. Bowman + Jarrel's plane blew up. Harris and crew had a rough time: the ship broke up, sank in 30 sec. but the whole crew got into boats O.K. The R.O. got an S.O.S. off.

15 min. after landing a Hudson circled, 3 hrs later they were picked up by the Limey coast patrol. All of the fellows suffered from exposure and shock. C. Harris says he's going to quit flying. B 10

### **Rattlesden January 14 Friday**

8:20- Fred and I got to briefing just in time. Capt. Richards is squadron operations officer now, Dalzell + Lagasse assistants. They had a good ground school schedule mapped out for us when they alerted us for a mission. T.W.G. said we could clean guns until briefing at 11 when we gunners went to their ships, as too much information as to target for the day has been leaking out before the planes take off so they told just the officers the target + particulars. The officers got out when everything was ready + told us that we were an extra crew. The formation take off was at 1-2:15, we stood by in the ship until 2:30 then came back + got something to eat. It was a milk run, and for the first time we would have been in our own ship. They got back at 5:30, no flak or fighters. All combat crews are alerted tomorrow for a maximum effort, restricted to barracks. I owe 6 letters + am going to bed instead of writing. Charlie Harris is going to get a 7 day pass for rest. He deserves it. B 9:00

### **R, January 15 Sat.**

The C.Q. came in at 3:30 to wake us up for a mission this morning, ate at 3:45, briefing at 4:45. After the gunners briefing I was in with the rest of the R.O.'s getting briefed by Capt. Unitas when he received a call from Berry that the mission had been scrubbed. We got back in bed by 6, slept until 9:30 when we got up to get paid flight pay, £14-5'6d. We had to go up to briefing room at 11 for a brief lecture by a major of some other sq. An electronic supercharger lecture 2.30-3.30, and poker took up all afternoon and evening. 6 pence loser, about the cheapest entertainment possible around here. It was just a friendly game among the 6 E.M. of the crew. At 7 Lt. Dalzell came in to get his radio + told us we probably would not go on a mission tomorrow because bad weather was expected. A bit of fog came up very suddenly this morning + hung on till noon. 3 more missions we get the air medal. 2 day pass the 21st. B-10

### **Rattlesden January 16 Sun.**

7: 15, Briefing at 8:30 in the theater. This was over at 8:45, Gene Dill, M.D. + I went to combat library until 9:25 when we went to church. At 10:30 after church I went up to take code in room 13, but the code instructor was skipping out. I shot the bull with a limey flight lieutenant and Al until noontime. After chow there was a short lecture at 1:30-2:00 by S-2, then I went + took code for an hour and passed 20 W.P.M. again, the first time being at Scott field last May. Some fellows flying B-26's land here from a mission 2 days ago + have been fogged in ever since. Those boys say that the grub is a hundred times better here than at their base. They don't mind their staying here at all. After chow M.D., Fred + I went to the show "Wake Island," played 2 cribbage games + hit the hay. The fellows are galloping the dominoes against the floor. B 10

### **Rattlesden January 17 Monday**

7:00 I got up good and early this morning. Some reason, Fred got up too! It was nice to sit in the mess hall for 45 minutes. Went to radio school most of the morning, code + a lecture, plus bull sessions. There was another class on zone sighting the 1st thing in the afternoon. The rest of the afternoon we read in the library + read in the barracks. Didn't do anything except read after supper. Today was another day of fog. The weather hasn't been very cold but pretty damp. No mail has come in for 4 days. We are getting pretty impatient because of the lack of mail. The B-26 boys have to go thro 50 missions, but 25 in B-17s are a lot harder. The 26's can make 2 missions a day, while one every other day is the most we can make except in emergencies. They have had anti-personnel bombs on the base for a month. Sort of expect the invasion to break loose in two months. B-10

### **Rattlesden January 18 Tuesday**

7: 15 Got up in time to eat, make some cocoa + heat it on a stove + take all the time in the world to drink it. Roll call at 8:30, no ground school during the morning, a class 1 :30 to 2:30, I took blinker then for an hour and went back to the barracks until chow time. At 5:30 in the officers mess Col. Harris presented the D.F.C.s and Purple Hearts earned in the past raids. The D.F.C.s were presented to fellows that have finished thier25 missions were of another group. Most of the Purple Hearts were earned in the Kiel raid by frostbite. The 26's + their crew are still here. Lt. Dalzell came in a while ago, telling us that we're on alert, we'll probably fly the purple heart-earner tomorrow with Lt. Bye,

Dalzell's copilot. He says we might not have briefing very early but I'm going to bed early anyway. B-9:30

### **Rattlesden January 19 Wednesday**

The C.Q. came in waking us up at 6:30 for a mission. All of crew 5 except Fred went to chow at 6:45 and stayed at the mess hall until 8 when all but me went to the main briefing room. I went back to the barracks to get a scarf + to wake Fred up. He was dressing as I came in; got to breakfast at 8:35 + sat around till 9 briefing time. We were to bomb rocket installations on the coast of France. When we got out to the ship + got the guns in T.W.G. came out + told us the mission was scratched. We went to the barracks until 2 when we had to take the ship out + dump the bombs in the North Sea. We had delayed action bombs that can't be defused without going off, so we dumped them, the six regular bombs went off + made beautiful geysers. Then T.W.G. took us down on the deck, 30 ft + test fired the guns, 300r. per gun. Came back, ate, cleaned the guns, got thro at 830, came back to the barracks + went to bed. 9:00

### **Rattlesden January 20 Thursday**

The C.Q. came in at 6:30 to tell us we were going on a mission. We slept until 7:30 when he came in again to get us up. Chow at 7:45, nothing to do until 9 when the gunners were briefed. Same lecture and target as yesterday. Same as yesterday we got the guns and made everything ready and mission was scrubbed. After chow all the E.M.'s went out to the ship, got it cleaned up, loaded a lot of ammo; T.W.G. turned us in as present at the afternoon classes in ground school. After dinner I went to the show alone, came back; went to the latrine and shaved + got cleaned up in general in cold water. I felt pretty good AFTERWARDS. This scrubbing of missions is getting tiresome for us, ground crew + everybody. But, most of the time we get our chocolate bar and gum every time to soothe us. So far none of the fellows I've noticed haven't been bothered by combat as they've seen so far. Got a "V" mail letter today from Mom mailed the 9th of Jan. So far they've received none of my letters. B- 1030

### **Rattlesden January 21 Friday**

We got up at 7:30, briefing at 9, when they told us we were going on a mission at noon. After the usual preparations we made a Noball raid, bombing the rocket installations on the coast of France. T.O. at 12, landing at 4: 15. No flak, no fighters, we missed the target by 500 ft, hit a railroad instead, bombing at 12,000 ft. The Jerries were shooting up some sort of rockets at us; they got up to our altitude + exploded, off to one side about a mile. We saw about six of them, none coming close at all + we are not sure what they are. After landing we got away from the ship in 15 min. the record, just about, got thro undressing, packing interrogation by 5:30, ate chow, went to the barracks to get mail. Mom and Alice seem not to have got any mail from me yet, the address is still APO 9006, Tad has it tho. Tonight the Jerries are keeping the searchlights busy, we can see light from exploding bombs in distant towns but cannot hear it. The Jerries must be mad. B- 10:30

### **Rattlesden January 22 Sat.**

We got up at 8, had breakfast and went to briefing at 9. The rest of our baggage came

this morning. After roll call T.W.G. and the rest of the crew with Sgt. Honeycutt the supply sgt. opened the big box with our stuff. I was glad to get the protective clothing, shoes, brand new pair from Kearney, and my new field jacket. Last night a lot of Ju 88's bombed London for the first time in a long while. 8 out of 30 were shot down. This afternoon we had a lecture on the British rescue boat. It is hooked on the belly of a Lockheed Hudson or some other plane + is dropped by parachute to a dinghy with a ditched crew. It has outboard motors, sail, warm clothing, emergency radio, rockets and food. It is 24 ft long, is self righting mahogany boat with CO2 filled bags at each end. A complete unit complete with instructions, gasoline and good wishes.

B-11 No briefing tomorrow morning.

### **Rattlesden January 23 Sun.**

I got out of bed at 10:30 this morning, read until 11, got cleaned up and went to chow. Just after noon we were ordered to go to briefing room as soon as possible for a mission. It turned out to be a practice mission, we didn't have to go because Lt. Mamlock was still D.N.I.F. No classes during the afternoon; spent the time in the Red Cross Rec drinking tea and eating sandwiches; sewing 8th Air Corps patches on my clothes. They had chicken for supper tonight; a swell meal. Crew 7 got back from London today; they say most of those Piccadilly Commandoes are thicker than flies + are pretty eager to earn money. They had a swell time tho. We get our passes in four days, M.D., Fred + I plan to go Ipswich. We are not supposed to fly a mission tomorrow except as individual replacements. Briefing at 9. B-10:15

### **Rattlesden January 24 Mon.**

Much to Crew #5's surprise, the C.Q. came in at 3:30 waking us up for a mission. Briefing at 4:15 when they told us we were going to Frankfurt to bomb chemical works and railway yards and explosive factories. We took off at 6:25 to fly high echelon for the 94th group. At takeoff we had trouble with interphone; used emergency interphone on the command modulating unit for an hour then switched back to interphone. Mac's interphone jack box was shorted out. Our composite group reached the rendezvous at 10 over the Channel; the 94's formation was very poor. The trip was cancelled as we were 40 miles in France. On the way back out ran thro some accurate flak, 2 small holes in ship. Got back to base at 12:30, after interrogation + putting up equipment went back to bed at 2 P.M. sleeping until 6 when Fred + I went to A.R.C. to get tea + sandwiches, went to clean our guns and came back to go to bed at 10:30

### **Rattlesden January 25 Tues.**

Got up at 7:30, ate chow and went to roll call at 9 when we were told the P. C.P N. + R.O. of Crew #5 were to take a ferrying trip to Honnington at 10:30. We took ship 146, took off at 1050, me in the tail. It was a great thrill during the take off back there. We landed at Honnington 10 minutes later on the prefabricated steel runway. After checking in Leavitt + I went to chow, a poor one at that and got back to operations at 12:45; Stenvig + T.W.G. + officers showed up at 1. We took off in 095 15 minutes after Stenvig got off. On the way back I rode in the nose. After landing spent some time in the barracks, Mac, Fred + I had tea in the A.R.C. until 5:30, then I went to the show.

Afterwards back at the barracks they say there is an all-out alert for tomorrow. Maybe we'll go even tho we made the last mission. B-10:30

### **Rattlesden January 26 Wednesday**

Again, much to our disgust, the C.Q. came in at 2:30, pulling us out of bed for a mission. Briefing at 3:45 where we're told our target was Frankfurt again, with a Noball target as a secondary mission. Takeoff time was to be 7:50, start engines at 7:25. At this time they told us both missions were scrubbed, due to 7/10's cloud over the Continent. There was another briefing at 9, so we had another breakfast + went back. Practice mission, skeleton crews + we got hooked. Flew from 10 till 2, me riding all over the ship. Came down, ate a late lunch, and finished reading a book by supper time. Dashed off a letter instead of going to chow, and am going to bed early. Lt. Mamlock says the 447th has the best bombing record of all time here in England for Yanks, 708 being high squadron. If we have good record for the next two raids we'll be in for a presidential citation. -B 8:00

### **Rattlesden January 27 Thursday**

We got up at 7, and when the rest of the crew went to breakfast I went over to the washroom to shave + wash up. At 12:10 we got in a truck + headed for Stowmarket, getting there at 1. Just for a change we took a bus to Ipswich at 1:30, getting there in an hour. It was one of these tall double-decker buses, we rode in the top, getting a good look of the countryside as we passed thru the two towns on the way to Ipswich. During the afternoon we walked around town got a room at the A.R.C. dormitory. Harris + I went to a show, the rest except Kealer went to a bar to get some drinks. Kealer stayed on the base in hope of getting a mission during our two day pass to catch up with us. The five of us hit the hay at 11, in clean sheets. It sure felt good.

### **Ipswich January 28 Friday**

Got up at 7 this morning. Harris + I took a shower before going out. By the time we were ready, the rest were ready too. After looking around a bit we went into a radio shop and asked if they had a radio. The owner swore up + down he didn't have any, then casually mentioned he'd sell us one for £20. We bought it before he could talk much. That would be £3-1/3 for each man of our crew. After buying it we took it up to the A.R.C. dormitory to have them keep it for us. For the rest of the morning we went thro the museum on High street that we just skipped thro on our last past. Fred + I went out to a golf course to spend the rest of the afternoon while the rest shopped. I had a swell time walking around and maybe learned a little about golf. In the evening the five of us went to a show. B-12:45 at the A.R.C.

### **Ipswich-Rattlesden January 29**

Harris + I got up at 7:45, went down to the middle town to do a bit of final shopping: buying some wine, a pillow. We got to talking to a civilian who said the Forts had been going up all morning from 630. We got the radio and got down to the station at 9:15. Mac + the rest showed up at 10, the train left at 10:15 with us standing up. The officers of the crew were on the same train. After a 15 minute run we got to Stowmarket, went to our tea room + had tea + cakes. This time it was on Mamlock. We got rides out to camp at

different times. I came out with H.E.M. + McGurer. The radio works very well. Jimmy Boyd went on the raid + says it was to Frankfurt, a milk run, some flak good fighter protection. Bombed thro clouds at 24 thous. saw smoke come thro clouds that were at 10,000. B-9. No alert as yet.

Bombed the city at 24000 thro clouds, with incendiaries. Returned at 430

### **Rattlesden January 30 Sunday**

We were a disgusted bunch of guys at 2:30 when they woke us up for a mission. T.O. was 820, headed for Brunswick Germany. Chemical, gas, and airplane city. We flew over at 24,000 ft, sometimes as high as 27,000. Looking back I could see group after group, wing after wing behind us in waves above the clouds, P-38's zigzagging back + forth above us. Those 38's looked pretty, so pretty in fact a few FW 190's came above the clouds, saw them and changed their minds and headed home. We always had at least 30 P38's in sight, a few P47's. It wasn't cold, I didn't turn heat on until after we left the target + went up to 27,000. Throwing chaff out kept me pretty busy. Quite a bit of flak, 2 holes in our ship, Putnam turned back at the I.P.; on the way back we were the lead ship for the group as Dalzell dropped behind to no. 6 position with a feathered no. 2 engine. Got back at 4. Went to bed at 7:30 dead tired.

Putnam's crew is gone. He must have bailed out over Germany. Probably P.W. + OK

### **Rattlesden January 31 Mon**

M.D. + I got up at 2:15 to go on a mission I was to go as RO for Donahue. At briefing at 4:15 we found that we were headed for Frankfurt, Ger. a pathfinder mission. I was to fly in a late B-17 G with all the radio equipment in the r. room, radio gun mounted on the hatch, waist guns mounted so that the waist guns + r. gun could be fired without opening any windows. It would have been nice + warm. After pulling the props thru the mission was scrubbed because the weather was too bad. Came back to barracks + stayed in bed from 8 till lunch time, got my rations and slept from 2-5. If we had of taken off we would have been loaded. 2700 gals, Tokyo's clear full, + 10x500 demo's; the ships would have been 200 lbs under maximum gross weight allowable for takeoff: 63000 lbs. A B-17 G can't get off the ground with more than 65000. The 63000 didn't count extra flying equip. we took along. Cleaned guns after chow. Alert for tomorrow. B-8:30

### **Rattlesden February 1 Tues.**

Crew #5 got up at 4, had chow and got to briefing at 5:10. A mission to Frankfurt Ger. We got the guns in but hesitated before changing clothes as the weather was pretty bad. The control tower shot red rockets to tell us the mission was scrubbed. After getting our equipment ready we headed back to briefing room leaving guns in ship. We managed to get back to bed by 8:30. I slept until 12 when I got up for chow. Went out to the ship, took the guns out + read for the rest of the afternoon. Went to combat library for 2 hours after supper. We are getting tired of all these false starts, the ground crews tireder as they have to load + unload bombs. Early this morning when loading guns in the dark I ran into the tail assembly, the tail hit me across the eyebrows. Tonite it's still sore + swollen. There's always a first time. The ship's radio mech let me drive an English Ford. 85 HP, a

lot of soup + a lot of fun. B-10

### **Rattlesden February 2 Wednesday**

We got up at 7:30 ate breakfast and briefing at 9 when T.W.G. was told P, CP, N + RO were to go on a practice mission at 10:30. There was pretty close to 42 ships in the formation, we took off at 11:15, didn't land until 3:30. During this time I rode in the tail, nose, and behind the cockpit. I worked for a while on radio just to get some practice. From fairly good sources we learn that Noball raids are to be counted as 1/2 missions from now on if we go on any more. Ship 145 is in almost perfect condition, Rudy doesn't put her on initial because the camera doors were removed. She is about the best ship on the field. There are quite a few metal patches on the ship's skin, it looks kind of funny. Had supper at 4, went to show at 6. B-10:30

Made Tech Sarge

6th Mission today

### **Rattlesden February 3 Thurs.**

Crew #5 got up this morning at 2:30 for a mission. Briefing at 3:50, T.O. at 750. We took off third, flying no 3 in the lead squadron, earring 10x500's and full Tokyo's. Left England at 10:20 headed for Wilhelmshaven, a seaport + sub base. Bombs away at 11:30 at 25000 bombing thro an overcast. We had P47's + 38's as escorts all the way. One ship in this squadron aborted + was attacked by 10 FW190's but got home OK on 2 engines. After dropping bombs we climbed up to 32,000 ft for some reason. At this altitude bends bothered me a little in the knees + elbows. This is the highest most of us had been. No ships were lost today, we got back at 3 o'clock. Cleaned guns + bed. Alert for tomorrow. B 8:10

7th T.O. 840 L 1520

Mission 6 hrs on oxygen

### **Rattlesden Friday February 4**

Climbed out of bed at 2:30 for a mission. T.O. at 815, left England 10:20 at 23,000 ft, flying low sq. low group. The 447th put 2 groups of ships, 42 in all, into the air, a mighty share of its job. We were carrying 625 a new B-17 G with closed waist + radio guns. It's nice + warm. Lt. Lazarus + I were flying with Lt. Donahue + his crew. We bombed Frankfurt, + did a good job too. We had 10/10 cloud until our target + about 7/10's there. From the target the group headed home + got too far north getting into Ruhr valley flak area. We were hit in main + tokyo's on right wing; hydraulic system was gone too. The bombardier was injured in the leg. One engine quit so we had to come home alone. Over the Ruhr we lost a couple B-17's, as there were upwards of 2000 guns shooting at us. Upon getting back to the base Laz + I were met by T.W.G., + Mac + Dill. F.T. Hawley, Harris, Gene flew with all different crews as did Lt McGurer who got a compound fracture of a leg by flak: he is over in main hospital now. Going to visit him soon. B-8:30

### **R-Ipswich February 5 Sat.**

Got up at 8, after cleaning up the barracks for inspection, shaving and cleaning up for a trip to town. Harris + I left at 12:30 on a Quartermaster truck to Stowmarket. Taking a train to Ipswich at 2:30, we got there to do a little shopping, get something to eat at

Fustman's, met the rest of the crew except Gene. We went to a show and went to bed in the A.R.C. dormitory. I hope there is some mail waiting for me at the base when I get back as there hasn't been much lately. Harris + I plan to go to Norwich + see what the town is like. All the names of the towns ending in "wich" were founded by the Romans during their time of conquest. B 12

### **Ipswich February 6 Sunday**

Hi Jinx went down today with Reed's Crew

Harris + I got up at 8, fooled around all morning with Fred Dill + Mac. Caught the 12:15 train for Norwich, Dill riding as far as Stowmarket with Harris + I. Fred + Mac stayed to go to church, then go back to the base. Harris + I didn't get into Norwich until 3:30, we took a look around town, it didn't impress us. The A.R.C. wouldn't give us beds as we were too far from base. We headed back for Stowmarket darned soon. Got in S. at 7:30, couldn't get a taxi so we got something to eat in the Canteen + started walking: Harris in cowboy boots + me in new G.I. shoes. We - mostly me - got us on the wrong road, hiked to Rattlesden asking for directions, twice, asked at a pub after getting some lemonade + got in at 1130 covering 7 1/2 miles. Hi Jinx is gone with Reed's crew, by flak. She was a good ship. B 1200

### **Rattlesden February 7 Mon.**

I got up at 10. Read until noon when the officers came in. All of us feel pretty rotten about losing that crew in "Hi Jinx". She was one of the best ships on the line, nothing wrong. The fellows that saw her go down say she peeled out of formation with a cockpit afire, one chute was seen. Just above the clouds the ship was leveled out, the fire out, and all fellows alive could have gotten out. Losing the ship is hard to take, but the real thing should be + is the loss of a crew. I knew the R.O. + the rest of the crew well. Lt. McGurer won't fly again as that piece of flak got him in the knee. Dr. Bartos won't let us see him until Wed. This afternoon I took code for an hour, and read in the combat library till 4. Lights went out at 6:30 + don't want to come on; writing this by flashlight. The ground crew of 145 worked terribly long hours to keep her going + would have got a decoration for the ship has never had any trouble to cause an abortion. B- 70

### **Rattlesden February 8**

Up at 2:30 this morning for a mission. Breakfast at 3, briefing at 3:50. We enlisted men were briefed by light from flashlights + an improvised arc light. We flew #497 a 711 ship. Dill didn't go as his nose was causing him a lot of trouble, he was replaced by a pretty nice fellow from 709. T.O. at 8:20 with full Tokyo's, 10x500 demo bombs, six with a six hour delay. I don't know why they use delayed action bombs, all they are big booby traps. We left England at 10:15, over the target Frankfurt at 11:45, making one run on target. Bombing from 25000. Flak was seen + heard at the coast going in and at the target. Heavy flak, from 108mm but inaccurate. We got 2 or 3 holes. Got back at 1500, had to wait for 1/2 hr for transportation. After interrogation we went + cleaned guns, had chow, a meeting in the orderly room on most everything. B 8:30

### **Rattlesden February 9 1944 Wednesday**

The C.Q. came in at 310 waking us up for a mission. Chow at 3:30, briefing at 4. Headed

for Brunswick. We were flying 167, Reed's old ship, not a bad one tho. T.O. 7:30, we had flown for an hour and the mission was cancelled because of weather, we found out later because by 1400 it was raining + wouldn't have let ships in. Got back to the barracks at 10, slept for an hour until T.W.G. came in to tell us we could visit Lt. McGurer in the afternoon. We left the base in a truck provided by Capt. Bartos, sq. surgeon. We were with him almost an hour when the nurse chased us away. He has cast from ankle to-waist, will be in it for 5 months. He was looking pretty bad, the prospect of being in bed for six mo. then limping for life isn't pleasant. All of us felt sorry for him but tried to cheer him up by telling jokes. Got back to base at 4:30, wrote a letter after chow + hit the hay so we're alerted, even tho the weather is bad outside. B 8

On the way in today Jerries attacked the escort + made them drop their belly tanks so they couldn't escort us as far as planned. A new trick!

### **Rattlesden February 10 Thursday**

Got up at 7:30, ate chow, role call at 9, a class from 10- 11, + one from 1:30-2:30. Read most of the afternoon. Went to a show with Fred + M.D. Yesterday #167, Reed's ship, was officially given to us. Today some other crew of another squadron took her up + they went down. So far we've had two ships, and both have gone down with some other crew in them. At 8:30, Lt. Mamlock came over to tell us something while we out swiping coke. As soon as we got back H. Morris came over + told us he wanted to see us. Fred, M.D. + I went over and found out ship 724 is now ours, a brand new ship. We take her up + give her a test tomorrow, altitude + test fire guns. They are moving Lt. McGurer to another hospital tomorrow. The fellows raided Brunswick today + somehow missed their fighter support. B 11:00

### **Rattlesden February 11 Friday**

Jumped from bed at 6:30, had chow, and got to the briefing room with McHugh in time for briefing at 7:50, T.O. at 9:45 on a practice mission, flying no. 4 in lead sq. I didn't do much besides getting a couple QTF's and listening to music Laz had on the R. compass. On the raid yesterday the Jerries were using JU 87's and almost every kind of ship imaginable. One fort pulled out of formation when he was hit, made 2 slow rolls, a 4000 ft dive and got home, at least to a base in England. A '24 would fall apart if it did a stunt like that. In the afternoon Mac, Laz, T.W.G., Mamlock + I took our new ship up to altitude. She's a [tried twice to spell 'damned', crossed both out] good ship, not a thing wrong with her. I can tune the liaison xmitter up on 213kc on fixed wire + burn all the insulation off the wires. Enclosed waist windows, extra oxygen outlets in radio room + nose + cockpit, heated suit outlets that are extra. We got down about 4:30, cleaned a gun + went to chow. Read for a while and hit the hay. B 9:00

### **Rattlesden February 12 Sat.**

Got at 7:45, ate chow and got to theater for roll call at 9. Practice mission at 9.30. We were flying skeleton crews, Laz, T.W.G., Mamlock + I got down there to find out that we were to fly in some other ship than ours as the ground crew were changing a carburetor on #1 engine. We didn't get away from the briefing room until 10:20, sat in the ship waiting for orders to takeoff or to come back until 11 when we caught trucks + came

back. At 1:15 all combat crews met in the theater to be awarded Air Medals. All of the crew except Mamlock + I got them, some mistake somewhere. We'll find out. I was scheduled for radio school but went to there instead. We didn't do much today, no alert for tomorrow as yet. A practice mission scheduled for tomorrow. B 9.45

### **9th Mission February 13 1944 Sun.**

Got up at 8:15 this morning, just in time to get to mess hall to eat. Read around the barracks until 9:30 when Lt. Dalzell said we were on alert for a mission. Went up to P.X. + got the rations, fooled around barracks until 10:30. Reported directly to ships, I had no briefing T.W.G. got my flimsy. T.O. 12:30 in 868, called "Due Back". We were carrying 12x500 demo's, six delayed action. Our bombing altitude was 12,800 bombing some target on the coast of France. The "A" group, the one we were in, didn't see any flak or fighters, "B" group ran into a lot of flak and some fighters 127 + 104 came back like sieves. We lost 2 ships, one hit by flak + went down in flames, one ditched. Somebody sent SOS's for them + we saw the launch going out on the way in. After chow cleaned guns. B 10.

### **February 14**

8:00 The C.Q. came in at 2:30 to wake up Jimmy Boyd for a raid. He was the only one of the barracks to get up. We had been napping all night thinking we would have to go too. After 2:30 we slept like logs. Got down to theater for roll call at 9, went over to combat library until 10 when Fred + I went to the gym to get some exercise. We played basketball and used most of their equipment. Really nice. After noon there was a lecture 1:30-2:30. Came back to the barracks to play poker until suppertime. Wrote letters until 9 when I went down to the shower room to get cleaned up, getting back at 10. Last night a lot of Jerries were over Ipswich and London. We could see and hear the barrage of A.A. fire put up. From this distance it looked like red lights going on + off. We could here the planes and saw 2 go down in flames, almost like a skyrocket going down instead of up. Almost everybody was out watching.

B- 10:30

### **Rattlesden February 15 1944Tues.**

8:10 Ate breakfast + got to briefing at the theater at 9. We had two classes during the morning, a lecture on tactics 10- 11, a test on aircraft rec 11-12. I had radio classes in the afternoon: an hour and a half in the trainers using 200kc on the liaison set and working in a net. After supper cleaned my gun and helped check the rest. Had tea + cakes in A.R.C. at 7:45-815. There is a red alert on tonight. So far have seen no flak, just searchlights. T.W.G. + Laz went up to the section hospital with Doc Bartos this afternoon to visit McGurer. They say he is feeling a lot better now, joking + all. They, the doctors, used \$6000 worth of penicillin getting the two, McGurer + the navigator in shape. We probably go on a mission tomorrow. B-9

### **Rattlesden February 16**

Gas mask day.

8:00 No important classes except a medical lecture 11-12 which lasted a half hour. It

started to rain in early morning and has continued all day. Some rumors on impending movement to someplace are flying around, but there's nothing to them I hope. Wrote letters and did some sewing most of the afternoon. After supper M.D., Fred + I went over to the A.R.C. and had cakes, tea, and sandwiches. Came back to barracks at 8:30. The waist gunners are going to get cameras to take pictures of anything interesting on the next raids. The civilian workers on this base are for the most in the land army, they get regular army wages, get furloughs regularly + almost are soldiers in civilian clothes, going wherever work has to be done. Lt. Mamlock is in the hospital with a cold again. We are supposed to be alerted for a raid tomorrow, but I don't know, the weather is lovely outside, a lot of rain coming down. B 9:30

### **Rattlesden February 17 Thurs.**

Snowed all day but melted as fast as-it came down.

The C.Q. came around at 4:30, waking us up for a mission. It was snowing as we went to the mess hall to get our fried fresh eggs. As we sat down to eat Van Langen came in + told us the mission was scrubbed. Went back to bed until ten to 9 when we went down to the theater for roll call. A movie on combat showing pursuit ships, P47's shooting down enemy planes. 11-12 we had a lecture by a British Naval officer on the German Navy and naval recognition. He was really good. He said their are: one battleship, Tirpitz in a fjord in Norway being repaired, 2 pocket battleships in Baltic sea, about 10000 tons, one aircraft carrier Graf Zeppelin, 4 heavy cruisers 4 light cruisers, 20 destroyers + subs. There is a serious shortage of trained naval men keeping some of these ships out of commission. This officer was a very good speaker. Went to show after chow, went to A.R.C., came back to barracks at 8:30, read until 1045. No alert  
B-1115.

### **February 18 Fri.**

Slept until 745, got up, had breakfast, roll call at 9 in the theater, as usual. It started to snow at 8 this morning + has snowed all day, stopped at 6 PM. We received instructions to take all diaries over to S-2 section to be kept in a safe because of the confidential + secret information in them might be lost if they are stolen from barracks by civilians. I had an hours work in the Horwell trainer 900-10. Maj. Newman gave us a lecture on discipline 10-12, no classes in afternoon. Hess made some fudge. It didn't harden so he stuck it outside for 5 hrs. We are now eating the stuff on toast. It is snowing again. No alert on, probably because of the bad weather. Wrote letters all afternoon. All resistance has ended in Solomon Is. I'm getting tired of sitting around doing nothing. A few missions wouldn't be bad if not too many in a row. The ship 124 is named Dear M.O.M. for Marion O. McGurer. B 10:15 A stand down tonight.

### **Rattlesden February 19 1944 Sat.**

7-45, Breakfast, roll call as usual. Went down to equipment room, put my name on the roll sheet, went to photo shop + had my picture taken again. The old shots weren't big enough. Jack Fleming also took a picture of Mac, Fred, M.D. + I. He is going to give us a copy. A talk by a pilot of a pursuit, P-51 at 2 was good. He said he was diving after a FW 190 at 550 mph, which tried to roll away. The tail broke off. Some Jerries think the ME 109 is faster than the P51. He says he just gets on his tail + waits until he is close enough

to open up. Once he got a long burst at one of two ME 110 rocket ships stacked one over the other by about 200 ft. He set a rocket on one wing of the lower ship on fire which blew up the wing gas tank. The blast tossed him up in line with the other ME 110, all he had to do was to pull the triggers. It's been snowing all day; on alert for tomorrow, we've been sitting around long enough. From now we'll be dropping 2000 lb bombs. This barracks are a bunch of coal hoarders. We've got 3 barracks bags of coal under our bed for future week. B- 9:00

### **Sun.**

The C.Q. woke us up 145, chow at 230, briefing at 3:40. T.O. at 7:35, headed for a place 70 miles N.W. of Berlin. No fighter escort. We had full gas tanks, Tokyo's + mains. Carried 42 incendiaries. A ex tail gunner flew with us as togglier and nose turret gunner. Seemed to be a nice guy. The course took us straight across the North Sea to Denmark, across Denmark to the Baltic Sea to the target, inland about 100 miles. We ran thro very little flak. The group ahead of us + behind us were attacked by pursuits, but they didn't touch us. Bombing altitude was 12000 ft. We bombed by pathfinder method, and after passing over target there were clouds of smoke coming up thru the clouds at 7500 ft. The mission was awfully long, 10 hrs of flying at 12000 ft with no oxygen. It is hard on a guy. Landed at 5:20, ate sandwiches, had a chicken supper, went back to clean guns. Went to bed dead tired. B- 9:45

### **February 21 Mon.**

Got up at 1030 after a good nights rest. I haven't done a thing all day, except go out and sweat in our ship; a 711 crew was flying her. They yelled like heck because the bolt studs wouldn't fit in the guns. When they got in everything was OK but half of the bombs wouldn't release, after they closed the doors 10 x 100 lb demo's dropped down on the bomb bay doors. The doors didn't break open as they should have. When they landed 10 hundred pound demo bombs were stacked in the radio room. They bombed an airfield in Germany. Yesterday we flew 1450 miles in 10 hours or less. In an hour more we could have landed in Newfoundland if we had have pulled a "Wrong way Corrigan stunt." A few ships were banged up today. Our ship had another hole put in her today by flak. Went to show after chow. There's an alert on tonight. Expect to go on a mission tomorrow. B- 1000

### **Rattlesden February 22 1944 Tues.**

We got up at 3:30 AM for a mission. Briefing at 0500, takeoff 0806. We didn't get out of briefing until 545, and had a time meeting the schedule. We were heading for Schweinfurt Germany. Bombing altitude was going to be 24000, 10 x 500's. We fooled around over England until 10:45, when we climbed to 24000 ft. The planes up there had formed thousands of vapor trails; we couldn't see more than 100 yds, + couldn't form groups + wings. The group leader couldn't find the rest of the 3rd \_\_\_\_\_ from the coast, the rendezvous, by themselves as we lost each other going thru all the cloud banks + vapor trails on the way back home. We were glad to come back, tho, the weather has been rotten the rest of the day. Slept from 2-5, ate chow, cleaned my gun, came back to the barracks read mail + hit the hay. We're on alert tonight, as usual. Hope we get a sortie in tomorrow. B 9:45.

### **February 23 Wed.**

We climbed out of bed at 0300 again. Briefing was at 04, supposedly but we didn't make it in time because breakfast wasn't ready in time. T.O. was scheduled for 0730, but they put it off an hour because of thick ground fog. We sat around in the tent with Rudisill + his crew shooting the bull for an hour, then they cancelled our mission altogether. We were supposed to have gone to Schweinfurt Germany to bomb the ball bearing works. From now on if a ship is disabled deep in Germany or up around Kiel we are supposed to head for Sweden or Switzerland + land instead of parachuting down + trying to hike our way home as it has been done. We would have to destroy all confidential information IFF + all radio equipment possible before landing. Landing in a neutral country, previous to now we would be interned for the duration, but now the Swiss + Swedes are sending us home to fight some more. It's just a recent agreement. Made a foot locker, showered, B-845. Alert tomorrow. I hope we go, I'm tired of dressing for nothing.

### **February 24 Thurs**

C.Q. came around at 2. Briefing at 3:15. We took off in our ship headed for Tutow, with Rostock as the secondary. After getting the group together we got the wing together as we left the English Coast headed NE across the North Sea. About 20 minutes out there was a short in the inverter circuit. When T.W.G. turned one off the other caught fire; so he had to leave them turned off, making the electronic superchargers, engine instruments and radio compass inoperative. We had to drop out and head for home. I called in to M.P./D.P. to identify myself and tell them we were coming back. Got to the base ok at 12:30. After lunch Fred + I did some chasing around doing some stuff we'd been putting off, got back to the barracks at 2:30 to find we had to go on a practice flight test hopping 868. We went up to 20000 ft, flew around a while, most of the time listening to the liaison receiver. Fooled around in ball turret for a while. Came back + went to bed at 8. We're on alert as usual.

### **Rattlesden 11th Mission. Regensburg February 25 1944 Friday**

Up at 3, briefing 4, T.O. 8:10. Left English Coast at 10:50 at 13000 ft. headed for Regensburg Germany. Ran into flak going over coast of France at target and on the way home. The leader of our group was hit by flak over Germany, 10 chutes opened then the ship blew up. A ship went down at the target + one on the way home; both shot down by fighters. The flak was very heavy at the target. When it hit the ship it sounded like gravel on a tin roof. We were attacked by 2 ME 109's, 4 FW 190's + a ME 110. The 110 shot rockets and 20 mm, the rest just 20 mm. When the rockets burst about 50 yds behind the ship they looked like flak bursts. Dill, Gene + Schneider (ball turret in Harris's plane, got in a few shots, 200 apiece. Dill damaged one. Came back at 15000 ft. We had fighter protection most of the way in, none on the way out until the French Coast. Got back at 1820, bad overcast + low ceiling. Cleaned guns, skipped supper + hit the hay at 10:00

### **Rattlesden February 26 Sat.**

Slept until 11:15 when I got up for lunch. Went out to the ship afterward. Harris gave me some togglier instruction to satisfy my curiosity. All of the crew except Lt. Gilleran + Kealer were put on D.N.I.F. last night to get some rest. Most of us put ourselves on

D.N.I.F. Harris + I got back to the barracks at 3, at 330 Lt. Fisher came in + told crew 5 we would go on pass at 5. It was a heck of a rush, but Fred + I got ready on time headed for Newcastle Staffordshire. Got to Ipswich at 6, London at 9 + Crewe at 6 AM, Stoke on Trent at 7. It took us 3 hrs to find the Lower Lodge May Place The Brompton's, Newcastle Staffordshire. Didn't sleep at all during the night so am pretty sleepy. Odds + ends: Lt. Fout's crew the first crew to ditch went down today. While on a 7 day rest from ditching the RO, N, E were injured + LW killed in a train wreck. They went on a mission today and flak got them. Some parachutes were seen.

### **Newcastle Staffordshire February 27 Sun.**

Fred and I walked into his cousin's house at 9. The cousin's name is Francis, whose husband is Eric. Eric has a munitions job + can't get released to join up, he wants to pretty bad. We got there in time eat breakfast with them. We tried to keep them from it but they got some eggs + ham for us. I told them they shouldn't give us their weeks ration of ham + eggs but they wouldn't listen to us. It was snowing all day. We sat around talking until noon when Fred's uncle Tom took us to Cousin Molly's house. One of Molly's friends + niece, a girl 19 yrs old was introduced. Good looking, shy, and nice. Almost another heartthrob. Wait + see. Stayed for 2+ half an hour, went back to Francis's house + took a two hour nap. At 6pm the whole crowd came over + had tea. Alma was very quiet + didn't say much. When we walked back to Molly's she talked a lot more. We had tea + cakes + sandwiches before going to bed at 2AM in the softest bed I've ever been on.

Newcastle-Ipswich

### **Rattlesden February 28 Mon.**

Molly called up at 7AM. I got up went down + got cleaned up. We had breakfast at 710, Molly walked down to the bus stop, about 1 mi, got on a bus + took us to the R.R. station to see us off. From Newcastle we went to Stafford, got on a different train + the only other stop was Rugby. It was a fast train. We arrived in London 1330, a train for Ipswich at 1440 so we went to the Liverpool Station by subway, went up to the street level to a cafe + got lunch, even tho Molly had packed us a lunch. We went to a few shops, buying nothing. Left on time, got to Ipswich at 545 where we met T.W.G. Laz + Mamlock. We came to Stowmarket with them, caught Liberty run truck going back to the base. Even tho 4 hrs late had no trouble. The group went on a Noball raid + lost two ships by flak; on was Lt. Fouts with Charlie Harris, T.Q. He's probably a PW now. If I go back to Fred's uncle's place it'll be to get to see Alma again. She thinks she'll be going into Nurse Corps soon. B- 245

### **Rattlesden 12th mission February 29 Tuesday.**

T.O. at 715. Leaving English Coast at 10:15, I.P. at 11:33, bombing Brunswick by Pathfinder method. We bombed thru 10/10 clouds at 23000 ft. It was cold outside, about -35 C, but with the closed radio hatch and waist windows it was very warm in the ship. For most of the missions in the past there were supposed to be RAF flown P-51's protecting our withdrawal. We always called them the ghost ships, they were never there. Today they were for the first time right in there. Besides them we saw P38's, US P-51's, P47's. Best fighter protection we've ever had. We ran thru some flak, but it was

inaccurate. Returned at 1350, got back to barracks at 1500, slept from 1700- 2000 + read for a while. We once thought we'd have to abort as the left oxy system had a leak + got down to 50 lbs pressure. Standown tomorrow. B- 11

### **Rattlesden March 1 Wednesday**

Got up at 9 this morning when the C.Q. came around and told us of a practice mission briefing at 10:30. We went there, Col Harris gave us a lecture on the length of our operational tour, which might be lengthened. At any rate 25 mission men will be kept here in U.K. for a few months longer than 90 days, as has been the custom. I don't mind being stuck over here for the duration if I don't have to go more than 25 missions. Each time we go over we are taking a big chance. The least number of chances the better. We left + came back at 12:30 after chow. A skeleton crew P, CP, N, RO, we got off at 2, came down at 4:30. All the time Lt. Laz + I were listening to music. Ate supper, read for a while, then went over to Red Cross until 8:15. Gene + Mac had to go down and clean all the guns from 5-7:30, unknown reason. We are on the alert for tomorrow. Hitting hay instead of writing a letter to folks + Alma as I should.

### **March 2 Thursday**

Got up at 8, as it snowed during the night canceling the alert. Ate chow + went to roll call in the theater. T.W.G. + his skeleton crew, me included, were to fly in a practice mission in the morning. We had briefing at 10 in main briefing room; I went out to the ship soon afterward. Al Minor + Fred T. Hawley went up with us for the ride. All but the pilot + copilot listened to music all the time while up. We landed at 2:30, ate a late lunch and fooled around doing chores until 5, when I came back to the barracks and read and wrote letters until 8:30, skipping supper. B- 900

Odds + ends:

Our target today was to have been Berlin. We're on alert again. The English are using a 12000 lb bomb in some of their raids. T.W.G. is now 1st Lt. T.W.G.! And no cigars?

#724

### **March 3 Friday**

Climbed out of bed at 245 for a mission Ate chow and briefing at 4 A.M. After the usual briefing, got out to the ship at 445, did the usual work and took off for Berlin at 7:10 as scheduled. Flew around England until 10:15 when we headed but over the North Sea. An hour and a half out we were at 27000 ft trying to go over some bad weather ahead + we had to put on flak suits. Fred was our bombardier, Henry McCowan was L.W. Fred told us to put on flak suits, all OK'd; five minutes later we started checking in Dill didn't answer Gene went back to check him + found him unconscious, checking his oxygen + couldn't get him to. I went back + gave him artificial respiration for 1/2 hour, Fred came back to relieve me. I went up + got 2 fixes to get home on as we had 2 engines gone from mechanical failure. At 27000 ft. Later they brought Dill to the waist + gave him art. resp. until we landed at a base near Norwich. The doc took him to the hosp, T.W.G. went with him + it was too late. Went to A.R.C. had tea and went to bed at 8:30

### **March 4 Sat.**

Didn't sleep so well. We saw two B-17's collide yesterday, it just made a big black geyser, a terrible sight. Got up at 7 for breakfast. Met T. W. G. + officers at the A. R. C. We went out to the ship, got all our gear, took the guns out, dropped all the stuff off at the Flying Control and cleaned guns at one of the arm. shops. Got thro at 1 when we ate + slept until 4. A plane was supposed to come from Rattlesden to take us back, but it snowed 2 inches during the night + the field was closed so a truck came up with our ground crew with it. All, Rudy, Whitey, + Don Lav. It was good to see them. We loaded up and left by 5:35, got to the base at 7:05. All the fellows helped unload the stuff. All of us ate in the combat mess + went to barracks, tired. T.W.G. took Dill's death harder than the rest of us, altho we felt awful bad. The supply had already got his stuff. Were going to try to get it + send it home for him. B- 10

### **March 5 Sun.**

Got up at 9:45 this morning. Read until noon, Harris went over to get our rations. Instead of the usual candy bars he brought a pound box of Whitman's Chocolate back. They sure are good. At 2 PM, the whole crew went over to the officers barracks to tell Doc Bartos exactly what happened when on that last mission when Dill died. Doc is a personal friend to almost everybody in the squadron, he sure hated to hear that Dill was gone. I was awarded the Air Medal this afternoon. About time. Read most of the rest of the afternoon. Everybody has to get up in the morning. B- 10:

### **March 6**

Got up at 2:45 for a mission. Briefing at 4. Our crew was not supposed to fly today but I flew with Rozmus, Fred with Socolofsky, Harris with Pauling, Mamlock with Morley. We took off at 0807, left English coast at 1025, got to the I.P. 1310, bombs away at 1320. We bombed an airfield and final assembly plant and electrical factory on the edge of Berlin Germany. We ran thro a lot of flak. At one time when the fighter escort was missing FW 190's and ME 109's made about 3 passes before some P51's got there + drove them away. Bob Johnson got one. The trip back was uneventful except for 15 minutes of flak. We landed at 1410. Lt. Socolofsky landed ship 227 after being hit in the bomb bay where the shell exploded. The ship theoretically should have broken in two. It blew Morse out, the roof + floor of radio room out, bomb bay doors off. We are to get credit for our first attempt to raid Berlin.

### **Rattlesden March 7**

We climbed out of bed at 3:45 for a mission. Had hotcakes, sausage and mush for breakfast. Briefing at 5. Just after regular briefing and my radio op's briefing the mission was cancelled. Tossing everything back, I managed to get to bed again by 6:45, slept until 10:15 when a guy comes in + says all R.O.'s are to be down to main briefing room at 10. A R.O.'s critique, just a discussion by our new radio training officer, Lt. Sparks, a graduate RO. 25 mission man. He seems to know his stuff and appears to be a swell guy. On our 1st Berlin attempt I got a QTF at 29000 ft, which is theoretically impossible because of the arcing of RF current is up to 4 inches across open air + thro porcelain insulation. After lunch T.W.G. Laz, Mamlock, Keeler + I depart by truck to Norwich to bring 724 back home. Get up there in 1 3/4 hrs, get back in 10

minutes. Skipped supper, wrote a letter home + hit the hay. I'm 2nd spare R.O. for tomorrow's mission so I shouldn't have to fly.

### **March 8**

Such luxury, stayed in bed until 9, got up, fooled around doing not much until noon when T.W.G. told me we were to test hop 724 at 1:30. Lts. Widstrom, T.W.G., Laz, + a couple bombardiers + 3 K.P.'s as T.W.G. calls groundhogs went up. We flew for 1 hr, never getting above 500 ft because of ceiling. After getting down I read for awhile, went out to briefing room to sweat Mamlock, Mac + Kealer in (they went on a raid to Berlin today). Harris + I cleaned their guns for them, I went to A.R.C + sat in the theater for 1 hr to see comics + the short subjects: a lot of fun too. We are on the alert tonight. It is funny in a way, after going on quite a few missions a guy gets so that he isn't afraid to die; he just wants to get home again awful bad, that' all. When a friend goes down + is lost, we feel pretty bad for a while, but we try to forget it soon. B-10

### **March 9**

Got out of bed at 2:45, ready and rarin' for a mission. Briefing at 4, T.O. at 7:25. We went to altitude fairly soon. The waist + ball gunners are getting so that they can sleep from starting engines until we get to 15000 ft, which is pretty close to an hour and a half. We don't talk Much on interphone during that time. I can't sleep much, just 22 minute catnaps between the hour and half hour. When we got to altitude we just tagged along behind the formation as we were an airborne spare. At mid channel we turned back + came home. I got a weather report from QMS for T. W.G. The rest of the fellows went to Berlin. They had fighter protection all the way, we lost 3 ships, 2 ditched one crash landed at Honnington. Toporofsky's crew was one of the ones that ditched. Slept the afternoon away from 1 to 5. After chow read in Crew Library until 9. Cleaned my guns and got to bed at 11.

### **Rattlesden March 10 Friday**

I finally got up enough energy to get out of bed at noon. Went to chow two classes in the afternoon. Afterwards shot the bull in the radio equipment shack with Joe Foster for an hour and got half a dozen donuts at the A.R.C. Clubmobile, good ones too. Cleaned up a bit instead of going to supper. I got a small package of chocolates from the folks. They are sure good. Toporofsky's crew was picked up almost immediately upon getting into life rafts. Top is a good R.O., I've always thought so, this proves it. I'm sure I'd come out O.K. if I had to do the job, but I'd be a little afraid of pulling a boner, altho I didn't last time. The R.O. is a guy that is never needed except in an emergency, but if he fails, its too bad for the whole crew. If the weather is O.K. tomorrow, we'll fly, with a lot of Lagasse's crew to complete ours. Fred got a 7 day pass 2 days ago, as he was pretty badly shaken up when 227 got hit + came back. He needed it. B-9:30

### **Munster March 7 Sat. #724**

They got us up at 1:30 this morning for a raid. It looked as if it was going to be scrubbed as the weather was pretty bad. Briefing at 3:00, T.O, at 6:45. We were to bomb Munster, Germany. Our target was the railroad yards in the town, as these yards are the nucleus of railroads running to the Ruhr valley. Munster is about 75 miles north of "Happy" valley.

Ping was ball turret, Garlock was toggelier, Miller ("Murphy") tail, and a guy named Vinton was L.W. The rest of the positions were held by our own crew. We carried 42 incendiaries, trained them out 200 ft up out at 19000 ft. It wasn't very cold. Bombed by P.F.F. The flak was heavy but inaccurate. Landed at 12:15, got back to bed at 2 after eating chow. Slept till 6, ate, cleaned guns with MacHugh, went to A.R.C. for 1 hr + hit the hay. Stand down tomorrow. B- 10:30

### **March 12 Sunday**

We climbed out of bed at 8:10, in time to get breakfast. I didn't do anything all morning, except I did go up to the equipment room to sign for one of those heated suits, the green gabardine cloth. They are supposed to be good. We had to go to an aircraft rec class in the afternoon. Afterwards I took code for an hour, then read in the combat library until suppertime. I worked for 2 hrs splitting a headset on my helmet, I was slowed up because the lights went out two times for half hr intervals. It is fairly definite that we fly 30 missions in a tour now, maybe coming back for a second tour after a six months rest. It seems like that would be tempting fate too much. Beautiful weather outside, raining hard. They say we're on stand down because there are no bombs on the field. We're getting a good rest anyway. B 11: 15

Yeah, and they surprised us. The C.Q. came in at 4 waking us up for a mission for briefing at 4:30. Our crew rushed, like heck and made it by 4:35. They sent the gunners out to the ship without briefing, I went out after being briefed. Mac flew with Widstrom, Harris flew with Hughes, I flew with Hopla, The rest of the crew, Gene stayed on the ground, Fred isn't back from pass yet. We took off at 0810 with 12x500's, for a Noball mission. We went over the coast at 20000 ft, went over the target but didn't drop bombs because of 10/10 cloud cover and we had no P.F.F. ships. Saw some flak, had fighter protection. We came back and landed at 1330. Very short interrogation, ate chow, cleaned my gun + slept until 6:30. B-29's are in this theater now, S-2 says. At the 18th mission we get interviewed to find out what we want to do after our tour. We're on stand down, briefing at 10AM in the morning. B-10:00

*T/Sgt. Harley Tuck 19192992  
708 Bomb. Squadron 447 Bomb. Grp.  
A.P.O. 634,  
c/o Postmaster New York, N.Y.  
3-13-44*

*Dear Folks:*

*I got your letter written by Mom and mailed by Pop the 22nd of February. It was a long letter and a swell one. Two of those boxes of Hershey chocolates have arrived, one addressed to the 407 Bomb Group. The candy sure is good. The box mailed the 21st of Feb. got here March 9th. The other one came yesterday.*

*I haven't got any suggestions as to help name that St. Bernard pup right now, maybe*

*later. Oh, for a furlough to get a chance to see home! Instead of chewing gum, I've graduated to eating Hershey chocolates when dropping bombs, when I have the candy. It tastes better and when we get home we're not so dog tired.*

*I've been thro London, about a week ago. One of my crew and I had to go thru London to get to his uncles place. Of course we didn't see much of the city but what we saw was enough. Talk about Yanks being in a hurry, heck, I was bowled over a couple times, (pretty close to it anyway) by some of these Londoners in their hurry. Some guys can talk about Yanks being in a hurry, but not me. From now on I can honestly talk about these Limey's and their continual rushing. The subway system is something really fine, fast service to almost any part of town and I'd bet they can carry a heck of a lot of people in rush hours. Of course we were all mixed up and bewildered and had to ask for a lot of directions from civilians, bobbies, soldiers and everybody else. Most of the directions were good and given willingly. Other than this I can't tell you much of London. After this mess is over, I think I'd like to take over some of the work on the ranch in Yakima. And, from Tad's letters, he has something of the same idea. I'm sure that if I got back there I'd like to do all the work on the place that I could, orchard and all. It seems to me that most of us worked too much and too long of orchard work + I'm king of tired of it; but if I ever get back there I'd be glad to do any and all work.*

*I've got 16 missions now, really on the down hill grade.*

*Now I'm out of things to write about. I'll write again soon.*

*Love Harley*

*P. S. Please send some candy.*

#### **Rattlesden March 14**

I got up at 7:20 in time to get breakfast and go to a briefing for a practice mission at 9:30. For once out of 7 crews from this squadron T.W.G. didn't have to fly. We came back to the barracks 'till noon, ate chow. I went over to Special Service to see about a correspondence course in ag + math. I've got the forms ready + I'll write to U. of Wisconsin + see if I can get an ag course from there. Wrote letters and fooled around barracks until 9. B-9:15

From a T/Sgt I met on the way back from London on my pass Mar 19 who worked on Link trainer for the 3rd Division I learned that there are some B 24's in the 3rd Bomb Div + more coming in.

#### **March 15**

The C.Q. came around at 2:15 to get us out of bed. We ate chow and briefing at 3, which made us really step to get there on time. After briefings we went out to 724 and got ready. T.O. was 6:58. We were loaded with 4 100 lb. demo's, and 38 100 lb incendiaries, 400 gals in the Tokyo's, total 2 100 gals. We bombed Brunswick by P.F.F. Our primary was an airfield NW of the city, but as there was a 9/10 - 10/10 cloud coverage we bombed the center of Brunswick proper at 20000 ft. There was a little flak at the coast going in, just

before + at the target, mostly meager, red white + black flak. Some of the groups saw a lot of action from ME 109's + FW 190's, but our escort of P47's + P38's kept most of them out of range. Landed 1400. After briefing I cleaned my gun which was very dirty after shooting 300 rounds trying to get the hatch to pull down. It won't. London pass tomorrow.

### **March 16**

We got up at 7:15 this morning. After breakfast we started getting ready for town. Ricco came in at 9 inspecting the barracks for Sgt. Terry. We had spent quite a bit of time cleaning up so it passed O.K. Terry had our passes ready; + seemed almost human for once by 9:30. We took the 10:20 train from Ipswich to London getting there at 2. After getting a room at the Imperial Hotel we walked around for a while getting our bearings around Piccadilly Square. Harris and I went to a show together. A staff car with 4 stars on it was parked in front of a theater playing "Lifeboat" + "Tunisian Victory". It was Eisenhower's. Gen Montgomery was in there with him according to the paper next morning. They wouldn't let us in until he came out so we went to another show. B-12 in a swell bed + 2 sheets.

### **March 17**

Yesterday our group went to Augsburg Germany. They lost no ships and it wasn't too tough. I got up at 8:15, met Harris in the dining room. The cost of breakfast was included in the 13 shillings a night. Did some shopping during the morning, didn't buy anything tho. Went to two shows from 2 to 9 alone. I saw "Life Boat" + "Tunisian Victory", and "The Desert Song". I preferred the last as it was a musical based in N Africa. A good show. After 9 I went to a Cannuck Service Club + talked with a R.A.F. guy until 11. He was pretty nice + was interesting. Got to bed at 11. The fellows on the base headed for Munich but was scrubbed. There was an air raid last night that lasted about an hour. Everybody slept in the subways. B-12:00

### **March 18**

All of us got up at 9. After breakfast Harris headed for camp; Gene Mac + I hired a taxi + saw all the places of interest in the town. Visiting Westminster Abbey, House of Commons, London Tower + Bridge, St. Paul's Cathedral; saw the change of the guards at Buckingham Palace and most of the sights of the city. In the center of London there were blocks on blocks of buildings that had been blasted down in the blitz of 42. Then we went up to Oxford Square, 5 blocks off Piccadilly Sq. and I did some shopping. Mac + Gene went back to Piccadilly + I fooled around shopping some more. Bought some music, and headed for Liverpool St. by tube. Caught the 2:22 train, sitting with 2 ATS + 3 other girls. I had a good time all the way to Ipswich where I changed trains. In Stowmarket I met Mac + Gene. We took a taxi to the base + got to bed by 9:30

Alert

### **Sunday March 19 44**

They broke the alert early this morning when it started to rain. Rained until 8. We got up at 9, in order to go to a meeting where they presented medals, I got an oak leaf cluster. As

they've raised the tour to 30 missions I get credit for an extra mission since I had 17 on Mar 15. After awards Col. Harris + all training officers had a sort of critique with the gunners lasting until 12:15. I had a hurried meal + went out to 092 the Col's ship as Crew #5 skeleton crew was to test hop it. We went to altitude, buzzed Stowmarket; a P47 tried to break his pitot tube on our R. wing but didn't make it. For 15 min he was from 4 in to 12 in from our wing. He was a hot pilot. Landed 4, shot the bull with Joe Foster in Radio Eq. shack till 5:30, ate chow + saw the show with Fred + M.D.-"So Proudly We Hail." B-9:30 Alerted.

### **March 20**

I got up at 2:45 for a mission. Hotcakes for breakfast. Briefing at 4, T.O. at 7:30 for the rest of the group. We were no 1 ground spare. A ship aborted at 8:30 so we took off then to take his place. After going to splashers 5 + 6 where the group was supposed to be and hunting all over we went as far as mid channel looking for our wing but turned back when we failed. Worley is our tail gunner now, the toggelier for today was a guy named Shock. The rest of the crew was intact. Landed at 12, ate lunch and went to bed at 1. M.D. Harris is getting a bit quarrelsome, I believe it's combat fatigue. The ball turret is hard on a fellow on those long trips. Slept until 5, went to show, "Forever and a Day"; very good. Afterwards Fred + I cleaned our guns. The last bunch to use them left them dirty. Our whole group had to turn back because of bad weather. Returned at 2. They won't set credit for the mission. It's been raining this evening: Standown, B- 11:15

### **March 21 1944 Tuesday**

After getting up at 8 we had dried eggs with burnt bacon, mush, grapefruit juice, bread, butter + coffee + spuds. Roll call at 9 when I learned skeleton crew #5 had to fly a practice mission at 10. There were 6 ships, we buzzed the field at 200 ft in formation, never flying over 800 ft the 2 hrs. A P47 + P51 were flying wing to wing with us about 5 ft off the wing. The 51 had its 2 wing tanks. Landed at 12, wrote letters and washed clothes most of the afternoon. We are on alert for tomorrow and some of the fellows are saying they can't sleep a wink waiting for the C.Q. to come in. It doesn't bother me that way. Some of the B-17 crews are landing in Switzerland on deep penetrations if they know they can't make the coast on the way back. According to Maj. Newman the 447th is the hottest group in E.T.O. highest bombing record, least casualties, most enemy ships + highest venereal [sic] rate according to Col. Harris who agrees with the rest what Maj. Newman says. B- 900

### **March 22**

Got up at 300 this morning for a mission. Briefing at 4:30. We have Worley as our permanent tail gunner and a bombardier now. At the last minute we had to get a L. W. gunner and put Fred up front as bombardier, which he didn't like very much. T.O. at 0900, loaded down with incendiaries that were left in the ship from day before yesterday. We didn't leave the English coast until 10:15 heading out over the North Sea at 7000 ft altitude. After getting up by the Friesian Is. we climbed up to 20000 ft. Passed over near Kiel, and struck S.E. for Berlin. Our target was an airfield 4 miles from Berlin but 7/10 clouds made us bomb the city proper. A lot of fires were started. #9864 had left horizontal stabilizer blown off, it came back O.K. There was a lot of flak all the way in

and out it seemed. Some heavy stuff too. Flak holes near LW + T.G. These incendiaries are gasoline + rubber with a charge of tetrol to spread the stuff. B-8:45 as we are alerted.

### **March 23 Ship 154**

The C.Q. came in at 1:30 getting us up for a mission. Briefing at 3. We flew 154 with an E.M. bombardier. After going out to hardstand 41 + went thru the usual preparations we took off at 6, got to altitude at 7 and left English coast at 8, headed for Brunswick. We didn't have fighter protection around, fighters, FW 190's started coming in at the groups behind us + off to one side before we really caught hell from the IP on; we had a ringside seat. One ship went down in a vertical dive, another got a direct hit in no 2 engine which caught on fire, 8 crew members bailed out, the pilot + copilot pulled the ship away from formation + then jumped. At the target we dropped 5x1328 demo's on the city of B. An oil cooler sprang a leak, T.W.G. managed to feather the engine + we came back on 3 engines, tacking onto formations when we fell behind. Had fighter protection about 30 minutes but saw plenty of FW 190's. Ball + tail got some long shots. R. at 1350. Cleaned guns + went to bed until 9, got up for a while + to bed again. Standown tomorrow.

### **Rattlesden March 24 Friday**

The C.Q. came in at 7:15 waking us for a 9 o'clock briefing. We got up, ate chow and found out that we could have slept until 10 or 11, + we were dead tired from yesterday's mission. A practice mission was scheduled for 1045, but was cancelled because of bad weather. I was going to be lead operator too! We got back in time to go to chow. A class in aircraft rec 2:30- 3:30, Wiggiwitz, Wiggi for short Harris Fred + I took test for others. I took one for T.W.G., M.D. for Kealer + Worley the rest for themselves. Lt Gailliard is a swell guy, the S-2 officer that gave the check. Coke came in yesterday but was gone before we got to it. A week ahead of us with no coke. Some fun. Gene is going over to some field tomorrow to see a B-29. Wrote letters in combat library after chow until 10. Standown. B-1015.

### **Rattlesden March 25 Sat.**

Crew 5 got up at 7:30, cleaned up a little bit for the Saturday inspections. We got to mess hall for

breakfast at 750, ate and went to briefing at 9. Afterwards the whole crew went to "Dear M.O.M." and practiced ditching procedure until 10:10 when Capt. Richards told us of a practice mission briefing at 10:45. Gene Keeler went to some other field with Don Law to see a B-29. T.O. at 12, I didn't do anything except calibrate the xmitter on 4 M/F D/F stations and listened to music from radio compass + liaison rec; until landing. P47's + Spitfires attacked our wing formation + came in close. For 45 min. I was in the ball turret tracking those ships as they came thro the formation. It was the first time we've ever seen Spits from the air. They are nice ships. Landed 1615, went to sq. operations to check on my missions, chow, shower, diary + bed. B 0800 -Alerted, nine crews from this sq. Us of course.

### **March 26**

We got up at 2:50, the C.Q. said briefing was at 3:05. After breakfast we hurried down to briefing room and got there at 3:20. The E.M.'s of this crew missed briefing because they

woke us up late. After getting ready, they cancelled the mission to Leipzig. We came back + went to bed until 10:15. Briefing at 11, we took off at 12. A Noball raid on the Brest Peninsula. A lot of flak, very heavy for a while. We used chaff. It was Lt. Wiggi's 1st mission, he was expecting flak, lighters + everything. He says that flak wasn't heavy, but he'll learn different. Returned at 1700, ate cleaned duns and hit the hay. From the air we can see concentrations of trucks, tanks ammo + equipment on the roads near Dover + south coast. Small says that there are very few soldiers of any kind in London on the week days, all are out drilling + practicing invasion I guess. After our tour of duty we don't go home, we stay here in E.T.O. for future reference. B- 9:30 Alerted

### **March 27**

We were routed out of bed at 245 this morning. Briefing at 3:45 but when we got there it was put off an hour because of the ground fog that had sprung up. After sleeping in hot news room we were briefed at 0515 for an airfield near Bordeaux, France. Getting out to the ship they made us stand by to take off until 10 when we got off. T.O. at 1012. Over the channel + Brest Peninsula we flew at 13000, going up after leaving Brest. All the way down we were in sight of French coast. Bombs away at 1350, 36 clusters of 6 frag bombs were dropped. We met very little inaccurate flak, some flak from Ger. cruiser that tossed a lot of heavy stuff up as we went over it. We didn't get back to the base until 6:30, 1st plane down, 1st to be briefed + 1st to bed. When we took off in morning the fog was just as bad as it was at 7, regular instrument take off. One ship crashed a few miles after T.O. + it blew up, loaded with demo's.

### **March 28**

We got up at 2:45 this morning, ate chow, briefing at 4. We got out to the ship 724 hardstand #46 at 4:45 got ready for takeoff when they delayed the start engines until 10 o'clock in the morning. I spent the time burning flares, chewing the fat and listening to the radio receiver. The fog was pretty bad all morning, even at T.O. at 10. We climbed to 1700 ft on the way across the Channel + headed south for the target, an airfield in southern France. Bombs away at 1405, 10x500 lb demo's. We hit the hangars, machine shops + barracks in an almost perfect bomb pattern. We had good fighter protection all the way in + out, very little medium flak at the target, not at the coast in or out. Going on oxygen at 12000 it wasn't bad, we didn't get tired. English coast back 1525, over field 1607, landing at 1630. Cleaned guns, ate supper, went to a show + hit the hay. Standown tomorrow. B 1 145

### **March 29**

I had the sleep of my life last night. I didn't get up until 11:30 + was asleep to 10:45. That bed really felt good. One of Mac's old friends that he knew in Binghamton, N.Y. has been here yesterday + this morning. I gave him my blankets to sleep in. Nice fellow. Capt Dalzell gave Mac a 2 day pass to get to visit longer with his friend. Capt. Dalzell is a swell fellow. At 1 P.M. T.W.G. Dalzell and two other officers wanted me to drive them to town. I did, the first time in a jeep + first time to drive in E.T.O. Once I started to drive on the right hand side of the towns main drag but I reformed in a hurry. We went to Quartermaster + got some clothes. T.W.G. got 10 pr wool sox for me. Came back, wrote letters until 7:00 visited the officers barracks to get crew picture censored + visited them

+ hit the hay. All crews but crew 2 are alerted. B- 9:15

### **March 30**

We got up at 745 this morning for chow. Pancakes + mush for breakfast. Got to the theater at 9 when Capt. Dalzell read the ground school schedule for the day. The people of our crew checked out headsets that hadn't yet afterwards, I went in and talked with Joe Foster until 10 when we, Chase Pritchett + I went in and took code checks with the rest of the R.O.'s of 708 until 11. After lunch I went back and worked with the one + only bug until 3:30 + tallied. Went to crew library until 5. Pork chops for supper. T.W.G. and the rest of the crew went buzzing in 724 shooting landings, giving H.E.M. a workout. Walt Fleming went to. He's done a lot of work getting the crew pictures for us. I ought to write letters to Pop, Alice, L.L. and Tad but there is an alert on so I won't. I'm supposed to be interviewed by operations officers to find out what I want to do after my tour. I'm having a heck of a time deciding. Maybe the interview doesn't count too much. B 9:00

### **March 31**

The C.Q. came in at 3 waking us up for a 4AM briefing. We were briefed for a target -- Ludwigshaven. Getting out to the ship at 5, just as the usual fog started setting in. In the month of Apr fog is very prevalent early in the mornings. T.O. was scheduled for 7:30 but was delayed an hour. Just as we were gunning engines for T.O. on the runway at 8:45 they cancelled the mission. After getting all equipment put away I went over + talked with Lt. Sparks, radio school + asked him about my chances for going back home. Not much. He believes + I do too, that my best bet is to stay with the group as instructor in radio school for 3 or more months, then go home. If I go home now I'll probably be classified and sent to another theater. I had a 5 min. interview with Capt. Dalzell at 1:45. Couldn't learn much. Went to a poor show and to bed at 7:30 Alerted.

### **April 1**

They got us up at 1:35 this morning for a mission. I was 10 minutes late for gunners briefing. Same target as yesterday. T.O. at 6:30. We were flying no. 4 in lead sq. leading wing. After leaving the English Coast at 0810, French Coast at 8:34 where Maj. Newman, leader of wing turned us back because of solid overcast just over us and we were at 15,000. We'd have to be above or below clouds to prevent icing, below-flak is too accurate above the overcast was too thick, up to 25000 ft. We ran thru some flak, so we might get credit for a mission. It is fairly sure that 900 fighters have been moved into Brunswick-Frankfurt-Ludwigshaven area. We'll have a hot time there when we go. Slept from 1PM - 3. Read books that were given out by Special Service in orderly room, aviation, Post, Colliers + all the magazines from home. Its really nice. Saw the show "Miracle of Morgan's Creek", very good. B 10:00. Standby.

### **April 2**

I got up at 1145 after being awake for 15 minutes. Got up and went to chow. After chow I went to the radio equipment shack and talked with Dudley until time for an equipment check at 1:30. Fred and I went to Photo Lab from 245 till 5, helping as much as possible when Walt Fleming developed the front view photo's of our crew. They gave us about 45 pictures for the crew and ground crew. I am going to send some home after censor puts

his stamp on them. At 6PM I borrowed a bike from the next hut and got ready to go to town. Fred, M.D. + I pumped to Stowmarket + rode around all the country, going thru Rattlesden twice, MD + Fred getting beer + me ginger beer which tasted like hot + strong pop. Got back to the base at 10:30. Riding was a lot of fun, the most fun for a long time. Read until 12:00. B- 12:45 AM

### **April 3**

Got up at 745 this morning. Ate chow and got to theater at 9. There was a fellow from 711 that went down on the Bordeaux raid Dec 31. He jumped from a ship with one engine on fire, landed in a farm and near the target. The farmer gave him a suit of clothes + a beret. He started south, by train at times, mostly by foot. He was in France for 2 months, 1 month in hotels in Spain + finally got to Gibraltar + to England by C-47. His talk was very interesting. At 11 I went to radio school + took a very easy test, 1/2 of it and finished it at 1:30. I read after lunch until 2:45 when the crew went out to a ship + had pictures taken by a Public Relations cameraman. This lasted until 4:30. I went back + finished the radio test. Read after supper until 8 when Fred + I went off base on bikes to a pub. Between Fred's beer + my ginger beer we spent an hour + came back in the rain. I thought it was fun but Fred didn't. Standown tomorrow. B- 11:45

### **April 4**

Climbed from bed this morning at 8:00. Briefing at 9. Chased around with Fred until 11 when we had an aircraft rec class. Out of 20 I missed seven. P. Poor. Read after chow until 3 when T.W.G. got a pass for me to go to Ipswich to hunt for a bicycle. I got into town by 5, hunted thru 5 cycle shops: no bikes for sale. Went to show "Kansan" + "The Angel Sisters." Pretty good. I took the 9:15 train to Stowmarket, caught a liberty truck to camp expecting an alert as it was clear outside; but its a stand down. Clouding up now. Limey planes are going out tonight. When I got back to the barracks the fellows were eating egg (fresh) sandwiches, cake, coke. A real meal too. There are rumors going around to the effect that we're moving out of E.T.O. soon. I would like to after finishing my tour. We've got to get up at 8 so bed at 12.

### **April 5**

I got up at 8:45, got to briefing just in time. Gene was absent, making T.W.G. mad because Capt. Richards chewed him. Gene got 3 hrs mud detail for being absent from a class yesterday but didn't go + do his duty. Its been raining all day off + on. Played poker from 9:30 till 12:30 lost a little but had a lot of fun. Air Sea Rescue Class at 1330 - 1400. Came back and wrote letters all afternoon. After supper Walt Fleming + I went out the back way + rode around the countryside. Stopped at a pub + had a ginger beer, Walt had a beer. Got back at 9:15. There's an alert on so we'll probably get up early. Mac is on D.N.I.F. because of a bit of sinus trouble. All of us will have trouble clearing our ears tomorrow: we always do after being on the ground for a few days. T.W.G. got the front view pictures of the crew taken at Harvard censored + I gave them to the crew who've been asking for them for the last day. B 1000

### **April 6**

When the C.Q. came in he said that there were hotcakes for breakfast so we piled out of

bed + went to the mess hall to get some greasy French toast. We came back to the hut until 10 when I had an hour in the Harwell trainer. It was a lot of fun, the ground station was using a bug + was mighty hard to keep up with. Last night at midnight a P.F.F. ship was landing and hit a silver ship on the perimeter track at the end of the runway. The P.F.F. ship slammed on his brakes but skidded. He tried to ground loop it but couldn't. The P.F.F. ship cut all the vertical stab. off, left horiz. was missing 6 ft, the wing just out from no 1 engine was cut off, cutting Tokyo tanks, oxygen leaks all over, the P.F.F. ship was loaded with 500 demo's + one bombardier was injured. Miracle fire didn't start. Aircraft rec class in aft. Bike riding from 6 - 10. Rode 10 miles with Fred + Walt Fleming. B- 11. Standby so far.

### **April 7**

I got up at 9:30 this morning. Read until noon. After chow got a pass intending to go to Stowmarket to hunt for a bike but due to transportation difficulties I didn't go as I had to be back by 3 for awards. Played poker from 1230 till 3:15. I received an oak leaf cluster. We had a long bull session with Col. Harris in regards to what we wanted to do after our tour was finished, and how we'd like to back to combat if we have to. Col. believed most of us would. It seemed that the majority would like to go to another theater with 447th if they have to go thru another tour; most fellows are really satisfied with this group but tired of E.T.O. Meeting adjourned at 5:30. After supper I read in A.R.C., combat library until 8 when I went to the show. It was a very poor movie so I walked out at 845 + came back to the barracks. T.W.G. says we won't fly in the morning. Standby now. B- 11:00

### **April 8**

I got up at 9 this morning. Crew 7 was called at 5 A.M., and it sure was good to go back to sleep. The 1st time crew 7 got up without us and the first time we ever slept in when the rest of the group went. Cleaned up the barracks until 1130. I had to fly at 1230 so I ate early. We, T.W.G., Mamlock, Laz + I took 104 to some field near London to pick up Col. Jumper. Five ground pounders went as passengers, most didn't even know what a headset was. 45 min trip down, waited 15 min. I got to look a Spit over, got in cockpit with permission from limey gr crew. A lot of W.A.A.F.'s work around this base. Took off with the Col., a limey wing commander + a group commander who took turns flying as co pilot, Col J was pilot. Flew around for 2 hrs, landed at 4:30. The group bombed Germany an airfield near Holland border. Wrote letters, went to A.R.C. + bed at 10:15. Crew #5 alerted.

### **April 9**

Crew 5 got up at 3, briefing at 4. Sparkman flew as engineer as Mac has been bothered with sinus. We took off at 0800 and started to assemble but due to fog from ground to 8000 ft it was impossible. After we broke thru the fog there was only six ships in the group. Another overcast above us and bad weather ahead of us so Capt. Richards got permission to scrub mission. The group turned back. We hunted for a long time for the field but it wouldn't let us land, told us to go to Horham. We couldn't find Horham so we landed at a P-47 base 20 miles south of Ratt. at 1130. The whole crew ate in officers mess, we felt out of place. T.W.G. + Mamlock shot 5 landings in a Taylor cub. They sure looked funny feeling for the ground on landings. We took off at 3 P.M. for home, landed

20 mins later. 5 fellows bailed out in preference to crash landing with a pilot. Capt Richards crash landed at Honnington. Read from 3 to 11. Pass tomorrow.

### **April 10**

We got up at 7:30 when the C.Q. came around to tell us we'd go on pass at noon. All of us got up, started cleaning up our selves and the barracks. Lt. Wiggie phoned up and got a command car to take the whole crew to Stowmarket. Fred and Mac came later by G.I. truck, the C. car was loaded to the hilt anyway. We took the 1120 train for London, getting there at 1315. The officers got rooms at Regent Palace, we got rooms at the Green Park Hotel, about 4 blocks west of Piccadilly Sq. Not a bad place but it is composed of two different buildings on different levels and interconnected by short arches + stairs. There were few G.I.'s in London, just combat crews and the G.I.'s based in London. I went to a show called "Tender Comrade"-Ginger Rogers; a very good show. The rest of the crew went

to a dance hall, drank some, got dates and got to bed from 1 to 3 after walking home. They picked up no Piccadilly flak. Bed for me at 12.

### **April 11**

The telephone rang at 9 as Mac had left a request in the lobby to get us up at 9. Mac got up and took a bath, I got up at 9:30. We had chow at 9:40, tea, toast or buns, dried eggs and fried spuds. Not too bad. Gene, Don + I walked around Hyde Park, St James' Park until about 2. Afterwards Wiggie + I went to the Regent Palace Men's Hairdresser's. I got a shave + a haircut for a half crown or 50c. After this I went to Rainbow A.R.C. and read until 6. At 6 I had an appointment with the rest of the crew in the grill room. All of us showed up. Laz + Mamlock were 1/2 hr late because they visited McGurer who is feeling swell + getting around on crutches O.K. Going home soon. As T.W.G. had reserved a table, he + Wiggie brought girls so we all had a grand time. It was hard for me not to drink beer or liquor as T.W.G. was doing his darndest to get me too. On the way out I got proposals from 3 Piccadilly gals. It was a strange experience. Went to another show, read in hotel lounge until 12. B 12:30

### **April 12**

I got up at 8:30. Had breakfast with Mac and Gene. I found out then that Fred, Gene + Don shacked up last night. There were hundreds of girls trying to make easy money last night, altho the price was down to a pound because of the man shortage. From 11 to 3 I was shopping for stuff to send home. Caught the train at 3:20, got to Ipswich at 5, Stowmarket 6, base at 6:25 by G.I. truck -- returning liberty run trucks. B. Hill came back from the hospital. Mon, and from an interview with a nurse up there, there are 80,000 professional prostitutes registered and they have to pass inspection at health office each week; ones that don't have some sort of band attached to one leg. On top of these there are the innocent "occasionals." I wish the fellows hadn't gone out with the "flak" but its their own lives. Fred is very disgusted with himself I believe. The majority of the crew started drinking at supper + kept up most of the night. Now the fellows Gene, Don + Fred are wondering or worrying. T.W.G. + officers got 2 sheets, etc, (gloves + tie for me) for each E.M. It sure is nice of them. B 140

Almost every outfit in E.T.O. is restricted to base except combat crews. I think it's because of the pending invasion

### **April 13**

The C.Q. came in at 5:45 AM for a mission. Briefing at 7, T.O. at 7:55 for Augsburg Germany. English coast out 12:12 at 20000 ft. A few flak bursts by Brussels Belgium, no more until target. The target was a Mess. factory and airport. We were carrying 42 inc, 20 dropped at IP because Wiggie pulled a boner. We were within sight of Switzerland on the other side of Lake Constance a few minutes before IP. The Alps were covered with snow, very rugged + beautiful. At the target the flak was very heavy + accurate; holes in both wings + vertical stabilizer. We flew lead, of low sq. in a composite group. The 94th lead, 385 high. Very good navigation, missed most flak areas. No flak to speak of on the way back. IP at 1355 - bombs away - 1408, enemy coast out 1632. The group lost 4 ships, 5 went to Switz, 1 crash landed in S. England, killing 4 crew members. Landed 1720 B 1025

*April 13 1944*

*Dear Mom and Dad:*

*Your letter mailed Mar. 22 got here yesterday. I'm glad to hear everything's O.K. and of the new addition to the family I guess I'm an uncle two times now huh? I'd sure like to see all the little tykes around home now, there must be a flock of them when a few neighbor kids come around.*

*In your next letter please include the name of those folks that live across the road and their telephone number. In the far future I might drop into town and might want to get in touch with you by phone.*

*My crew had a pass a few days ago; we went into London and spent 2 days there. We had a grand time, slept in a swanky hotel and all that but were we glad to get back to camp and get a few decent meals to eat. Tea and rolls don't fill me up enough for breakfast. There isn't jam or very much butter even. We got back in time to get in on the next mission which was over Germany yesterday. So we got to sleep in today, I didn't get up until noon. After a mission it sure is hard to get out of bed. But after 12 hours of sleep and the rest of the guys threatening to roll me out, I got up gracefully + of my own accord. There are some awful early birds in this hut, tho, or else they have to have their breakfast. Me, I can miss a meal almost anytime without anything serious happening. But to here some of these guys talk it would kill them to miss a meal, maybe it would.*

*How is my mail getting to you? Some of your letters get here in 2 weeks, once in a while a heck of a lot longer. The "V" mail is no faster than any of the other methods and you can write a lot more in an airmail letter.*

*This afternoon when the coke truck came we decided to have a fire, almost a novelty*

*around this hut lately as we are keep too busy to keep one. We put some black powder and stuff from flares we'd picked up around here in the bottom, kindling, then coke and on top poured a lot (1/2 cup) of lighter fluid. The results-- we've never had such a good fire in such a short time with so much smoke in our lives. But it was exciting to watch too. And we've never had so much fun around here for ages.*

*British and American pursuit ships are always buzzing our field, sometimes within 15 feet of the runways, I guess it's to help us along in our aircraft recognition. Today my pilot took some us and returned the compliment. He did a good job too. I wish you could have seen us. The Limey's seldom see such a big ship out buzzing them and they were all eyes, we could see them from where we were.*

*If you get some beef cattle for me to raise, and if there is some land to raise vegetables on we'd be sitting on the top in case of a big depression after the war. Fruit for desert, but the darned beef would get tiresome. Please keep a good start for various other animals if a depression starts. Rabbit is the only unrationed meat over here besides fish. On the way to London the other day I saw 50-60 rabbits in a field. That's usually what we eat in town on passes. They are that plentiful.*

*I guess I'll shut up as it's getting kind of late. Write soon. Have you got that request for a 5 lb package of candy yet?*

*Love Harley*

#### **April 14**

I got up at 1115 this morning. That sack sure was nice to stay in. On the way back from chow I stopped in officer's barracks with Fred. Mamlock tells me I'm supposed to check out R.O.'s during the afternoon's practice mission. I hurry down to briefing room and get my stuff + go out to "Butch II" 092. T.W.G. pilot, Laz as Co pilot, me as R.O. + N. There were 2 "S" box boys and a turret specialist on board. T.O. 0200, PM buzzed a couple Limey fields, went to altitude 19000 ft for a half an hour and on the way down I asked T.W.G. for some stick time. He says O.K. I fly around for about 30 minutes. It sure is fun to have the controls for such a big baby, even if you don't know what to do with the rudder pedals, throttles, prop pitch and turbo controls. We were buzzing + diving thro clouds + having a grand time in general. Landed at 430, ate supper, came back and wrote letters. Built a fire with 1/2 cup lighter fluid, powder + 12 flares, a hell of a lot of smoke and burnt my blanket 4 ft away from the stove.

B 11:30 Standown

#### **April 15 Saturday**

Got up at 0745 this morning, had breakfast, got to briefing at 9 at the theater with the rest of the crew. We had armament maintenance 10 -12, we signed in and came back to the barracks to clean up for inspection. After this I read until about 1:30 and there were two classes 2:30 - 4:30. It's hard for me to get down to something to do, I'm sort of restless. After supper I built a fire, and for an hour fanned it and tried to get it going. Finally the barracks got warmed up for the first time today. Donnelly day before yesterday after

landing on his final mission was presented by Col. Harris a diploma entitling him to join the "Lucky Bastard's Club." It was quite a ceremony, we all got a great kick out of it. I wrote a letter to Tad and got ready for bed. There might be a mission tomorrow.

Standby.

B- 10:30

### **April 16**

I climbed out of bed at 945. There was awarding of medals at 1030. Didn't get anything. After lunch I played cards most of the afternoon, went out to the hardstand on M.D.'s bike to get some oil to start the fire. Read for a while. Chicken for supper. A nice meal. Played blackjack from 8 - 12 after waiting for an hour in the theater for the show but they couldn't get the equipment fixed. No we have to go six missions for an air medal. B- 12 midnight. Standown tonight.

### **April 17**

I got up at 945 this morning, went to theater at 10 to hear of a practice mission at 1300, ground school schedule for afternoon. Went to dinner, played bridge with M.D. + Fred until 3, when we three went down and took a shower and got cleaned up. I took in a show at 6, afterwards read for a half an hour in the combat library. Came back and did some odd jobs, diary etc + hit the hay. Alert tomorrow. B-9:30

The majority of English people seem to worship money. The girls will do anything for a price. Now the price is down to shillings in London because most G.I.'s are restricted to their base, and there is a definite man shortage. Most of the G.I.'s in town live with girls for months. If a girl is a mistress to some G.I. she's not ashamed, it's a common thing here because a divorce is virtually impossible to obtain + nature is nature. I guess if the customs aren't very strict as in England.

### **April 18**

Climbed out of bed at 5 for a mission. We had hard boiled eggs that were raw, spuds sausage + mush for breakfast. Briefing at 6:15, we were spares so we got all ready + waited. Another crew came + took our ship + took off at 9:45. We piled into a truck and came back to briefing room + changed. Capt Richards came in + told us we were to go as soon as possible in 7052, a new ship "Paper Doll No 2". T.O. at 1010, caught up with composite group 1/2 hr from enemy coast. Flying no. 7 lead sq. until IP then no 5. There was a front around Berlin + the target; we circled B. for an hour + finally dropped our 6x500's incendiaries + 6x100 demo's on an innocent little town. Strewed incendiaries from one end of the town to another. Landed 1830. 3 ships hit by air to air bombing from our own ships. Capt. Dalzell is missing; flying in a P.F.F. ship. One ship landed with a 500 inc. in wing.

### **April 19**

Got up at 1:25 AM this morning for a mission. We had eggs bacon hotcakes butter syrup + mush A swell breakfast. Briefing at 2:45, T.O. at 6:30. After taking off with a severe crosswind and crossing from one side to another on the runway we got off in 866 with a lot of trouble. Everything went as usual until 8 when no#1 engine lost an oil ring +

started throwing oil. T.W.G. dropped out of formation feathered engine + went over field to get permission to drop bombs in ocean. We dropped all of them, one exploded even tho it was unarmed. Came back, slept all afternoon, went to "Jane Eyre" show + bed. Standby so far. B 9:15.

### **April 20**

I got up at 0825 this nice bright morning. We were put on alert at 0800. Read and cleaned up until noon, had chow. Gunners briefing at 12:30. After getting equipment we went out to the ship 724 and fooled around until 1635 when we took off. I listened to C.B.S. or N.B.C. programs from New York City. It's nice to hear Yanks talk + music. It came in very clear with plenty of volume. We bombed Noball target no. 74 with 12x500's. The bombs we dropped today are some especially powerful. We had good fighter protection, heavy accurate flak for a few minutes, minor damage. Bombed from 19,500 ft. Came back + landed at 2115. Lt. Laz didn't go, Wiggie was navigator, Harris toggelier, some guy for ball turret. Cleaned guns, ate chow, hit the hay 11:30. Alerted.

### **April 21**

We got up at 730, went to chow and were told to be in the area for further developments. Briefing at 1030 for gunners. While I was in radio briefing in navigators briefing room there was a big explosion that shook the whole building and dropped several bricks to the floor. Going to the window there was a big column of smoke out by hardstand 12. T.O. at 1400, flying no 6, low sq. low group. Just as we caught up to the group the mission was cancelled. T.W.G. headed for the field and we were the 2nd ones to land. at 16:30. After that big explosion the moral dropped 99%. It was awful. From appearances, the gasoline caught on fire while refueling. Some of 100 lb bombs didn't explode. It killed 14 men. One guy was standing under wing when the ship exploded, it tossed him into a ditch 25 ft away + broke his leg. He's almost O.K. We were to bomb a synthetic gasoline factory near Leipzig G. Went to show "Song of Bernadette". B- 10:00

*This was the last entry Harley Tuck was to make in his diary. On the following day Tuck and rest of the Gilleran crew were on board 42-31724 "Dear M.O.M." for a mission to Hamm. Shortly after bombs away, 724 was struck twice by flak; a third exploding shell set fire to leaking fuel. "T.W.G." pulled out of formation, held the ship steady for his crew to bail out, then jumped himself. All ten were captured and remained in POW camps until the end of the war.*



*The Gilleran crew*