



WW II DIARY
(1943-1944; 30 missions)



This diary was kept by Edward E. Beaty, pilot, 710th Sqdn, 447th Bomb Group until he completed his bomber missions in May, 1944. These comments were entered in a small black pocket notebook, usually the night after a mission or the next morning. Comments are copied as made then.

12-30-43	Briefed at 4:30 a.m. Attempted take off to Ludwigshaven. Assigned an unoperational 873 ship and did not get off. One ship lost on mission, my own 173, "Maid To Please," flown by Lt. Shero on her first raid.
1-4-44	Briefed at 5:00 a.m. Took off at 8:00 with 38 incendiaries in ship 144, Capt. Rowland's "Miss America," for raid on Kiel. Flew lead of last element of high squadron at 25,000 ft. Had oxygen failure on way to target - three men passed out. Managed to continue by rearranging oxygen setup. ROG S/Sgt. Smith did a nice job. Temperature 46 below C. Saw a few fighters - no attacks. Had P-47 and P-38 fighter cover. Bombed through an overcast. Moderate flak. Scratch on left wing. No injuries. Returned at 1500. Mission accomplished. No losses. Esterline's 191 "Flak Shack" got shot up.
1-5-44	Briefed at 0200. Assigned "Miss America," 144, flying deputy squadron lead of lead squadron with Captain Norris as copilot. Most of my crew were nonflyable due to previous mission. "Miss America" was not flyable due to a burned out generator. Did not get off again. This raid was on Bordeaux, France. Lts. Huff and Brooks lost. Remember Brooks from P-47s. Hope they got down okay. This three tries and one mission completed, not so good.
1-7-44	Briefed at 0430 a.m. Target Ludwigshaven, Germany. Big chemical works. Took off at 0740, full fuel load, 10 500 lb HE's in Lt. Chardi's "Solid Sender." Flew deputy lead of low squadron - #4 position - 23,000 ft. lead of wing today. Non-eventful- Bombed through overcast. Perfect fighter cover. No enemy fighters. Moderate flak - no battle damage - sea of B-17s & 24s. Impressive. Lt. Kaffun aborted on way to target. No trouble. All guns fired. Field overcast on return. Used "Gee" to get in. Mission accomplished. Two out of four. No group ships lost.
1-11-44	Briefed at 0400 a.m. Target Brunschweig. Fighter assembly plant. Flew Lt. Kaffin's 160, "Mickey." Take off at 0710. Scheduled to fly #8 position high squadron. Had difficulty forming at 17,000 ft. Weather lousy. Everything

	<p>was mixed up. Headed out over North sea with only six ships. Finally formed as low squadron flying #2 position. Bombed through overcast. Incendiaries 38-100 lbs. Group attached to dropped HE's Bomb doors would not retract. Alt. 21,000 ft. light flak. Not much fighter opposition. Ball gunner got a crack at two Ju 88s who made a pass at us. 8 hr. mission. Lost Col. Bowman, Lt. Hickey, and Lt. Kegley. Kegley a P-47 man and a real buddy. Hope he got down okay. Other groups took an awful beating. Total losses 59 aircraft. Got over 100 Jerries. Did a job on several of their aircraft plants. I've been awfully lucky. Mission generally snafu but accomplished. Three out of five.</p>
1-14-44	<p>Briefed at 1130 a.m. for a short haul over the French coast. Carried 12x500 lb HE's in "The Gimp" 100, Lt. Lewis' ship. Flew lead of third element, high squadron. Altitude 12,000 ft. Weather good. Bombed visually. Target coastal installations. Think we did a good job. No flak, no enemy fighter attacks. Saw one enemy fighter shot down. 4 hrs. in the air. Easy run. Four out of six. Mission accomplished. Sweating out the air medal.</p>
1-21-44	<p>Briefed at 0300 hrs. Target Frankfurt. Carried 10-500 lb HE's. Flew Lt. Johnson's 148 "Morning Star." Lead second element low squadron. Lead of Wing today at 24,000 ft. No fighter opposition - saw a few enemy interceptors - kept their distance. Fighter cover good. Flak moderate over target. No battle damage except one hole in bomb bay. 7 hr. mission -4 1/2 hrs. on oxygen -3 hrs. over enemy territory. Not too rough - Air Medal today - 5 out of 7.</p>
1-30-44	<p>Briefed at 0500. Target Brunswick. Flew new ship, "Stormy Weather." Carried 42-100 lb incendiaries. Flew lead of last element high squadron, high group and what a mess - flubbed along at 130 mph, "S"ing back and forth - scheduled to bomb at 22,000, bombed at 26,500 ft. Still flew into the overcast at target - lost group - came back with the 385th - PFF mission - a lot of hugs in ship. 2 in 2 days - tired. 6 out of 8.</p>
2-3-44	<p>Briefed at 0445. Target Wilhemshaven. Flew "Stormy Weather" #4 in lead squadron - carried 10-500 lb. GPs. Took off around 0740 - weather stinks - had to climb and climb to get over clouds -finally bombed at 28,000 ft. PFF. Cold! -54C. Good fighter cover - moderate flak - windshield cracked on Gorrell's side - 5 1/2 hrs. on oxygen - 8 hr haul. Have been briefed nearly every morning. Crews plenty tired. #7.</p>
2-4-44	<p>Briefed at 0500 a.m. Target Frankfurt. Flew Lt. Overdorf's 980. Carried 42-100 lb. incendiaries. Took off at 0800. Scheduled to fly #3 high squadron. Led squadron on return. Weather stinks. PFF. Bombed above briefed altitude again. Mighty cold. Missed fighter support - but had little enemy opposition. Flew through Ruhr Valley twice and flak was really rough. Holes in left wing and radio room - couple of ships blew up from direct hits. Rotten sight - Major Sheppard lost - 7 1/2 hrs. - 5 hrs. on oxygen. #8.</p>
2-8-44	<p>Briefed at 0420. Target Frankfurt, 3rd time. Getting to be a milk run. Carried 10-500 lb GPs in "Stormy Weather" which has a new windshield (bullet proof - glad it got hit). Also a new ball turret. Flew #3 in lead squadron. Briefed alt. 23,000. Bombed at 26,000 Pff. -45C. Brr!! No</p>

	personal fighter attacks. Flak heavy and accurate. Sounded like hail. Quite a few dents. No bad holes. 5+ hrs. on oxygen, 8 1/2 hrs. in the air-tired. No ships lost from our group. While on leave yesterday Lts. Clark & Reed went down in France. Sure losing my buddies. Hope they're okay. 9 missions completed.
2-13-44	Target Noball on invasion coast. Briefed at 1130 - missed dinner - took off at 1300. Bombed at 12,000 ft. Carried 12-500 lb GPs in "Stormy Weather." Short mission - no fighters - flak was terribly accurate at such a low altitude - got two of our ships. Lt. Kaffun, my good friend - blew up and fell apart in the air - no chance that they got out - Damn - Lt. McDonald, a flamer. Rough! Mission #10.
2-20-44	Target Tue Tau deep into Germany. Briefed at 0410. Took off at 0720 in "Stormy Weather" caring 42-100 lb incendiaries. Hell of a long haul - 10 1/2 hrs. Low altitude - 11,000 ft. Flew #3 in lead squadron, low group. Light flak, enemy fighters buzzing around but no personal attacks - one dent in tail from flak - 1300 miles - no friendly fighter support. Bombing results unobserved. Mission #11.
2-21-44	Target Diepholz in northern Germany. Airfield. Briefed at 0400 a.m. Carried 10-500 GPs in "Stormy Weather." Took off around 0800 a.m. Flew #6 in lead squadron. 2 runs on target - 5/10ths cover - final run visual bombing. A couple of fighters pecked at us. A little flak. Not too bad. Had to drop a couple of bombs in the channel. Believe we hit our target. Mission #12.
2-22-44	Schweinfurt. Recalled at English channel - 24,000 ft. on instruments. Nasty weather.
2-23-44	Target Tue Tau again. Ended up by bombing Rostock in northern Germany - PFF. Hell of a long haul. Carried GPs. Full gas load. Flew "Paper Doll" 122 #5 in the high squadron. Mild fighter attack for half an hour on return. Flew at 12,000 ft. Bombed at 18,000 ft. Plenty tired. Mission #13.
2-24-44	Target Regensburg. Aborted midway across channel. Fuel pressure leak. Carried incendiaries in "Lady Lorraine," Lt. Davis' 865. Lost Lt's Chardi and Kautt today. Chardi and boys got out. Kautt didn't-Damn rough.
2-25-44	Target Frederickshaven - Exhausted - Mission scrubbed - Thank God!
2-28-44	Spare lead on Noball. Did not get off. Rest home Boy!!!
3-8-44	Target: Berlin. Specific target - Eckner near Berlin - ball bearings. Flew 902 - lead of low squadron -carried mixed load of demos and incendiaries. Briefed at 0330. Take off at 0630. No fighters. Lots of flak. A few scratches. Same old grind. No losses in Group. #14.
3-9-44	Target: Berlin. Briefed 0400-0700 take-off. Led group with Major Elder in Lt. Johnson's "Virginia Lee" 164. Flew high group in wing. Carried demos. Went right through center of Berlin flak. Lucky!! Nearly exhausted gas supply. Two ships ditched. Picked up okay. Long haul. #15
3-11-44	Target: Munster. Briefed at 0500. Take off at 0800. Flew "Stormy Weather" #6 low squadron. No fighters. Flak over target. Carried incendiaries. Short haul. Lost Lt. Overdorf. Left formation on return. Don't know why. Quite easy. #16

3-15-44	Target: Brunswick. Briefed at 0500. Take off at 0800. Flew "Stormy Weather" #4 low squadron. Carried demos. Few fighters. Flak intense over target. No squadron losses. Not too rough. Comparatively short. # 17
3-16-44	Target: Augsburg. Briefed at 0400. Takeoff 0700. Led high squadron in "Stormy Weather." PFF rough Long haul into southern Germany. Hit a bunch of fighters. Gave us a good workout. Escort not too good. Lt. Huchins shot down. Several other casualties. Quite a bit of flak. Carried 5-10(X) lb HEs. #18
3-20-44	Target: Frankfurt. Briefed at 0430. 0730 takeoff. Flew "Virginia Lee" lead of high squadron. Carried incendiaries. Nasty weather - turned back 1 /2 hr. short of target - couldn't get through clouds. Some flak - no fighters. #19
3/26/44	Noball. short haul over French coast on Brest peninsula. Flew 135, #2 in lead squadron - carried GPs. Bombed at 20,000 ft. Beautiful weather. Bombed by squadrons. Flak was the most intense and accurate I've seen up until now. Plexiglass nose shattered. Sprayed the bombardier with glass - not hurt. No enemy fighters. Time of flight 5 hrs. #20
4-1-44	Recall Ludwigshaven. Briefed at 0400. Takeoff 0700-flew 021 - #4 in lead squadron. Bad weather forming. Couldn't get to altitude. Turned back just over the French coast. Got some flak damage to left wing. Jettisoned bombs in channel. Comparatively easy. No enemy fighters. #21
4-4-44	Munster, Briefed at 0600. Take off 0900. Led low squadron in composite group. The other two squadrons supplied by other groups. Flew 021. Carried GPs. Missed our primary target. Went on to bomb Handorf airdrome near Munster. Flak was terrific. Lead squadron caught hell. Group leader shot out and two other ships. Ships all over the sky. We were left by ourselves. Managed to keep the low squadron intact. Finally rejoined the high squadron. Picked up a few stragglers. Rough. #22
4-13-44	Augsburg: Briefed at 0700. Take off at 0950. Flew "Virginia Lee" 164 lead of high squadron. Carried 500 lb GPs. Hit heavy flak going in. Knocked several ships out. 021 was hit and eventually aborted and went to Switzerland. I lose another ship! Some other ships returned there. Hit primary target. Flak intense and accurate. Group leader shot out. I finally managed to get group back together - rejoined wing and brought the 12 remaining ships home. Three ships went to Switzerland. I was hit quite hard - about 30 holes - some large, none serious. Had some communications trouble over target but got it repaired in time to get group together. Had to fire some flares. Long hard trip. Seems to be getting rougher. Flak is setting worse and more accurate. #23 Have credit for an extra mission under new 30 tour set up. Put in here. Gratis' #24
4-20-44	Noball: Flew 025, #4 in low squadron. Briefed in afternoon. Carried 6x 1000 GPs. Easy mission- no flak or fighters. Target partially covered by clouds - bombed by squadrons. Today, I found out just before taking off, that I made captain - was anxious to get back and try those bars. #25
4-27-44	Noball: Led high squadron in "Virginia Lee." Carried 6x 1000 GPs. Late morning briefing. Bombed by squadrons. Today was Elder's big chance but

	the ground haze obscured the target - made two runs -could not locate it. Flak very accurate. Lost one ship-Hofsess - ten chutes - dropped bombs in channel. Very disappointed because we didn't do any good. #26 Went on pass at noon. Another mission in afternoon - lost Ashley Guynn - a buddy. Guynn was in my 4th ship. 4 original crews left out of 17 - Rough.
4-30-44	Clermont-Ferrand: Briefed at 0515. Took off at 0815 - flew "Virginia Lee" - lead of low squadron - carried 5x 1000 GPs. Easy but tiring mission. No fighters - escort good - went deep into central France. Hit an airfield - have some pictures. Made two runs - no flak. Good deal - no losses. Lou flew my right wing. #27
5-1-44	Noball recall: Led group in 072 with Major Elder - what a mess. Took off before 0400 for a night assembly to try a razzle dazzle feint before running the regular mission. Ships all over the sky in the dark - hundreds of them. Several ran together. I could see them diving earthward and blow up. Thanked God for daylight. Had to land for another bombsight. Formed group and headed for France. Couldn't bomb because of weather. Got some flak. Day and some lives wasted unnecessarily. #28
5-8-44	Target: Berlin. Flew "Virginia Lee," lead of high squadron. Carried 10x500 GPs. Had a Colonel Watnee aboard - CO of a new B-24 outfit - flew as observer. Turned out to be an easy mission. No fighters, - very heavy flak over target, naturally, but we got through that, Lucky. Weather was good. Bombed Pff #29 - 1 to go!
5-9-44	Target - Laon (airfield in France). Flew "Virginia Lee," lead of composite high squadron. 94th lead, 385th low. Lead had his head up. Two runs on primary - didn't drop either time. Flak very accurate. Lt. Ovens got a direct hit. Went straight down. Finally bombed secondary, Lille. Lots of flak here too. I was really sweating this last one out. No fighters -carried incendiaries. Well, that's 30 and plenty and I'm a "lucky bastard!"

Some days after completing my tour, I was told that my crew was the only one of the original 710th Sqdn. crews to finish intact; that one other finished 9 of 10 crew members; all others were casualties; and five replacement crews were also lost during this time. If this is so, we were indeed lucky.

Radio/Operator/Gunner S/Sgt. John Smith received the DFC for his efforts on our first mission. He enabled us to continue to the target by keeping crew members on oxygen in spite of oxygen failure. A comment in the diary indicates that four aircraft assigned to die were lost while other crews were flying them. I remember only three: "*Maid To Please*," the plane we flew over in; "*Stormy Weather I*" and "*Stormy Weather II*."