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HEADQUARTERS
464th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Intelligence Officer
APO 520 U.S. Army

MCK/WHF/jcm

312.1

6 August 1944

SUBJECT: Narrative Mission Report

TO : Commanding Officer, 55th Bombardment Wing (H),
APO 520, U.S. Army

1. On 6 August 1944, 44 B-24 a/c of 45 a/c scheduled took off at 0655B hours to bomb Le Pontet Oil Storage, France. One (1) a/c failed to take off due to fuel cell leak; engineering department would not allow a/c to take off.

2. The 44 a/c formed two (2) attack units, the first being led by Lt Col Charles F. McKenna III, Deputy Group Commander, and the second by Captain Sherman F. Martin, Operations Officer of the 778th Bombardment Squadron (H).

2. Group and bomber rendezvous was made without incident and as briefed. Wing rendezvous was made by the 465th and 464th Groups approximately two (2) minutes late and pulled up to the wing formation at the Italian Coast.

3. One (1) a/c returned early after feathering No 3 engine because of low oil pressure.

4. Forty three (43) a/c were over the target at 1151B hours (briefed target time 1200B hours). Forty two (42) a/c dropped one hundred and five (105) tons of 500 pound GP bombs (.1 nose and .04 tail fuse) from 22,000 feet.

Two (2) a/c returned five (5) tons of bombs to base. One returned two and one half (2 1/2) tons due to necessity of feathering No 3 engine (see paragraph 2) and one returned two and one half (2 1/2) tons due to rack malfunction. This latter a/c went over the target with the formation.

Recapitulation of Tonnage:

Bombs dropped on target	105 tons
Bombs returned to base	5 tons
Total	110 tons

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Ltr Narrative Mission Report, contd

The target on approach was clear with visibility of fifteen (15) to twenty (20) miles. There was no attempt made by the enemy to obscure the target by smoke screen or other means.

Both strike photos show numerous strikes on all facilities in the Le Pontet Oil Stores area. Hits are grouped in close pattern about the aiming point. East of the target there were approximately ten direct hits on the highway to Mondragon and at least two direct hits on the double tracks railroad to Pedarrides. To the north of the oil stores area, six hits fell among stores at the south end of the explosives works. In addition, there were several near misses on a large building 1200 feet north of the oil stores.

5. The automatic pilot was used by both the first and second attack unit leaders.

6. Flak at the target was MH, with black bursts. A small amount of red bursts were also observed. Some white bursts were observed at from 24,000 to 25,000 feet. Time in flak approximately three (3) to five (5) minutes. There was no flak encountered enroute.

7. Seven (7) a/c were observed, all ME 109s. Three (3) were observed at 44°20'N - 06°42'E, and four (4) at 43°30'N - 06°25'E. These a/c were of a dark color and were flying between 16,000 to 18,000 feet, headed in the opposite direction. No attempt was made to attack our formation.

8. Rendezvous with fighter escort was made at 1117B hours with twelve (12) P-51 a/c at 43°20'N - 06°42'E. Escort last seen at 1212B hours just after leaving the target area near the French Coast.

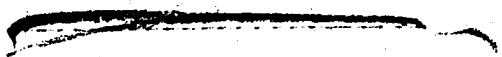
9. Weather at Base - Clear on take-off with a few strato cumulus on the horizon. Visibility was 20 miles. Wind was light and from the southwest.

Enroute to target - Clear to scattered cumulus over the mountains with patchy stratus in valleys. Scattered alto stratus over west coast at 13,000 feet. Clear over water with 4/10 built-up cumulus over Corsica, tops at 12,000 feet.

Target - Clear with scattered cumulus in vicinity.

Return - Heavy cumulonimbus over the Alps. Visibility 20 miles or more over entire route. 7/10 cumulus, tops 14,000

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10. [Faint text, possibly describing a route or location]

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- 12. [Faint text]
- 13. [Faint text]
- 14. [Faint text]
- 15. [Faint text]
- 16. [Faint text]

17. [Faint text]

<u>File</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Altitude</u>	<u>Characteristics</u>
1100A	Blacker	4,000	WY at base, elevation 500 meters.
1300B	Arles - low stone	1,000	Six (6) houses along banks of Rhone river.
1101E	130031-060021E	22,000	W/D with 15/20 ft. tall dispersed.

18. Thirty five (35) are landed at this base between 1500h hours and 1545h hours. Two (2) are landed at this base at 1630h hours and 1745h hours having previously landed at friendly fields for gasoline.

19. The route was flown as briefed until return to Corsica, where due to weather conditions return was flown over southern part of Corsica making land fall on Italian Coast ten (10) miles north of Ajaccio, then to base. Track chart showing route as briefed and as actually flown is included.

