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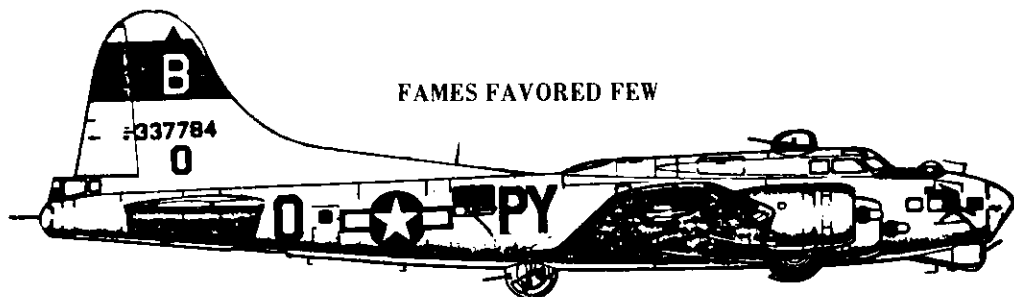
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# 92nd Bombardment Group NEWS



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## OUR TOUR OF OPERATIONS IN THE ETO Dec. 11, 1943 to April 11, 1944

In the continual search for material to publish, lightning occasionally strikes and that rare piece of history surfaces. Such is the case when a packet of photos and material furnished by Glenn Ellis of the 326 BS arrived in the mail. Glenn was the flight engineer and top turret gunner on Capt. Frederick Wenger's crew, November 43 thru April 44. Enclosed in this packet was the mission log typed by Capt. Wenger (now B/Gen Retd) at the time he was flying the missions, photos of personnel, aircraft operations, etc. Glenn's letter provides some interesting anecdotes as well as his motivation for furnishing the data. I understand from my conversation with Glenn that this packet of documented history is but a part of his cache of 92nd history. Glenn is a consultant in the Aircraft Accident Investigation field in Arkansas and Texas and is a strong booster of the 8th AF Historical Society.

Glenn's cover letter revealed his deep feelings for "Fritz" (Capt Wenger). To quote him, "This man personally saved my life on one mission, and his superb pilot skills probably saved my life many more times. On one mission—I can't recall the exact mission—Wenger noticed my top turret had stopped its usual continuous motion, which he knew was always the way Glenn Ellis operated. He gave me a call and I didn't respond. He came back to the turret, shook my leg, no response, he released my seat belt and lifted me down from the turret. Noticing I was "blue" as indigo, he immediately placed his oxygen mask on my face until I returned to life. I shall always have the deepest of gratitude for this man and for his alertness, and the saving of my life. You may recall we lost a number of crew members due to oxygen failures, three tail gunners in the same B-17 on three different missions before maintenance found the defect."

Much of the log is matter of fact and sparse, but how many of us had the presence of mind to keep a log. Here is Fritz Wenger's log:

12/11/43 EMDEN: First flight since we left the states and the whole crew flew it together. Rather unusual since an experienced pilot generally flies the new crew on their first mission. Had moderate flak and no fighters. Mission accomplished. Alt 26,500, A/C F 494, 42 incendiaries. Six hours.

12/20/43 BREMEN: — 44 deg C, Alt 26,000, 42 incendiaries, Flak heavy, few fighters. Two (2) Ju88s right under our nose—20 mm in front of us. One hole in chin turret. Saw first B-17 in flames, also saw plane ditch. Seven hours. (Ed note: 92nd lost one aircraft, eight aborted.)

12/22/43 OSNABRUCKEN: 12 500#, light flak, lots of fighters. Rohlff shot the tail off a ME 109. — 40 deg C at 24,000 ft. A/C J

799. Six hours, ten minutes. (Ed note: Rohlff was Bombar-dier—one aircraft lost.)

12/30/43 LUDWIGSHAVEN: PFF, 42 incendiaries, flak, few fighters. Saw one shot down over France by a Spit. 10/10 clouds. A/C H 975. Eight hours, five minutes. (Ed note: Target Farben Chemical Plant.)

1/4/44 KIEL: Started for Kiel again. Ran into Locks ship on take off and clipped off his tail. Lock's ship had blown a tire and left runway. Damaged our wing section. Very lucky no one was hurt. (Ellis notes that 20 guys beat Jessie Owen's speed on foot to mid-field.)

1/11/44 OSCHERSLEBEN: 12 500#. Roughest yet. All kinds of German fighters from target to the Dutch coast. Continuous attacks for over an hour and a half with other intermittent ones. Hundreds of the SOB's. Saw lots of them shot down and saw bombers going down in smoke. Four blew up near us. Lost our roommate Lock. Saw his ship blow up. (Doc got back OK. He visited the base about the middle of March.) We felt tough about Doc because it was his twenty-fourth. We blew hell out of what we hit, but we did not hit the briefed target. No fighter escort. Got six small holes in the ship. Flak moderate but close. They threw everything at us 20mm, 30 cal, rockets, wire bombs, FW 190's, ME 109 & 210's, JU 87, 88, 188 and 189's. We landed at Bungay after trying to make the base but found it weathered in with ground fog and rain so thick it was like flying in a cloud. Could not see the ground fifty feet above it. Grounded at Bungay for two days and had an enjoyable time. Reports say we lost 60 bombers on that one. It was really hell for awhile. A/C R 362 one of the best ships we have ever flown so far. Incidentally this ship went down on its 31st mission when we were on our last one. Seven hours, twenty minutes. (Ed note: Two aircraft lost. Recall had been sent out but message not received. Division's Forts were jumped by over 200 fighters. Division lost 42 aircraft.

1/21/44 BELLEVUE, FRANCE: Milk run. No bombs dropped due to cloud cover. Flak moderate but at a distance. No fighters. Made three runs on the target and came home with load of 12 500#. Alt 14,000. A/C H 975. Four hours.

1/29/44 FRANKFURT: PFF, moderate flak, six JU 87's and a few 109 and 190's. The JU 87 shot rockets at us. Not too rough. Short of gas and landed at a P-51 base, refueled and came home. Rohlff flew formation with two P-47's on way home. Alt 24,500. — 34 deg C. Eight hours, forty minutes. (Ed note: one aircraft lost.)

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