

**(Retyped from microfilm by Joan D. Stewart)**

**25<sup>th</sup> BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON  
Office of the Historical Officer**

**3 December, 1944**

**NOVEMBER HISTORY**

In November, the 25<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, finishing its eighth month overseas, was more engaged with the enemy Japan than ever before. Five times it bombed important installations ranging from Singapore to Japan proper. Two crews, those of Captain GAUGHAN and Captain COPLEY, completed their missions and were sent back to the States.

At this particular time, several things are apparent. The general trend of thinking is something like this: The war in Europe has gone well, with the Allies within the German border, but the Germans have shown no signs of surrender. And no great strength has come to the China-Burma-India Theatre, which strength is expected by almost everyone once Germany does fall. With Fourteenth Air Force Bases being lost and purposely destroyed, including those at Kweilin and Liuchow, the Twentieth Bomber Command becomes the one weapon which can still bring pain to and inflict great damage upon Japan and its Empire. In India at this time, the weather is about all one could wish. No rain, beautiful sunsets, warm days and cool nights. China is the opposite, with cold days and nights, dampness, and seldom any sun. The Squadron itself has changed, and will undoubtedly change more so. The general exodus of combat crews has already begun. The opposition is smarter now, and more likely to be met in China than ever before. The route to Japan, through necessity, has been more or less stereotyped. Still, morale is higher now than it has been in some time.

On 3 November, the MALAGON RAILROAD YARDS AND SHOPS were bombed from Chakulia, India. Thirteen B-29's were airborne toward Rangoon, and of this number, ten successfully bombed the assigned primary target. Three hundred and ninety one x five hundred pound bombs were released, which is a record for the number of planes bombing. The aiming point, which was the large roundhouse, was completely obliterated.

Major TURNER and Captain SANDERS, both of the 25<sup>th</sup>, flew B-29's on this mission to Rangoon, and were over the primary target. Captain FRANKS lost an engine over the Indian Ocean and was forced to return

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to Base. Enemy air opposition was encountered only after bombs had been released. Although the opposition was weak, some of the boys want to write the Japanese government and recommend one "TOJO" pilot to go to Hell as fast as possible. He attacked the twelve-plane formation, making one pass, and through luck put holes in four of the B-29's. All aircraft returned safely to base.

When missions originate from Chakulia, interrogation of the returning combat crews is very pleasant, and is probably about the conception people have back in the States as to how all B-29 outfits operate. The crews return, are met by waiting trucks and jeeps, and are whisked to the War Room, where Red Cross ladies wait with cold drinks, coffee, sandwiches, and the "combat" whiskey. There in the warm winter sun they leisurely describe their activities.

On the other hand, bombing missions out of Hsinching, in China, are a direct contrast. There, it is common for the Superforts to be landing during an alert or just about the time the Jap planes are taking off. There has seldom been any sun this winter in China and the late afternoons are bitter cold. Some make the long trip back across the Sea of Japan, through occupied China and land without sufficient gasoline to taxi off the runway. It is an anxious time and even Major General LEMAY can be found standing on the line, G.I. shoes and all, chewing his pipe and watching the lead colored skies.

On the heels of the Rangoon Mission came orders for the Twentieth Bomber Command to strike the main dry dock installation at the SINGAPORE NAVAL BASE. This was to be in conjunction with and a follow up to the great Naval Battle which is taking place off Formosa and in the waters around the Philippines. After careful consideration, the mission looked impossible. It was thought that the B-29's could fly the 4100 miles, but only without a bomb load. However, a wire from General MARSHALL himself settled the question and seventeen aircraft from the 40<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group were off on the longest non-stop bombing raid in the history of Aviation. Of these seventeen, seven were flown by pilots and crews out of the 25<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron. Major KINGSBURY, the Squadron Commander, Major SWANCUTT, the Operations Officer, Major DOYLE, Captain GAUGHAN, Captain COPLEY, Captain RICHARD, and Captain SANDERS, with their respective crews, flew the mission, and all bombed the primary target, with the exception of Captain SANDERS, who bombed the Secondary target, the PANGKALANDBRANIEN REFINERY on Sumatra. Fourteen aircraft bombed the assigned primary target from between 20,000 feet and 21,000 feet, with a total of thirty two x one thousand pound bombs. Bombing results were excellent. The large sliding caisson to the dry docks was hit as well as a very large freighter which was in the dry dock for repairs at the time. Strike photos revealed great amounts of water rushing into the dock, and the ship was listing badly. Anti aircraft fire was moderate and four B-29's sustained minor flak damage.

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One enemy fighter was shot down and two were damaged. No B-29's were lost. The total distance of the mission was 4,100 statute miles, and a penetration of over 1200 miles into enemy held territory was necessary. The most precise high level bombing was also necessary to accomplish the desired results. The strike photos obtained clearly indicate that this mission was accomplished in a most satisfactory manner, which, when coupled with the fact that not a single aircraft was lost or even seriously damaged stamps the mission as an outstanding achievement. The total time for the flight was eighteen hours and thirty three minutes.

Taking practically no break at all, the 25<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron began getting B-29's into shape as quickly as possible to send to the forward area in China. By 10 November 1944 a total of twenty-eight planes were at Hsinching for participation in the forthcoming mission, ten of which belonged to the 25<sup>th</sup> Squadron. Taking off at 1046 China time, weighing 134,000 pounds and unable to see the end of the runway on account of the steady rain, twenty-five aircraft were airborne to attack the OMURA AIRCRAFT FACTORY at Omura, Japan. Of the twenty five airborne, two were early returns. Ten of the twenty three aircraft bombing were planes belonging to the 25<sup>th</sup> Squadron. The following is a list of the pilots with their crews who participated in the mission:

Lt. Col	SULLIVAN (flying with Major TURNER'S crew)
Major	MALLORY
Captain	THOMAS
Captain	GERBER
Captain	RICHARD
Captain	FRANKS
Captain	SANDERS
Captain	SCHAAL
Lieut.	BRALEY
Lieut.	VICKERY

Due to weather, a message was sent out changing the primary target from OMURA AIRCRAFT FACTORY to the RAILROAD FACILITIES and SHIPPING at NANKING, CHINA. Four aircraft did not receive the message concerning the change in primary target and proceeded on to OMURA. Two bombed the primary target area through a solid undercast and under very extremely turbulent weather conditions. The other two returned and bombed targets of opportunity, one of whom was Captain FRANKS. Two aircraft bombed the secondary target at SHANGHAI. Of the fourteen bombing NANKING, ten 40<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group aircraft bombed in a twelve ship formation,

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two in a two-ship formation, and two bombed singly - #298, flown by Lieut. BRALEY, scored six near misses on a large AK in the YELLOW SEA.

B-29 #237 is missing. Several aircraft received a message from Lieut. VICKERY indicating that his #4 engine was on fire over NANKING. At this time the key was locked down and it is believed that the crew bailed out in the vicinity of NANKING. Following is a list of the crew, for which great hope is still held that they will be safely returned:

1 <sup>st</sup> Lieut. RICHARD L. VICKERY	Pilot
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut. BERNARD L. PAGE	Copilot
1 <sup>st</sup> Lieut. FELIX O. SINICROPE	Navigator
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut. EDWARD G. CASSIDY	Bombardier
2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieut. WILLIAM G. WARBURTON	Flight Engineer
SGT. JOHN A. MYERS	Radar Operator
S/Sgt. DWIGHT E. COLLINS	Radio Operator
Sgt. FREDERICK S. CARLTON	CFC Gunner
Sgt. CARL R. REIGER	Right Gunner
Sgt... WATSON R. LANKFORD	Left Gunner
Sgt. GEORGE R. SCHUNCHARDT	Tail Gunner
Major MORGAN (Bomber Command)	Passenger

In addition to the full crew on #237, which is listed as missing, one other member of the 25<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron was injured. #344, piloted by Captain DORSEY B. THOMAS, was attacked and damaged by three TOJOS after reaching friendly territory on the way back to Hsinching. In this encounter, the CFC gunner, Sgt. MITCHELL ZIEMBA was wounded when a bullet creased his head. His condition at this writing is good, however, and he is expected to be flying again shortly.

There were no losses in the 40<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, with the exception of Lieut. VICKERY and crew, of the 25<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron.

Upon return to India, the very large administrative job lay before Major WILLIAM KINGSBURY, the Commanding Officer. This consisted of writing up recommendations for awards and decorations. Practically all of the combat crew personnel of the Squadron have received the Air Medal, or an Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal, and Captain COPLEY and entire crew received the Distinguished Flying Cross for their photographic reconnaissance work in a B-29 in China and over Japan. It is anticipated that more decorations will be forthcoming in the near future, in recognition of the really tremendous task which has been done so well by the combat crews of the Squadron.

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Because of poor weather over the target on previous missions, which made visual bombing impossible, the Omura Aircraft Factory at OMURA, JAPAN was again, on November 21, listed as the primary target. On this, the fourth mission to OMURA, a total of twenty-eight B-29's from the 40<sup>th</sup> Group were airborne. Of the twenty-eight a total of twenty one were over the assigned target and twenty aircraft succeeded in bombing at 22,000 feet. Both incendiary and demolition bombs were used. As usual, the weather at OMURA was bad, and cloud cover was reported as being from six-tenths to nine-tenths. This made it necessary to once again bomb the target by radar.

The 25<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron contributed seven B-29's out of the twenty one that hit OMURA. Captain FRANKS was forced to return with number three engine feathered. Following are the pilots who participated in the mission:

Major SWANCUTT  
Major MALLORY  
Major WESCHLER  
Major DOYLE  
Captain SCHAAL  
Captain CAUGHAN  
Captain COPLEY  
Captain FRANKS

The Group met strong fighter opposition of all types, and set a new record for individual attacks. There were seventy passes made, but no B-29's were shot down. Twelve fighters were destroyed, two probably destroyed, and seven were damaged. Anti-aircraft fire encountered was weak and inaccurate.

The airfield at Hsinching was raided by a small force of Japanese bombers on the night of November 21. Everyone hit the slit trenches and there were no casualties reported. Three parked B-29's and one G-109 sustained varying degrees of bomb damage. In addition, some stores of gasoline were destroyed.

No sooner had the planes returned to India and the necessary maintenance work was done than a field order was received to strike the Bansue Marshalling Yards at BANGKOK, THAILAND. In accordance with this field order, the 40<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group dispatched fifteen B-29's, thirteen of which successfully bombed the Yards. Of the thirteen, five belonged to the 25<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron and were flown by the following pilots and their crews:

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Major	TURNER
Captain	THOMAS
Captain	GRESHAM
Captain	SCHAAL
Lieutenant	BRALEY

Due to mechanical difficulties, Major TURNER bombed the target of last resort, the Japanese Storage Area at PAUNGUP, in BURMA.

The observed results of the bombing was excellent, and the weather was CAVU. No fighter opposition was encountered and anti-aircraft fire was meager but accurate. Due to difficulty in finding the target two bombing runs were made and all bombs dropped on the second run. There were two slightly wounded gunners, but they belonged to Squadrons other than the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Besides contributing thirty-six percent of the total Group effort over primary targets in November, thus leading the other Squadrons, the 25<sup>th</sup> manages not to deteriorate socially. Most social gatherings consist of little informal get-togethers in the barracks area. Though no invitations are issued, and no memorandum is out, anyone participating is advised to bring their own flak helmet and other protective equipment. There seems to be no doubt in anyone's mind about the 25<sup>th</sup> being distinct, and it has a strong tendency to stay that way.

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