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## SECRET

HEADQUARTERS 40<sup>TH</sup> BOMBARDMENT GROUP  
Office of the Historical Officer

APO Number 631  
20 November 1944

### GROUP HISTORY

1 October thru 31 October 1944

“20 Oct 44 – United States Army Troops with General DOUGLAS MAC ARTHUR in personal command, land on LEYTE ISLAND in the PHILIPPINES.” The electrifying communiqué spread throughout the world and members of the 40<sup>th</sup> Group received the news with pride because they knew they had made a valiant contribution to the success of the operations.

It so happened that as General MAC ARTHUR's men were approaching LEYTE from the Pacific, B-29's from the 40<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group roared out of China to strike twice at Japanese military installations on the Island of FORMOSA, and before month's end, they added yet another blow by bombing the aircraft factory at OMURA on the Japanese mainland. The efforts of the 40<sup>th</sup> Group helped materially to neutralize the enemies capabilities for contesting the invasion of the PHILIPPINES.

October was an eventful month in many ways. The long awaited and seemingly unfortunate, “Streamlining Orders,” became effective on October 20<sup>th</sup>. The new Table of Organization called for a reduction in the number of squadrons from four to three, and a slight overall reduction in the number of administrative and maintenance personnel, although total aircraft and combat crew strength, would remain about the same. One squadron had to be inactivated and the blow fell on the 395<sup>th</sup> who had the highest numerical designation. Aircraft and combat crews from the 395<sup>th</sup> were transferred to the three remaining squadrons. Simultaneously with this move, all maintenance squadrons were amalgamated with the bombardment squadron which they had served. Personnel from the 4<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Squadron who had been associated with the 395<sup>th</sup> were reassigned to the 25<sup>th</sup>, 44<sup>th</sup>, or 45<sup>th</sup> Squadrons. In the final shuffling there were a number of overages who were placed in Group Headquarters of a Group Pool awaiting assignment. Many of the latter joined the 28<sup>th</sup> Service Group which became more closely associated with the 40<sup>th</sup> Group.

Tactical operations for the Group began early in the month. It was decided that combat B-29's should carry bombs rather than gasoline over the hump as XX Bomber Command now had a fleet of C-109 tankers carrying gasoline to the forward area. On 2 October some of the newer B-29's with center wing tanks were dispatched to China with a load of 40 x 500 pound bombs in each airplane. The trip was accomplished without any unusual occurrences.

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On 9 October, the 40<sup>th</sup> Group began dispatching aircraft to China for the first of three missions scheduled for October. The target was the OKAYAMA airfield and arsenal at OKAYAMA, FORMOSA, called by the 20<sup>th</sup> Air Force as "the most important target south of Japan." The story of this successful operation is told in the following narrative from the Group Consolidated Mission report:

"In accordance with Field Order #10, XX Bomber Command, dated 6 October 1944 the 40<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group started dispatching aircraft from rear to forward area on 9 October 1944. By "D" day, 14 October 1944, a total of 34 B-29 aircraft were at A-1.

"Starting at 132256Z on 14 October 1944 all 34 aircraft were airborne to attack the OKAYAMA airfield and arsenal at OKAYAMA, FORMOSA. By 132338Z 32 aircraft had been airborne, the remaining two being delayed, one by mechanical difficulties and the other becoming mired when it taxied off the runway. Both difficulties were overcome and the last aircraft was airborne at 140117Z.

"Weather at take-off was overcast at 3500 feet with good visibility. Of the 34 aircraft airborne 28 are known to have visually bombed the primary target with from excellent to unobserved results. Two aircraft visually bombed the assigned tertiary target (shipping and harbor installations along the China coast) with poor results. One aircraft bombed the last resort target (airfield at Hengyang, China) by radar with unobserved results due to 10/10 cloud cover. One aircraft was forced to jettison its bombs due to engine failure, one aircraft returned to base almost immediately due to mechanical difficulties and one aircraft #513, after reporting returning to base on three engines has not been heard from at time of this report.

"A total of 473, 500 lb An-M 64 TNT bombs with .1 sec nose and .01 sec tail fusing and 236, 500 lb AN-M 76 type incendiary bombs with instantaneous nose and non-delay tail fusing were dropped on the primary target.

"No enemy fighter opposition was encountered and antiaircraft fire was meager and from accurate to inaccurate.

"Reports of high altitude balloons were received but the distance involved and the possible similarity to antiaircraft bursts prevents any definite conclusions.

"Reports of damage inflicted by recent Naval air attacks were received. Complete lack of air opposition can probably be attributed to these attacks.

"All aircraft with the exception of #513, still unreported, returned safely to A-1 with last aircraft landing at 141015Z. A two ball alert was received just prior to landings but did not develop further. During

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final stages of interrogation another two ball alert was sounded but this also failed to materialize.

“No conclusive damage assessment is possible without photo reconnaissance.”

At the completion of the mission the Group did not return to India, but awaited further order in China and they came the next day. Another strike was to be made, this time a maximum effort against Japanese installations at EINANSHO airfield and repair depot at TAIWAN, FORMOSA. The assigned secondary target was shipping harbor installations at TAKAO, FORMOSA. This was to be a special mission by 40<sup>th</sup> Group airplanes, on 17 October, as planes from the other Groups had flown a mission on 16 October.

How this special operation progressed, and how the effort became divided between the primary and secondary targets, due to weather, is given in the following account from the Group Consolidation Mission Report:

“In accordance with instructions of Commanding General, XX Bomber Command, the 40<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group carried out a maximum effort strike against enemy installations at EINANSHO Airfield and Repair Depot at TAINAN, FORMOSA. The assigned secondary target was shipping and harbor installations at TAKAO, FORMOSA. Tertiary target, shipping and harbor installations along China coast and the last resort target, the town of HENGYANG, CHINA.

“A total of 32 B-29 aircraft at A-1 were considered available for the mission. Starting at 16230Z 30 aircraft were airborne with the last aircraft taking off at 170015Z. Two aircraft were unable to take off due to mechanical difficulties.

“Of the 30 aircraft airborne 10 attacked the assigned primary target dropping a total of 174 GP and 50 incendiary bombs from 24000 feet with reported good results. Weather over primary target was such that the target was covered by cloud from the east up to the extreme western edge. The target was clearly visible coming in from the west and bombs were seen to explode in the aiming point area. No worthwhile photos were obtained due to cloud cover.

“Between 12 and 14 enemy S/E fighters were sighted below the formation but attacks were not pressed home in this area. Antiaircraft fire was meager and inaccurate. Several aircraft reported sighting high altitude balloons, spherical in shape with a long black box-like object suspended beneath them. The balloons were reported at 23000 feet and it is believed photos were obtained.

“Thirteen aircraft proceeded to the primary target but finding it cloud covered went on to the secondary target and dropped a total of 281 GP

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and 121 incendiary bombs from 24000 feet with good results. Approximately 15 ships, six of which were large ocean going type, were found in the harbor. The center of the main bomb pattern appears from strike photos to have hit in the midst of the anchored shipping slightly short of the assigned aiming point. Three or more ships appear to have sustained direct hits and there are apparently numerous near misses. Some bombs are seen to be striking the main northern dock area. Weather was CAVU.

“Fighter opposition was moderate but attacks were vigorously pressed home as the formation was leaving the target. Our aircraft claim a total of eight enemy aircraft destroyed and seven damaged. None of our aircraft were lost to enemy fighters.

“Antiaircraft fire was moderate but accurate and was probably directed by enemy aircraft flying parallel to our formation.

“One aircraft, due to failure to fuel transfer system, was forced to bomb a tertiary target (AMOY on China Coast) from 20000 feet with unobserved results due to 8/10 cloud cover.

“Six aircraft were forced to abort due to mechanical difficulties. Four returned safely to A-1, one to A-3 and one, #342, crashed about 10 miles southwest of A-1 when an engine caught on fire. Nine crew members parachuted to safety but two were unable to get out of the aircraft in time and were killed in the crash.

“Of the 24 aircraft bombing assigned targets 22 returned safely to base, one landed at LUICHOW and one at SUICHWAN.

“In addition to the two men killed in #342 one crew member of aircraft #295 was lost by being blown out of the plane when the side blister blew out shortly after leaving the secondary target. Other crew members report seeing his chute open but that he was strafed by enemy fighters.

“Four crew members sustained minor wounds from flak and enemy fighters.

“Four aircraft sustained minor battle damage.

“The last aircraft landed at A-1 at 1709Z.

To complete a busy month the 40<sup>th</sup> Group was ordered to bomb the OMURA aircraft plant at OMURA, JAPAN on 25 October. CAVU weather prevailed over the target and strike photographs indicated that the bombing was excellent, probably the best ever accomplished by aircraft of the 40<sup>th</sup> Group. A complete account of the raid is given in the following narrative from the Group Consolidated Mission Report:

“In accordance with XX Bomber Command, Field Order #13, dated 20 October, 40<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group started dispatching B-29 aircraft from the rear

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to forward area on 23 Oct 44. By 24 Oct 44 a total of 21 B-29 aircraft were at A-1 for participation in the mission.

“Starting at 241828Z a total of 14 aircraft were airborne to attack the OMURA Aircraft Plant at OMURA, JAPAN. The last aircraft was airborne at 241911Z. A total of seven aircraft were ground aborts due to mechanical difficulties.

“Of the 14 aircraft airborne two were early returns due to mechanical difficulties, one was forced to bomb a target of opportunity, SAISHU ISLAND, from 20000 feet with good observed results, due to the fact that the two aircraft from another group that were in formation with this aircraft turned back about half way across the China Sea and the airplane commander had been briefed not to go to the PT alone. The remaining 11 aircraft bombed the PT from 25000 feet with excellent results. A total of 16.5 tons of HE and 5.5 tons of incendiary bombs were dropped and strike photos confirmed the observed results.

“Enemy aircraft opposition was moderate to meager and our aircraft claim only one enemy aircraft destroyed and one damaged.

“AA over the PT was meager and inaccurate. However, meager but accurate AA fire was encountered over NAN-YANG in friendly territory and AA over NAGASAKI was moderate and accurate.

“One aircraft reported a possible high altitude balloon in the PT area but this observation was not substantiated by other aircraft.

“Weather over the PT and TO bombed was CAVU. Considerable enemy naval strength was observed and reported.

“Eight aircraft returned directly to A-1, landing at from 250845Z to 251018Z. Two aircraft were forced to land at other bases due to lack of fuel. One aircraft #281 is known to have crashed approximately 50 miles southeast of LACHOKOW, due to lack of gas. It is believed from intercepted radio message and interrogation of other crews that this aircraft was hit by AA over NAGASAKI which resulted in one engine going out and the pilot and flight engineer being wounded. At the time of this report four crew members are reported to be safe”.

A statistical summary of three October missions is as follows:

	<u>14 Oct</u>	<u>17 Oct</u>	<u>25 Oct</u>
A/C bombing Primary Target (Including Secondary on Mission Oct 17)	28	22	12
Average flying time – Form #1	10:24 hrs	10:34 hrs	14:40 hrs

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	<u>14 Oct</u>	<u>17 Oct</u>	<u>25 Oct</u>
Average gross weight at take-off	132,237	132,137	130,599
Average gallons fuel, take-off	6171	6171	7251
Average gallons fuel consumed	5383	5354	6728
Average gallons fuel remaining	821	817	521
Average air miles flown	2527	2546	3191

Bomb loading varied according to type of airplane (center wing tank or otherwise). On the average 24 to 30 x 500 pound bombs were carried in the October 14 and 17<sup>th</sup> missions. The longer mission of October 25 necessitated a reduced bomb load averaging 8 x 500 pounds.

The gasoline remaining at the conclusion of the October 25 raid was not too adequate. #303 piloted by Captain WM. R. HOWARD, landed on one engine with all tanks dry.

### Cargo Operations

Sixty-two cargo missions were flown during October, 47 by combat B-29's and 15 by tankers. In as much as the combat B-29's carried bombs, gasoline deliveries dropped to a net total of 17,750 gallons.

Group Statistical Section prepared a report of all cargo operations for the period April 27 through October 31. The tabulated summary is as follows:

Number of trips by tanker B-29's	97	
Number of trips by combat B-29's	217	
Number of trips total	314	
Gasoline delivered to forward area	386,371	gallons
Oil delivered to forward area	12,220	gallons
Passengers delivered to forward area	230	
Dry cargo delivered to forward area	822,978	pounds
Combined weight all deliveries	1616	tons
Average take-off weight tanker B-29's	131,973	pounds
Average take-off weight combat B-29's	131,300	pounds
Average gasoline delivered tanker B-29's	2312	gallons
Average gasoline delivered combat B-29's	746	gallons
Average total weight of cargo tanker B-29's	16,187	pounds
Average total weight of cargo combat B-29's	7661	pounds

Group personnel who had been at Chakulia since the middle of March voted October as the nicest month yet experienced from the stand point of weather. Average temperature was 79

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degrees. The average daily maximum was 87 degrees, minimum 71 degrees. The highest temperature recorded was 92 degrees on October 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. The lowest, 64 degrees on October 25<sup>th</sup>. 3.22 inches of rain fell in one day, October 3, but total rainfall for the month was only 6.05 inches.

**WILLIAM M. MC NAIR**  
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Actg Historical Officer

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# R E S T R I C T E D

## MONTHLY HISTORICAL REPORT

Group History, 1 Oct thru 31 Oct 44 Hq 40<sup>th</sup> Bomb Gp, APO 631

1. Capt. David P. Allen Jr. arrived at this station 17 October to act as Command Armament Officer in the absence of Major McBride. Capt. Allen is on detached service from the Armament Laboratory at Wright Field and is expected to remain here until the return of Major McBride.

2. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Sanford G. Driskill and detachment arrived at this station 19 October after closing the "AAF Special Projects Office" at Casablanca. Lt. Driskill, Special Project Officer, was sent to Casablanca 15 July to succeed Lt. Col. C. H. S. Russell who was returning to the United States. Other personnel consisting of two officers and six enlisted men had been on duty at that station since April, having been a part of water-air XX Bomber Command personnel shipments through that station. Purpose of subject detachment was to expedite shipments of critical XX Bomber Command cargo through that station. Subject personnel were re assigned to their former groups and proceeded immediately to their respective stations.

3. Col. Frank Cook who arrived at this headquarters 11 October from the Engineering Division, Wright Field on temporary duty, departed 26 October for return to the United States. While here, Col. Cook worked with engineering personnel of this command in an attempt to iron out many of the present maintenance difficulties, and to compile information for study and experimentation at Wright Field. Col. Cook's visit was considered a success and indicates Wright Field's eagerness to assist us in every way possible by getting first hand information on the difficulties encountered here, climatic and operational as well as mechanical.

4. Continuing his "around the World Tour" Col. Sol Rosenblatt departed this headquarters on 29 October after being here slightly over a month. Col. Rosenblatt, currently performing duties as Assistant A-4 of the Twentieth Air Force, is touring the various theaters disseminating information from Headquarters, Army Air Forces, collecting other information to take back, and last but not least, attempting to smooth out several snags encountered in our dealings with theater supply bigwigs here. Col. Rosenblatt's pet peeve upon departure was the theater's attempt to curtail the XX Bomber Command's independence in reference to cargo tonnage allocations from the United States. To our sorrow, the theater was partially successful and succeeded in maintaining a partial control over cargo shipped from the United States to this command. Previously, lump sum monthly allocations were made, and we could ship anything from toothpicks to complete airplanes, without question.

5. The early promotion showered upon an individual in the Supply and Maintenance position during the past month was the boost from Captain to Major for Major Charles McBride. The only sad part about it is that Major McBride had departed for ninety day temporary duty in the United States only two days previously and will not receive notification for approximately two weeks, or until he arrives at Wright Field, his temporary duty station. Major McBride was sent to the Armament Laboratory at Wright Field for study and experimentation on present, revised, and new CFC equipment.

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**MONTHLY HISTORICAL REPORT**

**Group History, 1 Oct thru 31 Oct 44 Hq 40<sup>th</sup> Bomb Gp, APO 631 (Contd)**

6. Lt. Col. Morris of the Logistical Support Unit reports that ATC hauled the tremendous daily sum of four hundred tons of POL supplies on numerous occasions during October. As the ATC is carrying the bulk of XX Bomber Command supplied to China bases, they should be commended on their constant effort to meet obligated tonnage allocations.

7. Supply procedure adjustments are underway to adjust present procedures to fit changing conditions. Upon notification by Washington that the Casablanca Shuttle was to be discontinued and west coast to Calcutta cargo all-water shipments to take its place, Major James R. Byers started large scale planning to meet all foreseen and unforeseen bottlenecks. Shipments are to be received at the Calcutta docks, immediately loaded on freight cars and shipped to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Air Depot for storage, issue and use. The previous "Compound" procedure of handling cargo at Calcutta received a thumbs down by Major Byers as there were near disastrous results with that system when used for initial B-29 shipments to this theater.

8. In accordance with a Patterson Field request, the Supply Section is compiling information and recommendations for the revision of present supply tables II and III. Being this command's experience on the use and practicability of present supply tables, it is hoped that other B-29 units will go to their overseas theater, and go into combat, better and more adequately supplied with essential equipment, than this unit. The completed report will be forwarded to Headquarters, Air Technical Service Command, approximately 15 November 1944.

9. After extensive training at Wright Field, twelve Electrical Engineering Officers arrived at this station for further assignment, one to each bombardment squadron, to carry on work started by Major Moore and Capt. Green who are also from Wright Field. As difficulties had been experienced in creating sufficient electrical power to ground operate turrets and other electrical airplane equipment, Major Moore and Capt. Green were placed here on temporary duty to work out a solution. Present equipment was found to be too small, with too high a mortality rate for efficient operation. Arc welders which had been modified into electrical generators were requested from ATC and upon their receipt, were put into use to furnish the needed power. Above mentioned officers will be assigned to jobs with primary duty to supervise the use of all electrical power units in their respective organizations.

10. A new addition was made to the engineering staff of Supply and Maintenance upon the arrival of Lt. Col. Benjamin F. Fulkrod, who was assigned as successor to Lt. Col. Roger P. Fuller as Chief, Engineering Section. Lt. Col. Fulkrod was formerly on Major General LeMay's staff in the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, and has an excellent record for efficient aircraft maintenance to his credit. Lt. Col. Fulkrod arrived at this station on 7 October 1944.

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