



13TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)

FEBRUARY 1944

13TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
3RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)
Office of the Squadron Commander

AEB/rlg

APO 713-1,
7 March 1944.

SUBJECT: Unit History, 13th Bomb SQUADRON, month of February.

TO : Commanding General, V Bomber Command, APO 713-1.

1. Nil.
2. Strength:
 - (a) February 1, 1944: Officers, 45; Enlisted Men, 259.
 - (b) Net change: Officers, increase of 2; Enlisted Men, decrease of 4.
 - (c) February 29, 1944: Officers, 47; Enlisted Men, 255.
3. Station: APO 713, Unit 1, Nadzab, New Guinea.
 - (a) Nil.
 - (b) Nil.
4. Training.
 - (a) February 1, 1944, 16 A20Gs (14 in, 2 out).
February 29, 1944, 15 A20Gs (9 in, 6 out).
 - (b) Trained combat pilots February 1, 1944, 31; February 29, 1944, 32.
Trained combat gunners and photographers, February 1, 1944, 45; February 29, 1944, 48.
 - (c) New crew members are assigned to old crew members, (pilot to pilot, gunner to gunner, etc.), trained and checked out for combat by them.
 - (d) Nil.
5. Not applicable.
6. Squadron Commanding Officer.
 - (a) Theodore G. Fitch, Captain, Air Corps.
 - (b) From this organization.
 - (c) Experienced combat leader.
 - (d) Par. 16, SO #166 Hqs. 3rd Bomb Group, dated 21 December 1943.
 - (e) Dobodura, APO 503, 21 December 1943.
 - (f) Not applicable.
 - (g) Not applicable.
 - (h) Not applicable.

Unit History, 13th Bomb Squadron, Cont'd.

7. Outstanding missions.

Tadji Airdrome.

- (a) First low-level attack of war on Tadji Airdrome.
- (b) Tadji airdrome, Aitape, New Guinea (0310S-14200E).
- (c) Bismarck Campaign.
- (d) 12 February 1944.
- (e) Eleven A20G type aircraft.
- (f) Bombs and ammunition:
 - (1) 420 X 23 lb. parafrags, 18,000 X 50 cal.
 - (2) 30 X 23 lb. parafrags.
 - (3) 6 X 23 lb. parafrags.
- (g) Nil.
- (h) Five enemy aircraft on ground left smoking or afire and probably destroyed. Three enemy aircraft on ground probably damaged by strafing. Three direct bomb hits on a 1500 ton enemy merchant vessel and two luggers set afire 3 miles off shore from Tadji.

Kavieng Harbor.

- (a) First light bomber attack on Kavieng Harbor.
- (b) Kavieng, New Ireland (0234S-15049E).
- (c) Bismarck Campaign.
- (d) 15 February 1944.
- (e) 12 A20G type aircraft.
- (f) Bombs and ammunition:
 - (1) 33 X 500 lb. 4/5 sec. delay bombs, 8,800 X 50 cal.
 - (2) 12 X 500 lb. 4/5 sec. delay bombs.
 - (3) 1 X 500 lb. 4/5 sec. delay bomb.
- (g) Nil.
- (h) Direct bomb hits set afire and probably destroyed a 1,000 ton enemy merchant vessel. One of six or eight float planes was set afire and destroyed by strafing. Two gun boats and town area was bombed resulting in two large fires with black smoke in town district.

8. Enemy aircraft and shipping.

- (a) Nil definite ships, two definite aircraft on ground.
- (b) Probably destroyed: two 1500 ton merchant vessels, one 750 ton merchant vessel, 3 luggers, 4 grounded aircraft.

9. Killed in action at Kavieng, New Ireland, 15 February 1944, by explosion of bombs from preceding plane: 1st Lt. William T. Pearson, O-789129 and S/Sgt. Michael P. Schussman, 36109753. Killed in action at Kavieng, New Ireland, 15 February 1944, probably by enemy ack-ack: 2nd Lt. Sam L. Norris, O-677419, Sgt. Donald N. Gamage, 11050806.

Unit History, 13th Bomb Squadron, Cont'd.

9. Cont'd.

Missing in action at Hansa Bay, New Guinea, 28 February 1944, probably by enemy ack-ack: 2nd Lt. Norman H. Williams, O-798393, Sgt. Raymond E. Stricklin, 35209754.

Two A20G aircraft lost at Kavieng, New Ireland. One A20G aircraft lost at Hansa Bay, New Guinea (see circumstances above). One A20G lost in crash after takeoff in Markham River between Nadzab and Lae, 19 February 1944.

10. Lt. William T. Pearson carried out a lone bombing and strafing raid on Wewak and Boram airdromes at low level on 12 February 1944. Action occurred when Lt. Pearson was unable to overtake his squadron on a mission to Tadjil after a delayed takeoff due to mechanical trouble. Sincere disappointment in missing out on the first attack on Tadjil motivated his daring solo attack. Lt. Pearson was killed two days later at Kavieng.
11. Nil.
12. See Page 4.

Unit History, 13th Bomb Squadron, Cont'd.

12. Narrative report.

February was the first full month of operations with A20s in the 13th and our first month at our new base at Nadzab. It was hard to say goodbye to our dependable old Mitchell strafers. The old box cars with the sassy noses held many memories of historic pioneer missions over Wewak and Rabaul "back when it was rough" over those targets. The new A20s were pilots' dreams though, even if their new maintenance problem did give some of the old line men with 26 months overseas, one more reason for preferring life in the Forty-eight to the tropical enchantment of New Guinea.

The squadron carried out fifteen missions in February despite all the work and inconvenience of moving by air and setting up in a new area. On the 2nd and 4th the squadron pounded the Jap inland bases at Amele and Marienberg, blowing to smithereens a dozen buildings. Several cows were strafed at Marienberg and were prefactorily reported as "three enemy cows, in good condition, destroyed by strafing." On the 6th on a sweep over Muschu Island, Wewak, "Oscar" our famous Grim Reaper trade mark, set a small freighter and a lugger afire.

Participating in the first strike of the war on the new enemy airdrome at Tadjji, above Wewak, 11 planes of the 13th strafed and parafragged the drome, destroying or damaging at least 5 serviceable Nip aircraft on the ground. Direct bomb hits on a small Nip freighter and a lugger off shore were included in the bargain.

On the 15th and 19th, the 13th participated in the first low-level attacks on Kavieng, New Ireland, leaving a 1500 ton freighter and a Pete float plane afire in the harbor and scoring three direct hits on a corvette 15 miles south of Kavieng. Oscar had his first really hard luck on these missions. Two planes were lost in Kavieng Harbor on the 15th and one in the Markham River on the 19th. The crew of the last plane was saved. During the month Dagua airdrome was raided twice and Hansa Bay once. Fires were started in dispersal and store areas in all three strikes. On the Hansa Bay raid (28th) one A-20 was lost but the gunner was saved by a Catalina.

The new Squadron camp area was set up in record time and in record style. Through trading off precious bottles of liquor, through expert conniving and through just plain good old Army "racking off", men and officers alike rounded up enough lumber and other materials to give the site and shacks the well-ordered appearance of a tailor-made camp back in the land of U.S.O.s and Coca-cola. February was a month of hard work for Oscar, but a month of action and good spirits.

Alfred E. Baucum
ALFRED E. BAUCOM,
Captain, Air Corps,
Commanding.

FEBRUARY 1944

- Feb. - 2: Twelve A-20s attacked Mualo Mission. All bombs hit in target area with several white European type buildings being demolished by direct hits. Other buildings were hit including the Mission building. The area was thoroughly strafed with but little observed results. 38 x 500 lb. bombs and 14,000 x .50 calibre ammunition was expended.
- 4 Feb. - 4: Eleven A-20s bombed Marienberg, New Guinea. One European type building and one large native constructed building were demolished by direct hits. Other buildings were hit. One was believed to be a machine shop.. A fuel dump was believed hit when a large column of smoke arose during a strafing and bombing pass. 35 x 500 lb. bombs and 2 x 250 lb. bombs and 6,200 x .50 calibre ammunition was expended.
- 5 Feb. - 36A-2: Ten A-20s assigned to strike ack-ack positions at Amar Point were forced to return due to bad weather.
- 6 Feb. - 37A-2: Six A-20s attacked reported barges at Kairvui and Muscma Islands. One sugar chandler received a direct hit. One lugger and a small gunboat damaged by near misses. All shipping in harbor was strafed with unobserved results. 22 x 500 lb. bombs, 2 x 250 lb. bombs and 6,500 x .50 calibre ammunition expended.
- 12 Feb. - 25-309: Eleven A-20s attacked building area near Darapop and Karak Village, New Guinea. At least 6 or 7 buildings demolished. Both villages were heavily strafed with unobserved results. 34 x 500 lb. bombs, 2 x 250 lb. bombs and 9,000 x .50 calibre ammunition expended.
- 13 Feb. - 34-309: Twelve A-20s attacked grounded aircraft at Tadji airdrome. One Letty and one Hamp received direct parafrag hits, and were set on fire. Three camouflaged single engine planes were strafed and also set afire. Three Zekes were damaged by strafing. Two luggers were strafed and left burning. Three direct hits were scored on a Fox Tare Dog and the snip exploded. 420 x 23 lb. parafrags, 11 x 500 lb. bombs and 18,000 x .50 calibre ammunition was expended.
- 14 Feb. - 14B-309: Eleven A-20s bombed supply dumps at Dagua Airdrome. Three grounded aircraft were set afire and one machine gun silenced near the strip. P-40s intercepted attacking enemy planes and fought them off. 80 x 100 lb. bombs, 16 x 500 lb. bombs and 16,500 x .50 calibre ammunition was expended.

- 15 Feb -- FFO 15B-309:- 12 A-20s bombed enemy shipping at Kavieng Harbor, New Ireland. 2 direct hits were scored on one Fox Tare Charlie and the ship caught on fire. 2 Gunboats were strafed. 6 bombs were dropped among 6 & 8 Jap float planes and 2 were definitely destroyed and 3 probably damaged. The entire coastal area and shore installation were heavily strafed and many fires were started. One A-20 crashed in flames about 1 mile north of Nusa Island. Another A-20 crashed 30 mile SW of Kavieng and the plane broke into three pieces and sank with no apparent survivors. Four of our planes received holes from M/G fire and one plane received a medium A/A burst. 33 x 500 lb. bombs and 9,200 x .50 cal. ammo was expended.
- 17 Feb -- 17B-309:- 12 A-20s of the 13th Squadron attacked enemy convoy between Kavieng and Rabaul. A direct bomb hit scored on an enemy corvette lying 1 1/2 miles off Kavieng, New Ireland, but the ship was not seen to explode. Debris from a burning merchant vessel about 1/2 mile NW of Corvette was strafed with unobserved results. One of our planes crash landed in the Markham River. Reports on hand at this time indicate that the pilot and gunner are safe. 19,500 lb. bombs and 3,200 x 50 cal. ammo were expended.
- 24 Feb -- FFO 55-A-2:- 7 A-20s struck stores areas at the Dagua air-drome, New Guinea. All bombs were dropped in the assigned areas and one large fire was started. All other results were unobserved. 22x 500 lb. bombs and 6,600 x .50 cal. ammo were expended.
- 26 Feb -- FFO 59C:- 9 A-20s attacked enemy stores at Hansa Bay, New Guinea. All bombs were dropped in the target area and many small fires were started with unobserved results. One of our planes crashed in Hansa Bay and no life rafts were seen. 27 x 500 lb. bombs and 8,000 x .50 cal. ammo. were expended.

During the month of February the 13th Squadron flew 10 combat mission and 90 sorties. A total of 71 tons of bombs were dropped and 97,250 x .50 calibre ammunition was expended.