

40th Bombardment Group History Reports August 1945

FRONTISPIECE

a. Date of arrival and departure from each station occupied in the Theater: Negative

b. Losses in action, Personnel: Missing 12

c. Awards and Decorations: See Inclosures

d. Organization: Negative

e. Strength, Personnel:

| | | | | |
|-----------|---|--------------|---|-------------------|
| 1 August | - | 474 Officers | - | 1818 Enlisted Men |
| 31 August | - | 502 Officers | - | 1696 Enlisted Men |

f. Strength, Airplanes:

| | | |
|-----------|---|----|
| 1 August | - | 48 |
| 31 August | - | 45 |

g. Losses, Airplanes:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Operational: | 2 |
| Combat: | 1 |
| War Weary: | 3 |

(This page retyped from microfilm by Sparky Corradina)

**40th Bombardment Group
History Reports, August 1945**

Retyped from Microfilm by Joan D. Stewart

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CHRONOLOGY

- 1 August - Briefing and take off for mission to Hachioji**
- 2 August - return from Hachioji**
- 4 August - Classes begun on Military Courtesy and Discipline**
- 5 August - Briefing and take off for mission to Imabari**
- 6 August - Return from Imabari**
Briefing for mission to Toyokawa Naval Arsenal
- 7 August - Mission to Toyokawa Naval Arsenal**
First announcement of atomic bomb
Briefing for mission to Yawata
- 8 August - Take offs for Yawata fouled up by 462nd planes; no 40th**
Group aircraft airborne
Briefing and take-off for mission to Fukuyama
- 9 August - Return from Fukuyama**
First news of Russia's entry into Pacific War
- 10 August - Japs broadcast acceptance of Potsdam terms on certain conditions**
- 12 August - Announcement of Allied terms to Japanese**
Work begun unloading bombs and loading cargo racks
All firearms turned in
- 13 August - Reloading of bombs begun**
- 14 August - Mission to Hikari Naval Arsenal**
Announcement by Radio Tokyo that Allied terms were accepted

CHRONOLOGY (Continued)

- 15 August - Announcement by President Truman that Japan had surrendered**
- 16 August - Day off**
- 29 August - Briefing for POW missions**
- 30 August - POW missions to Kyustsu, Korea, and Formosa. One plane and crew missing.**
- 31 August - Display of Strength Mission to Japan**

GROUP HISTORY

1 August thru 31 August 1945

The world will long remember the events of this special month. Climax followed climax as the war drew rapidly to a close. On 2 August more than 800 B-29s dropped an unprecedented 6000 tons of bombs on the Japanese empire; on 6 August the first atomic bombing in history – of Hiroshima, Honshu – took place; on 8 August Russia entered the war against Japan; on 10 August Japan offered to surrender under certain conditions; on 12 August an allied interpretation of satisfactory terms was transmitted to Japan; and finally, on 15 August, after a tense, nerve-racking period of suspense, President Truman announced to the waiting world that the Japanese had accepted the allied terms of surrender. The war was over.

Technically V-J Day would not come until the surrender terms were signed. Fighting continues in Manchuria, the Philippines and scattered outposts, but the cessation of all hostilities was to be only a matter of days. For the 40th Group the war had come to an end, and if the concept of a world in which war had ceased to exist was beyond the immediate comprehension of most, it did not detract from the jubilation of every man in the Group.

During this last month of war the 40th participated in four combat missions to the enemy home land. Two were night incendiary attacks on urban areas and the other two were daylight strikes against precision targets. No airplanes were lost and there were no casualties, thus bringing to 24 the number of consecutive bombing missions on which the 40th suffered neither a fatality nor the loss of an airborne plane. The last mission was run on 14 August; Japanese acceptance of the surrender terms was answered by Radio Tokyo only a few hours after bombs had been released.

Through the latter half of the month preparations were being made by General MacArthur (who had been appointed Supreme Allied Commander) for the signing of the surrender terms and the occupation of Japan. By the end of the month Jap envoys had flown to the Philippines for instructions and returned to Tokyo, the first troops had landed (by parachute) in Japan and everything appeared to be progressing in a satisfactory manner. Apparently V-J Day was to come in September.

In the meantime, missions had been resumed – but only missions as the Group had never participated in before. On 30 August supplies were dropped at prisoner of war camps in Kyushu, Korea and Formosa, and on 31 August our planes participated in a “show of strength” mission, intended to impress the Japanese people still further during the period in which the first landings were taking place. Unfortunately one of our

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

Airplanes failed to return from the POW mission and to date nothing has been learned regarding the fate of this plane and crew.

Rotation of personnel, already underway in July, was of course speeded up by the termination of the war. During August a total of 13 officers and 117 enlisted men departed the Group for return to Uncle Sugar under the readjustment policy. The majority of these men had a minimum of 115 points.

Needless to say, the end of the war boosted morale to an all time high – temporarily. After the first feeling of exuberance had died down the men were more anxious than ever to get home.

Of the enlisted men, those with 85 or more points could expect to leave before very long but those with less could only sweat out a recomputation of point scores and a lowering of the critical score.

Of the officers, those with the required number of points (which varied with different ranks) who had previously expressed a preference for getting out of the Army as soon as possible could expect to leave within a comparatively short time. Those men were in either “A” or “B” category under the alphabetical system devised to govern readjustment and they could not be held on duty status for more than 30 days (60 days for Lieutenant Colonels and above). But the officers in “C” category who were high scoring in points but who had volunteered to stay in for the duration of the war (which apparently meant remaining on Tinian) found themselves stuck here while the “A” and “B” people left. The unfortunate aspect of this situation resulted from the fact that a large number of the men who had volunteered to stay un until the end of the war had been overseas for as long as 18 months while many of those in “A” and “B” had come in as replacements a comparatively short time ago. With the war ended, so far as we were concerned, it was difficult for these men to accept the situation with equanimity. Their subordination of personal desire to duty appeared to be going unrecognized and unrewarded.

*** * * * ***

At 1600Z on 1 August briefing was held for a night incendiary mission to Hachioji, an important rail city controlling practically all of the Tokyo rail traffic to the northern half of Honshu. Having a population of 73,000, Hachioji was also a dense housing center for vital outlying

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

Industries and had gained increased importance because of conversion and dispersal resulting from attacks on Tokyo. Only the four groups of the 58th Wing were scheduled to attack this target.

Take-offs began at 1943Z; 46 B-29's including one RCM plane and one Super Dumbo, were scheduled and all were airborne. With the exception of two planes that returned early due to mechanical difficulty all aircraft completed the mission.

The 42 planes comprising the strike force released 1665 E-17 500 lb incendiary clusters (416.3 tons) on Hachioji from an average altitude of 15600 feet. Bombing was by individual aircraft and 28 of the 42 planes bombed by visual means. Although the target area was blanketed by 10/10 cloud coverage, fires started by previous groups had burned a hole in the clouds and conditions were CAVU directly over Hachioji.

Meager and inaccurate heavy and automatic weapons fire were encountered or observed in the target area, but none of our planes sustained damage. Searchlight opposition was weak and ineffective due not only to the weather but also to the "Guardian Angel" RCM plane.

Although a total of 14 enemy planes were sighted there were no reports of attacks on our aircraft.

All planes returned safely to base on the evening of 2 August with three stopping at Iwo for fuel.

Post-strike photographs, according to CIU Twentieth Air Force Damage Assessment Report 166, dated 7 August 1945, revealed that 1.12 square miles, or 80% of the built-up portion of the city, had been destroyed by this mission. Hachioji had not been attacked previously.

Immediately following this mission it was also learned that on the night of 1-2 August more than 800 B-29's had released approximately 6000 tons of bombs on Japanese targets. This was the largest number of planes and the greatest tonnage yet.

On 4th August classes were begun for all personnel, officers and enlisted men, on military courtesy and discipline. At the same time notices were published outlining local requirements. Proper uniform was emphasized and warning given that the practice of going about with shirts unbuttoned and shirt tails out would not be tolerated. As one means of enforcing this order PA personnel were directed not to serve anyone not in proper uniform.

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

As with the majority of such campaigns there was considerable improvement in military courtesy and dress for a few days, but by the end of the month conditions were almost as they had been.

Briefing for the second mission was held at 1400Z on 5 August. Thirty-three planes were scheduled to attack with incendiaries the urban area of Imabari on the northwestern tip of Shikoku. (Continuing the policy of warning the Japs that certain of their cities were marked for destruction, leaflets bearing this message and the names of Imabari and 11 other urban areas had been dropped on the home islands on 4 August.) A small, compact city, Imabari was a center of light industry and had a population of 55,000.

Starting at 1732 on 5 August, 34 planes (including 12 pathfinders and one wind aircraft) were airborne. The entire strike force successfully bombed the primary target from altitudes ranging between 12500 and 12800 feet within a compressibility period of 30 minutes. Altogether 1247 E-19 500 lb incendiary clusters, 31 M-26 500 lb fragmentation clusters and 32 M-64 500 lb general purpose bombs were released on Imabari – a total of 263.6 tons.

Meager and inaccurate heavy and automatic weapons fire was encountered or observed in the vicinity of the target, though many planes bombed without opposition. Weather conditions were reported as CAVU to 2/10 cloud cover. Searchlight activity was weak to nil.

Three definite and two possible sightings of enemy aircraft were reported but no attacks were made on our planes.

All planes returned safely to base. The mission had been completely successful; all scheduled aircraft had been airborne, had accomplished their mission, and had returned undamaged.

Results were also excellent. According to CIU Twentieth Air Force, Damage Assessment 169, 17 August 1945, .71 square miles or 76% of the built-up portion of Imabari had been destroyed.

The next mission came within 24 hours. Briefing for a daylight demolition attack on the Toyokawa Naval Arsenal was held at 2330Z on 6 August. This arsenal, located approximately 37 miles southeast of Nagoya, was the principal producer of naval ammunition in Japan's war

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

making machine and in addition turned out machine guns, aircraft cannon, antiaircraft guns and rifles. It was one of the largest arsenals in Japan.

Take-offs began at 0350Z on 7 August. Only 11 planes were scheduled but all were airborne and all bombed the primary target in a single formation. Bombing was accomplished visually from an altitude of 16000 feet; 316 E-64 GP Composition B 500 lb bombs (75 tons) were released on the target. Smoke caused by previous formations obscured the target to a great extent but calculated impacts on strike photos indicated excellent results. No damage assessment on this target has been received.

All of our planes returned safely to base undamaged and without casualties.

Also on 7 August President Truman announced to the world that the first atomic bomb had been used against Japan on 6 August and that it had devastated the city of Hiroshima on Honshu. There is no need to chronicle here the first practical use of atomic energy; future generations will comprehend far better than we are able to the significance of this event. The world had passed a milestone and the Atomic Age had arrived.

At 2330Z on 7 August briefing was held for a daylight incendiary attack on the urban area of Yawata, Kyushu. The Yawata Iron and Steel Works had been the 40th Group's first target in Japan proper on the night of 15 June 1944. Opposition had been bad enough on this first mission, but when the 58th Wing attacked the same target in daylight on 20 August 1944 enemy flak and fighters and extremely bad weather in China had taken a heavy toll of B-29's and crews. Yawata came to be known at the "Big Y" and only a very few of the hardest souls cared to contemplate flying another mission to the place.

Although only a few of the original crews remained in the Group they had indoctrinated the new men with their attitude toward this target. Consequently it was a highly unenthusiastic gathering who heard (among other things) a description of the flak defenses of the Big Y at the briefing that night.

As things turned out their fears were groundless. The 40th was to be the third group off early on the morning of the 8th. The 444th got off and a few planes of the 462nd. Then a B-29 of the latter organization went off the end of a runway effectively blocking it and a few

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

minutes later another with a fire in the bomb bay stopped in the center of B runway. By the time the fire was out and the plane moved it was too late for the remaining planes to take off, so the 40th Group did not get to participate in the mission.

At 1430Z on the same day briefing was held for a night incendiary mission to Fukuyama, following up the leaflet warning of 31 July.

Located 42 miles northeast of Kure on the Inland Sea, Fukuyama with a population of 57000 was a center for chemical production designed for the manufacture of war materials. A new aircraft plant was located there as well as the headquarters of a military unit.

Take-offs began at 1645Z; 33 planes were scheduled and all were airborne, though one returned early due to mechanical difficulty and another bombed a target of opportunity for the same reason.

The remaining 31 B-29's bombed the target from an average altitude of 13500 feet with 4035 M-47 A2 100 lb incendiaries (139.2 tons). Although weather was CAVU at the target more than half the planes released by radar.

No heavy anti-aircraft fire was encountered or observed and automatic weapons fire was meager and ineffectual. No enemy fighters were reported.

All planes returned directly to base.

Results according to CIU Twentieth Air Force Damage Assessment Report 182, dated 15 August 1945, were excellent. Of the total built-up area .88 square miles or 73.3% was destroyed by this mission.

Early in the morning of 9 August the first news of Russia's entry into the war against Japan came over the radio. Later in the month President Truman revealed that the Russians had agreed to become active participants in the war against Japan within three months after V-E Day and had kept their promise by opening hostilities on the 90th day.

Also on 9 August the second atomic bomb was dropped on Japan, this time at Nagasaki.

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

On 10 August at 2215Z the first reports of Japan's offer to surrender "providing the (Potsdam) declaration does not compromise the prerogatives of the Emperor as a sovereign ruler" were heard coming over the radio. Thus began the greatest "sweat job" in history.

Opinion in the Group as to whether or not these terms should be accepted appeared to be more or less evenly divided, but any concern over the official decision was subordinate to the feeling that the war was almost over.

A briefing had been scheduled for 0030Z on 11 August. The crews assembled and the Group Commander, Colonel W. K. Skaer, talked matter of factly for a minute about the mission. Then he added, "We have no official word of the Japanese surrender proposal, but tonight's mission has been cancelled." The exuberant crews whooped and whistled and went happily back to their quarters.

Shortly before noon on the 11th, Group Operations was informed that a mission was tentatively scheduled for the following day and late that evening the target was changed.

Once again the briefing, scheduled for 0030K on 12 August, was cancelled. Early in the afternoon of the 12th the first announcement of allied terms came over the radio – that Hirohito might remain as emperor but that he would be subject to the dictates of the allied commander. Also on the 12th an order came through to unload bombs and begin installing cargo racks.

All firearms were ordered turned in by 1700 hours, a precaution against over-zealous celebrators.

On 13 August it began to appear that the war was not over after all. The radio brought the news that Admiral Halsey's 3rd Fleet carrier aircraft had struck the Tokyo area early that morning, and shortly before noon a warning order was received from Wing. Take-off time was not set but loading of bombs began again. On the afternoon of the 13th briefing was scheduled for 1830Z but later cancelled.

By this time the feeling of tension was increasing with every passing minute. A frequently heard remark was, "I never sweated out a mission like I'm sweating this."

Shortly after midnight on 14 August word came from Wing that the mission would be run. Briefing was held at 0330Z and take-offs began at 0655Z. Of the 45 planes scheduled one was a ground abort and two bombed targets of opportunity, but the remaining 42 proceeded to the primary target, the Hikari Naval Arsenal on the southwestern coast of Honshu.

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

Containing munitions storage, forges, foundries, smelters, roiling mills and machining works, this recently constructed installation ranked among the top five naval arsenals in Japan and was rated as one of the most important arms and munitions targets.

With the exception of a single plane, which bombed individually, the strike force passed over the target in four formations. Weather was CAVU but the arsenal was partially obscured by smoke from the bombs of preceding groups. Bombing was accomplished at altitudes ranging from 15850 to 17450 feet.

The first and second formations, of 11 planes each, bombed almost simultaneously so that only a single large pattern was visible in strike photos (Photo1). Of the 512 M-64 GP composition E 500 lb bombs released at the target by these formations, 326 or 64% fell within 1000 feet of the aiming point. Lead bombardiers were Captain J. L. Payton (45th Squadron) and Lt. W. E. McQueen (25th Squadron).

The third formation – also 11 planes – released 222 bombs of which 219 or 99% were calculated as striking within 1000 feet of the AP. Lead bombardier was Lt. V. W. Beck of the 44th Squadron. This formation bombed 30 seconds after the first two. (Photo2)

The last formation – 9 planes – released 215 bombs at the target 30 seconds after the third formation. Although it was not a good formation, being too strung out, 103 or 58% of the bombs were calculated or visible hits inside the 1000 foot circle. (Photo 3) The lead bombardier was Lt. Dickerson of the 45th Squadron.

Thus all formations released their bombs within a compressibility period of approximately one minute and with an average, for the Group, of 68% within 1000 feet of the aiming point.

The attack was so compressed as to reduce to a minimum the duration of the enemy's fire. Meager to moderate and generally inaccurate heavy anti-aircraft fire was encountered. Three of our planes sustained minor damage. There was no fighter opposition.

Late in the afternoon, many hours before the planes returned, Radio Tokyo was heard to announce Japan's acceptance of the Potsdam surrender ultimatum. The news was received quietly; it was not official and there was always a possibility that the Japs had inserted another condition which would be unacceptable.

Our planes returned late at night – only an hour or two before midnight. Those who watched the long procession of B-29's approaching the island will never forget this sight. Evenly spaced in two rows the landing lights extended out over the dark Pacific almost to the horizon, and

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

each pair of lights was reflected on the water in a glistening patch which kept pace with the gradual approach of the plane. At one time 27 pairs of lights could be seen approaching in a stately procession.

The weary crews were interrogated, fed and sent off to bed – after being relieved of their sidearms. If the end of the war should be announced the Colonel wanted no celebration casualties.

No damage assessment was ever received on the results of this last mission but strike photographs from all groups in the Wing revealed that only two or three buildings in the entire target area escaped damage.

On 15 August at 0905Z a few shouting men burst out of the communications Quonset with the news that President Truman had just announced to the world that Japan had accepted the Allied terms of surrender. In a few minutes everyone in the Group area knew that the war had ended although many were skeptical of second hand reports and insisted on hearing the news direct from a radio before believing it. Thereafter for the rest of the morning men stood around in small groups grinning happily and trying to think of appropriate comments for the occasion. A few were able to express their exuberance and some of the officers immediately headed for their quarters for liquid refreshment and the beginnings of parties that were to last far into the night. Everyone, it seemed, felt the need to be with some of his fellows, but many felt vaguely frustrated, not only because they had no way to properly celebrate the occasion, but also because the fact that the war was over – that there was no war in the entire world for the first time in nearly a decade – was all but incomprehensible to them. The full significance of this fact is still not apparent to many and probably will not be for some time to come.

The 16th was, by official decree, a holiday for everyone. The day passed quietly and services at the Group Chapel were well attended.

Also on 16 August it was learned that MacArthur had been appointed Allied Supreme High Commander. During the week that followed, Japanese envoys flew to Manila and then returned to Tokyo with MacArthur's instructions regarding surrender arrangements and the initial landings on Japan.

At 2300Z on 29 August briefing was held for a supply mission to prisoner of war camps in Kyushu, Korea and Formosa.

Take-offs began at midnight; 16 planes were airborne and one returned early due to mechanical difficulty. The majority of the planes successfully

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

parachuted their cargo to the POW's. (Photos 4 – 7)

Only six planes returned directly to base. Seven landed at Okinawa and one at Iwo. Actor 36 (A/C #1554) piloted by Lt. Jack L. Riggs of the 45th Squadron was not heard from after take-off. To date nothing has been learned regarding the fate of this plane and the 12 men it carried.

Early in the morning on 31 August 11 of our planes took off for Japan to participate in a “display of strength” for the benefit of the Japanese people. Due to weather conditions over the home islands the mission was not completely successful. Overcast conditions prevented the assembling of large formations. All planes returned without incident from this mission. (See Photos 10, 11, 12 taken over Tokyo on this mission and Photo 13 of the battleship Missouri on which the surrender ceremony would take place).

During August the Group finally acquired an unofficial designation that could be used in public relations dispatches. Such a nickname had long been needed inasmuch as the Group could not be referred to in press releases by its numerical designation. Unfortunately the name was acquired too late to be of much use. In any event the 40th is now known as the Kagu-Tsuchi Group after the Japanese fire god who in mythological times had vowed to return some day and destroy Japan by fire. The manner in which the name was picked and the reasons for choosing it are outlined in a letter sent to the Commanding General, 58th Bomb Wing (Incl 2). A photograph of the new insignia as it appears on the nose of a B-29 is also enclosed. (Photo 14) This insignia, the combined efforts of Sgt Fred Sartorine of the 45th Squadron and S Sgt Henry DeFina and Cpl Charles Gaskill both of Group Headquarters, was chosen from among the 40 odd entries submitted. The winners received two cases of cool beer.

* * * * *

The 40th Group had come far and accomplished much since that never-to-be-forgotten day of 7 December 1941. At the outbreak of hostilities, the Group, equipped with obsolescent B-18's, was stationed at Borinquen Field, Puerto Rico. From there it traveled to Panama through the then U-boat infested waters of the Caribbean Sea. After a year of patrolling over the Caribbean and the Pacific with B-18's, B-17's and B-24's the 40th embarked for the United States to become one of the first B-29 outfits. Nine months of intensive training at Pratt, Kansas, followed, and

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

in March and April of 1944 the B-29's of the 40th took off on the long trip half way around the world to India.

Flying out of India and China the 40th combat tested the B-29 and participated in the first land based attack against the Japanese home islands as well as in those that followed.

Exactly one year after arriving in India the Group left for Tinian in an unprecedented 3000 mile mass flight much of which was over enemy controlled territories and waters.

The end of the war found the 40th two thirds of the way around the world from the place where it had started, and the records of its accomplishments make interesting reading. (See Incl 3) The Group had participated in 70 combat missions and had dropped a total of 9,218 tons of bombs on enemy targets. Its claims numbered 46-1/2 enemy planes destroyed, 22 probably destroyed and 64 damaged. The cost had been high: 32 B-29's lost in combat, 53 men killed, 26 wounded and 134 missing.

In compliance with orders from higher headquarters a supplement covering historical data from 7 December 1941 to the present time is included with this installment of this history. Also attached is a copy of an interview with the Group Commander, Colonel W. K. Skaer. (Incl 1) Additional photographs not referred to in the narrative (Photos 15 – 26) are all fully identified.

**F. G. WOOD JR.
Captain, Air Corps
Historical Officer**

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

(Due to the war ending by the middle of August reports on the curtailed activities of certain of the Group sections are not considered of sufficient interest or importance to require their inclusion with this installment of the Group History.)

ADJUTANT AND PERSONNEL

1. Unit Personnel Section

a. **Readjustment**: Under the readjustment policy, 117 enlisted men and 13 officers departed from the 40th Bombardment Group for return to the United States during the month of August. Of this group, 52 enlisted men were sent to the Western Pacific Base Command at Saipan on 13 Aug 45, and two enlisted men were sent there on 17 Aug 45, for processing and return to the mainland. These men had a minimum of 115 points and did not choose to remain in the Army. On 27 Aug 45, five officers and 13 enlisted men returned to the States by war weary B-29; on 31 Aug 45, seven officers left for the mainland for the same reason.

It was during this month that the personnel section screened records in order to find all men with at least 85 points to ready them for return to the States. The first group in this category, consisting of 17 enlisted men, left by boat for the WPBC Personnel Distribution Center at Saipan on 30 Aug 45 for the purpose of being returned; this next group (one officer and 33 enlisted men) left later on the same day.

With the advent of the Japanese surrender, the processing of records became the most important phase of work in personnel. Records were readied for the possible immediate departure of men placed in certain categories in conformance with the point system. A limited number of replacements arrived during the month, not equaling the amount of departures; nor did they in any way approach the number that had been anticipated before the end of the war.

b. **Promotions**: Due to a great many high ranking men – veterans of this group for many months – departing during the month of August, vacancies for new ratings were left open. This made it impossible for the Group to promote 165 enlisted men, many of whom had been in grade for long periods of time. Of this group, 18 enlisted men were promoted within Group Headquarters. In addition, five Officers were promoted and three enlisted men were reduced in grade during the month of August.

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

c. **Significant Change:** The following significant changes, including transfers and new assignments, took place during the month of August:

Colonel Miles was assigned to the Group and took over the duties of Group Deputy Commander, replacing Lt. Col Schaaf. Lt. Col Schaaf was appointed Group Executive Officer, vice Lt Col Shutters who returned to the United States on readjustment, on 23 Aug 45.

Major Van Vliet was appointed Group Air Inspector, vice Lt Col White. Captain Lowman was transferred to Group Headquarters and appointed Group Intelligence Officer, vice Major Scherck transferred.

Captain Salovin was assigned as Dental Officer; Lt. Zieleki replaced Captain Lowman as Group Public Relations Officer; Lt. Orme was appointed Group Information-instruction Officer as a Primary Duty; Lt. Fuller was assigned to Group to replace Lt. Orme as Group Special Service Officer.

On 13 Aug 45, 34 enlisted men of Group Headquarters were transferred to various squadrons. On 15 Aug 45, 18 enlisted men were placed on SO with the Group.

On 1 Aug 45, two officers and two enlisted men were sent to a Rest Camp. On 10 Aug 45, one Officer (Major Rivers, Group Communications Officer) was transferred to the Detachment of Patients, 374th General Hospital, for evacuation to Rear Area. On 31 Aug 45, one enlisted man was transferred to the 374th General Hospital for evacuation to Rear Area.

During the month of August four enlisted men departed for the States on emergency furlough on the following dates: one left on 7 Aug, one on 16 Aug, one on 26 Aug and one on 30 Aug 45.

d. **Rotation:** Combat crew rotation continued in full swing during the month of August. All men who had completed 35 missions were returned to the mainland. A list of all those who have completed 31 missions has been submitted; these men are now awaiting orders. On 1 Aug 45, three officers and one enlisted man were returned; 3 Aug, two enlisted men; 6 Aug, three officers, two enlisted men; 7 Aug, one officer; 12 Aug, seven officers, two enlisted men; 13 Aug, four officers, four enlisted men; 17 Aug, 11 officers, four enlisted men; 27 Aug, one officer. On 30 Aug 45, seven enlisted men were returned for completing 31 or more missions.

2. **Officers**

a. **Strength as of 1 August**

| | | | |
|---------|----|--------------------|----|
| Colonel | 1 | 1 st Lt | 10 |
| Lt Col | 3 | 2 nd Lt | 0 |
| Major | 8 | | |
| Captain | 17 | TOTAL | 39 |

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

b. Strength as of 31 August

| | | | |
|---------|---|--------------------|-----------|
| Colonel | 2 | Captain | 17 |
| Lt Col | 3 | 1 st Lt | 11 |
| Major | 7 | 2 nd Lt | 0 |
| | | TOTAL | 40 |

3. Enlisted Men

a. Strength as of 1 August

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| M Sgt | 3 |
| T Sgt | 6 |
| S Sgt | 20 |
| Sgt | 32 |
| Cpl | 26 |
| Pfc | 17 |
| Pvt | 0 |
| TOTAL | 104 |

b. Strength as of 31 August

| | |
|--------------|-----------|
| M Sgt | 4 |
| T Sgt | 5 |
| S Sgt | 10 |
| Sgt | 17 |
| Cpl | 18 |
| Pfc | 12 |
| Pvt | 0 |
| TOTAL | 66 |

4. Court-Martial – Punishment Under 104th Article of War – Delinquencies.

- a. There were no cases of the above in Headquarters for the period 1 Aug 45 to 31 Aug 45.

5. Savings

- a. During the month of Aug 45, 19.6% of the officers and 18% of the enlisted men purchased War Bonds by deductions from pay rolls and pay vouchers.
- b. Soldier's Deposits and PTA remain the most used method of saving in this Group. It is estimated that at least 85% of personnel in Headquarters use either of these two methods for saving.

- 6. Awards and Decorations: It is anticipated that a great deal of the work involved in Awards and Decorations will soon come to an end, with the conclusion of the war. At present, many orders are being received in response to recommendations for awards submitted by this Headquarters; there are still several awards pending.**

**F. W. McWalters
Major, Air Corps
Adjutant**

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

ENGINEERING

The month of August saw the last bomb to be dropped on Japan. On 15 August 1945, the 40th Group sent out 45 aircraft on what proved to be the last bombing mission against the mainland. Organized resistance had ceased, and the Japs were hollerin' "Uncle."

The Group ran five missions during those 15 days, two of which were 100% effective. A total of 167 aircraft were scheduled, 162 of which effectively bombed targets. This speaks very well for the aircraft maintenance in view of the fact that we were losing mechanics to the USA regularly.

Three aircraft received battle damage, all on the last mission, but none was too serious. No losses were experienced due to enemy action.

After the Japanese capitulation, orders were received to paint "PW Supplies" on the under side of each wing on all our aircraft. The Service Center made up some inadequate stencils, and the job of painting progressed at a very slow pace. Interest had vanished as far as getting work done in the shortest possible time was concerned.

One cargo mission was flown to the various PW camps on the mainland by 15 aircraft of this Group. Several bomb bay doors were damaged when cargo platform and supplies were salvaged over the target. One aircraft 44-61554 was never heard from after it took off, and is presumed lost.

This Group set an all time high in engine time at engine change this month. Twenty-six engines with an average time of 339:00 hours were changed. Some were changed with as high as 498:00 hours, but there were two or three engine failures down around 80:00 to 18:00 hours, which brought the overall average down.

At the termination of hostilities, the Group engine change crew was dissolved and the men returned to the squadrons. The biggest factor leading to this move was the loss of experienced men on points from the squadrons. Several men on the engine crew were crew chief material, and greatly needed in the squadrons.

Two aircraft were lost to surveys during the month, both in the 44th and both within four hours of each other. Landing long and "hot" were the factors which sent both 42-24685 and 44-67659 off the end of the runway. No injury to personnel was incurred, but both aircraft were damaged beyond economical repair.

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

Three aircraft were sent back to the USA this month as "war wearies," 42-24752, 42-24718, 44-69068. On the other side of the ledger, three aircraft were gained, 44-61848 and 44-61746 from the USA and 42-24860 from the 313th Wing. The last was a "photo Joe" and in very poor condition.

FREDERICK KOEL
Captain, Air Corps
Asst Engineering Officer

RADAR

During the month of August the radar section was rather inactive, especially after the secession of hostilities. The most important fact has been the continuation of the modification 11 computer program. This modification 11 or AN/APQ-23 incorporates the bombsight with the radar bomb release computer, resulting in a much smaller circular error for radar bombing.

Most of our time has been spent in straightening out our file system and in destroying all unessential material.

DONALD L. STUMPF
Captain, Air Corps
Radar Officer

MEDICAL

The medical situation of the Group remained essentially the same as during the previous month. The Central Wing Dispensary finally began accepting patients on 20 August 45. There were eight admissions from the Group during the later part of the month.

The health of the command remains good. Hospital admissions dropped from 60 in July to 45 in August and a fair portion of these are cases of elective surgery. The men are anxious to get certain surgical conditions corrected before going home. There has been a noticeable increase in circumcisions, hemorrhoidectomies, and excisions of cysts and tumors.

The general sanitation of the area is satisfactory.

The only casualties of the month were the 12 men of Lt Riggs' crew of the 45th Bomb Squadron who disappeared on a prisoner of war supply mission

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

on 30 August 45. This crew was not heard from after take-off and are reported as missing in action.

**LEE A. HALL
Captain, Medical Corps
Group Surgeon**

GUNNERY

During the past month the Group skeet range was opened. The range is available to all personnel who are interested in firing. The range is open from 0800 to 1100 hours and 1300 to 16 hours daily, except Sunday.

Captain John T. Brannan and Lt. John Farr have been assigned as range officer and all firing will be conducted at all times by them.

Several skeet teams are being organized and will participate in the local tournaments as well as the meets on Saipan.

**JOHN T. BRANNAN
Captain, Air Corps
Gunnery Officer**

TECHNICAL INSPECTION

During the month of August, inspection of all specialized sections within the Group Headquarters was made. In the squadrons, in addition to the airplanes, airplane forms, records, and powered ground equipment, the personal equipment and armament sections were inspected. This was the first complete inspection of all units coming within the technical category since operations in this Theater started. The reason for this was explained in the July Historical Report.

Inspection of airplanes revealed that mechanically they were still maintained with a high degree of efficiency. In regards to cleanliness of engines there was a decided drop. This can be attributed to the increasing loss of man power. The average number of mechanics assigned per airplane is down to 2-1/2 men. The outstanding discrepancies noted were failures to comply with CTI G3-5-1000, "Weather Proofing of Electrical Equipment," most prevalent on landing gear limit switch and failure to have fire extinguishers and first aid kits checked and resealed after seal

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

Was broken. The outstanding discrepancy noted on the engines was throttle and mixture control bolts loose, or installation not properly assembled.

With the cessation of hostilities, a noticeable improvement in the armament reactions and armament equipment has been noted, especially in the storage of equipment out of the weather. This discrepancy has always been prevalent in the past.

Group communications continued to function in a most efficient manner. Inspection revealed that discrepancies noted were minor in detail as in the past.

The month of August saw some of our inspection personnel rotated to Uncle Sugar Able. M Sgt Christensen, our able airplane inspector who had been with us since the inspection department was organized, left us and was replaced by Sgt Riece. T Sgt Spears, our engine inspector, who also was with us from practically the beginning also left us and was replaced by S Sgt Blackman. M Sgt Adamczak, who had only been with us a month, left us unexpectedly with only about 18 hours notice, and was replaced by S Sgt Hiller. Our air inspector Lt Col White also left us unexpectedly with only a couple of hours notice for us with Headquarters US??STAF and was replaced by Major Van Vliet.

**WILLIAM J. h????
Major, Air Corps
Technical Inspector**

STATISTICS

1. Combat Record

| | | |
|-----------|---|------------|
| a. | Combat missions | 5 |
| b. | Total effective sorties without fatality | 779 |
| c. | Total airborne sorties without fatality | 818 |

| | <u>August</u> | <u>Cumulative</u> |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 25th Squadron | 57 | 345 |
| 44th Squadron | 53 | 342 |
| 45th Squadron | 55 | 333 |
| 40th Group | 165 | 1020 |

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

e. Total tonnage on all targets

| | <u>August</u> | <u>Cumulative</u> |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 25 th Bomb Squadron | 405 | 2320.84 |
| 44 th Bomb Squadron | 374.25 | 2324.3 |
| 45 th Bomb Squadron | 383.6 | 2233.85 |
| 40 th Bomb Group | 1162.85 | 6886.99 |

f. Cost of missions

| | <u>August</u> <u>battle</u> <u>Damage</u> | <u>A/C</u> <u>Lost</u> | <u>Cumulative</u> <u>battle</u> <u>Damage</u> | <u>A/C</u> <u>Lost</u> |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 25 th Bomb Squadron | 1 | - | 36 | 3 |
| 44 th Bomb Squadron | 2 | - | 25 | 3 |
| 45 th Bomb Squadron | 1 | 1 | 22 | 4 |
| 40 th Bomb Group | 4 | 1 | 83 | 10 |

g. Enemy aircraft claims

| | <u>August</u> | <u>Cumulative</u> |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 40 th Bomb Group | - | 31 Claims |

h. Landing at Iwo Jima

| | <u>August</u> | <u>Cumulative</u> |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 25 th Bomb Squadron | 2 | 27 |
| 44 th Bomb Squadron | - | 18 |
| 45 th Bomb Squadron | 3 | 24 |
| 40 th Bomb Group | 5 | 69 |

i. Sorties

| | <u>Sorties per</u> <u>Assigned Crew</u> | <u>Sorties per</u> <u>A/C on Hand</u> |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| 25 th Bomb Squadron | 2.6 | 3.9 |
| 44 th Bomb Squadron | 2.5 | 3.6 |
| 45 th Bomb Squadron | 2.7 | 3.7 |
| 40 th Bomb Group | 2.6 | 3.7 |

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

2. Flying Time

| | | |
|----|-------------------------------|---------|
| a. | Combat flying time for August | 478.03 |
| b. | Training time for August | 763.16 |
| c. | Miscellaneous time for August | 73.40 |
| d. | Total time for August | 1314:57 |

3. Combat Crews and Miscellaneous

| | | |
|----|---|------|
| a. | Replacement crews received | 3 |
| b. | Replacement aircraft received | 3 |
| c. | Aircraft assigned first day of month | 44 |
| | (1) Aircraft returning to USA | 3 |
| | (2) Aircraft lost on combat missions | 1 |
| | (3) Operational losses | 2 |
| d. | Aircraft assigned last day of month | 45 |
| e. | Combat crews assigned as of last day | 65 |
| f. | Combat crews available as of last day | 47 |
| g. | Total number of officers of the Group | 502 |
| h. | Total number of enlisted men of the Group | 1696 |

DONALD L. STUMPF
1ST Lt, Air Corps
Statistical Officer

SPECIAL SERVICES

Suring the month the Information-Education Section had a great burst of activity which seemed to give promise of an extensive school program as part of the duty day. With the cessation of hostilities many men in the Group were left virtually without a duty assignment. To take up this slack in activity, in accordance with the long term plans of the Army Education Program, a school set-up was planned so that classes would start within a week following V-J Day. Texts were obtained from Island Command and from Saipan, and a survey was made of the Group personnel to determine the interest of the men and to discover potential teachers. Captain Francis Cahill of the Group S-2 section was assigned to the school program to assist with the organization. Building space for classrooms was arranged for and construction begun.

From the survey it was found that about eighty per cent of the personnel were definitely interest in taking some class work. Due to the suddenness with which the entire program was instituted, however, class room space for such large numbers could not be made available at camp.

GROUP HISTORY, 40th Bomb Gp, APO 183, Cont'd

A limited number and variety of texts also reduced the size of the original program so that it was decided to limit enrollment in all classes to 50 people, and schedule each class both morning and afternoon so that a possible hundred men could enroll for each of 27 classes. Teachers were picked, enrollments made, and all arrangements set to open the school on 28 August.

Redeployment of personnel to the States was the factor which led first to postponement of the opening date and final cancellation of the program until some definite policy with regard to personnel could be established. With the first large group of men to leave this Command for discharge from the Army went approximately half of the originally selected teaching staff. Class enrollment had to be altered to such an extent that any orderly plan for conduct of a school was impossible.

With the cancellation of the school, the texts were placed in a library suitable for the use of the men for study, and all other plans were dropped.

Theater: No innovations or changes occurred during the month in the Group Theater. Two USO Units played for the Group (Musical Interlude, 8 August and Charlie Ruggles, 20 August) and were well received.

**GORDON OPKE
1st Lt, Air Corps
Special Services Officer**