

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

GP-509-H1

Director
Aerospace Studies Inst
ATTN: Archival Branch
Maxwell Airfield

RETURN TO:

CLASSIFICATION CHANGED TO

By authority of the
Commanding General, USAF
Chief of Staff, USAF

By *Ernest B. Stevenson*
Classification of Document, 19 Jun 51

Date AUG 10 1945

Classification ~~was~~ changed (changed to Uncl)
by authority of Ch of Staff, USAF
by ASD (PA) com memo 6 May 51

HISTORY

of
509th Composite Group
313th Bombardment Wing
Twentieth Air Force
Activation to 15 August 1945

Ernest B. Stevenson
ERNEST B. STEVENSON
LT. COLONEL, USAF

Tinian in the Marianas

GP-509-1555-3

UNCLASSIFIED
~~SECRET~~

7204-9d



C O N T E N T S

I.	Historians Note	a
II.	Activation	1
III.	Personnel	8
IV.	Supply, Maintenance and Facilities .	27
V.	Training	45
VI.	Operations	56
VII.	Public Relations	75
VIII.	Interviews	77
IX.	List of Documents	81
X.	Addenda	82
XI.	Photographs	--



[REDACTED]

HISTORIAN'S NOTE

Chapter I

The document which follows is, strictly speaking, the Administrative Historical Narrative of the 509th Composite Group --- the "First Atomic Bombardment Group". Yet, as this is written, the Unit Historian well knows that his task is a sober and gigantic one --- in the sense of its size, and in the sense of its substantive historical importance.

One need probe but lightly into the structure of the 509th Composite Group to become aware of its far-reaching proportions. The term "composite" as applied to the Group is somewhat inaccurate. True, the organizational arrangement of the Group was planned in such a manner as to make it self-sufficient --- dependent upon no alien organization. Had this Group's mission, then, been an ordinary one, it no doubt would have been self-sufficient.

But this is hardly the case. For instance, the Press throughout the civilized world is reporting to the people the magnitude of research carried on by thousands of eminent scientists of the Allied world in the perfection of the Atomic Bomb. Intricate modern manufacturing plants and scientific laboratories are now pictured in every daily and weekly newspaper and in every magazine in the country as evidence of the proportions which the

[REDACTED]



Atomic Bomb project has assumed. Tens of thousands of people have toiled daily for months at a task which to them had no meaning. All of this is indeed a vital part of the story of the 509th Composite Group.

Yet, it goes without saying that an administrative history can hardly purport to cover such a vast scope of activity. At the same time, an awareness of the Group's broad background and foundation should be manifested in this administrative history.

Time alone will tell in what manner and to what degree the discovery of the Atomic Bomb will influence future generations. Already, prominent world thinkers have expressed the belief that the Atomic Bomb can be the world's most potent guaranty of world peace in the years ahead. To just what degree this new source of power will revolutionize future industrial life and standards of living is a concept almost beyond the realm of comprehension.

With these facts and ideas in mind, the writer approaches his task. It is hoped that the result will be an accurate, readable and informative historical document born of World War II.

31 August 1945
Tinian Island.



A-C-T-I-V-A-T-I-O-N
Chapter II


By direction of the War Department and the Second Air Force, the 509th Composite Group was activated on 17 December, 1944 to comprise the following components: ^{1/}

Hq. 509th Composite Group
320th Troop Carrier Squadron
Headquarters and Base Services
Squadron, 390th Air Service Group
603rd Air Engineering Squadron
1027th Air Materiel Squadron
1395th Military Police Company (Avn)

In addition the 393rd Bombardment Squadron (Very Heavy), was relieved from its previous assignment and transferred to the 509th Composite Group. ^{2/} Thus constituted, the 509th Composite Group immediately took its place in the Second Air Force, assigned to the 315th Bombardment Wing (VH), Colorado Springs, Colorado.

On 6 March 1945 an additional unit, the 1st Ordnance Squadron, Special, Aviation, was activated and became a part of the 509th Composite Group. ^{3/} This unit was manned to a large extent by hand-picking of skilled machinists, welders and munitions workers from throughout the entire Army Air Forces. In fact, a few individuals were transferred from the Army Ground Forces.

-
1. General Order #6, Wendover Field, Utah 17 December 1944
 2. General Order #6, Wendover Field, Utah 17 December 1944
 3. General Order #4, Wendover Field, Utah 6 March 1945



Much difficulty was encountered and time consumed in finding enough personnel of the Special nature required. This additional unit raised the Table of Organization strength of the Group to 225 Officers and 1542 Enlisted Men.^{4/}

When activated, the Group was designed to stand alone. Headquarters 509th Composite Group constituted the executive head of the organization, functioning through the familiar S-1, S-2, S-3, and S-4 channels.^{5/} The 393rd Bombardment Squadron was charged with the execution of the tactical phase of the Group's mission. The 320th Troop Carrier Squadron was designed to fulfill one important need: the rapid transportation of project personnel and supplies from point to point within the states and from the states to the overseas base. The 1st Ordnance Squadron, Special, (Aviation), was constituted to carry out the important project work of the mission.

The 390th Air Service Group----"a group within a group"---- was set up to operate overseas in the same manner that a Base organization functions in the states, that is, to provide housing and other administrative facilities and through its 603rd Air Engineering

-
4. AAF form 127 Report of Army Air Force Personnel, 31 March 1945
 5. Command Book, 509th Composite Group, 15 January 1945.

[REDACTED]

Squadron and 1027th Air Materiel Squadron, to provide personnel and facilities to meet every conceivable problem which might arise in engineering and supply.

The 1395th Military Police Company (Aviation) was an integral part of the 509th Composite Group in that its important function was to protect the security of the project.

COLONEL PAUL W. TIBBETS, Jr. was selected by Army Air Forces about July of 1944 as the man who would successfully command the 509th Composite Group. His contributions to Allied success had, even at that time, been most outstanding. He was Group Operations Officer of the 97th Bombardment Group in the European and North African Theatres of Operation.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL THOMAS J. CLASSEN was Commanding Officer of the efficient 393rd Bombardment Squadron when the latter became assigned to the 509th Composite Group. His background is a lustrous one, for previously he had served heroically in the Pacific Theater of Operations as a Pilot of a B-Seventeen with the Eleventh Bombardment Group.

-
6. General Order #1, Hq. 509th Composite Group, Wendover Field, Utah, 18 December 1944.
 7. Statement of Captain T. L. Karnes, Group Adjutant.
 8. General Order #6, Wendover Field, Utah, 17 December 1944.
 9. Statement of Captain J. D. Buscher, 393rd Bombardment Squadron Intelligence Officer.

[REDACTED]

Several months after his assignment to the 509th Composite Group as Commanding Officer of the 393rd Bombardment Squadron, he was advanced by COLONEL TIBBETS to the important position of Deputy Group Commander. ^{10/} MAJOR CHARLES W. SWENNEY assumed command of the 393rd Squadron. ^{11/}

LIEUTENANT COLONEL GERALD E. BEAN, a master in executive matters, was assigned to the Group as its Executive Officer.

CAPTAIN THOMAS L. KARNES worked with personnel matters at Wendover Field, Utah for more than two years. With his personal knowledge of Wendover Field personnel, COLONEL TIBBETS saw in him the man who could best supervise the intricate personnel problem which the Group's activation involved. Accordingly, ^{12/} CAPTAIN KARNES was named Group Adjutant.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL HAZEN J. PAYETTE, prominent Michigan attorney from Detroit, had served with COLONEL TIBBETS in the European Theatre of Operation. His proven ability, in addition to his desire to return overseas, were two reasons why COLONEL ^{13/} TIBBETS placed him in charge of Group Intelligence.

MAJOR JAMES I. HOPKINS had extensive experience in the

-
10. S.O. #41, Hq. 509th Composite Group, Wendover Field, Utah, 2 May 1945
 11. S.O. # 1, Hq. 509th Composite Group, Wendover Field, Utah, 5 Jan 1944
 12. G.O. # 1, Hq. 509th Composite Group, Wendover Field, Utah, 18 Dec 1944
 13. S.O. # 2, Hq. 509th Composite Group, Wendover Field, Utah, 9 Jan 1945



European Theater of Operation and received a number of citations and decorations for his outstanding work there. Knowing Operations in all of its aspects, he was wisely chosen to head the 509th Group ^{14/} Operations.

MAJOR JOHN W. PORTER, before his assignment to the Group ^{15/} as Director of Supply and Maintenance, had been B-Twenty-Nine Engineering Officer and Director of Supply and Maintenance at McCook, Nebraska. His three years of experience in Sub Depot, Supply, and Maintenance work furnished him with the wealth of experience necessary to carry out successfully his important new assignment.

CAPTAIN (now MAJOR) CHARLES F. H. BEGG, ^{16/} was selected to command the 1st Ordnance Squadron, Special, (Aviation). He was preferred over several perhaps more prominent individuals because he showed outstanding promise as a coming figure in the field of explosives. The man needed for this post must be open minded, free of deeply embeded convictions which form as a result of years of work in a given field of endeavor. He must keep pace with expanding scientific thought. He must be capable of reducing and eliminating

-
- 14. S.O. #12, Hq. 509th Composite Group, Wendover Field, Utah 6 Feb 1945
 - 15. S.O. #14, Hq. 509th Composite Group, Wendover Field, Utah 13 Feb 1945
 - 16. S.O. #27, Hq. 509th Composite Group, Wendover Field, Utah 8 Mar 1945



[REDACTED]

differences, real or imaginary, between the corps of civilian scientists and technicians, and the military with whom he is obliged to carry on the Group's most vital work. CAPTAIN BEGG, as the success of the project now proves, measured up to these stringent requirements in every respect.

Other key personnel, the number of which forbids individual comment at this time, were selected by COLONEL TIBBETS and his Staff for reasons similar to those pointed out above.

In passing it is interesting to note that COLONEL TIBBETS, LIEUTENANT COLONEL PAYETTE, MAJOR THOMAS W. FEREBEE, Staff Bombardier, CAPTAIN (now MAJOR) THEODORE J. VAN KIRK, Staff Navigator, and CAPTAIN KERMIT K. BEAHAN, 393rd Squadron Bombardier, all served in the same Group in England and North Africa. COLONEL TIBBETS'S crew ferried GENERAL MARK CLARK from England to Gibraltar, where GENERAL CLARK left by submarine to negotiate with the French in North Africa prior to the North African Invasion. Subsequently, the 97th Bombardment Group ferried GENERAL EISENHOWER and other VIP'S to North Africa at

[REDACTED]

the time of the Invasion. Their Group was the first of the ^{17/}
Heavy Bombardment Groups to drop bombs on Nazi-held Europe.

About two years thereafter, these five men were to reunite and play an important part in carrying out two bombing missions which would bring World War II to an end.

17. Statements of Lt. Col. Hazen J. Payette, Group Intelligence Officer.

~~REDACTED~~

P-E-R-S-O-N-N-E-L
Chapter III

STATESIDE

A country is fighting a war, a war in which air power, or the lack of it, tips the scales of battle either to ultimate victory or decisive defeat. Commanding Generals determine, let us imagine, to activate additional air might.


A standardized Table of Organization and Equipment is promulgated under which fighting air power is activated, organized, and executed. These fighting units are collected, assembled, trained and put in the air with production line speed and efficiency.

Had the 509th Composite Group been a standard type group, its story, from a Table of Organization point of view, would be a repetition of that of the many groups that came before it. But the case is otherwise.

Because of the unusual mission of the 509th Composite Group, ^{18/}no existing Table of Organization and Equipment was adequate for its needs. Efforts were therefore made to have the War Department tailor a Table of Organization for the Group. ^{19/}These

18. Command Book, 509th Composite Group, 15 January 1945

19. Statement of Captain Thomas L. Karnes, Group Adjutant.



efforts were unsuccessful because it was found that several months were required to create new T/O's. Instead, established T/O's were used with standard amendments and modified by inclo-^{20/} sures to the activation order.

As training began, it was found that all squadrons required more adjustments. The Group Executive Officer, LIEUTENANT COLONEL BEAN, took these to Headquarters, Army Air Forces, and the changes were later incorporated in amendments to the movement orders.^{21/} These did not constitute changes in the T/O but did permit passage through Port of Embarkation of individuals whose rank or MOS did not conform to the T/O.

Probably the most distinguishing feature in the story of this Group's assembly of manpower is the fact that before activation orders were received, much of the personnel of the 216th AAF Base Unit, Wendover Field, Utah, the site of activation, had been earmarked for the 509th Composite Group. Approximately 800 people were thus transferred from the Base to the Group im-^{22/} mediately upon activation.

-
20. Statement by Captain Thomas L. Karnes, Group Adjutant.
 21. S.O. #23, Wendover Field, Utah, 23 January 1945.
 22. Statement by Captain Thomas L. Karnes, Group Adjutant, and S.O.'s of Headquarters, Wendover Field, Utah, between 17 December 1944 and 28 December 1944.

[REDACTED]

This procedure had a distinct advantage over cadre methods in that there was no duplication of personnel, the experience level was very high, officers and enlisted men knew each other previously, and to a large extent the personnel had volunteered for the Group. In many instances, entire departments were transferred. The only tactical Squadron, the 393rd, was transferred in a body from the 504th Bombardment Group to the 509th Composite Group.^{23/} The Troop Carrier Squadron, a definite misnomer, incidentally, was incorporated to make possible the transportation of personnel and equipment needed for the special project of the Group. Fillers for the Group were provided by the Second Air Force, with a high degree of priority given requests for specific individuals. On occasion this authority was exerted to obtain people from other commands of the Army Air Forces.^{24/}

While the T/O was taking on a definite form and personnel required to fill it were obtained, the Second Air Force, upon instructions received from Headquarters, Army Air Forces, issued "Warning Orders", 27 December 1944, setting a readiness date of

-
23. General Order #6, Wendover Field, Utah, 17 December 1944.
24. Statement of Captain Thomas L. Karnes, Group Adjutant.

~~SECRET~~

1 March 1945 for the Ground Echelon. ^{25/} On 6 January 1945 the Second Air Force published movement orders for the 509th Composite Group Ground Echelon (Shipment No. 6015 A through G), placing the Group at the call of the Commander of the Seattle Port of Embarkation. Amendment No. 2 to the movement order was published by the War Department ^{26/} 28 February 1945. This included the changes, previously mentioned, which were found necessary to give the Group the proper personnel and to fit certain highly desired individuals into the organization.

But, no sooner had the officers in charge begun to see their personnel problems substantially solved than a new unit was incorporated into the Group. On 6 March 1945, Wendover Field General Order No. 4 activated the 1st Ordnance Squadron, Special, ^{27/} (Aviation).

The Table of Organization of this new and unique squadron was designed to include administrative, supply, production, transportation, ammunition, special ammunition and fuses and, later, ^{28/} delivery and facilities sections.

-
- 25-26 Movement Orders, War Department Letter 370.5 OB-S-E-M 3 Jan 45
Amendment #1, War Department Letter 370.5 OB-S-E-SFMOT-M,
14 February 1945
Amendment #2, War Department Letter 370.5 OB-S-E-AFROC-M,
28 February 1945
27. Activation orders of 1st Ordnance Squadron, Special, (Aviation)
28. Table of Organization, 1st Ordnance Squadron, Special,
(Aviation)

[REDACTED]


It was obvious to high-ranking officers in Washington, D.C. that if this Squadron was to function properly at its overseas destination, far-reaching plans must immediately be made. Accordingly, COLONEL E. E. KIRKPATRICK, 20th Air Force Staff Officer, was assigned the task of supervising construction activities for laboratory buildings and storage areas on Tinian Island. Assigned out of Washington, D.C., he departed in March 1945, for A.P.O. ^{29/}247.

Meantime, a vigorous drive was begun at Wendover to secure full strength for the Squadron in a period of two months. Not only did 228 enlisted men and 14 officers have to be obtained, but each individual necessitated a separate interview to assure that his capabilities were in keeping with the work required of him. So exacting were these technical requirements as well as military security measures that an average of only twenty percent of the men interviewed were accepted. ^{30/}

On 2 April 1945, the Squadron Commanding Officer, CAPTAIN CHARLES F. H. BEGG and the Squadron Executive Officer, CAPTAIN ARCHIE G. COMBS, JR., departed for Washington, to coordinate and

29. War Department, TAG Letter, 10 May 1945.

30. Statement by Major Begg, Commanding Officer of the 1st Ordnance Squadron, Special, (Aviation)



accelerate shipment of men to Wendover Field, Utah for interviews and assignment to the Squadron. These officers remained in Washington until 12 April 1945.

On 18 May 1945, 55 vacancies still existed in the following MOS: 4532 --- 5, 063 --- 1, 345 --- 2, 901 --- 40, 114 --- 2, and 505 --- 5. During the next two days two Officers of the Squadron interviewed and accepted 43 men at the Kearns Overseas Replacement Depot, Kearns, Utah, and these men were subsequently transferred to the 1st Ordnance Squadron, Special, (Aviation). Finally, on 24 May 1945 personnel had been brought up to strength with two percent overages.

Group administrative and supply processing had, in the interim, been accomplished. For, on 8 February 1945, an administrative processing team from Headquarters, Army Air Forces, had begun processing the Group. Consisting of about twelve individuals headed by MAJOR RHODES, the team was highly trained for its work. In fact, its ultimate destination was the European Theater of Operations, in which it was to be employed after VE-Day in the important

-
- 31. S.O. # 85, Headquarters, Wendover Field, Utah, 26 March 1945
 - 32. Statement by Major Biggs, Commanding Officer of the 1st Ordnance Squadron, Special, (Aviation).

[REDACTED]

job of processing American troops for return to the States. Its work at Wendover with the 509th Composite Group was completed quickly and efficiently, but it remained until April because of the frequent postponements in departure date of the Group's Ground Echelon.

[REDACTED]

~~SECRET~~

OVERSEAS MOVEMENT, MAIN GROUND ECHELON

The main ground echelon, having completed all required training and processing, received orders to depart on Thursday morning, 26 April 1945, from Wendover Field, Utah. For the purposes of traveling by rail, this group was divided into two sections; number one, totaling thirty-six officers and five hundred and thirty-two enlisted men, boarded the train at Wendover station and pulled out promptly at 0800, 26 April 1945, and number two, totaling eight officers and two hundred and eighty-three enlisted men repeated the process several hours later.^{33/} Everyone concerned felt that this step in the Group's movement was accomplished with considerable ease.

The conduct of the troops aboard the train was exemplary, according to MAJOR GEORGE W. WESCOTT, the Troop Commander.^{34/} In fact, had not a formidable seige of the "G.I.s"^{35/} overtaken the personnel --- about sixty cases were reported --- the trip by rail would have been as uneventful as it was orderly.

On Saturday morning, 28 April, both sections arrived at

-
33. S.O. # 113, Headquarters, Wendover Field, Utah, 23 April 1945
34. S.O. # 113, Headquarters, Wendover Field, Utah, 23 April 1945
35. Dysentery.

[REDACTED]

the military terminal at Seattle, Washington. A convoy of trucks from Fort Lawton awaited the group and drove it to the Fort. Within two hours after leaving the train, all personnel were fed and assigned to barracks.

Nor was any time lost in getting under way with the matter of final overseas processing. The efficiency of the staging area processing teams, along with the efficiency with which the group had been processed at the home station, resulted in the completion of final processing days ahead of time.

On Saturday, 5 May, the main portion of the group was conveyed to the port and there put aboard the ship, "Cape Victory". The next morning the remaining personnel followed, and at 1220, 6 May 1945, all traveling passengers were instructed by the ship's CAPTAIN to wear or otherwise have at hand at all times, their life jackets. The main ground echelon was now enroute overseas.

Each soldier aboard ship had been issued motion sickness tablets at Fort Lawton. Furthermore, he had been acquainted with that school of thought whose contention is that seasickness is,

[REDACTED]

"ninety percent mental." With the aid of the tablets, and with each man talking himself out of becoming seasick, all went well for the first day and a half. But on the latter part of the second day out, the ship encountered a storm --- the severest in eight months, so said the ship's personnel --- which upset many a stomach. Only the thought of seeing land again made life bearable.

On Sunday, 13 May, just one week after leaving the states, the troopship sailed within sight of the Hawaiian Islands and dropped anchor that evening in Honolulu Harbor, Oahu.

The personnel were restricted to the ship the following day until early in the evening. Mail call --- the first since leaving the states --- served to keep everyone in high spirits during the day, as did the frequent musical sessions offered by a five-piece musical combination organized within the Group.

A representative of Army Special Service, having heard that the group had docked, arranged to bring a troupe of native singers and dancers to the warehouse adjoining the pier and there to present an evening's entertainment. Accordingly, the personnel

[REDACTED]

aboard ship enjoyed two hours of unique and colorful songs and dancing.

On the following morning, 15 May 1945, a mobile post exchange unit pulled into the adjoining warehouse, which by that time was used as a recreation and exercising area for the ship's passengers, and the latter made many purchases of food, toilet articles, stationery, and other necessities.

The "Cape Victory", left Honolulu Harbor as one of a convoy of three troopships at 1830, 16 May 1945 and proceeded on its journey. After an uneventful nine days of travel, the ship entered the atoll at Eniwetok and, having laid in the harbor for a little more than twenty-four hours, proceeded on the final leg of her journey, accompanied at this point by a single Patrol Craft.

Several more days of travel brought the group safely to its destination and, met by acting Commanding Officer, LIEUTENANT COLONEL HAZEN J. PAYETTE, the ship docked at Tinian on the afternoon of the 29th of May 1945, a total of twenty-three days having been required for the voyage. The personnel debarked at 0815, Memorial Day, 30 May 1945.


OVERSEAS MOVEMENT. ADVANCED AIR ECHELON

The Advanced Air Echelon, in command of LIEUTENANT COLONEL HAZEN J. PAYETTE, consisted of twenty-nine officers and sixty-one enlisted men.^{36/} Three C-54's, the numbers of which were 9009, 9019, and 2594,^{37/} were furnished by the 320th Troop Carrier Squadron to transport these individuals from the States to Tinian.

The first plane to depart from Wendover Field, Utah, was number 9009. It took off at 0830, 15 May 1945, about nine days after the main ground echelon left the Seattle Port of Embarkation.

The second plane of the Advanced Air Echelon departed from Wendover Field at 0912, 15 May 1945. The third plane, number 2594, did not leave the home base until 19 May 1945, the delay being occasioned while awaiting the arrival of the pilot from his familiarization flight over the route with the Air Transport Command.

The first two planes proceeded to Hamilton Field,

-
36. S.O. #38, Headquarters, 509th Composite Group, 21 April 1945
37. Statement by Major Hopkins, Group Operations Officer.

[REDACTED]

California, arriving there about noon. After lunch, all personnel were medically and administratively processed, upon the completion of which they were briefed on ditching procedure for the C-54. The party left the continental limits of the United States at 1930, 15 May 1945.

Ideal flying weather favoring the flight, the party landed at Hickam Field, Oahu, Hawaiian Islands at 0730, 16 May 1945, where both aircraft underwent a 50-hour inspection. Such inspection disclosed the necessity for an engine change on aircraft 9019, an unexpected happening which consumed two days. Further delay was encountered when this plane was grounded for other mechanical reasons, the necessary replacement parts not being immediately available at Hickam Field.

While this work was in progress, the party toured Oahu, seeing such points of interest as Pearl Harbor, Waikiki Beach, the City of Honolulu, the magnificent Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormon), and witnessed several baseball games between teams whose players, to a considerable extent, had played major league ball.

38. AAF Form #1, Operations, 320th Troop Carrier Squadron.

[REDACTED]

landed, the plane proceeded to Kwajalein Island, arriving there about five hours later. Again being refueled, the plane departed at 0600, 22 May 1945 and set down six hours later on Tinian Island, thus completing successfully its flight to the Group's overseas destination.

The journey of aircraft 2594 was a repetition of that of aircraft 9009. Sufficient is it to say, then, that the Advanced Air Echelon of the Group made its trip overseas in an orderly, safe, and thoroughly agreeable manner.

A total of five hundred and twenty officers and enlisted men made up the advance, main and rear air echelons, transported quickly and efficiently by planes of the 320th Troop Carrier Squadron.

[REDACTED]

Meanwhile, aircraft 9009 proceeded on the next leg of the journey at 0800 on 17 May 1945 and arrived at Johnston Island at 1115. Servicing of the aircraft consumed about an hour, during which time the passengers and crew ate lunch. Again taking off at 1230, aircraft 9009 set down at Kwajelein about five hours later. The passengers and crew rested.

Flying from Kwajelein at 0200, 18 May 1945, the party sighted its overseas home at 0810. The size of the island of Tinian plus growing vegetation and projected housing gave a feeling of satisfaction to those making their initial tour overseas, while to those making their second tour, it looked like the Garden of Paradise --- after experiencing England, North Africa, Italy and the Southwest Pacific Islands.

Back on Oahu, plane 9019 was finally readied for flight. The party left Hickam Field, Monday evening at 1810, 21 May 1945, and proceeded to Johnston Island, arriving there about three hours later. The party ate a wholesome meal while the plane was being refueled. Taking off from Johnston Island two hours after it had


1ST ORDNANCE SQUADRON, SPECIAL, (AVIATION) MOVEMENT OVERSEAS

While many of the 1st Ordnance Squadron personnel were still undergoing an intense schedule of training at Wendover Field, Utah, movement to the overseas destination already had begun. Three Officers and seventy enlisted men left Wendover Field for the Seattle Port of Embarkation on 4 June 1945, and thence to APO 247 on 15 June 1945^{39/}. During the same period six officers and fifty-six enlisted men departed by air on 5, 6, and 7 June 1945^{40/}. One officer and forty-six enlisted men comprised the second airborne contingent which departed Wendover Field on 16 and 17 June 1945^{41/}.

As the remainder of the personnel of the 1st Ordnance Squadron completed their required training, they were dispatched a few at a time to overseas destination with flights of the 320th Troop Carrier Squadron^{42/}.

-
39. S.O. #153, Hq., Wendover Field, Utah, 2 June 1945.
40. S.O. #153, Hq., Wendover Field, Utah, 2 June 1945.
41. S.O. #165, Hq., Wendover Field, Utah, 14 June 1945.
42. AAF Form #1, Operations 320th Troop Carrier Squadron.


[REDACTED]

OVERSEAS

Thus, although it can be said that the month of May 1945 saw the arrival of the greater part of the 509th Composite Group at its overseas destination, it is equally important to note that from the first of June until the first week in August, 1945, both individuals and equipment arrived almost every week from the states either by C-54 or B-29.

The personnel problems thus occasioned, while perhaps less impressive than the logistical, were almost as difficult. The ground echelon rarely was able to foresee, for instance, when an air movement of any squadron would be completed. It was sometimes slow or too premature, as a result, in transferring new arrivals from air to ground echelon. Morning reports were corrected when the necessary information was finally obtained. The cause of this difficulty was slowness of communications brought about by Air Force policy of not using telecon for transmittal of such information.

Of equal difficulty was the personnel problem with reference to the 320th Troop Carrier Squadron. Since the bulk of the latter's personnel have remained at the Group's "home base", Wendover




Field, the morning report of the 320th was never released from the states, and changes in rank and total strength of its personnel were sometimes only verbally delivered.

Again, in June 1945, the unique character of the 509th Composite Group manifested itself in matters of personnel. In June 1945, the 1st Technical Service Detachment, War Department Miscellaneous Group became attached to the 509th Composite Group. This technical service detachment had been activated for the purpose of administering a variety of scientists, security officers and Naval personnel needed in the Atomic Bomb project. Among these personnel were physicists whose assignment was to examine the physiological effects of the Atomic Bomb upon crew members and the enemy. There were Navy officers who aided in designing the bomb, counter-intelligence officers, fuze experts, radar specialists and, of course some of the vast number of scientists who contributed so handsomely to the development and perfection of the Atomic Bomb and of Atomic Bombing.^{43/}

Complex though the 509th Composite Group by this time had

43. Roster of 1st Technical Service Detachment, 11 August 1945.



become, an annual inspection (on or about 23 July 1945) conducted by the Twentieth Air Force Air Inspector revealed that the squadron average in administration was excellent and Group Headquarters superior, ^{44/} with verbal recommendation by LIEUTENANT COLONEL YOUNT of the Twentieth Air Force that the Group Sergeant Major's Distribution Sections be copied by the entire Wing. Too, he considered the several funds that he inspected to be efficiently handled.

In recognition of the admirable manner in which 509th personnel had executed their duties, an enlisted promotion policy created at Wendover Field was amplified overseas to permit each Squadron to submit by the twenty-fifth day of each month the names of a given percentage of its personnel for promotion. These lists of candidates for promotion were then checked by Group Headquarters and promulgated as of the first day of each month. As for officers' promotions, it was the responsibility of the Squadron Commander to initiate the request. An average of about seventy-five enlisted men and an average of about six officers were promoted each month under this policy.

44. Inspection Reports, Hq., 509th Composite Group, July 1945.



SUPPLY, MAINTENANCE AND FACILITIES

CHAPTER IV


That part of supply which meets the eye is a rather simple affair; a man or an organization is in need of authorized property of one sort or another; he goes to the supply office, presents his requisition, is issued materiel, and signs for it. But behind that issue is a maze of channels, a multitude of plans, and a miracle of coordination, without all of which supplies do not arrive in required quantities and in time of need. Supply is a function which, if improperly and inadequately executed, may lose a war.

Whether one considers supply from its broadest aspects ---- supply pertaining to a war in toto, or simply to an individual group, the one is as vital as the other.

The Supply and Maintenance Section of the 509th Composite Group was organized in a manner similar in function to the "State-side" Director of Supply and Maintenance of each Army Air Force Base. ^{45/} All supply activities for the Group were organized under

^e
45. Command Book, 509th Composite Group, 15 January 1945.





the Group Supply Officer, MAJOR GUY GELLER, who was designated also as Commanding Officer of the 1027th Air Materiel Squadron.^{46/} The supply sections of each of the other squadrons were consolidated with the 1027th Air Materiel Squadron for operation.^{47/} This consolidated supply handled all supply matters pertaining to the Group.

A similar consolidation was effected for the Transportation activities, a Group Transportation Section being organized. Since no mobile equipment belonging to the Group was accessible at this time, the Wendover Base Motor Pool was operated by both Group and Base Transportation personnel.

The 393rd Bombardment Squadron (VH) had been destined for overseas with another Group before being assigned to the 509th Composite Group.^{48/} As a result, it presented little or no problem of supply, the bulk of its equipment having already been sent to docks at the Port of Embarkation.

The 1st Ordnance Squadron, Special, (Aviation), likewise presented an exception to the general run of supply problems.

-
46. S.O. #352, Hq., Wendover Field, Utah, 17 December 1944.
47. Command Book, 509th Composite Group, 15 January 1945.
48. Reference made to Chapter I, Activation.

[REDACTED]

Much intricate and top secret equipment was authorized, and persons of high authority were consulted as to what equipment was needed. Too, since this unit was activated at a late date, the Group Supply Section did not requisition all shortages of equipment as it did for the other units. The Wendover Base and the 1st Ordnance Squadron worked more closely in this case. In some instances, equipment and facilities were improvised to meet an exigency.

Thus, the problem of initial supply was accomplished for the 509th Composite Group with exceptional efficiency.

But, once Supply has furnished materiel, its work has only begun. After issuance, many types of property obviously must be "kept up". This work of maintenance for the Group was performed by the 393rd Bombardment Squadron (VH), the 320th Troop Carrier Squadron, and the 603rd Air Engineering Squadron. The maintenance section of the 393rd Bombardment Squadron (VH) was headed by Captain CECIL N. KING, Lieutenant CARL M. GARNER, and Lieutenant IRVINE D. MCKER^{49/}. They were responsible for all first and second echelon maintenance of the seventeen B-29 aircraft assigned to the Group.^{50/}

-
49. Roster of Officers, Hq., 509th Composite Group, 31 March 1945.
50. Command Book, 509th Composite Group, 15 January 1945.

[REDACTED]

When the work load became heavy, Wendover Base personnel would assist in the maintenance of the planes.

One of the first projects undertaken by this maintenance section was the stripping of the aircraft. Since they were to be the Group's fly-away airplanes, and since the mission which the Group was to perform specified B-29's without turrets and blisters, it was necessary to remove these items and install plates over the wells. The 603rd Air Engineering Squadron assisted in the accomplishment of this work. Thus modified, the aircraft now were capable of increased speed in operation at very high altitudes.

Just before movement from the states, the 393rd Bombardment Squadron Maintenance Section was augmented with approximately forty mechanics. ^{51/} During the training period, the maintenance record of this section, according to Second Air Force standards, was excellent. No major or minor accidents --- the highest type of evidence of the fact --- occurred to Squadron aircraft. During the Cuba training, maintenance again proved to be excellent and, according to COLONEL TIBBETS, Commanding Officer of the Group,

51. S.O. #25, Hq., 509th Composite Group, 5 March 1945.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

it was far superior to that of other units operating in the area.

In February it was decided by higher authority that the Group would be furnished new airplanes. These were to have fuel injection engines, Curtis electric reversible pitch propellers, pneumatic bomb bay doors, engine mounted front collector rings, and other smaller mechanical improvements.^{52/} This meant additional schooling for the maintenance personnel. Accordingly they attended special classes of instruction at the Wendover Base and at schools elsewhere.

Crew Chief Maintenance, an arrangement under which specified individuals about 10 to 15 in number are assigned to the task of maintaining particular aircraft, was employed by this maintenance section. The personnel were exceptionally well-trained upon leaving the states.

The Maintenance Section of the 320th Troop Carrier Squadron was headed by LIEUTENANT RICHARD B. SMITH AND WARRANT OFFICER CLARKE C. MATHISON. Later CAPTAIN MATHEW H. CANJAR succeeded LIEUTENANT SMITH.^{53/} This section was responsible for first

52. Statement by Major Porter, Director of Supply and Maintenance.
53. Roster of Officers, Hq., 509th Composite Group, 31 July 1945.

[REDACTED]

and second echelon maintenance on transport planes assigned to the Group; however, these were later replaced with three C-54's.

During the greater part of that period of time previous to overseas movement, this section maintained three C-54 and four C-47 aircraft. The maintenance record for this unit was excellent; no accidents occurred.

Just before overseas movement, the four C-47 aircraft were taken over by the Wendover Base, and two additional C-54 aircraft became the responsibility of this section. Thus, upon departure from the states, the 320th Troop Carrier Squadron Maintenance Section had obtained a wealth of training and experience, enabling them to perform their work in an exceptionally efficient manner.

CAPTAIN EARL O. CASEY was designated Commanding Officer of the 603rd Air Engineering Squadron^{55/}, with LIEUTENANT ARTHUR C. BARNEY, LIEUTENANT ROBERT D. WILLIS, and WARRANT OFFICER JOSEPH L. FILICHA as assistant engineering officer. This unit had the responsibility of performing third echelon maintenance on all Group

-
54. Statement by Major Porter, Director of Supply and Maintenance.
55. S.O. #352, Hq., Wendover Field, Utah, 17 December 1944.

[REDACTED]

aircraft. Personnel were taken largely from the Wendover Base Third Echelon Shops and were well trained from the start.

In addition to its primary duties, this unit assisted the other two maintenance units in first and second echelon maintenance whenever the workload in the latter two required additional hands. When the time arrived for overseas movement, the 603rd Air Engineering Squadron Maintenance Section was exceptionally well fitted to perform its work overseas.

The ingenuity of the American soldier is now legendary. When the 509th Composite Group arrived overseas, latent "Rube Goldbergs" sprang up as necessity pressed. Make-shift office equipment and supplies were fashioned until regular supply channels began functioning. Appetites of clerks and typists began to look like appetites of mechanics and craftsmen. Numerous hams and other foodstuffs were consumed by these men as they built shelves, file cases, footlockers, tables and desks. It was not unusual for helpful LIEUTENANT CHARLES PERRY, Group Mess Officer, to dispose of mess supplies so that boxes could be used for file case drawers

[REDACTED]

and storage. Ironically, Armour, Swift, and Cudahy often got together in one file case --- probably for the first time in their corporate lives.

In the 509th Composite Group's new setting as a part of the 313th Bombardment Wing and the XXI Bomber Command,^{56/} it became necessary, as might be expected, to effect several changes in the organization of Supply and Maintenance. All maintenance personnel assigned to the 393rd Bombardment Squadron (VH) were organized into a Combat Line Maintenance section, which followed closely the technique of the Production Line Maintenance of Stateside bases.^{57/}

~~Production Line~~
Production Line Maintenance (or Combat Line Maintenance) is an arrangement under which a small number of men --- usually 4 to 7 --- are assigned to maintain a particular aircraft. In addition to these men, "specialists" from a central pool, Service Center, are called upon when needed to perform their particular type of work on any aircraft which requires it. It is a system which is especially advantageous when qualified personnel are not available in numbers required under the Crew Chief Maintenance

56. G.O. #75, XXI Bomber Command, 1 May 1945.

57. Statement by Major Porter, Director of Supply and Maintenance.

[REDACTED]

system. Although lacking somewhat in the sense of a personal bond between ground crew and air crew, Production Line Maintenance (or Combat Line Maintenance) has the advantage of utilizing available manpower to the utmost.

Thus reconstituted, the 393rd Bombardment Squadron (VH) Maintenance Section became responsible for first and second echelon maintenance of all 509th Aircraft.

Likewise, the 603rd Air Engineering Squadron Maintenance Section underwent a similar reorganization, being sent to work in the two Service Centers ("C" and "D") of the 313th Wing. There it assisted in specialized maintenance of aircraft --- third echelon maintenance --- belonging to other Groups, as well as the 509th, operating from Tinian.

And as for the 320th Troop Carrier Squadron Maintenance Section, the situation was even more complex. Of that Squadron's maintenance personnel, hardly more than a dozen were on Tinian at any one time. The bulk of the Maintenance Section were needed more, and therefore remained, at the Group's "home base", Wendover^{58/}


58. Statement by Captain Cecil King, Aircraft Maintenance Officer, 393rd Bombardment Squadron (VH).

[REDACTED]

Field, Utah. Those who came to Tinian worked alongside the 313th Wing Flight Section. When Group C-54's arrived on Tinian in need of maintenance, these men performed the requisite work and were assisted therein by 313th Wing Flight Section personnel. In turn-about fashion, 320th Troop Carrier Squadron Maintenance personnel assisted the 313th Wing Flight Section in the maintenance of the latter's thirty-odd aircraft.

Reorganization of the Group Supply Section also was effected to function in accordance with 313th Wing standard operating procedure. 509th Supply personnel of the 390th Air Service Group were assigned appropriate duties in the Service Centers. All squadron supply activities were gathered into a reconstituted Group Supply Section, individual supply rooms being eliminated. Functioning as liaison between the Service Centers and the "consumer", it has, in a very efficient manner, managed all supply matters pertaining to the Group.


Consolidation, it has been learned, is a by-word in overseas operations. It means the elimination of much "red tape", it



results in less duplication of effort, and it realizes fuller utilization of time --- considerations obviously of great importance in an overseas theater of operation. Had the 509th Composite Group known that ultimately it was to become a part of the 313th Bombardment Wing, perhaps it could have anticipated these changes in the organization of supply and maintenance more fully. ^{59/} However, it did not know, for its overseas base of operation was not finally determined by higher authority until the last moment --- due, obviously, to the peculiar nature of the Group's mission.

This resulting reorganization occasioned by the Group's assignment to the 313th Bombardment Wing entailed in and of itself no great problems. The only difficulty encountered was residual --- that of housing the personnel and equipment affected by the change. As for these people, it was most desirable that they be housed in close proximity to their work, lest they consume too much time enroute to and from their places of duty. Thus, the 603rd Air Engineering Squadron and the 1027th Air Material Squadron were housed in a different area than the rest of the Group. ^{60/}

-
59. Opinions of Major John Porter, Director of Supply and Maintenance.
60. Locator Map, Exhibit Number 1.



Likewise, it was necessary to operate Combat Line Maintenance in a temporary area in the beginning, since the permanent Group maintenance site was still under construction. One small building in this temporary area was used as the Combat Line Maintenance and Technical Supply Office. Squad tents were pitched for use by the several shops and for use in housing equipment.^{61/}

With a firm foot again on the ground, Supply and Maintenance was now in a better position to devote a greater part of its efforts to its regular work. Pursuing the important job at hand, all personnel were busy during the first part of June unloading Group equipment from ships. The "Cape Victory" was relieved of her burden first. All available Group personnel accomplished the job by 5 June 1945.

Five days later the "Emile Berlinger" docked. Five days were consumed in unloading her cargo --- the bulk of the Group's organizational equipment. Large Quonset huts^{62/} (now occupied by the 1st Ordnance Squadron) were utilized as storage warehouses for this material, and items needed for immediate use were issued therefrom.

-
61. Reference is made to Locator Map, Exhibit Number 1.
62. Reference is made to photographs of 1st Ordnance Area.



11 June 1945 was an especially busy day for the 509th Composite Group. The complete organization, with the exception of the 603rd Engineering Squadron and the 1027th Air Material Squadron, moved to the 18th N.C.B. Area ^{63/} --- the first time since arrival on Tinian that the Group actually looked like a Group. Scouting supplymen immediately discovered a large empty warehouse (used formerly by the Sea-Bees) in the new area and put it to use as a Group Supply headquarters.

Again the Group's property was transferred --- this time from the 1st Ordnance Area to the new location. This move was supervised by LIEUTENANTS CHRISTENSEN and LUCCIONI. ^{64/} The 603rd Air Engineering Squadron and the 1027th Air Materiel Squadron, in the meantime, had become fairly settled; accordingly, they moved property belonging to them to their respective areas.

The Group Transportation Section, having been consolidated in the states, presented no problem since arrival overseas. When the move was made into the 18th N.C.B. Area, the Group Transportation Section carried on its duties in an uninterrupted manner.

-
63. Reference is made to locator map, Exhibit Number 1.
64. Group Supply Officers.



[REDACTED]

taking over the motor pool and the motor pool maintenance shops already set up there. Since all the Group vehicles were in A-1 condition when shipped from the states, no motor vehicle maintenance problems of any consequence were encountered.

In addition to the Group's moving on 11 June 1945, the Supply and Maintenance personnel were further occupied by reason of the fact that the first three of the Group's B-twenty-nines arrived on Tinian that day. These were followed by the arrival of two more on 13 June 1945, four on 16 June 1945, and two on 27 June 1945 --- a total of eleven B-29's during the month.^{65/}

The Maintenance Section had plenty to do. "Schedule Inspection" --- one of the Group's "specialized" units under the Combat Line Maintenance organization --- began immediately to conduct one-hundred-hour inspections required after an overseas flight on each of the eleven aircraft. Other sundry maintenance work served to give all the Maintenance Section personnel the "feel" of their work for the first time since leaving the states, and the end of June saw all Maintenance personnel eager to execute

65. AAF Form 1's, Group Operations, 11 June 1945.

[REDACTED]

their all-important duties.

During the month of July 1945 the 509th Composite Group began tactical operations in the theater. ^{66/} The first part of the month was entirely taken up by training schedules required before sending combat crews against the enemy. Supply and Maintenance encountered no major problems during this period; most equipment was in good condition and most supplies were intact upon arrival in the theater.

Notwithstanding, there seemed never to be a dull moment in Supply --- overseas, at any rate. After living comfortably in the 18th N.C.B. Area for a little less than a month, the Group again pulled up stakes and, on 8 July 1945, moved to the 13th N.C.B. ^{67/} Area. Major John W. Porter, Director of Supply and Maintenance, after inspecting the new area which was to be the Group's permanent home overseas, had but one statement to make; "God Bless the Sea-Bees."

In taking over the 13th N.C.B. Area, the Group acquired eighty-nine Quonset huts, a consolidated mess hall, a large ware-

-
66. Operations Order No. 1, 29 June 1945, Exhibit Number 2.
67. Reference is made to locator map, Exhibit Number 1.

[REDACTED]

completed and turned over to the Group. It included hardstands, taxi strips and twelve quonset huts. The entire maintenance Section, including Technical Supply, began the work of moving all shops and equipment to this permanent area. ^{70/} The twelve quonset huts were found to be sufficient only for the housing of the shops. It therefore became necessary to set up part of the Combat Line Maintenance Section in squad tents. These tents were used wholly for the protection of equipment ---- not as work shops.

By the end of the month the Group Maintenance Section completed all the work of moving and setting up facilities, in addition to the routine and preventative maintenance required to be done on the thirteen airplanes in the theater at this time.

The Group Motor Pool and Motor Pool Maintenance Shops also were moved into the new area and continued the consolidated method of operation. An acute transportation shortage --- brought about by the Group's now full scale program of operations --- was alleviated by the organization of bus lines to the various areas.

70 Reference made to locator Map

[REDACTED]

where group personnel were employed. However it was still necessary to maintain a close watch on the distribution and assignment of vehicles.

Since the 603rd Air Engineering Squadron and the 1027th Air Materiel Squadron were to continue working in the Service centers, they remained in their assigned areas and made necessary arrangements for permanent quarters there.



TRAINING
CHAPTER V

Probably in no other of its aspects is the 509th Composite Group's distinct character more apparent than in its initial status of training. It has been noted that in many instances complete departments were lifted from the Base Unit and placed bodily into the Group, pared off here, or perhaps augmented there --- tailor made to fit into their new roles.

The 393rd Bombardment Squadron's assignment to the Group is a case in point. On 10 September 1944, the Squadron, at current strength of 700 people, with individual and organizational equipment, was transferred from Fairmont Army Air Field, Geneva, Nebraska, to Wendover Army Air Base, Wendover, Utah. ^{71/} The 393rd Bombardment Squadron was to be the first to fly a B-29 from Wendover Army Air Base. When the unit arrived, no B-29's had ever set down on the field. In the absence of the necessary aircraft, then, flying training ceased for the time.

As to over-all status of training accomplished up to the date of movement of the Squadron, an inventory was taken. It was immediately recognized that further training would have

71 SO #254, PAR 7, HQ. BAAF, Geneva, Nebr. dd 10 Sept. 1944



to be carried on within the Squadron by Squadron instructors because of the fact Wendover Field had no satisfactory training department for Very Heavy Bombardment Groups. CAPTAIN BUSCHER was sent to Second Air Force Headquarters to obtain the latest information on B-29 training, and from there went to Fairmont Army Air Field to obtain all the data on training accomplished there by the Squadron.

On the basis of this information, a ground school schedule was planned. Classes commenced early in October of 1944, and by the end of the month approximately 73% of this schooling had been accomplished.^{72/} Flying training was of necessity limited by the number of B-29's, available to the Squadron. With the arrival of the B-29's, flying training was scheduled and resumed in the last two weeks of October, major emphasis being placed on high altitude bombing, navigation, and instrument flying.^{73/}

In November of 1944 the primary mission of the Squadron continued to be training of Very Heavy Combat Crews. Technical

-
72. Second Air Force, Crew Progress Chart, Technical Training, (VH) 393rd Bomb Squadron.
73. Operational Training Report, 393rd Bombardment Squadron, (VH) 29 October 1944.

[REDACTED]

training was approximately 89% completed by the end of the month. ^{74/} Flying training began to present a favorable appearance; approximately 51% of the three phase missions completed; the companion trainer missions completed; 73% of bombing requirements met; 51% of navigation requirements finished; and 100% of instrument checks accomplished. ^{75/} Thus in December of 1944, when the Squadron was relieved from its assignment to the 504th Bombardment Group and was made a part of the 509th Composite Group, training was substantially completed. ^{76/} Now the Squadron was ready to begin the important job at hand ----- Silver Plate Project Training.

On 7 January 1945, an advance party of six officers and twenty-six enlisted men of the 393rd Bombardment Squadron, together with other personnel of the Group, left Wendover for temporary duty at Batista Field, ^{77/} Cuba. This was the beginning of a period of extensive training which was to last until the end of February. By the 14th of January, ten B-29's with combat and ground crews were at the new base, ready for specialized training operations.

The training in Cuba was both comprehensive and particular.

-
- 74 Crew Progress Chart Tech. Tng. (VH) 393rd Bomb Sq. WAAF, Utah
 - 75 Crew Progress Chart Tech. Tng. (VH) 393rd Bomb Sq. WAAF, Utah
 - 76 Crew Progress Chart Tech. Tng. (VH) 393rd Bomb Sq. WAAF, Utah
 - 77 SO #6, Hqs. Wendover Field, Utah. dd 6 Jan. 1945

[REDACTED]

This training was divided into two parts. The first part consisted of Radar bombing from altitudes of 20,000 to 30,000 feet. Gunnery was usually practiced in these flights. Briefing was held at 0600, take-off scheduled for before 0800, and landing at approximately 1400.

The second part was a simulated combat mission, with formal briefing and a simulated enemy target. At a joint Staff meeting, the day previous to the missions, due consideration was given to the course to, over, and returning from, the target, enemy situation and capabilities, the target itself, communications, operational data, weather, and, in fact, all other information necessary to make the mission both plausible and successful. These missions were described by the crews who participated as interesting and profitable and helped to stimulate a training schedule that by this time had been drawn out far beyond normal duration. From the 15th to the 31st of January, the crews averaged 42 flying hours in training missions.

All went well in February. The necessary additional crews were blended into the training program, and the close of the month found the task substantially completed. The average

[REDACTED]


number of simulated combat missions flown was approximately 3 1/3. The average time flown by each crew for the period of temporary duty at Cuba was 66 hours.

Personnel who had been subjected to this intense and elongated program of training deserved a rest. During the greater part of March and April, the Group personnel, especially combat crewmen, were given leaves and furloughs.

By the end of May, the 393rd Squadron had nine new modified B-29's, each having been flown by one of the Squadron's crews from Omaha, Nebraska to Wendover Field, Utah. Then began the customary acceptance checks and shakedown missions before leaving the states. Each aircraft put in from 25 to 40 hours flying time during these missions, which consisted of bombing, calibration of instruments, and cruise control practice.

The first of the fifteen crews --- those of Lt. Westover, Lt. McKnight, and Capt. Wilson --- departed from Wendover on 5 June 1945.^{78/} A good portion of Squadron personnel were down on the ramp to watch the take-off. The combat personnel were on their way.


78. AAF Form 1, June 1945, 393rd Bombardment Squadron Operations.



Three days later the crews of Captain Price and Captain Eatherly departed; in another three days Captain Bock, Captain Taylor, Captain Marquardt and Lt. Devore and their crews took off. Lt. Col. Classen left on 19 June (Lt Smith's crew), followed on the 22nd by Major Sweeney (Lt. Albury's crew), Captain Lewis and Lt. Ray quit Wendover on the 27th, bringing the total number of crews enroute overseas to thirteen and leaving two at Wendover; ^{79/} Captain Zahn and Captain Costello's who at this time had not yet received their planes from ~~Omaha~~.

Upon arrival at Tinian, all combat crew personnel were obliged to spend seven days in the Wing Lead Crew Ground School. ^{80/} Subjects in which the men were indoctrinated included the following: Theater history, Air Sea Rescue, Ditching and Bail-outs, Survival, Japanese people, Radar Bombing Methods, Wing and AAF regulations, Weather, Cruise Control, Emergency Procedures, Camera Operation, Dinghy Drill, and other classes bearing directly on combat operations.

-
79. AAF Form #1, June 1945, 393rd Squadron Operations
80. 313th Wing Training Program for Indoctrination
of 509th Composite Group, 23 June 1945



Required training missions in the 313th Wing were as follows: a four and a half (4½) hour Instrument Calibration and orientation flight; an~~d~~ eight (8) hour flight (navigational) to Iwo Jima, returning to Rota for bombing (4-1000 lb. H.E.); a two (2) hour local night mission; two (2) four (4) hour radar and visual bombing missions on Rota (8-500 lb. H.E.); and a shake down bombing mission on Truk (with 8-1000 lb. H.E.).

On 30 June, the first Group overseas training mission was flown;^{81/} Instrument Calibration and Orientation. Nine aircraft were airborne, after a briefing at 0430, with take-off at 0700, and landing at approximately 1200. The first two hours were spent in instrument calibration and the remaining three in a look at the islands composing the Mariana Group by way of Parallon de Medinilla and return.

On 1 July, training mission #2^{82/} was flown; Nine (9) aircraft were scheduled and completed the mission as briefed to Iwo Jima and thence to Rota to drop two 1000 lb. H. E. from 25,000 ft. Six (6) of the bombs were dropped by radar, twelve (12) visually.

-
81. Reference made to Exhibit Number 4, Operations Order No. 1.
82. Reference made to Exhibit Number 4, Operations Order No. 2.



with excellent results. Crews participating were Capt. Wilson, Lt. McKnight, Lt. Westover, Capt. Price, Capt. Eatherly, Lt. Devore, Capt. Bock, Capt. Marquardt, and Capt. Taylor.

Briefings for these missions, and all subsequent missions were held in the theater, with interrogations in the Intelligence Lounge.


Training mission #3 was flown on 3 July, ^{83/}nine (9) aircraft participating, with take-off at 1230 and ETA of 1630, was a bombing practice on Rota. Fifty-four (54) bombs were carried, forty-six (46) dropped on Rota, seven (7) salvoed, and one (1) hung up and was later pried loose. Victor #2 returned early with high oil temperature on engine #1. Results were good to excellent.

Training mission #4, 4 July, ^{84/}with the same nine (9) crews flying, was a repeat bombing of Rota. Fifty-two (52) bombs were released on the target, two (2) were jettisoned because of a shackle malfunction. Results were good to excellent.

Training mission #5 was run on 5 July ^{85/}with nine (9) crews scheduled, five (5) scratched and four (4) flying, completing the

-
- 83. Reference made to Exhibit Number 4, Operations Order No. 5.
 - 84. " " " " " " " " " " 6.
 - 85. " " " " " " " " " " 7.





mission: Capt. Bock, Capt. Wilson, Lt. Westover, and Lt. McKnight. Bomb load was six (6) 1000 lb G.P.'s; briefing at 1530, takeoff at 1800, and ETA of 2400. The target was Moen (N) airfield in the Truk Islands. All four (4) aircraft bombed by radar from 25,000 feet through cloud coverage ranging from 1/10th to 8/10ths, with unobserved results. No fighters were encountered, and only three (3) bursts of A. A. were reported.

Then came a flurry of excitement, the Squadron was about to fly combat missions, which accounted for the scratching of five (5) planes on a training mission #5. The target was both runways on ^{86/}Marcus Island. Briefing was at 0530, take-off at 0800, and ETA at 1500, the 6th of July, bomb load was 20-500 lb G.P., altitude was 20,000 and 20,500 feet. Capt. Taylor, Capt. Marquardt, and Lt. Devore bombed the 112° runway. Results were good to excellent, with ninety eight (98) bombs hitting Marcus, one (1) salvoed and one (1) hung up. No enemy aircraft were encountered, and flak amounted to several inaccurate bursts. All crews commented on the difficulties in locating the target, and the excellent navigation exhibited

86.

86. Reference made to Exhibit Number 4, Operations Order No. 8.



87/


On the 7th the same mission was flown to Marcus, by Capt. Wilson, Lt. Westover, Capt. Taylor, Capt. Bock and Lt. Devore, with good results to excellent. On the 88/ 8th, again, Capt. Eatherly, Lt. McKnight, Capt. Marquardt, Capt. Price, and Capt. Bock bombed Marcus with the same results, good to excellent. Lt. McKnight, Lt. Wendover, Capt. Wilson, Lt. Devore, and Capt. Taylor bombed Marcus again on the 9th, this time with delayed action 500 lb G.P. bombs, with the usual fusings. Four (4) planes bombed by radar in this mission, with unobserved results, the fifth having excellent results visually.

Then followed a series of bombing practice missions on Rota and Guguan, interspersed with the usual orientation and training missions for the other crews who had finished ground school in the meantime.

July 21st saw Lt. Ray and Capt. Lewis fly the Marcus mission, 89/ which was now only a training mission, much to the disgust of the crews. Both planes bombed visually from 25,000 feet pressure, with good to excellent results, through 5/10 to 8/10 cumulus over the target.

87. Reference made to Exhibit #4, Operations Order No. 9.
 88. " " # " " " " " 10.
 89. " " " " " " " " 11.





By this time, combat strikes against the Japanese Homeland had gotten under way. Training assumed a place of secondary importance, but continued, nevertheless, throughout the Group's period of overseas operations in the form of practice bombing missions to the several unoccupied islands north of Tinian used for that purpose.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
OPERATIONS
Chapter VI

Once the smooth silver B-29's had arrived at Tinian, curiosity concerning the mission of the 509th manifested itself within the other outfits stationed on the island, in the form of whispered speculation. Distinctive insignia, an encircled black arrow, identified the aircraft as those of the 509th.^{90/}

Group Operations received orders directing it to carry out the first training mission on 30 June 1945.^{91/} The results of nearly two-score training missions, including those flown against Marcus Island, testified unequivocally to the adequacy of the crew's Stateside training. Accordingly, the time had come to test their mettle in a full-scale strike against the Japanese homeland.

"Frag Plans"^{92/} 1 through 14 had, in the meantime, been received by Group Intelligence from XXI Bomber Command. Each of these fourteen plans prescribed a pin-point target --- usually a strategic industry located in or near a town of medium size and population.^{93/} LIEUTENANT COLONEL PAYETTE assigned specific


-
90. Reference is made to insignia chart. Exhibit #5.
91. Reference is made to Operations Order #1. Exhibit #4.
92. AAF term for "tentative plan of operations".
93. Reference is made to Frag plans 1 to 14. Exhibit #6.

[REDACTED]

frag plans pro rata to the several Intelligence Officers. This was not only the wise but also the necessary thing to do, in view of the fact that to each target was assigned a single, and later, two aircraft. The unique situation thus confronting Intelligence was met in the following manner: Target 'study classes were prepared and scheduled, at which times the crews concerned were made thoroughly familiar with their assigned targets and were given all information available which, in the opinions of the Intelligence officers, and the Staff, would aid the crews in successfully completing their missions.

On 19 July 1945 paragraph 2 of Field Order 104 announced "313th Wg will Atk Empire Targets with 10 A/C of the 509th Gp on 'D' Day".^{94/} Target study classes were again conducted. Instant-minute questions of the crewmen were answered. Special briefings were held by the Staff. At the general briefing, COLONEL TIBBETS wished the crews well, reminded them that the eyes of the 313th Wing were upon them. H-hour, 0200, 20 July 1945, saw the first 509th aircraft airborne enroute to the Japanese homeland.

94. Reference is made to Field Order #104, Exhibit #7.



If one had taken the opportunity to make a last minute run down to the "line" to wish the ten crews Godspeed, he probably would have been ushered to the open bomb-bay by one of the proud crewmen and invited to affix his name or some other inscription to the pumpkin-colored, pumpkin-shaped bomb which was to be dropped into the heart of some Japanese vital military installation eight or nine hours later.

On the afternoon of 20 July 1945 all ten aircraft returned to their home base. Five had bombed their primary targets; three visually and two by radar. Four dropped their bombs on secondary targets --- targets of opportunity --- by means of radar. The tenth aircraft was forced to jettison its bomb at sea enroute to the target due to an engine failure. The results of the mission were officially reported, "Fair to ^{95/}unobserved". Quiet disappointment and an aggravated anxiety could be sensed in all concerned.

This first mission over the Japanese Homeland demonstrated beautifully one fact, a fact which of itself would determine to a considerable extent the effectiveness of the Group's missions in

95. Reference is made to Final Report of Missions 1, 2, 3, and 4. Exhibit #8.

[REDACTED]

the future; the state of the weather over the target area. Half jesting and half in earnest, one crewman described the cloud coverage over his plane's target area as, "20/10; 10/10 above us and 10/10 below". Another aircraft, finding its primary target completely obscured by clouds, dropped its bomb on Tokyo proper --- the only spot along the route that was open at the time. Some hours later radio Tokyo had this to say: "The tactics of the raiding enemy planes have become so complicated that they cannot be anticipated from experience or the common sense gained so far. The single B-29 which passed over the capital this morning dropping bombs on one section of the Tokyo Metropolis, taking unawares slightly the people of the city, and these are certainly so-called sneak tactics aimed at confusing the (minds of the people)."^{96/}

Hoping above all else for favorable weather, the Group, on 23 July 1945, prepared for its second combat mission over the Japanese Homeland. Ten aircraft were scheduled to participate, each being assigned a specific target and aiming point, and each crew being briefed accordingly. Strike reports and, later, inter-

96. Reference to Foreign Radio Reports, 21 July 1945.

[REDACTED]

rogation, disclosed that the weather over the target areas generally was clear. Nine planes had bombed visually, one by radar. Seven had bombed their primary targets, three their secondary targets. The total results of this mission were officially reported, "Effective and Successful".^{97/} Photo interpretation bore out this appraisal, for, the next morning at regular Mission Critique, LIEUTENANT COLONEL PAYETTE, Group Combat Intelligence Officer, was delivered a TWX from the COMMANDING GENERAL of the 313th Bombardment Wing which was addressed to COLONEL TIBBETS. LIEUTENANT COLONEL PAYETTE read the message to all present: "Interpretation of strike photos taken on your mission yesterday reveals outstanding bombing capabilities Such results as these are indicative of an organization with good leadership, high degree of training and determination to achieve outstanding results. Congratulations to you and your men."^{98/}

^{99/}


Two more "pumpkin" strikes over the Japanese Homeland were carried out during the closing days of July. The mission of 26 July saw ten 509th aircraft airborne. The targets attacked were

97. Reference is made to Final Report of Missions 5, 6, and 7.

Exhibit #8.

98. Reference is made to copy of TWX, 24 July 1945. Exhibit #9.

99. Nickname given to pumpkin-colored, pumpkin-shaped bomb.



in the Nagaoka and Toyama Areas. Not one plane bombed its primary target. Of the ten secondary targets bombed, seven bombs were dropped visually. Three were dropped by means of radar. It again was the same old story: 10/10 cloud coverage over the primary target. The results of this strike were officially reported to be "successful, but fair as to effectiveness".^{100/}

The mission of 29 July 1945 put eight 509th "Pumpkin" carrying aircraft over the Japanese Homeland. Nine planes were scheduled to participate. Shortly before take-off, however, the "Pumpkin" carried in the plane under the command of MAJOR HOPKINS (LIEUTENANT WESTOVER as co-pilot) suddenly broke loose and thudded into the asphalt hardstand. Fortunately, none of the flying or ground personnel were under the plane at the time, although MAJOR HOPKINS had been beneath the aircraft only a few minutes before. This miscarriage, the only accident of any consequence to occur during the group's operations overseas, made any possibility of the plane's taking off out of the question.

The weather being somewhat more favorable for this mis-

100. Reference is made to Final Report of Missions 8 and 9.
Exhibit #8.


[REDACTED]

sion, four planes bombed their primary targets, while four found breaks in the weather over secondary target areas. All aircraft bombed visually. The results of this strike were officially cataloged as, "Effective"^{101/}.

This, then, is the summation of the combat efforts of the 509th Composite Group up to the world-shaking mission of 6 August 1945. It had carried out four strikes against the Japanese Homeland, with results ranging from "Unobserved" to "Excellent". A total of ^{twenty}~~thirty~~ seven of their bombs had been dropped visually; ten had been loosed by radar. Only one aircraft received damage --- and that was meager --- as the result of enemy defensive efforts.^{102/}

Comment still ran rampant among the other units located on Tinian as July drew to a close, the gist of the curious critics' remarks being, "Well, the 509th and their fifteen planes don't seem to be winning the war yet..."^{103/} And, indeed, they were probably right --- as far as they went.

-
101. Reference is made to Final Report of Missions 10, 11, and 12. Exhibit #8.
102. Reference is made to Final Report of Mission #12, Par. 9. Exhibit #8.
103. Reference to "509th Will Will the War". Exhibit #9.



THE TWO ATOMIC BOMBS---THE TIME FOR DECISION

If for no other reason than the desire to tell a good story, it would be ideal to include herein the complete account of the two Atomic bombings --- beginning with the initial considerations behind the field order, down through the accomplishment of the mission. But reasons much more important than the desire to tell a good story prevent its being told.

In the first place, the Atomic bomb project was conducted on a compartmental basis, that is, no individual was permitted to know any more about the project than was absolutely essential to the performance of his specific work. MAJOR GENERAL LESLIE ^{104 /}GROVES is the only individual, in all probability, who is in possession of the unabridged account of the Atomic bomb and the two Atomic bombings.

In the second place, those who were in possession of information concerning the Atomic bombing missions stood guard over it night and day. So conscious of the vital importance of security, they may have been too tight-lipped. This is true from the standpoint of the Historian, at any rate!

104. War Department Representative of the Atomic Bomb Project.




The week prior to the date of the two Atomic bombing missions was one filled with much off-the-record scurrying about, secret meetings, and conferences behind closed doors. To illustrate the point, only one of the 509th's Intelligence Officers --- LIEUTENANT COLONEL PAYETTE --- was actually informed of what was about to be undertaken. The main sources of reliable information concerning the two Atomic bombings, therefore, are Top Secret. Field Order Number 13, 20th Air Force published information, and the interrogation forms completed when the Atomic bombing crews were questioned.

105 /

The first Atomic bombing mission was carried out on 6 August 1945. Several days prior to this, the six crews concerned were instructed in target studies and were given special instruction on the actual bomb-dropping procedure. Briefing was given in two parts: the first part, conducted two days before take-off, included a disclosure of the targets, a brief explanation by Navy personnel of the immediate effect of the bomb, and a resume' of operational data; the second part of the Atomic briefing, held just before take-off, included air-sea rescue and weather details.

105. Reference is made to Interrogation Forms of Mission Flown 6 August 1945, Exhibit #9.



It was emphasized at this briefing that under no circumstances were aircraft to go within fifty miles of the target four hours prior and six hours subsequent to strike time; that in case of distress, rescue facilities would not venture within the forbidden area for the prescribed length of time. Special Air-Sea Rescue facilities were provided for this mission by planes of other Groups, and by Navy planes and submarines. These facilities were posted so as to give better than usual coverage to the aircraft participating.

On the same day --- 6 August 1945 --- other 20th Air Force aircraft were attacking targets in Japan in the hope of diverting any enemy defensive action which would deter the Atomic Bombing mission. At this time, however, the Japanese Air Force was on its last legs, and little trouble from either flak or fighters was anticipated. Yet, every precaution was taken to insure the success of the mission.

The primary target of Atomic Bombing Mission Number 1, was Hiroshima; with Nagasaki as an alternate. The initial point of the bomb run over Hiroshima was $34^{\circ}24'$ North, $133^{\circ}05'$ East.


[REDACTED]

The aiming point was just below Army Division Headquarters, at the tip of the island on which the Hiroshima Airfield was located.

Altogether, seven of the Group's B-29 figured in this attack. One deployed to Iwo Jima to be used as a spare in case of emergency; three "weather planes" were to proceed to their specifically assigned targets, appraise the weather over it, and relay the information to the "strike aircraft" so that the target over which the weather was most clear could be ascertained. The remaining two aircraft were to escort the strike aircraft to the target. Each of the latter two planes carried camera equipment; one carried special instruments of a highly scientific nature.

Obviously, this arrangement involved considerable radio briefing, precise coordination among the crews participating, and stop-watch timing. The gears had to mesh.

Nothing but visual bombing would do, and it must be done from an altitude of from 28,000 to 30,000 feet --- for the safety of the strike aircraft, if for no other reason.




At least four hours after the bomb was released, two photo ships from the 3rd Photo Reconnaissance Squadron were to make photo coverage of the Hiroshima (or other target) area. The two photo crews were to be briefed by 509th Intelligence Officers and given all necessary information to carry out their mission.

Thus briefed, the Atomic bombing party set out on its amazing strike.

The trip up was uneventful. LIEUTENANT MCKNIGHT and crew stood by at Iwo Jima in case of an emergency. CAPTAIN WILSON was commander of the area weather ship. CAPTAIN TAYLOR's plane reported the weather over Nagasaki, and CAPTAIN EATHERLY and crew observed the state of weather over Hiroshima. At approximately 0815 the weather over Hiroshima was reported to COLONEL TIBBETS as "2/10 lower and middle lower, and 2/10 at 15,000". Hiroshima was to be the target!

The bomb run was short and straight. At 0915 the bomb was away. MAJOR THOMAS FEREBEE ^{106 /} gave back the controls to COLONEL TIBBETS, who executed a violent turn away from the target. At the

106. Group Bombardier, 509th Composite Group




time of the drop, the plane was flying at an altitude of 31,600 feet, at a CAS of 196 KPH, and at a ground speed of 285 K. The bomb had been dropped visually at an axis of attack of 265°. Weather at that time had been 1/10 cloud coverage, with considerable haze over the target.

The two escort planes, commanded by MAJOR SWERNEY and CAPTAIN MARQUARDT, observed the explosion through protective goggles. They reported that the flash after the explosion was deep purple, then reddish and reached to almost 8,000 feet; the cloud, shaped like a mushroom, was up to 20,000 feet in one minute, at which time the top part broke from the "stem", and eventually reached 30,000.

The stem of the mushroom-like column of smoke, looking now like a giant grave marker, stood one minute after the explosion upon the whole area of the city, excepting the southern dock area. This column was a thick white smoke, darker at the base, and interspersed with deep red.

Though about fifteen miles (slant range) from the target when the explosion occurred, both escort aircraft, as well as the



strike plane, reported feeling two shock waves jar the aircraft. Approximately 390 statute miles away from the target area, the column of smoke still could be seen piercing the morning sky.^{107/}

At 1500 on the afternoon of the sixth of August, COLONEL NEL TIBBETS's plane, the Enola Gay, set down and taxied onto her coral hardstand. The propellers whined to a stop, and COLONEL TIBBETS stepped out of the aircraft and blinked in the bright Marianas sunlight. A voice called, "Attention to orders." The men stiffened and became silent. GENERAL CARL A. SPAATZ,^{108/} (who later attended the interrogation) stepped forward and pinned the Distinguished Service Cross to the Group Commander's chest.^{109/}

History had been made --- the first Atomic bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima.

Photo coverage later that day did not prove too satisfactory because the area still was covered by smoke and scattered fires. However, subsequent reconnaissance showed the following assessment of damage (as of 11 August 1945): built up area, 4.1 square miles, or 60% destroyed; built up area, .6 square miles,

107. Reference is made to Interrogation Forms of Mission Flown 6 August 1945. Exhibit #9.

108. Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Air Forces

109. Gen. Order #15 Section 1., Mq. United States Army Strategic Air Force, 18 August 1945 -- Awards and Decorations Exhibit #10.



or 8.5% damaged; total area destroyed and damaged, 4.7 square miles, or 68.5%.


Specific targets destroyed or damaged were; Army Food Depot, 25% damaged; East Hiroshima Railroad Station and Yards, minor damage; Army Division Headquarters, 100% destroyed; unidentified Industry, 50% damaged, 50% destroyed; Teikoku Textile Mill 100% damaged; Signal Corps, 2nd Company, 12% destroyed, 55% damaged.
 110 /

Sixteen hours after the first Atomic bomb had been dropped, PRESIDENT TRUMAN told the news to the world. Radio and press had a field day. The 509th remained tight-lipped. Japan looked at Hiroshima, cried "inhumane" and in her own mind knew that total destruction was staring her in the face.

On 8 August 1945, two days after the first Atomic bomb had been dropped, and while Japan frantically sought a course of action that would save her face as well as her country, the 509th sent six B-29's to targets in Yokkaichi, Uwajima, Tsuruga, and Tokushima. Each plane carried a Pumpkin.

110. Reference is made to Damage Assessment Reports, C.I.U., Twentieth Air Force, 7, 8 and 19 Aug 1945. Exhibit #11.






Two aircraft bombed their primary targets. Inclement weather forced three to seek secondary targets, and one aircraft was forced to abort and return to Tinian with its bomb-load intact. The five bombs were dropped by visual means, with results officially designated as "Effective."^{111/}

In the meantime, the 509th prepared for its second Atomic bombing mission --- its second and last. The general plan was the same as that of the first, with the following important exception. In the first mission, three targets were designated; in the second mission, there were but two. The reason for this difference may be assumed to be the fact that high authority in the first instance singled out three targets of particular military significance. Then, when Hiroshima --- one of the three --- was extinguished, there remained only two upon which to plan the second mission.

Accordingly, two weather aircraft, two escort planes (both of which carried camera equipment, and one of which carried highly scientific instruments), and one strike aircraft participated in the second Atomic bombing mission.

111. Reference is made to Final Report of Missions 14 and 15, Exhibit #8.



Briefings were conducted in the same manner and with the same degree of secrecy as those of the first Atomic bombing briefings. The trip to the Empire was flown through nasty weather. CAPTAIN TAYLOR and crew left Tinian and landed on Iwo Jima to stand by in case of an abort of any one of the five participating aircraft. CAPTAIN MARQUARDT flew his "weather plane" over the primary target and reported less than 3/10 cloud coverage, with some haze burning off rapidly. LIEUTENANT MCKNIGHT, commander of the other weather aircraft, appraised the weather over Nagasaki, the secondary target, and at 0919 reported CAVU conditions there.

After rendezvous over Yokushima, the strike aircraft, commanded by MAJOR SWEENEY, proceeded with the escort aircraft to the primary objective. By this time, however, weather had closed in over this target --- about 9/10 cloud overage --- making visual bombing impossible.

The only alternative was to head for Nagasaki, the secondary target. Because of a strong headwind enroute to the target from Tinian, MAJOR SWEENEY's gasoline supply was running uncomfortably low, and it now was Nagasaki or nothing. The party proceeded to

[REDACTED]

Sogamosiki ($33^{\circ}15'$ north, $131^{\circ}53'$ east), thence to the briefed I.P. and into Nagasaki.

Here, too, weather was quickly closing in --- 7/10 to 8/10 alto-cumulus over the entire target area. Nine tenths of the bombing run was made by radar. Then came a break in the clouds which permitted CAPTAIN BEAHAN to take over and drop the bomb visually.

The run was made at an altitude of 31,000 feet true; bomb was away at 1158; CAS was 200 MPH, ground speed, 323 MPH; axis of attack was 233° true. The bomb hit approximately 500 ft. south of the Mitsubishi Plant in the target area. Five shock waves were felt, none of great intensity, however. ^{112 /} The three aircraft landed at Okinawa to refuel and thence proceeded to Tinian.

Observations made by the strike aircraft were reported as follows: after explosion, a balloon-like ring of white smoke formed, followed by a light-red ball of fire which covered two-thirds of the target area. Within one and a half to two minutes, the column of smoke that had formed---its lower portion a dark

112. Reference is made to Interrogation Forms of Mission Flown, 9 August 1945. Exhibit #9.

[REDACTED]

60% destroyed. At least eighteen of the twenty-one small industries known to be in the area were completely destroyed. And finally, the Mitsubishi-Murakami Ordnance Plant was wiped out.^{113/}

But the important damage went deeper than that. Japan knew now that the Atomic bomb apparently was available for continued use against her. Several days thereafter, terming it "national suicide" to continue the struggle. Japan accepted the terms of unconditional surrender as defined in the now famous Potsdam Ultimatum.

And it was during these last several days of the war that the 509th carried out its last strike against the Japanese homeland. On the fourteenth of August, seven of the Group's planes bombed targets in Koromo and Nagoya with seven "pumpkins". All bombed their primary targets by visual means, with observed results ranging from "poor to excellent."^{114/} These were probably the last bombs dropped by the Twentieth Air Force bombers in World War II.^{115/}

-
113. Reference is made to Damage Assessment Reports, C.I.U., 20th Air Force, 18 August 1945. Exhibit #11.
114. Reference is made to Final Report of Missions 17 and 18, 14 August 1945. Exhibit #8.
115. Last bomb dropped 140624 Z.



PUBLIC RELATIONS

Chapter VII

Public Relations, a responsibility of the Group Intelligence office, did not function in the proper sense of the word until after the dropping of the First Atomic Bomb. True, there was very little that could be told about the 509th --- security was still the watchword.

Not until the Group was established on Tinian and operating as a unit, was a Public Relations Officer appointed. The work was given to FIRST LIEUTENANT FREDERICK C. KRUG, Weather Officer for the 393rd Bomb Squadron, as an additional duty. ^{116/}

On 1 August 1945, CAPTAIN JOSEPH D. BUSCHER, was appointed to succeed LIEUTENANT KRUG. ^{117/} A few days later, the First Atomic Bomb was dropped on the Empire, and the Group became world famous. However, although pictures of the crews and statements from members of the project were released, nothing could be said to connect the 509th with the world shattering event.

Press conferences were held and leading representatives of the wire services and broadcasting networks were given an

-
116. S. O. # 59, Headquarters, 509th Composite Group, 23 June 1945
117. S.O. # 75, Headquarters, 509th Composite Group, 3 August 45



118/

opportunity to interview the crews. A news release was prepared on
the crew members and every member of the Group but was held until
5 September 1945 when permission was obtained from the White House.

119/

Public Relations, for the most part during this time operated under a news black-out.

-
118. Exhibit No. 12 "press Conference"
119. Exhibit No. 13 Sample of form filled out.





INTERVIEWS

Chapter VIII

In an interview with COLONEL PAUL W. TIBBETS, Commanding Officer of the 509th Composite Group, on Tinian in the Marianas, 14 September 1945, the following questions were asked:

CONCERNING THE MISSION OF THE 509th COMPOSITE GROUP:


In your estimation, did the success of the mission and the Group as a whole measure up to expectations?

The mission of the 509th was accomplished. Its success is now a matter of world history. In all probability this success surpasses the expectations of those intimately connected with the early phases of the project.

Did the Group at any time hold up the work of the project, or was the Group ready to carry out the mission on schedule?

It is safe to say that the 509th never held up the work of the project. Many times the 509th caused the project to speed up their efforts because the unit shaped up faster than expected and was committed to the theater ahead of schedule.

The success of the mission is now history. Have you anything to say that would throw some light on this success?



The success of this organization is due to team work by all people in the outfit and the willingness with which they cooperated with the Project people to accomplish our assigned mission.

CONCERNING PRIMARY PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED DURING THE COURSE OF THE WAR:

What in your opinion was the outstanding problem overcome by the Group?

Probably the worst problem that had to be overcome was that of uncertainty. One never knew from one day to the next if the plans of the previous day were still in effect.

Can you recall any other problems of the Group which could be considered outstanding?

The second problem in importance was that of security. It was necessary to keep outsiders from becoming curious about the 509th. Now this is a matter of record evidenced by the complete surprise, to all Airforce and other Personnel, when the announcement of the existence and use of the first Atomic Bomb was made.


CONCERNING THE ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION AND POLICIES OF THE

GROUP:

Do you believe that the efficiency of the Group was as high as could be obtained? In what manner do you believe that it could be improved?

The administrative efficiency of the 509th is a matter of record as evidenced by the high ratings received on P.O.M. inspection and subsequent inspections by Wing and Air Force Air Inspectors. Improvement is possible and must continually be the goal towards which we work.

Was the T.O. & E. adequate? If not, how could it have been improved?

The T.O. & E. was adequate because by selection the final T.O. & E. of the unit was made from a combination of others to fit our exact needs.

What do you think of the efficiency of the command setup in the POA as it affected the Group?

Our operations never fell under the POA Command setup as

[REDACTED]

it was functioning for other units. Our operations were given the personal attentions of the highest command echelons which gave us the advantage and eliminated all chance of difficulty.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF OVERALL EFFICIENCY:

How could the efficiency of the overall picture have been improved?

This question would require a lot of study of details because the overall picture shows high operational efficiency.

How would you compare the POA with the ETO?

There is no way to compare the ETO and the POA. They are two entirely different types of wars, one a rough one and the other a relatively easy one. The element of distances involved in operations is the difficult factor of the P.O.A.

LIST OF DOCUMENTS
Chapter IX

TITLE	DOCUMENT NUMBER
1. Special Orders	1 62-509-141 Doc#1
2. AAF Form Number 127 ..1.....	2 - - - Doc# 2
3. Command Book, 509th Composite Group ...	3 - - - Doc# 3
4. Roster of 1st Technical Service Det ...	4 - - - Doc# 4
5. Roster of Officers	5 - see: Doc. # 4
6. Locator Map	6 - see: Doc. # 4
7. Operations Orders	7 - - - Doc. # 7
8. 313th Wing Training Program	8 - - - Doc # 8
9. Insignia Chart	9 - - - Doc # 9
10. Final Report of Missions	10 - - - Doc # 10
11. Commendations, Awards & Decorations ...	11 - see: Hi, Cy. No. 2
12. Damage Assessment Reports	12 X
13. Field Orders	13 X
14. Public Relations Documents	14 - - Doc. # 14

ADDENDUM

Thus ends the initial Administrative Historical Narrative of the 509th Composite Group. Security measures have, in a very practical way, hampered the collection of information. The war's sudden termination found an important segment of the Group still in the States. Many important sources of information are therefore still in the States.

Under these circumstances, it is the object of the Historian to include in coming monthly installments of the Group Administrative History all newly available information of historical significance, whether it concerns either the current month or the period already covered.