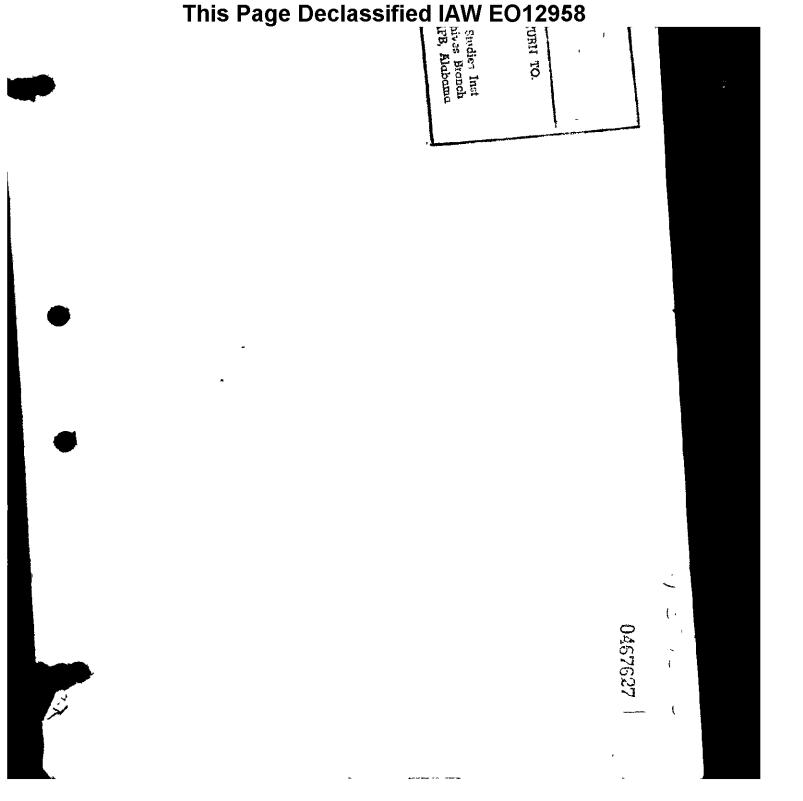
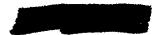


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This narretive was prepared by Lt. Col. Robert H. George, who served as historical officer of the Minth Air Force from the fall of 1945 to the close of 1944 and who was subsequently reassigned to the MF Historical Office. Based largely on materials forwarded from the theater by him and his associates of the Historical Section, Minth Air Force, the narrative is the result of firsthand experience as well as careful research. Like other studies in the series, it is subject to revision as additional information becomes available.



ARMY AIR FORCES HISTORICAL STUDIES: NO. 36

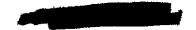
HINTH AIR FORCE, APRIL TO NOVE BER 1944

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Prepared by
AAF Historical Office
Headquarters, Army Air Forces
Cotober 1945



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Ninth Air Force, April to November 1944

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Chapter I

THE NINTH AIR FORCE PLAN FOR INVASION OPERATIONS

When reconstituted in the ETO under the command of Maj. Gen. Lewis H. Brereton on 16 October 1943, the Ninth Air Force was designed to serve as the American Tactical Air Force which would cooperate with the ground forces in the Allied invasion of Europe. Its organization, its rapid build-up, its training, and many of its operations were all undertaken with this supreme purpose in view.

From the very moment of its reconstitution the Ninth Air Force took measures which, more fully developed in the period from December 1943 to April 1944, allowed it to play a major role in the work of producing the plan for its ultimate employment—"The Ninth Air Force Plan for Operation 'Neptune'—Tactical Air Plan."

Planning Procedures

Initiation of Planning Activities

On 3 November 1943 Headquarters, European Theater of Operations outlined the responsibilities of U. S. forces for continental operations planning. This made the Commanding General, First U. S. Army Group responsible for all plans, both operational and administrative, involving operations to or on the continent of Europe by U. S. Army forces, other than air, concentrated in the United Kingdom. The Commanding General, U. S. Army Air Forces in the United Kingdom was charged with





the necessary coordination of air plans with First U. S. Army Group. Since the Ninth Air Force had previously been designated as the air unit which would furnish tactical air effort in association with the ground forces involved, planning responsibility for its operations was passed on to its headquarters.

Earlier, on 16 October 1943, a Ninth Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans had been announced. To assist his office in the discharge of its functions, planning sections were thereafter set up in the several staff sections of headquarters.

Coordination with Other Headquarters

On 15 December 1943, concurrently with other Allied unilateral and higher headquarters, the Ninth Air Force established a planning staff in London. These planners who were ordered to London for duty were headed by officers whose previous service (April-August 1943) with Headquarters, COSSAC provided them with continental invasion planning experience. They were drawn from the special and staff sections of Ninth Air Force. Their presence in London assured close contact and full cooperation with the planners of 21st Army Group (British), First U. S. Army Group, First U. S. Army, Services of Supply, European Theater of Operations, Allied Naval Expeditionary Force, U. S. Naval Forces in Europe, Allied Expeditionary Air Force, and 2d Tactical Air Force RAF.

COSSAC Appreciation of Operation Overload, 15 July 1943, which had been approved by the Combined Chiefs of Staff at the Quebec Conference in August 1943, served as the basic planning document for



all forces involved.

Planning Time Table

Upon receipt of directives to proceed with detailed planning, the following time table was established:

30 Jan. 44	ANXF, 21st Army Group, and ANAF to prepare Initial
31 Jan. 44 1 Feb. 44	Joint Plan Initial Joint Plan to be issued Planning on Army level to start on basis of Initial Joint Plan
15 Feb. 44	Joint Plans and estimates on Army level to be submitted to Joint Commanders in Chief as resubmitted to Joint Planning Directive
15-28 Feb. 44	Joint Commanders in Chief to review plans and
29 Feb. 44	Army Group to issue firm shipping and craft allotments, showing block priorities each day, and to issue Provisional Build-Up Table of Army Group units (other than those allotted to armies) and air force units (other than those forming part of composite groups). Operation and administration instructions to be issued at the same time, jointly with ANXF and AFAF where necessary. Final planning to start on corps and divisional
1 Mar. 44	
31 Mar. 44	level Final Loading and Build-Up Priority Tables to be forwarded to War Office.

A delay in this schedule was caused by deviation from COSSAC Plan as ordered by the Commander in Chief, 21st Army Group at the time of his appointment.

Planning Syndicates

time table, could be accomplished, planning was required in much greater detail than the Initial Joint Plan would exhibit. To deal with this detail it was decided to form planning syndicates from which



A

staff studies would emerge. Upon such staff studies the Initial Joint Plan and operations and administrative instructions would be based.

Accordingly, the Ninth Air Force Planning Group furnished personnel to participate in the work of numerous syndicates whose activities were of interest to Ninth Air Force Headquarters. Meetings of the syndicates were frequent, averaging eight per day. As planning progressed, specialists from IX Ingineer Command, IX Fighter Command, IX Homber Command, IX Air Force Service Command, IX Air Defense Command, and IX Troop Carrier Command were often called to attend the meetings. Their presence served a two-fold purpose--first, it gave the planners first-hand information from those who would perform the missions; and second, it enabled the several commands of the Ninth Air Force to keep acreast of planning progress.

The subjects covered by the planning syndicates were numerous, including the following:

Provisional Organization of Naval Forces Beach Appreciation (Western, i.e., U. S. Sector) Outline Hounting Plan (including Briefing) Maintenance Appreciation Weather Air Order of Battle (U. S.) Joint Fire Support Plan Security Airfields Employment of Airborne Troops Artillery Policy Anti Aircraft Artillery Policy Intercommunication Maps and Models Training and Rehearsals Plan for Strategic Delay of Enemy Reserves Overall Air Plan Army Group Build-Up Table Organization and Control of Build-Up





The papers produced by the Planning Syndicate constituted the technical framework for all plans, whether Army, Air Force, or Navy.

This method of planning concurrently with higher headquarters possessed great advantages. In particular it led to the inclusion of those policies and principles peculiar to a tactical air force in the directives and plans of those headquarters. Without such concurrent planning, such policies and principles would have been either omitted from such documents entirely, or included only with extreme difficulty after the documents had been issued by superior headquarters.

<u>Pavelopment of Signal Communications Annex</u>

The further development of the Ninth Air Force Tactical Air Plan is well exemplified by the manner in which the Signal Communication annex was developed. As suggested above, an officer of Signal Communication Section was designated as Signal Communication Officer, Plans, and assigned to the Ninth Air Force Planning Group at the time when Signal planning was initiated on 17 December 1943. Much of his work was done at Headquarters 21st Army Group (British) in close collaboration with the 2d Tactical Air Force PAF.

When on 1 February 1944 the general outline of Operation AFPTUNE was laid down by the Initial Joint Plan issued by Headquarters 21st Army Group, work on the detailed Ninth Air Force Signal Plan was begun by a full-time Signal Plans staff. Flight officers comprised the Signal Planning Sub-section appointed on 1 February:



1 lieutement colonel Assistant communications officer, Plans

1 lieutenant colonel Wire 1 major Wire

1 captain Signal security

1 captain Radar 1 1st lieutenant Radio

l squadron leader Radar and radio (RAF liaison)

1 captain Wire (air formation signals liaison)

To assure coordination with other interested Ninth Air Force staff sections, Signal Plans Section maintained and distributed to them a detailed journal of its activities throughout the period 1 February-6 June 1944.

Further to provide necessary coordination the closest liaison was maintained with 2d Tactical Air Force RAF, with 21st Army Group.

First U. S. Army Group, and First U. S. Army. Much of this coordination was effected through regularly established committees and boards on each of which the Winth Air Force Signal Communication Section was represented. A list of such organizations, together with a brief indication of their (1) composition and (2) functions, follows:

Combined Signal Board, Supreme Allied Command

- (1) Chief Signal officers of all services participating in Operation NEPTUNE
- (2) Recommendations of policies, particularly those affecting both British and American services
 Allocation of radio frequencies and cable circuits

Joint Signal Board, 21st Army Group

- (1) Signal officers representing all headquarters on the operational level of 21st Army Group, or immediately below
- (2) Recommendations of policies involving the headquarters represented for the period prior to the arrival of Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force on the continent
 - Radio and radar siting, radio frequency, cable circuit allocations, and air-ground cooperation procedures.

AND THE RESERVE OF THE PARTY OF

Signal Coordination Board

- (1) Signal officers representing all air force headquarters down to and including Ninth Air Force commands and RAF groups
- (2) Coordination of all aspects of Signal planning Interchange of units and equipment between the Ninth Air Force and the RAF when required

Land Line Committee, Allied Expeditionary Air Force

- (1) Signal representatives of all headquarters under AEAF
- (2) All problems of wire communications in the United Kingdom, both in preparation for the operation and during its course

Wire Committee, First U. S. Army Group

- (1) Signal representatives of all headquarters in the American sector of the operation
- (2) Coordination of planning for land line communications in the American sector on the continent

Mutual Interference Sub-Committee, Combined Signal Board, Supreme Allied Command

(2) Study of all types of interference between radio and radar equipments planned
Recommendations to minimize this interference

Radar and VHF Siting Sub-committee, Joint Signal Board, 21st Army Group

(2) Clearance of all sites on the continent to be used before the arrival there of Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force

To further the development of the final Signal Plan an outline plan was early begun. In this, decisions arrived at in the course of planning were included for future reference on the use of Signal units and the provisions for radio and wire communications, fighter control, radar, and security systems. Where applicable these outline plans were sent to interested commands of the Kinth Air Force to serve them as a guide in their detailed planning for the operation.

As planning progressed, several exercises were carried out to determine the feasibility of various parts of the plan. During these

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exercises all communications—ship-to-shore, point-to-point, and ground-to-air—were thoroughly tested and the plan modified from time to time on the basis of results obtained. By no means incidentally, such exercises provided a dress rehearsal for the units scheduled to participate in the forthcoming operations.

By such means, and on the basis of materials thus provided, the outline plan itself grew, and from it was developed the final Signal Plan which was published on 20 April 1944 as Annex 5 to the Ninth Air Force Tactical Air Plan. Like other portions of that plan it was subsequently amended as required by late changes in the over-all plan and in the tactical plan itself. Even after 6 June 1944, a skeleton plan staff continued to deal with minor changes and to clarify parts of the plan as the time came for them to be carried into execution.

Build-Up Priority Table

Signal planning was of necessity both vital and complicated. But by far the most formidable task of the Ninth Air Force planners was the composition of the Troop List or Build-up Priority Table. So far as the assault lift was concerned this was prepared in conjunction with First U. S. Army, and in respect to the build-up after D plus 15, in collaboration with the First U. S. Army Group. This list showed by tides, by days, and by beaches the planned movements to the far shore of Ninth Air Force units and echelons of units from first tide on D-day through D plus 14. Thereafter units were merely assigned their Army List Index and Unit Serial numbers.



That this portion of the planning task should be formidable was occasioned by the fact that a tactical air force must not merely fight intensive air battles in the early stages of the operation from bases previously established, but must move its headquarters as the Army moved, and as soon as possible base its aircraft on airfields directly behind the Army's front lines. Not merely sircraft and their crows, but engineers, ground crews, spare parts, and servicing equipment must be placed in the proper place at the proper time and in the desired sequence. Furthermore, in contrast to the movement of nicely packaged ground force elements, the Hinth Air Force must move its units to the continent in "unpackaged" lots. The correct phasing of men and material to conform with the mission assigned and with the tonnage allocated was the all-important mission assigned to Ninth Air Force administrative representatives. These officers had the grave responsibility of selecting the bits and pieces which, when finally brought together on the far shore, would constitute a working ground organization for the Minth Air Force.

Priefing and Records

As part of its planning work the staff of Plans Section briefed the Commanding General, Ninth Air Force each day and obtained from him outstanding policy decisions. A Planning Journal, reflecting in some detail the current problems confronted, was also maintained and distributed to the Commanding General; to the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations; to the Assistant Chief of Staff, A-4; and to the Commanding General, IX Air Force Service Command.



In the planning phase of other annexes to the Ninth Air Force
Tactical Air Plan, close cooperation with interested organizations was
also maintained. IX Troop Carrier Command, for example, had liaison
officers at AEAF, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, and at Headquarters
82d U. S., 101st U. S., and 1st British Airborne Divisions; while
liaison officers were present at its headquarters from AEAF (Navigation
RCM), 82d and 101st U. S. Airborne Divisions, Headquarters 21st Army
Group Airborne Troops, and from the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm. IX
Fighter Command worked intimately with 11 Group RAF in developing
"11 Group and IX Fighter Command Joint Air Plan and Executive Order,"
a document supplementary to IX Tactical Air Command's annex.

The Ninth Air Force Plans Section also maintained the commanding general's map room. Here graphic displays detailed the up-to-date development of the invasion plan, with emphasis on the role of the air forces. Targets were outlined and classified as to time and type of attack. The airfield program was similarly presented. Initial points of assault were shown, Army boundaries indicated, the predicted phase lines of the Army's advance delineated, and the disposition, composition, and strength of attacking and defending forces shown.

To care for the mass of highly classified material a Top Secret Control Section was set up in headquarters under the supervision of the Plans Section. It not merely watched over and registered materials, but was charged with the duplication of all plans in the large-sized reproduction establishment at its disposal. Not one document was



lost during the entire period of the plan's preparation.

By virtue of their participation in higher-level planning, the planning agencies of the Minth Air Force and its subordinate commands became so familiar with antecedent higher directives that publication of the Minth Air Force Tactical Air Plan was greatly facilitated.

Publication

On 26 April 1944 the Ninth Air Force Tactical Air Plan for Operation NIPTUNE was published, exactly 10 days after receipt of the formal AEAF directive. Inevitable modifications in the form of amendments were published between that date and D-day. Covering both sides of over 1,300 pages of legal size paper, and containing more than 100 maps and charts, it constituted the battle plan for the largest tactical air force ever to operate as a unit. The whole plan had been coordinated, composed, and checked by Ninth Air Force Plans Section. 2

Analysis of the Tactical Air Plan and its Annexes

The "Kinth Air Force Plan for Operation 'Neptune' -- Tactical Air Plan" was of necessity a comprehensive document. It contained five main sections entitled Situation, Mission, Operations, Administration, and Command and Control and was furnished with 16 annexes whose significance is self-evident: (1) Intelligence, (2) Build-up Priority Tables, (3) References, (4) Public Relations, (5) Signal, (6) Weather, (7) Chemical, (8) Provost Marshal, (9) IX Tactical Air Command, (10) XIX Tactical Air Command, (11) IX Bomber Command, (12) IX Troop Carrier Command, (13) IX Engineer Command, (14) IX Air Defense Command, (15) IX





Air Force Service Command, (16) Novement Liaison Organization.

Mission

The mission of the Ninth Air Force was described as "to assist the Allied Armies to secure a lodgment on the Continent in the first phase of the operation and to support the armies of the First U. S. Army Group in the development of that lodgment in the second phase."

Aims and Commitments

The aims and commitments of the Ninth Air Force for the assault phase of the operation and in later phases through 18 June 1944 are given below. It is to be observed that in the various sections of the Tactical Air Plan reference is frequently made to tasks assigned in the preliminary phase (to approximately P-30), and in the preparatory phase (D-30 to D-1). Since the Plan only lists these assignments in general terms, and since they merely recapitulate the main objectives of the preparatory operations which will be narrated later, they will not be rehearsed here.

IX Tactical Air Command

IX Tactical Air Command was given operational control of XIX

Tactical Air Command units until such time as the Third U. S. Army

commenced offensive operations on the continent. At that time XIX

Tactical Air Command was to revert to normal control and command. On

the other hand IX Tactical Air Command was to operate under the

direction of IX Fighter Command through the Combined Control Center

(IX Fighter Command and 11 Group RAF) at Uxbridge until such time as



IX Tactical Air Command should be established on the far shore.

Its definite tasks and commitments follow. In connection with them it should be noted that many details and all figures are those which appear in the "11 Group and IX Fighter Command Joint Air Plan and Executive Order." 25 May 1944, as amended 1 June 1944. The figures involve slight modifications of those given in the earlier Tactical Air Plan and its Annex No. 9.

High cover over assault beach area (day)	5 groups
Shipping cover (day)	2 groups
Air cooperation (against pre-arranged	
targets)	6 groups
Reserve (pool of readiness)	_5 groups
Total	18 groups

All fighter-bomber groups were to be prepared to operate on a scale of four group sorties per day.

High seach Cover. Low cover (3,000 to 5,000 feet or below clouds) over the assault beach area was a British commitment. High cover by American P-47's was to be flown at heights between 8,000 and 15,000 feet or below clouds of 10/10ths. They were to endeavorat all times to keep the low-cover patrols in visual contact. High cover was to be maintained at all times during the day by three squadrons which remained for one hour over the assault beach area. That area was defined as extending five miles inland from the beaches and 15 miles to seaward of them for each of the two squadrons assigned to cover the American and British beach areas respectively, and eight to 10 miles inland and five miles to seaward for the squadron assigned to high cover in the central area.

Shipping Route Cover. P-38's had been chosen to afford cover over the main shipping route and its flanks because the relative ease of their identification would afford a guarantee against friendly fire. Two Ninth Air Force groups together with four groups from VIII Fighter Command were assigned to this task. Fatrols of four-squadron strength were to maintain continuous cover, beginning at 1600 hours on D minus 1, and to operate at heights of from 3,000 to 5,000 feet or below clouds. Each patrol was scheduled to be over the shipping area for 90 minutes. The routes followed by patrols proceeding to and from the beaches gave added protection to the main shipping route.

Air Alert Squadrons. On D-day, during the initial assault period, one squadron was to patrol each beach under the control of the appropriate headquarters ship. These squadrons were to attack defense targets which the main bombing operations had not neutralized, and which were seen from the air to be interfering with the actual landing of our forward troops. If no targets presented themselves by the end of the prescribed period of the patrol, predetermined targets were to be attacked.

Escort. IX Tactical Air Command was further to furnish close escort to IX Troop Carrier operations by day, and to make available one tactical reconnaissance group for use in conjunction with ground forces on the scale of three group sorties per day.

General Commitments. The combat assignments detailed above, plus such as might be directed on the part of the groups committed to air



cooperation and those ready to operate in the air at shortest notice from reserve were to be determined in accordance with the Joint Air Force's tasks of (1) protecting the cross-Channel movement against air attack, (2) preparing the way for the assault by neutralizing coast and beach defenses, (3) protecting the beaches from air attack, (4) reducing the enemy's ability to mount effective counter attacks, and (5) providing full air-ground cooperation in the advance of the ground forces from the assault beach head.

Assignment of Personnel. Other duties were assigned to units or personnel of IX Tactical Air Command. Its Air Representatives were to be detailed to the headquarters ships and the Controllers to fighter direction tenders. Its 70th Wing was to move early to the far shore there to operate a fighter control station for the First U. S. Army area and to supervise all Ninth Air Force units until the arrival of Advanced Headquarters IX Tactical Air Command. With it rested responsibility for the operation of refueling and rearmament strips and advanced landing grounds as they became available, for aircraft warning, and for the air defense of the American sector by day and by night. Night defense was to be afforded by operational units furnished by 85 Group RAF.

Association with First U. S. Army. Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron IX Tactical Air Command was to establish an advanced headquarters adjacent to Advanced Headquarters First U. S. Army on the far shore and to remain with it during subsequent moves. This was planned





to render more effective their air-ground cooperation. In similar fashion the air-ground coordination of XIX Tactical Air Command and the Third U. S. Army in the second phase of operations was to be fostered by the physical association of their headquarters on the continent. Such actions merely continued the liaison and the execution of necessary details incidental to joint operations established and maintained by the associated armies and tactical air commands while based in the United Kingdom.

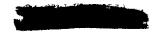
IX Bomber Command

Expes of Farcats. In the assault and later phases of operations. IX Bomber Command was to operate its units from airfields in the United Kingdom. On D-day the bulk of its 11 groups was to be utilized in bombardment of beach defenses at the earliest time visibility permitted. The balance was to be employed to support fighter-bombers in attacks on coastal installations. Subsequent to D-day its forces were to be used in attacks against enemy concentration areas, reserve areas, communication centers, MT concentrations, command and control centers, and in battle-area air attac: when required.

Direction of Activities. The operations of IX Bomber Command units were to be directed in the following manner:

- Targets to be attacked, and strengths and timing of attacks by operational orders from Advanced Headquarters Ninth Air Force to Headquarters IX Bomber Command
- 2. Routes to and from targets, bomb loads and fuzing, and communications procedures by field orders from Headquarters IX Eomber Command to compat wings





3. Initial points, load, groups and boxes, and other necessary supplemental information by orders from combat wing head-quarters to bombardment groups

It was planned that Advanced Headquarters Ninth Air Force should precede IX Bomber Command units to the continent and there control all operations of that command.

IX Troop Carrier Command

1X Troop Carrier Command's plan envisaged the full employment of its large resources. These consisted of 14 troop carrier groups under three wings, and comprised 56 squadrons of C-47 and C-53 aircraft (totaling 1,022 aircraft and crews). In addition it had available 1,352 glider pilots (plus 445 co-pilots), 2,000 Waco gliders (CG-4A's), 360 Horsa gliders (British), and 200 additional Horsa gliders for a possible mission with the 1st British Airborne Division.

Assault and Later Phases. In the assault phase it was planned that IX Troop Carrier Command should lift parachute troops and glider-borne troops of the 82d and 101st U. S. Airborne Divisions from staging areas in England to drop and landing zones on the continent, there to assist the Allied armies in securing a bridgehead. In the assault and subsequent whases the command was to resupply the ground forces by air as required, to evacuate casualties, and to be prepared to lift one British airborne division to drop and landing zones behind enemy lines in the assault area. So long as the situation required, IX Troop Carrier Command was to function under the operational control of the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Forces.





10th Photo Reconneissance Group

The 10th Photo Reconnaissance Group was assigned to perform day and night tactical and seri-strategic photo reconnaissance missions as ordered by Advanced Headquarters linth Air Force during the assault and later phases of the operation, and to execute bomb-damage-assessment photography for IX Bomber Command. Its operations were to be based on the United Kingdom during the assault phase and for some time thereafter. During the assault it was estimated that the group could execute three group sorties per day.

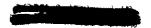
1X Engineer Command

Airfield Construction. IX Engineer Command commitments were both vital and varied. It was planned that its initial detachments should land with the assault waves on Omaha and Utah beaches on first tide of D-day. These and subsequent units were to provide parties for the reconnaissance of advanced landing grounds and personnel for the initial layout and construction of one emergency landing strip behind each beach. The schedule for the construction of other ground facilities in the period between D-day and D plus 14 was as follows:

Beach Onaha

Type of field	Location	Construction	Field to be	
ÄLS ÷R∺S	Morthwest of Vierville sur Mer St. Pierre du Mont	to start D D plus 1 p.m.	operational D plus 1 a.m. D plus 3 p.m. (untracked)	
*RRS	South of Criqueville	D ylus 1 y.m.	D plus 4 p.m. (tracked) D plus 3 p.m. (untracked) D plus 4 p.m. (tracked)	





Type of field	Location	Construction to start	Field to be operational
**ALG	St. Pierre du Mont		D plus 8 a.m.
ALG	Criqueville		D plus 8 a.m.
**ALG	Cardonville	D plus 3 a.m.	D plus 7 a.m.
ALG	Doux Juneaux		D plus 8 a.m.
ALG	Hestry		D plus 14 a.m.
Alternate	s: Poix, La Campe, Colleville.		

Beach Utah

els	Ste. Mere Eglise	D	D plus 1 a.m.
ALG	West of Reuzeville	D plus 1	D plus 8 a.m.
ALG	forth of Azeville	D plus 6	D plus 10 a.m.
ALG	Carentan	D plus 10	D plus 14 a.m.
Alternat	est Picauville, south of Valornes.	16	

Such ground facilities were rated as essential to the Ninth Air Force in the performance of its tactical mission.

Other Commitments. The improvement and maintenance of roads to advanced landing grounds and other Ninth Air Force installations (exclusive of those in the communications zone), and the construction and repair of buildings for headquarters camps or sites as ordered figured as additional IX Engineer Command assignments. It was further to afford technical assistance in camouflage operations, to inspect camouflage security measures, and in special cases to execute camouflage projects. The enforcement of camouflage discipline was another responsibility of this command. It was also charged with the establishment of water points to serve Ninth Air Force units and with the

** Cardonville, Deux Jumeaux, and Beuzeville were to be developed as rapidly as possible to 5,000-foot paved runways suitable for the operation of fighter-bombers

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^{*} St. Pierre du Mont and Criqueville were to be constructed initially as refueling and rearming strips to become operational as soon as a runway could be graded and compacted. The runways were then to be paved with square-mesh landing met and the fields developed into complete advance landing groups by D plus 8 a.m.

operation of the same until the arrival of service groups or teams of IX Air Force Service Command. It was likewise responsible for the supply of standard maps, the preparation of special maps and charts, and the reproduction of other work required by Ninth Air Force units. Engineer supply, however, was a responsibility of IX Air Force Service Command.

IX Air Defense Command

In the period covered by this report the IX Air Defense Command was to continue its earlier functions of supervising and allocating all antiaircraft units assigned or attached to the Minth Air Force, and to supervise all airdrome defense activities within it. It was to make air-raid intelligence available to passive air defense control centers and to coordinate and perform such aircraft movement liaison functions as were made the responsibility of the Commanding General. Minth Air Force. Later it was to be charged with the operation and control of night fighters in the American sector with the assistance of 85 Group RAF and was to relieve IX and XIX Tactical Air Commands, as they displaced forward, of responsibility for daylight interception of enemy air attacks and for air warning services.

"The general Air Defence Flow is to establish as rapidly as possible behind the advancing arries an adequate and effective coordinated air defense of vital installations. Initially the defense will consist of ground-controlled day and night fighters and of operationally-controlled antiaircraft units. The defense will



ultimately be supplemented by the establishment of fighter searchlight belts as required."

IX Air Force Service Command

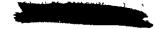
Under the Ninth Air Force Tactical Air Plan, IX Air Force Service Command was responsible for direct supply and services to all Ninth Air Force units as that command was progressively built up on the continent.

Preparation for D-day. Prior to the invasion, however, it was to store and prepare for shipment the supplies and equipment necessary for the operation of Ninth Air Force units across the Channel, consolidate and assure the procurement of their requirements for common supplies, and coordinate the procurement of their shortages in unit equipment and air force supplies.

It was to prestock airfields in the United Kingdom to assure that, in view of road congestion inevitable from approximately D minus 15 to D plus 15, units should operate at full efficiency in air operations based on Britain and still be able to move to the continent with their full T/E. Ninety thousand gallons of aviation POL were ordered prestocked on each ALG, and also a total of 20,000 tons of ammunition and bombs stocked for all fighter ALG's, together with 30,000 tons of the same for fighter-bomber ALG's.

"Ten Day" pack-up kits were to be prepared for the use of airdrome squadrons prior to the arrival of fighter squadrons on airfields in France, and Hareng cells for the storage of gasoline there were to





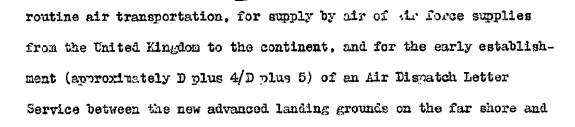
be issued to units prior to their departure from home stations.

Transportation. Equipment, and Personnel. As units moved to the marshalling areas IX Air Force Service Command was to furnish the necessary transportation to supplement their organic transportation. Always it had in charge the main reserve of equipment and of personnel, together with major repair facilities which were not to be transferred to the continent.

Responsibilities on the Continent. In the assault phase, IX Air Force Service Command was directed to furnish an air force beach party to identify, segregate, and store all air force technical supplies, except class III-A. Through liaison with the British it was to identify and to be such supplies and equipment as might have been erroneously laided over British beaches. It was further to establish and operate air force beach dumps for air force classes II and IV-E. Engineer construction materials, and class V-A supplies, and to furnish the transportation necessary to move all air force supplies to airfield locations.

These functions were to be intensified and enlarged in subsequent phases of the operation. Among commitments of note for the period under review were the provision of equipment and supplies for combat units of the Winth Air Force as they should arrive on the far shore. Tactical air depots were to be stripped of heavy repair machinery and moved to the continent as soon as deemed necessary. The Transportation Division of the command was made responsible for the operation of





the United Kingdom.

Replacement aircraft were to be delivered to the continent from replacement pools at Chilbolton and Membury, and field artillery liaison aircraft similarly delivered from a pool at Grove. Quarter-master Truck Regiment Headquarters and a vehicle park were to be established in Omaha beach area to provide supplementary transportation for units of the Einth Air Force ashore.

IX Air Force Service Command planned to supervise the discharge of these significant functions through an advanced headquarters (including personnel from 2d Advanced Air Depot Area) whose first echelon was scheduled to land on D plus 2.

Signal Communications

The Signal Communications mission as set forth in Annex 5 to the Tactical Air Plan was expressed in general and simple terms: ". . . to plan and provide signal communications for the Minth Air Force during the mounting of the Operation in the United Kingdom, the pre-assault phase, the assault phase and the subsequent build-up phase on the continent."

The details of the Signal Plan were, however, infinite, and the importance of signal communications for the success of air operations was so great that a summary of the major details of the Signal Plan are given here.

Mounting Phase. In the first, or mounting phase, when all Minth Air Force units were in the United Mingdom, wire, radio, and messenger

communications were to be provided between Headquarters Ninth Air Force and its commands and units. Similar links were to be established between Headquarters Ninth Air Force, its subordinate commands, and the headquarters of higher formations and others associated with the Minth Air Force in the impending operation. Furthermore, IX and XIX Tactical Air Commands, IX Bomber Command, and XIX Troop Carrier Command required signal communications, radio navigational aids, and aircraft warning to enable them to perform their NEPTUNE missions while still based in the United Kingdom. These were to be provided, at times in cooperation with the FAF; e.g., a fighter control station (MEN) of IX Tactical Air Command was to augment the fighter direction facilities of Air Defense of Great Britain RAF, while Controllers and Signal personnel were to be provided the ADGB operations room and sector operations rooms which were to direct Minth Air Force aircraft. As Minth Air Force units began their movements toward the far shore, communications between its headquarters and the concentration and marshalling areas involved were to be supplied.

Fre-assault Phase. In the second, or pre-assault phase, when certain headquarters and units of the Linth Air Force were afloat, an increase of communications was required. They were to be established between designated command posts in the United Kingdom, Ninth Air Force Headquarters, and units afloat. Where necessary, radio air-to-ship communications between aircraft of the Ninth Air Force and designated ships were to be provided.



In this connection, communications were especially necessary between Minth Air Force Headquarters at Uxbridge and flagships and fighter direction tenders in the Channel. Minth Air Force representatives were to be present on board U.S.S. Augusta (Western Maval Force and First U.S. Army flagship), U.S.S. Ancon (Omaha assault force flagship, V U.S. Corps and 1st U.S. Division), U.S.S. Bavfield (Utah assault force flagship, VII U.S. Corps and 4th U.S. Division), and U.S.S. Henrico (relief to U.S.S. Ancon and U.S.S. Bavfield). Theirs was a vital role in connection with air-ground cooperation, i.e., the offensive use of Minth Air Torce aircraft.

To enable them to discharge their functions effectively various sources of information were provided. (1) Air Command broadcast channel for the special use of the Allied Expeditionary Air Force at Uxbridge. In emergency, the flagship, headquarters ships, and fighter direction tenders might transmit on this frequency. (2) Minth Air Force command channel from Uxbridge. This was later to be extended to Advanced Headquarters IX Tactical Air Command. (3) Three Air Support channels between Uxbridge, the ships, and the far shore. The Task Force flagship maintained a listening watch on all three channels. A transmitter was available at Rear Headquarters First U. S. Army, Plymouth, for the purpose of relay if the Air Support Parties could not work directly to Uxbridge, and if the headquarters ships were for some reason umable to relay. (4) Air Representatives and Controllers liaison between the Combined Control Center (IX Fighter Command and 11 Group RAF) at Uxbridge and those officers with the Western Haval

Task Force. It was later to be extended to the Fighter Control Center of IX Tactical Air Command when it was set up on the far shore.

(5) Three VHF channels for communications between headquarters ships and aircraft on offensive missions. The same channels were to be used by fighter direction tenders to direct fighter cover. Communications between headquarters ships and fighter direction tenders were also envisaged, together with communications with Air Support Parties ashore, broadcast reception channels, and Y-Intercept. Navy and Army communications were also to be available.

Assault Phase. In the third, or assault phase, when certain head-quarters and units of the Minth Air Force were established on the continent and others were affoat and in the United Kingdom, an additional increase of facilities was planned. Communications, as earlier established between the United Kingdom and ships, were to be extended to designated units on the far shore, and strengthened. Radio air-to-cround communications between Minth Air Force units and designated units ashore were required as were aircraft warning and fighter control facilities. All were to be supplied.

Air Support Parties and Air Support Controls were to be provided with signal communications as were ground liaison officers at Minth Air Force airfields. Wire communications were to be provided between Minth Air Force units on the beachnead and between Head-quarters First U. S. Army Group and Minth Air Force. Wire communications between 85 Group RAF units in the American and British sectors, and between designated units of the Minth Air Force and co-equal units

of the 2d Tactical Air Force RAF, were to be established in agreement with First U. S. Army, Second British Army, and the 2d Tactical Air Force RAF. Signal radio communications were to be afforded between units of the Minth Air Force on the far shore, and laterally between such units and designated units of the 2d Tactical Air Force RAF.

Entitle-In Phase. In the fourth, or build-up phase on the continent facilities already existing were to be still further expanded so as to provide for the anticipated communications load between Headquarters Finth Air Force and its commands, for internal traffic between Hinth Air Force units, and for lateral communications between the Linth Air Force, 2d Tactical Air Force RAF, and their designated units. Further, in agreement with the headquarters concerned, signal radio and wire communications were to be established between Headquarters Winth Air Force and the headquarters of higher formations on the continent and in the United Kingdom. Specifically, submarine cable communications were to be provided between Headquarters Ninth Air Force on the continent and designated headquarters in Britain over cables laid by others than the Winth Air Force. It was anticipated that the first of these cables would be laid to a point on the beach near Bayeux by D plus 6.

Liessenger Service and ADLS. Certain further points in the Signal Plan are worthy of mention. Hessenger service was to be supplied between rear and advanced headquarters and commands of the Ninth Air Force.

When some units were affoat this was to be supplemented by a similar service embracing the terminals of the Air Dispatch Letter Service and



the Naval Dispatch Boat Service. On the far shore IX Tactical Air Command was to maintain such a service to the above terminals, to its own units, and to Headquarters 2d Tactical Air Force PAF. On the continent also Headquarters IX Engineer Command and Advanced Headquarters IX Air Force Service Command were to establish a messenger service on a comparatively reduced scale. It was planned that an Air Dispatch Letter Service should be operational on D plus 3, involving three trips per day from Northolt and Whitchurch to Headquarters IX Tactical Air Command, and eventually to Advanced Headquarters Ninth Air Force, XIX Tactical Air Command, and IX Air Defense Command on the continent.

Other Commitments. The fact that the lighth Air Force and 2d Tactical Air Force RAF were to share in the forthcoming air operations made it necessary to plan for the provision of air-to-ground and air-to-cir communications between certain of their airborne and ground units and those of the Kinth Air Force.

Signal intelligence was provided for by special detachments.

Nobile air reporting units and rear area reporting units of the IX and XIX Tactical Air Commands and IX Air Defense Command were furnished means of reporting air warning information to filter and fighter control centers, and were furnished with necessary multiple communications with ground observation posts, forward direction posts, and D/F units.

Since tactical reconnaissance aircraft might, in emergency, be





employed for artillery spotting at Army request, provision was included for the necessary ground-to-air communication.

To make tactical reconnaissance reports available to First U. S.

Army formations with a minimum of delay, such reports were to be
broadcast during the assault from the home base of reconnaissance
groups for reception by Army units affoat or ashore. When reconnaissance units should begin to operate from ALG's in France a preliminary
broadcast was to be made by Advanced Headquarters IX Tactical Air Command and followed by complete reports broadcast from home base in the
United Kingdom.

That speed was regarded as an essential in the provision of signal communications is evidenced by two further items. First, three transportable air radio stations were to be activated and, from D-day on, placed at IX Troop Carrier Command stations in a state of readiness to be flown to the beachhead. Second, the Signal Plan included the provision that the Finth Air Force should assist in the construction of the main-line wire network on the continent and in this connection pool available Signal construction personnel with the zone of communications and/or field force Signal construction personnel. The pooled personnel were to operate under the direction of the First U. S.

Army Group's Joint Wire Group.

In the preceding paragraphs the Signal Plan has been greatly condensed. From the major details presented, however, it is evident that the Minth Air Force was committed to provide a great complex of signal communications—no less would suffice a tactical air force of its size when engaged in an operation of such magnitude as NEPTUNE. 3





Chapter II

PREPARING FOR THE INVASION OF EUROPM

While the Minth Air Force Tactical Air Plan was being carried through its later stages certain operations were begun directly related to that plan, and final actions were taken to enable the Minth to accomplish its full mission at the time of the invasion itself. Conspicuous among the final actions were the tactical redeployment of Minth Air Force units and the elaboration of a substantial mechanism to further air-ground cooperation. The operations were part of what General Eisenhower was later to describe as "The brilliant preparatory work of the air forces, a belief in which was a very cornerstone of the original invasion conception. . . . "

Operations Preparatory to the Invasion

These combat operations had been envisaged in the Tactical Air Plan itself, which provided that "during the preparatory phase the objectives of Allied Air Forces will be the reduction of the Cerman Air Force, the destruction of strategic rail centers, selected enemy coastal defense, Crosebow and Naval installations and airfields in the Neptune area. Strategic and tactical reconnaissance will be intensified." The policy calling for such activities rested upon the sure foundation of Field Service Regulations 100-20.

Attacks on Airfields

Field Service Regulations 100-20 prescribe as first priority for

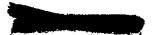




a tactical air force the gaining of "the necessary degree of air superiority," and further declare that "Air superiority is best obtained by the attack on hostile airdrones, the destruction of enemy aircraft at rest, and by fighter action in the air." Throughout the period under review destruction of enemy aircraft by fighter action in the air was chiefly accomplished by Ninth Air Force planes' escorting the heavy bombers of the Eighth Air Force over Germany. Attacks on enemy airfields had been a constant feature of independent operations of the Ninth Air Force based in the United Kingdom. They were continued against such targets in Holland, Belgium, and northern France throughout April and May 1944 in the effort to secure and maintain air superiority.

April Missions

During April, when such targets rated as sixth priority for the Winth Air Force, at least 28 enemy airfields, ranging from the coastal region as far south as Bourges, Orleans, and Rennes, were subjected to a total of over 30 attacks. Of these, all except nine were delivered by fighter-bombers which bombed in over 20 cases, strafed in five others, and followed their bombing attacks by strafing in yet another five instances. Installations servicing the fields were the special objectives. Results were difficult to assess, but pilots' claims were generally "good." In only three instances were there claims of enemy aircraft destroyed on the ground: on 5 April two at Triqueville and six on the two fields at Orleans and Chateaudun, and 11-plus at Thionville on 14 April.





In April medium bombers delivered a total of nine attacks on six different airfields, none of which had been assigned as primary targets for the missions. Three attacks were made on Chievres by 36, 14, and 18 planes respectively on 11, 12, and 13 April. In the two cases where results were observed, bursts occurred on the landing ground or among buildings. Coxyde/Furnes was also hit three times. on 8 April by 35 planes from two groups and on 10 and 12 April by 13 and 12 planes respectively. The bomb pattern of the 8 April attack blanketed one dispersal area and that of the assault of 10 April covered another. The 12 April attack produced no notable result. The attacks on Cormeilles en Vexin (28 April) and Ostend/Middlekirk (12 April) were not significant; but bursts occurred among buildings in the 12 April attack on Courtral/Wevelghem, while at Poix (20 April) a heavy concentration of bombs from 28 planes fell in a dispersal area.

May Missions

In the month of May 1944 enemy airfields were given a generally higher priority among Minth Air Force targets than hitherto. Furthermore, attacks were stepped up in number and weight, and the total number of airfields attacked was increased. The airfield targets for this month lay within, or adjacent to, the eventual area of invasion operations, for it was desired to neutralize all airfields within 130 miles of the assault beaches, or within a strip of territory extending as far south of the French coast as the distance north from it to



Allied operational bases in the United Kingdom. If this desire were realized, the enemy would be under the same disadvantage as the Allies in operating in the invasion area.

From 1 May through 5 June airfields situated at no less than 36 places, from Brittany well into Folland, were subjected to attacks. At least 26 such fields were assaulted at least once by fightercombers which delivered a total of over 30 dive-bombing and 11 strafing attacks. Pilots' reports were more optimistic than in April and usually chronicled results as "excellent" or "good." The number of attacks by medium bombers increased to nearly 40, as fields at 20 different places were attacked at least once each.

In contrast to the April attacks by the mediums, all the attacks of this period had airfields assigned as their primary targets. Hine fields were subjected to particularly frequent or heavy attacks.

Evreum/Fauville was hit by one group on 8 May, by two on 20 May, and by two more on 22 May. Dispersal areas, hangers, and a fuel dump were well hit, while concentrations fell on the landing ground. Two groups hit Achiet on 24 May and the same number on 29 May. Again the dispersal area was hit. Damage was also done to the taxi track, and a fuel dump was blanketed by bursts. Beaumont le Roger was struck by one group on 11 and 23 May, by two groups on 22 May, and by three on 24 May. Dispersal areas were heavily struck, and direct hits scored on runways and the perimeter track.

Corneilles en Vexin was attacked by three groups on 11 and 20 May and by two on 22 May. Here the dispersal areas were struck and



considerable damage done to buildings. Furthermore, revetments were blanketed and hits were scored on taxi strips and perimeter track.

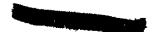
Beauvais/Tille was bombed by one group on 13 May, and by two on 22 and 24 May. Dispersals and hangars were hit hard, craters blown in ammunition and fuel areas, and bursts observed on runway and taxi track. Beaumont sur Oise was attacked by one group on 11 and 24 May and by two on 20 and 26 May. Once more damage appeared to be concentrated in dispersal areas, although the bombs of the attact on 20 May fell on the runways and perimeter track.

Dispersal areas were badly damaged at Abbeville/Drucat in the attacks by one group on 13 May, by two on 21 May, and by three on 24 May. Denain/Frouvy was hit by two groups on 20 May and by two on 24 May. Two explosions resulted, buildings were destroyed, and the perimeter track and landing ground damaged. Chartres was attacked by four groups on 26 May and by three on 3 June, with heavy damage done to shelters and buildings in a hanger area and the runway and the landing ground well hit.

Danage done to runways, landing grounds, and taxi strips increased in significance as the invasion date approached, for as D-day drew nearer and nearer the enemy was given less and less time in which to effect repairs. By such means the Minth Air Force contributed to the establishment of an unquestioned air supremacy for the Allied forces when the invasion began.

Attacks on Communications Targets

Second priority among the missions assigned to a tactical air



force by Field Service Regulations 100-20 is "To prevent the movement of hostile troops and supplies into the theater of operations or within the theater." Accordingly communications targets figured prominently exong those attacked by the Ninth Air Force long before D-day.

At the start they had to be selected with great care in order that complete security in respect to the invasion plans might be maintained. This necessary safeguard rendered the exact purpose of many actions obscure at the time that they transpired, but as time went on they slipped into their proper places in connection with the general plan preparatory to the invasion. With our present perspective we can see some three special programs for attacks on communications targets as parts of a single Ninth Air Force plan: first, attacks on railway centers, such as marshalling yards, servicing facilities. and locomotive works; second, attacks on rail and road bridges; third, growing out of the first two, a program of rail and road interdiction designed to complete the "isolation of the battlefield" by denying to the enemy food, ammunition, and reinforcements. Of these associated programs the first two were developed and carried into execution well before D-day. The third had perforce to remain under wraps until 6 June 1944.

Railway Centers--Marshalling Yards

Enilway centers hal appeared as targets in bombardment directives since early February 1944 and had been subjected to frequent attacks by the Einth Air Force. The AFAF directive of 1 April 1944, however,

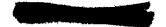


served to underline their importance. To them it accorded first priority among targets. Furthermore, the first paragraph of the directive contained the significant statement that "The Supreme Allied Commander has decided that the time has now come for the operations of the AEAF to be directed more closely towards the preparation for 'Overlord'. . . . " Again, by directive of 1 May 1944, AEAF stated that "In order that the greatest possible destruction may be accomplished on the transportation system affecting the future invasion, it is desired that every opportunity for attacking these vital rail centers be utilized. " The connection between this program and the planned invasion was obviously immediate, as from 1 April 1944. Accordingly this report will concentrate its attention upon attacks on such targets delivered between 1 April and 6 June 1944, although in some instances earlier actions must be cited.

Attacks 1 Harch-5 June 1944. In the period between 1 March and D-day 36 marshalling yards were attacked 139 times. The concentration of attacks was as follows:

1	marshalling	yard	attacked	11	times
1	8	33	IŞ	8	п
4	n	yards	. 11	7	15
4	11	B	11	6	11
3	8	15	Ħ	5	15
3	II	tt	#	4	Ħ
9	71	II.	Ħ	3	Ħ
3	1f	Ħ	11	2	11
8	11	Ħ	15	1	time

Selection of Targets and Methods of Attack. The targets lay in Belgium and in northern France, and they were assigned in blocks to



the end that closely integrated portions of the rail systems in those regions might be knocked out as nearly at the same time as possible, thus producing a maximum effect upon their operation. Major attacks were of necessity delivered by IX Bomber Command aircraft, but the fighter-bombers had their assigned role as well. They not only followed up the mediums' assaults by "tickling" attacks, designed to impede the work of repair, but also delivered independent assaults and further supplemented the work of the mediums by bombing or strafing after they had completed their work of escort to the Marauders. If each mission against such targets were counted as an attack, the total for the months of April and May alone would exceed that given above for the period from I March through 6 June 1944. The total of more than 200 missions in April and May was about equally divided between the mediums and the fighter-bombers.

The intensity of the attacks, notably after the appearance of the directive of 1 May 1944, is suggested by the fact that 26 such missions were flown on 1 May, 13 on 3 May, 17 on 10 May, 12 on 11 May, and 11 on 20 May 1944. Thereafter the number decreased markedly because of the accent then placed on the program which had rail and road bridges as its targets.

Results Attained. The results attained were of a very high order, the larger proportion of the attacks warranting the classifications "good" to "excellent." It would be fruitless if not impossible to attempt a consolidation of all reports on such actions. Their general





effect is, however, well portrayed in the reports of damage done by attacks on characteristic targets.

Greil was the railway center most frequently attacked, being hit no less than 11 times between 7 March and 22 May 1944. The first two attacks on 7 and 17 March destroyed 60 freight cars, damaged 180 more, cut every track at least once, and damaged the engine shed by blast. On 20 March three direct hits were made on the engine workshop; two were scored on a standing train and the through lines cut in eight places. Three days later two locomotive sheds were destroyed and heavy damage inflicted on rolling stock. The attack of 20 April resulted in only insignificant damage, but a week later 10 hits blocked all lines. On 10 May the locomotive depot was reported 70 per cent destroyed and the roundhouse completely demolished, with storage and reception sidings all cut. Attacks of 20 and 24 May put the marshalling yard 60 per cent out of action, destroyed at least 50 freight cars, and further damaged the rails.

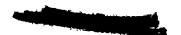
At Bethune, which was attacked on eight occasions in the period 30 April to 20 May inclusive, the damage was reported to be equally severe. Thirty freight cars were destroyed and 70 damaged by the attack of 30 April. On the following day essential buildings were destroyed or damaged. The attack of 26 April partially destroyed the locomotive shed and repair shop and inflicted additional damage to buildings, while that of 27 April cratered the sidings, although with little damage to rolling stock. Buildings and facilities were further damaged on 8 May and the main lines to Rouen and to Evreux cut in



five and three places respectively.

photographs, were the rule following missions flown against targets at such critical points as Arras, Mamur, and Valenciennes; Aulnoye, Mezieres, and Aerschot; Mons, Mantes-Gassicourt, and Busigny. Throughout there was a need for extremely accurate bombing since the rail centers often lay in proximity to built-up areas. This fact caused priorities to be assigned targets of this class which were based on the expected number of civilian casualties. Constant attention given to the improvement of bombing accuracy throughout this period undoubtedly helped to keep the number of gross errors low. The development in May of the practice by the mediums of bombing by flights of six on converging lines of attack played a definite role in assisting improvement which was the more to be decired since "in a short while gross errors [would] mean death for allied soldiers, rather than death for civilians."

It is certain that in many cases repairs to through lines could be effected in a short period of time after an attack on a railway center had been delivered, and that the enemy's skill in employing alternative facilities to those destroyed was great. Nevertheless, the total empenditure of effort for purposes of repair in which he was forced to engage was appreciable, the inconveniences to which he was subjected were distressing to him, and the absolute loss of rolling stock, and particularly of locomotives, one which he could



ill afford. Allied air attacks on railway centers were held to have caused the capacity of the railways of the northern half of France, which had previously exceeded by far the enemy's military and economic needs, to fall by D-day below the level with which he had sustained his garrison troops in the preceding period. Together with closely related programs, this of the Einth Air Force against railway centers assisted in carrying out the mission against communications assigned to it by Field Service Regulations.

Bridges

Rail Bridges. Closely related to the air attacks on railway centers was a definite program of attacks on rail, and eventually road bridges. This had its inception on 7 May 1944, when, on the initiative of Advanced Headquarters Ninth Air Force, AEAF agreed that rail bridges on the Seine and the Heuse might be attacked. For the sake of security an equal number over each of the rivers were to be assaulted. Fighter-bombers were to concentrate on two bridges in each area and mediums on one in each, and both were to continue their efforts until the designated targets were destroyed.

That some day fighter-bombers attacked the Seine bridges at Hantes-Caccicourt, Oissel, Orival, and Vernon. At Vernon eight aircraft completely destroyed the bridge with 16 x 1,000-pound GP bombs in a more-level attack. On 8 Hay fighter-bombers sent against a Seine bridge destroyed three of the 11 spans of the railway viaduct at Hirson. Another mission subjected Mantes-Gassicourt to a second



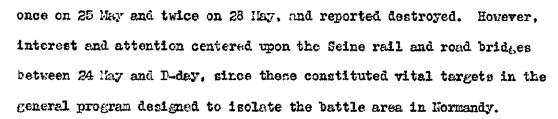
assault. The mediums began their attack on Seine bridges on 8 May with the bridge at Cissel as their targets, and repeated the action on the two following days. Fit on 9 May, the Cissel bridge was classed as unserviceable on the 10th.

Meuse bridges were first assculted on 8 Mar when dive bombers severed the bridge at Mezieres and mediums covered that at Mamur with an excellent pattern. Illus and Sedan were also dive-bombed on this day, while Mahon was attacked on 9 and 10 May.

The program was more narrowly defined by an AEAF directive dated 10 May 1944. This listed four Neuse bridges as fifth priority targets for the Minth Air Force and prescribed that no attacks of any kind should be made on Seine bridges until further notice. These restrictions were maintained until 24 May. Under them the bridges at Liege were attacked by fighter-bombers and mediums on 12 May, and those at Heerenthals and Hasselt by fighter-bombers on 12 and 13 May. Decisive results were not obtained except in the case of Heerenthals, where pilots reported the bridge "probably destroyed."

By directive dated 24 May 1944, AEAF opened for attach seven bridges over the Seine between Paris and Pouen, and added to the target list four road bridges over the same river. On 26 May rail bridges were given "first priority over all other targets with the Seine bridges at the top of the priority." This did not preclude attacks against bridges over the Meuse. The three bridges at Mege were heavily attacked by mediums on 25, 28, and 29 May, and all were reported severed. Hasselt bridge was attacked by fighter-bombers,





Fail bridges at 10 points, and road bridges at 14 others over the Seine appeared on the target lists for the period involved. Of the rail bridges, that at Vernon had been destroyed by dive bombing on 7 May. Those at seven other places were rendered impassable by 4 June. The fifth in a series of dive-bombing attacks accounted for the last of the Conflans bridges. Le Manoir was broken as the culmination of four dive bombings, and the bridge at Rouen destroyed as the result of five such assaults.

Mediums destroyed bridges at four other points. At Le Mesnil

Ande an attack by two groups produced the desired effect. At ManterGassicourt two attacks, by two and five groups respectively, denied
the enemy the use of the East and South bridges. Oissel bridge
succumbed to the attack of a single group of mediums, while that at
Orival was reported destroyed after two such attacks, the first by
two groups and the second by one group. Dridges at St. Germain and
at Maisons Lefitte alone remained standing. Both lay close to Paris
and were heavily defended by flak. The first was dive-bombed once
without result. The second was twice attacked by mediums, once by four
and once by two groups, but damage was limited to the approaches. By
D-day all rail bridges over the Seine from Conflems to Eouen (inclusive)
had been rendered impassable by Minth Air Force attacks.





Rolling Stock

Strafing attacks on rolling stock by fighter-bombers supplemented the attacks on rail centers and bridges by the destruction of locomotives and other rolling stock on enemy-controlled lines. The most notable of such attacks occurred on 21 May 1944 -- a day whose results caused it to be given the appropriate title of "Chattancoga Day." No less than 13 group missions were launched against rolling stock in France north of the river Loire. Meather prevented attacks from being delivered by two groups, but a total of over 500 aircraft found and strafed the type of target assigned. Pilots' claims for the day's operations were 46 locomotives destroyed, 11 probably destroyed, 21 damaged, with 30 trains damaged in varying degrees. Hine of our planes were lost in these operations. Five days later, on 23 May, three groups strafed rolling stock--two in the Rhineland and one in northern France. A total of 97 aircraft delivered attacks. Five were lost, but the pilots claimed 51 locomotives destroyed and 14 demaged, in addition to damage done to other rolling stock. At least seven missions of 2, 3, and 4 June, directed against railway targets, indulged in bombing and strafing attacks on trains. Although pilots reported generally good results their claims of rolling stock destroyed were small.

The above attacks on rail and road bridges, together with those upon rolling stock, constitute an essential preamble to the more formal and more fully developed Interdiction Program of June and the months immediately following. The objectives were the same, the over-all purpose was identical, and the reduction of enemy facilities





and, more particularly, the destruction of the Seine bridges were the premises upon which the later program was built.

Attacks on Coastal Batteries

Although individual enemy batteries designed to defend the coast of northern France had occasionally served as targets for the Minth Air Force prior to 13 April 1944, it was not until then that a definite program against them was inaugurated. An AEAF directive dated 13 April 1944 prescribed that the Minth Air Force and the 2d Tactical Air Force RAF should concentrate the necessary bembardment effort on 12 listed patteries "to the end that the harassing effect of our attacks snall prevent the completion by the enemy of the construction now going on on specified targets. " The targets were divided into two grows of six each. In each group two were batteries under construction, and the remainder were completed installations. Rearly all of the targets under construction lay within the invasion area. The others extended as far east as Dunkirk in the Pas de Calais. For security reasons it was stipulated that two attacks should be made upon completed batteries for each one on a battery under construction. These principles were in their essence maintained in later directives which added new targets to those first provided.

Medium bombers of IX Bomber Command monopolized the attacks on these targets. Between 13 and 30 April they bombed gun positions at 24 places in missions of at least one-group strength. Targets in two places were twice bombed. In May gun positions in 24 places were



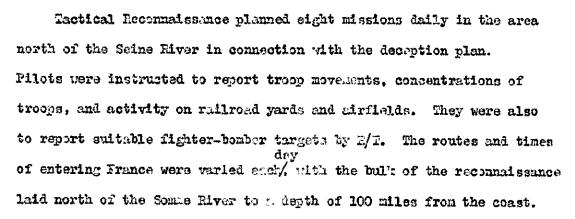
bombed by the mediums. Single attacks were delivered against the installations at six places, two at 12 others, three at three points, and four at two more; while Etaples was six times attacked. Only one attack was in more than group strength. In the first five days of June similar targets in 10 localities were attacked at least once each.

The effects of this program are exceedingly difficult to assess. By scattering the attacks beyond the invasion area security in respect to invasion plans may have been strengthened. The targets were small and of a nature which required direct hits to effect denolition. Even an excellent bomb pattern might fail to produce such hits. Since the framers of the directive of 13 April were aware of these facts it is to be assumed that they used the phrase "harassing effect" rather than the word "destruction" advisedly. Pilots' reports of demage inflicted varied greatly, and photographic evidence added but few significant details. Effectheless, the effect of such a sustained program upon the enemy's mind and morale may well have been considerable.

Reconnaissance Activities - Visual and Photographic

Throughout the period from 15 May through 5 June the reconnaissance groups of the Minth Air Force were exceedingly active in discharging functions closely related to current operations, and likewise in gathering information relevant to operations associated with the forthcoming invasion. They also had a definite role assigned in connection with the deception or cover plan then in effect.





Group flew 83 missions to obtain Merton obliques of 160 miles of the Trench coast line and of two in-shore strips, each 120 miles long. This usually involved flying at 3,500 feet and at a straight flight line for four minutes. In spite of the size of the task and the dangers involved, 9,500 prints were turned in. No planes were lost. New low-level obliques were obtained of proposed landing and drop zones in the invasion area for study by IX Troop Carrier Command and the airborne divisions. For deception purposes each mission of this type executed in the invasion area was matched by two others, executed in exactly the same manner, in the region of the Pas de Calais.

It should be noted that when weather or cloud base precluded photography on the part of high-altitude photo reconnaissance units accompanying the medium bombers, and when a prompt report of visual observation was required, pilots' visual observations were relayed by E/T to the sector controller, who forwarded them to the reconnaissance center at advanced headquarters. Such information could be furnished within one-half hour from the time of bombing. When possible, bomb-damage assessment photographs were made at the same time.



A total of 400 tactical reconnaissance sorties were flown by the Linth Air Force during this period, in addition to the special task of flying 140 weather reconnaissance sorties.

Turing the same period from 15 May through 6 June, photographic recommaissance was employed to the maximum to provide the photo coverage required by armies and air forces. This work was closely coordinated with British agencies and equitably divided between the PAF and the American facilities available.

The Minth Mir Force Photographic Group completed the following 5 tasks within this period:

- (1) Mosaic of the area within a 12-mile radius of the Liege bridges for a IX Bomber Command study of the flak defenses in the area prior to bombing operations
- (2) Coverage of all occupied airdromes and airdromes previously occupied by the German Air Force in northern France
- (2) Run-in, nose-dloing strips for IX Troop Carrier Command's use in briefing and to assist pilots in making proper landfalls
- (4) Mosaics of landing and drop comes for IX Troop Carrier Command and the airborne divisions
- (5) Hedium-scale coverage of all main roads in the invasion area every four days from 23 May to D-day
- (6) Kedium-scale coverage of all bridges over the Seine River as far inland as Paris.
- (?) Hedium-scale coverage of all bridges over the Loire River from Hantes to Orleans
- (8) Special large-scale coverage of landing and drop zones on D minus 1 to enable IX Troop Carrier Command and the airborne divisions to study obstacles which were reported to be under construction in these areas



(9) Eleven extraordinary sorties flown to obtain low-level obliques of underwater beach defenses. These sorties were flown at zero altitude plus sufficient elevation to clear the obstacles on the beaches. Nose-dicing and side-dicing cameras were used, and the flight path usually maintained midway between high-water and low-water line. These photographs were invaluable in that they provided the details of construction of the obstacles themselves. They also disclosed the teller mines and high explosive shells fastened to the several types of obstacles. Their information assist the Navy in dealing with the mass of underwater obstacles which the enemy had constructed as a defensive measure.

Supplementary Actions of Fighters and Bombers

Supplementing the work of Tastical Reconneissance and Photo Reconnaissance in connection with operations in progress in this same period were the reports of returning Minth Air Force pilots of the medium and fighter-bombers. Acting on the principle that such reports might well constitute a most substantial source of information, all pilots had been specially trained to observe and to report their observations. A conspicuous case where such action paid dividends had occurred on 25 April 1944. Fighter-bomber pilots returning from a mission over Hamur marshalling yard reported the largest concentration of rolling stock there which they had ever seen. The information was received at Advanced Headquarters Minth Air Force at 1440. By 1944 hours a group of fighter-banbers and four groups of mediums had bombed the target with resulting heavy damage to choke points, sidings, and rolling stock. Such a case is obviously exceptional, but the sun total of information brought in by combat pilots was both great and useful. Training in accurate observation and in the establishment of good reporting procedures was bearing good fruit. It was its value in the course of later operations.



Tactical Redeployment Preparatory to the Invasion

A notable feature of the Ninth Air Force's life in the early months of 1944 was the gradual novement of its combat units and their ancillary formations to new tactical locations. Such changes were planned so that units might be more effectively concentrated than hitherto and placed at points which would facilitate their tactical operations in connection with the invasion. By the end of April nearly all such changes had been effected and units were located on the last fields they were to occupy in the United Kingdom.

The new locations involved in this tactical deployment of combat units placed IX Forber Command on 11 airfields in Essex. IX Tactical Air Command occupied 11 stations in Hampshire and one in Dorset, extending south from Andover to the Channel coast. Of these, three were classified as advanced landing grounds. XIX Tactical Air Command was located at seven fields in proximity to the Channel coast in Kent. All save one of these were ALG's.

IX Troop Carrier Command was placed at three main centers. The most northerly embraced seven inland airfields, five in Lincolnshire and one each in the adjacent counties of Rutland and Northampton.

Tour inland fields in Berkshire and one in Miltshire comprised the second group. The third was composed of two fields in Devonshire and one in Somerset in proximity to the Channel coast.

Reconnaissance units were placed at Chalgrove in Oxfordshire and at Middle Wallop, Eampshire. The night fighter squadrons were





placed at Charmy Down in Miltshire and at Scorton, Yorkshire.

Headquarters Minth Air Force and its advanced headquarters were fixed at Sunninghill Fark, Berkshire, and at Uxbridge, Buckinghamshire respectively. Headquarters IX Fighter Command was at Middle Wallop, Hampshire, and its advanced headquarters at Uxbridge. Headquarters IX Tactical Air Command was also at Middle Wallop. Headquarters XIX Tactical Air Command was located at Aldermaston Court, Berkshire, and its advanced headquarters at Biggin Hill, Kent. IX Bomber Command Headquarters remained at Marks Hall, Essex. Headquarters of IX Air Force Service Command was located at Sunninghill Park, that of IX Englneer Command at Bray Court, Berkshire, and that of IX Air Defense Command at St. John's Wood, London. IX Troop Carrier Headquarters remained at Grantham, Lincolnshire, but its advanced headquarters was fixed at Eastcote, Middlesex.

The movements incident to this tactical redeployment of the Minth Air Force afforded an excellent opportunity to give the units involved in the movements experience which it was believed would be of value to them as they made changes of station to, or on, the continent. Mobility exercises, therefore, coincided with the movements made. In addition, groups not scheduled for an immediate change of station were directed to carry out such exercises by leap-frogging between airfields, or by a movement from the station occupied out into the adjacent countryside and back again. Wherever possible the necessary transportation was provided to allow these exercises to be carried out in a manner identical with that of a genuine operation. There



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transportation was not available it was necessary to simulate the existence of transportation; e.g., to stake out a space on the ground equal to the area of a truck body, and to stack equipment therein. In all cases the mobility exercises involved the movement of all available personnel and materiel, and their reestablishment in readiness for operations. All measures which would be observed in a movement within an active theater of operations were observed in the course of these exercises.

Provision of Facilities for Air-Ground Cooperation

The success of the operations of a tactical air force depends in large measure upon the degree of cooperation which exists between it and the Army units with which it is associated. To achieve such success a variety of measures was taken by the Minth Air Force.

Conferences

Beginning in December 1943, a series of conferences was held at Winth Air Force Headquarters, Sunninghill Fark. Here high-ranking ground commanders, together with the ground llaison officers who were to operate with Kinth Air Force units, were given full information as to the resources and capabilities of air power. Such conferences were addressed by the Commanding General, Ninth Air Force, by the Commanding Generals, IX Bomber Command, IX Fighter Command, and IX Troop Carrier Command, and by other specially chosen officers.





Ground Liaison Officers

It was designed that the ground liaison officers, composed of Army personnel, should assist air force units in developing a full picture of the ground situation, that they should help in the briefing of air crews preparatory to their taking off on missions, and that they should pass on information obtained after missions had been flown to the proper ground headquarters. They were assigned to headquarters and wings of IX Bomber Command, to headquarters, wings, and groups of the IX and XIX Tactical Air Commands, and to the tactical and photographic recommands are groups. They functioned in close association with air force S-2's and S-3's.

To supplement the information obtained at the conferences at Sunninghill Park, the ground liaison officers attended a special Command Fost Exercise at IX Tactical Air Command designed to demonstrate significant points in the doctrine of air-ground cooperation. They further attended a two-week course at the FAF School of Army Cooperation at Old Sarum.

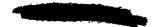
Air Support Farties

Air Support Parties, composed of air force personnel, were assigned to Army corps, divisions, and regimental combat teams. Their function was to assist the proper Army authorities in formulating requests for air strikes, in which connection their knowledge of the capabilities of air power would be of special value. Each party was provided with mobile ground-to-ground and ground-to-air communications



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to enable it to send requests for air strikes promptly, and to direct aircraft that were searching for their targets. IX Tactical Air Command furnished the personnel for 15 Air Support Parties.

Cooperation with Units Afloat

To further the cause of air-ground cooperation Finth Air Force Air Representatives were assigned to the flagships of the Western Haval Task Force and Controllers to three fighter direction tenders. The U.S.S. Augusta was the Western Naval Task Force flagship and for a time corried the Commanding Ceneral, First U.S. Army and key members of his staff. The U.S.S. Ancon was the Assault Force Cmaha flagship and headquarters ship for V U.S. Corps and 1st U.S. Division. The U.S.S. Earfield was the flagship for Assault Force Utah and headquarters ship for VII U.S. Corps and the 4th U.S. Division. U.S.S. Henrico was relief ship for U.S.S. Ancon and U.S.S. Barfield. One flighter direction tender was located off the American beaches, another off the British beaches, and the third in the shipping lane.

Controllers and Air Representatives

The role of the Controllers in the fighter direction tenders was to assist in the operation of Minth Air Force aircraft in the essentially defensive operations of shipping and beach cover. The role of the Air Representatives on board the flagships was to assist in the provision of offensive air-ground cooperation by the Minth Air Force. They were to keep the Communding General, Minth Air Force

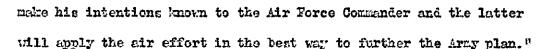


informed of the operation's progress at his Uxbridge headquarters. They were to give air advice to the Commanding General, First U. S. Army, to the Taval Commander, Western Task Force, and to the commanding generals of corps and divisions. They were further to examine calls for air coordination passed back to the United Kingdom by the Air Support Farties ashore and to confirm or veto these calls in consultation with the ground force and navel commanders. They were further to originate requests for air-ground cooperation, pass weather information, and give direct to the Communing General, Winth Air Force information as to the bomb line. The Air Representatives on the assault force flagchips were to reprief, or relirect if necessary, the fighters or bombers which arrived in response to those calls or in accordance with a set program. They were to request additional reconnaissance if such were required by corps or division commanders, to relirect reconnaissance mircraft if necessary, and to receive radio-telephone reports from there aircraft whenever such reports were made direct. Such devices gave added guarantee that air-ground coordination would be effective.

Coordination Facilities at Uxbridge

By 21st Army Group memorandum, subject Direct Air Support, dated 23 April, it was stated that "The successful application of direct air support depends on two broad principles: (a) That the support afforded conforms with the military plan. (b) That the air support applied achieves the greatest effect. The Army Group Commander will, therefore,





To give effect to the above policy various organizations were established in close working proximity to one another at Hillingdon House, Uxbridge, in the period prior to D-day.

Advanced Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Air Force

Advanced Headquarters AEAF was one such organization. It provided the Minth Air Force and 2d Tactical Air Force RAF with target directives. It resolved any questions which might arise and served to assist in determining the employment of the United States Strategical Air Force in cases where its use appeared necessary.

Advanced Headquarters Minth Air Force and 2d Tactical Air Force RAF

Advanced Headquarters Einth Air Force was established at Hillington House in early February 1944 as essentially an operational headquarters. Its operational personnel shared the same operations room with equivalent personnel of 2d Tactical Air Force and developed their actions in cooperation with the latter.

Combined Control Center (Tighter)

In similar fashion Advanced Headquarters IX Fighter Command, in operational control of IX and XIX Tactical Air Commands, took up its residence at Uxbridge by the side of 11 Group PAF in what was known as the Combined Control Center (Fighter).



21st Army Group Combined Control Center

The 21st Army Group Combined Control Center also appeared on the scene to give the needed representation to the ground forces. It was headed by a general staff officer (air) of 21st Army Group. Its personnel, derived from 21st Army Group and from the First U. S. Army, were distributed among three subordinate groups or cells.

Reconnaissance Center. The first of these cells was the reconnaissance center. This handled all requests for reconnaissance which were not cared for by reconnaissance units directly assigned to armies. It had the further responsibility of planning reconnaissance missions in advance and of planning missions on its own initiative, if in its judgment such missions were necessitated by the developing situation. It furthermore received reports of all reconnaissance missions. These it formarded to the information cell which, in turn, transmitted them to the operations cell and to the operations room for their information and possible action. Direct control of American reconnaissance was maintained by the senior U. S. officer in the reconnaissance center.

Control Center was denominated the operations cell. This unit received all requests for air participation originating with U. S. Air Support Parties (or Pritish visual control posts) which, as noted above, were assigned to ground troops. These requests conveyed the wishes of





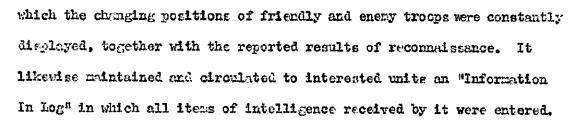
ground commanders in respect to such missions. In the assault phase they emanated from the headquarters ships. As the Army units involved moved ashore the requests came from their command posts. Such requests might also come directly from the ground commanders.

The operations cell might reject such requests, or it might pass them on to the appropriate operations room for acceptance or refusal. Refusals on the part of operations room authorities would normally be only on grounds of air necessity. This cell might also develop requests for air-ground cooperation on its own initiative and on the basis of its knowledge of the ground situation. It was kept fully informed on the details of this subject by way of reports received directly or through information cell, ground units in the field, or reconnaissance. A situation map portrayed this information graphically.

Operations cell had two other functions. It assisted in the development of the missions planned in advance for any given day. On the basis of information received from the ground it set the bomb line, altered the same as need arose, and gave prompt information on the subject to operations room and to the ground and air units concerned.

Information Cell. The third element of the 21st Army Group Combined Central Center was the information cell. To it all intelligence concerning the ground situation was remorted by the ground units involved. As has been noted above, it also received reports of air recommensance, to which sources of information were added the reports of observations made by other air missions. This cell maintained a situation may on





Once it was determined that an air participation mission should be flown, operations orders were sent, usually by telephone, to the proper air S-3. The same information was likewise given to the ground liaison officer attached to the air formation involved, in order that he might inform the ground commander and personally assist the S-2 in briefing the crews on appropriate details of the ground situation. He was kept currently informed on this subject so that he might properly discharge this briefing function. If a request was refused, the ground commander who originated it was so informed.

Final Instructions to Ground Maison Officers

details of the invasion plan with which they needed to become familiar, a special conference was held for their benefit at Hillingdon on 2 June 1944. There officers of the 21st Army Group Combined Control Center inculged in a full exposition of the plan, repeated earlier statements in respect to the procedures employed in laying on air-cround cooperation missions, and provided each ground liaison officer with a carefully developed set of instructions for his reference in the immediate future. The fact was stressed that while the greater part of air-ground cooperation missions would be prearranged, missions

in response to demands arising from unforeseen situations, though smaller in proportion, were exceedingly important.

Later Developments

whis plan and organization for the control of air strikes was maintained without substantial modification throughout the period 6 to 18 June. However, as operational bases were established on the far shore in immediate proximity to First U. S. Army, the activities of the 21st Army Group Combined Control Center were progressively limited. A definite stage in this development, so far as U. S. air power was concerned, was reached on the night of 17-18 June 1944. Then, in accordance with an order from Advanced Headquarters IX Tactical Air Command on the far shore, operational control of air-ground coordination missions was assumed by that headquarters. In effect this meant that the control of the fighter-bombers passed to that command. Preplanned air participation missions were still arranged and ordered by Advanced Headquarters Einth Air Force at Eillingion House, and other missions were ordered there in cases where the local resources of IX Tactical Air Command did not permit it to care for them.

Of necessity an elaborate communications not was maintained for the use of 21st Army Group Combined Control Center which gave them direct communications with both ground and air units.



Chapter III OPERATIONS 6 TO 30 JULE 194:

D-day Operations

The invasion plans of the Minth Air Force had been fully elaborated on paper in "Minth Air Force Plan for Operation "Meptune"—Tactical Air Plan," issued on 26 April 1944. On D-day, 6 June 1944, the first of these plans was translated into action as the actual invasion of Europe began. All of the Minth's vast resources had been committed by the plan. All were now employed to the fullest possible extent—troop carriers, medium bombers, and flighter-bombers alike.

IX Troop Carrier Command

Field Order No. 1

amended 4 June 1945, determined the role of that organization in the assault phase of Operation NEPTUND. The assigned mission of Brig. Gen. Faul L. Millians' forces was to "transport and re-supply parachute and glider elements of the 82d Airborne Division and the 101st Airborne division." This was to be accomplished in three phases. The first, to be accomplished in the early hours of D-day, involved the delivery of parachute and glider infuntry of the two airborne divisions on a total of six drop or landing zones in close proximity to Ste. Here Eglise, where they were to be used to assist the inland progress of the assault troops landed on Utah beach. The second, involving the

support of the two divisions with glider-borne headquarters, medical, signal, and digineer detachments, together with field artillery, antimircraft artillery, and infantry units, was to be accomplished late on D-day and in the early hours of D plus 1 at two landing zones, one of which had not been previously employed. The third, to be carried out early on D plus 1, involved parachute resupply of the airborne divisions at two drop zones earlier employed.

Take-Off, Course, and Formations

In the closing hours of D minus 1, C-47's and C-53's of IX Troop Carrier Command began to take off, some serving as tags for CG-4A's.

No less than 15 airfields, distributed in three major areas from Lincolnshire to Devon, were employed in the operation, which was directed from the Combinel British American Operations Room and Command Post at Destone, in proximity to Advanced Headquarters Minth Air Force and Ecadquarters Allied Expeditionary Air Force.

Aircraft proceeded to three wing assembly areas and thence to the command departure point on the coast. From that point the air trains proceeded along a command channel 10 miles wide, passing between the islands of Guernsey and Alderney to a turning point off the west coast of the Cherbourg peniusula. The course was planned to avoid the heavy antimircraft fire of the Channel Islands and northern portion of the Cherbourg peniusula. Three naval craft, provided with visual and radar tracans and carrying Signal personnel of IX Troop Carrier Command, marked the course and turning point.



Aircraft carrying paratroops proceeded in nine-ship column Yee of Yees, while glider tugs and their tows were formed in pairs of pairs echeloned to the right. The former observed a speed of 140 m.p.h., the latter a speed of 120 m.p.h. en route; and both were to return to 150 m.p.h. To avoid excessive casualties paratroop drop speed was fixed at not over 110 m.p.h.

Pathfinders

Six pathfinder serials of three planes each were directed to proceed to six drop and landing zones. Their navigators were the most experienced members of the IX Troop Corrier Command Pathfinder School, where their crews had also been trained. This school had provided intensive training in the use of all navigational aids since its establishment on 1 threh 1944, and its members had participated in frequent wing and command exercises. The pathfinders mission was to drop at least one of three airborne pathfinder teams on each of the six drop zones assigned, the teams to mark the zone with lighted tees and radar beacons one-half hour before the sarrival of the main body. The pathfinders were also to drop at least one of two airborne pathfinder teams to mark a special glider landing zone.

All 19 pathfinder alrereft which made landfall completed their missions, and all drops were made at approximately the correct times, although some difficulties were encountered at the turn and immediately after landfall. All planes were equipped with Gee, with Roberta (to receive Dureka beacons), and with SOF-717-0 radar, so that in case one or more of the devices fadded the mission could still be



carried out. All of the equippment worked satisfactorily with the exception of the SOR-117-0 reception of signals from Emps beacons. COL-117-0 was used to determine the exact landfall on passing the Eritish chart, to fix course exactly midway between Alderney and Cuernscy islands, and as a check to Gee in reaching the drop zones and on returning to base. Rebeccas received Eureka signals at all check points and at three drop zones. At no time was Gee unreadable. In the cases, the actual drops were made by its use alone, while in three others Gee was supplemented with good visual checks. In the remaining two instances the pathfinder teams were dropped on visual identification of the target. In one instance three teams were dropped within 500 yards of the center of the assigned drop zone.

Piversion

A force of ENF Stirlings flow a diversionary mission in connection with the first phase of troop corrier operations. They paralleled the course of the main column and continued beyond the turning goint towards the enemy coast, dropping window to similate a second troop carrier force going to a different area in carries of approximately 40 aircraft cash. Dumny paratroops and noisemplers were also dropped in the course of this diversion.

Issort

Front the provided by night fighters of 11 Group RAF which provided corotan for the column, while RAF introders assisted in providing cover and attacked enemy game and searchlights. He enemy aircraft agree





encountered in this or any subsequent phase of the operations.

Progress of the Operation

First Place. Over 900 6-47's and 6-53's of IX Image Carrier Command, together with more than 100 66-44 gliders, participated in the first phase of the operation in 28 serials. Thanks to intensive training in night flying, all formations were effected without air accident. Transport mayignation problems were usually solved in a satisfactory manner. Two creas per group had been specially trained in the Pathfinder School to lead their groups within visual distance of the drop-zone aids established by the airborne pathfinder units. All formations reached the targets at approximately the time designated without receiving any gunfire from Allied ships. Havigational aids functioned satisfactorily with the exception of the lighted tees on three drop zones. There, however, the Durelm beacons worked well. Heavy cloud formations obscured vision and readered the special remain maps of little value. The aircraft reached the drop zones between 0016 and 0494 hours on D-day.

Surprise was possible only in the case of the leading aircraft; all subsequent serials were under practically continuous ground and antichicraft fire in crossing the peningula and on landing. Thile receiving such fire the transport serials were usually unable to maintain close formation with the result that airborne units were scattered and intermingled on landing. Revertheless results differed from the plan in detail rather than in mass, and the ground observer's report



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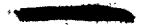


indicates that the units of the 101st Airborne Division were dropped without major loss and that only one unit of the 82d Airborne Division was badly dropped. The same observer remarked that the successful conclusion of the glider phase of the mission was "little short of a mirable," since the landing fields were small and often obstructed by heavy posts. Farachute and glider landings alike had to be made in the midst of a strongly organized defensive position. This fact was emphasized in the case of the 82d Airborne Division, which landed squarely on the Corman 91st Infantry Division and other defence troops engaged in maneuvers and occupying their assigned defense positions.

Second Phase. Cver 400 C-17's and C-53's towing as many CC-4A and Horse gliders participated in the support missions (nine serials) on the afternoon of D-day and on the morning of D plus 1. They were escorted by fighter groups of IX Tighter Command which gave closs cover.

The results were much the same as those recorded for previous missions. CG-41's had been amployed for the night glider lundings since it was held that their size would keep night losses to a minimum. Two hundred and tuenty Horses were assigned to this phase, their pay loads of 6.900 pounds making then particularly valuable for the transport of heavy equipment. Small landing fields again occasioned many crash landings, the high lending speed of the Horses placing them at a special disadvantage. Again formations were considerably scattered by ground fire. Some of the landings were used in the midst of the bottle which was raging in the Ste. Here Telise area. Under



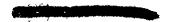


these circumstances considerable heavy equipment was lost, there being little opportunity to secure that which was nafely landed; but casualties were reported as "amazingly light." The aircraft arrived over their targets between 2053 and 2050 on D-day and between 0700 and 0855 on D plus 1.

Third Phase. The work of IX Troop Carrier Command in the assault on Utah beach was concluded by phase three of its operation. Paralleling some of the support missions above described, more than 320 C-47's and C-53's were dispatched to resupply the 821 and 101st Lirborne Divisions on the morning of D plus 1. Ground conditions and enemy reactions were average to the successful accomplishment of resupply. In addition, this phase was carried out as preplanned and not on orders framed in accordance with the actual ground situation. These facts in combination caused many bundles of the mase drop to fall in enemy territory, while the location and distribution of others by the ground troops constituted a difficult problem.

Accomplishments

The difficulties attendant upon an operation of this mightude were serious and many. Flanning had anticipated nony. Others had been reduced to a minimum by the newigational and other technical training afforded by the IX Troop Carrier Command Pathfinder School. Furthermore, no less than 30 wing and three command exercises had been conducted by IX Troop Carrier Command between 15 Parch and 27 May





to give its air crews operational experience. Airborne troops partleipated in all of these exercises which culminated on 12 May 1944 in
Exercise Engle--a full-coale and realistic rehearsal of invasion operations. The fruits of such planning and training were gathered in the
course of the troop carrier operations of D minus 1 to D plus 1. These
operations were a success. The following tables constitute a record
of their size, cost, and accomplishment.

IX Troop Carrier Command: Operational Swampry

lirer_ft		
Disputched		1,660
Sorties		1,606
Completing sission		1,581
Abortive		76
liccing and destroyed		41
Damijed		449
Troops dropsed on objective		13,215
Artillery wcapons dropped		223
Founds of combat equipment at	id supplies aropped	1,641,448
Flying time (hours)		7,092
_		
<u> </u>		
Diroatcied		513
Corties		51.2
Released at IZ		503
Fot released at LZ (lost)		9
Troops landed on objective		4,047
Troops not landed on objectiv	ra	43
Artillery wcapons Landed		110
Jempa landed		281
Pounds of combat equipment ar	id supplies landed 💎	412,477
Fl; lng time (hours)		1,118
Percendages		
Aircraft abortive		4.6,
/ircraft destroyed and missing	ıg	2.5
Mircruft daraged		e7.0%
Glidere not released at LZ (lost)	1.5,1
Tropas dropped or landed		
Aircraft	13,315	
Cliders	4.047	
	1 7 A CO	



Lotal

Pounts of freight dropped or landed

 Mircrift
 1,641,448

 Gliders
 412,477

 Total
 2,053,925

Analysis of combat contonent dropped or landed

•	Aircraft	Gliders	<u>lotal</u>
Number of Joeps	0	£31	281
Runber of artillary weapons or nortare	ධයය	110	233
Callens of gasolina	1,667	230	1,947
Founds of mines and employives	16,237	10.383	26,652
Pounds of amounition	596,621	202,063	798,683
Pounds of rations	81,701	5,672	87,373
Founds of other combut equipment	946,329	194,333	1,141,217

Bomber and Tighter Commenda

Cperations Order No. 168A

The assault phase operations of IX Beaber Command and of IX Fighter Command for P-day were determined by Advanced Headquarters Minth Air Force Operations Order No. 168A (no date). Its essential provisions, tasel upon the Joint Fire Plan of 8 April as subsequently revised and amended, were so follows:

IN Bomber College 1, under the command of Brig. Cen. Samuel D.
Anderson, was to attack three constal batteries in the Elst Army Group area, one near Ecnerville and two in the vicinity of Outstrehea.

Dighteon aircraft were to bomb each target at as near civil twilight as possible.

Three other coastal batteries at Pointe du Hoe, just west of Chaha beach, at Haisy I on the custern shore of the Vire estuary, and at Hontfarville, south of Burfleur on the northeast tip of the Cherbourg peninsula were to be attached by 18 mediums each between H-hour minus 20 and U-hour Linus five minutes. All these batteries



were capable of interfering with the landings on Utah beach.

In addition the mediums were to bomb seven defended localities in the Utah beach area in the vicinity of Les Dunes de Varreville, St. Martin de Varreville, La Madeleine, and Beau Guillot. Three were to be attacted by 35 and the remainder by 54 aircraft each. The attacks were to be delivered between H-hour minus 20 and H-hour minus five minutes. The medium-bomber affort was concentrated in this area to eliminate, so far as possible, air traffic problems.

The etremath of groups during the assault missions was fixed at the maximum of 54 directft. Nedium formations were to have no direct flighter support, but were to be under area cover.

IX Tighter Command was in operational control of all IX and XIX Taotical Air Command units, and was under the command of Maj. Gen.

Throad E. Quesada. Five groups were assigned to beach high cover, two (supplemented by four from VIII Tighter Command) to convey cover. Five other groups constituted a striking force, and six were held for support (air-ground cooperation). Two fighter-bember squadrons, designated from the striking force, were assigned to fly one air alert mission each, in support of the U.S. V and VII Corps, as directed by the Combined (Fighter) Control Center in direct coordination with the commanders of those corps.

In addition the fighter-tombers were to attack two coastal batteries in squadron strength. These were Maley II and Gefosse, both on the castern shore of the Vire estuary and both capable of delivering fire on Utah beach. The attacks were to be made between H-hour and I-hour plus 10.





With the purpose of blocking novement into the Utah area, fighter-bombers were assigned six bridges and a rail embaniment in the general area southwest of Ste. Hero Delice and in proximity to St.

Enuveur lo Vicente. The embaniment was at La Sangeurière, the bridges at Bousevillo, Dimmoville, Courpoville, St. Sanwour de Fierre Pont,

St. Sanwour le Vicente, and Rahou.

Intelligence Appreciation of Assault Phase Torgets

The nature of these targets is exhibited by Intelligence Section's "Appreclation of Caheduled Rangets for 6 June 1944," which follows.

IX DOING CONTAIN

CULTIFIES

Farileur (Montforville)

Cascantes under construction for four 170 mm. guns with range of 32,000 pards. Freedowsly attacked 12, 19, 20 and 24 May by IX Bomber Command, resulting in dam go to all four carcantes. One of the four guns was possibly destroyed and another may be out of action. The rationing two guns may be able to fire but probably from adjacent sites and not from the incomplete explanaments.

"eal: to moderate heavy flak is anticipated.

linism I

Four emplacements for 155 mm. howitzers consisting of open circular pits 35 in diameter with concrete platform. Attached 23 May by IX B.C. by blind tembing methods, causing no damage. Casenates are under construction in the vicinity.

Weak heavy flek may be encountered.

Fointe du Roc

Explacements with six 185 m., guns. Also as manates under construction. Attacks by IX Bomber Campand on 18 April. 33 187 and 4 June have described all but No. 2 and No. 3 position.

Meak heavy flak may be encountered.





Benerville

Six gan 185 a... battery with 4 case inter under construction. Attacks of 23 April and 12, 19 and 20 May effected only minor damage.

Weak heavy fluit may be encountered.

Cuietrehen I

Sim 188 im. gums with 4 caremates under construction. Attacks of 27 April and 4 May severely damaged No. 1 and No. 2 caremates. Hear to moderate heavy flak is anticipated.

Cuictribe. II

Six 185 mm. guns with 4 casemates under construction. No damage from prior attack.

Weak to moderate heavy flak is anticipated.

DEPETED ICCALITIES IN WEAR BOACH AREA

Les Dunes de Terreville

Infantry position on coact. Two pillbones, five shelters, possibly one anti-tank gun. Protected by anti-tank ditch and wire on landward side.

L deleine

Infantry position on court. Two pillboxes, three shelters, possibly two 150 km. gans. Protected by wire on landward side.

St. Hartin de Verreville

Infinity position on coast. Four pillbones, one shelter, three anti-tank gun, one light gun, probably 75 mm. protected by wire on landward side.

St. Hartin de Varreville

Infantry position on coast. Three pillboxes, six shelters. Protected by wire on landward wide.

La Madeleine

Small infantry position alightly inland, surrounded by wire.

Peru Guillot

Small industry position inland from coast. Probable platoon Readquarters.



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Bean Guillot

Infantry position on coast in front of dyke. Two pillboxes. No heavy flak is enticipated at any of there beach targets. Light flak and small arm fire will be encountered if low flight is necessary.

IN EIGHELF COLLAND

GUN BANTEPIN'S

Geforre-Tontener

A net four-gen tattery emplaced in a row of trees liming a rand. On 26 My 1944 no minor defences or wire had yet been installed. It is believed to be a field eattery.

lead he way flet may be encountered.

Wairz II a

Probable 75 mm. field guns in rough open earthen emplacements CO-25 feet in disaster sited in an open field. Range of guns about 13,000 yards.

heak reavy flak may be encountered.

BRIDGES

Teuzeville -- Road Bridge

Single span through lattice girder bridge with masonry abuttents. Span is 50 fest long over Douve River.

Ttierneville-Road Bridge

Three oridges in succession over Druve River and two branch strucks. (1) Brich arch, single span, 45 ft; (2) Decited steel Lattice girder, 2 agen, 90 ft; masonry arch single span, 45 ft.

Countrille -- Tailread Bridge

fin_le tract railroad bridge on Carentam-La Haye du Puite-Carteret line.

St. Sauveur de Pierre Pont-Pailrord Dridge

Single track milread bridge.

St. Sauveur le Vicomite--Coud Bridge

Reinforced concrete, two coun bridge 109 feet long, over Donne Piver.



Mehou--Boad Bridge

Higher erch, 2 spen bridge, 70 feet long, over Douve Piver.

Ennesuriers--Element on main road on west side of Cherbourg peninsula.

Light flest only is anticipated at any of these bridge targets. Note:

Of the gun batteries listed above as targets, the following have portions of both Utah and Casha beaches within range:

Thisy I - Maisy II - Gefosse - Points du Hoe.

The Barifeur Battery can reach Utah beach.

IN Bomber Command Operations in the Assault Phase

All of the assignments to IX Bomber Command for the assault phase were carried out. Zero hour had been fixed at 0630. Accordingly the first aircraft involved took off at 0843, the last at 0800 on 6 June. Under these circumstances it was well that much effort had been expended in training flying personnel in formating just before dawn.

Weather and puthfinder difficulties reduced the attack on the targets in the Elst Army Group area. Only one aircraft was over Benerville and II were over the two batteries at Ouistrehen. The attacks too't place between OS17 and OS50, with 1,000- and 2,000-pound bomba being used.

The attach on the bitteries at Pointe du Hoe, Hontfarville, and Maisy I took place between 0625 and 0645. The results in the first instance were unobserved; in the other two the targets were well covered by the bursts of 1,000- and 2,000-pound boabs dropped visually by single boxes accompanied by mathfinder circumst.



Owing to weather conditions the visual attacks on the seven defended localities in the Utch beach area were hade at unusual levels between 3,500 and 7,000 feet. They were delivered by 18 boxes, distributed as planned, and took place between 0605 and 0624. To avoid heavy cratering, 000-pound bonks were employed. Obliquations based upon experimental backing at Emmeaster on 11 and 23 May had determined this selection. A total of 269 aircraft dropped 523.63 tons of 250-pound bonks.

Assessment of the results of these building attacks is extremely difficult. Poor photographic conditions prevailed which limited the results to be obtained from strike photographs. Later examination on the ground yielded rather unsatisfactory conclusions since the small craters were obscured by the effects of naval gunfire, by later flighting, and by still later electing-up operations. Operational mercural Cestion, however, calculated on the basis of 28 located bambfalls in the Utah beach area that 16 per cent of the borbs fell in the target areas of the seven defended localities. 48 per cent within 500 feat of the target areas, 66 per cent on land, and 34 per cent totween high tide and water line. It should be remembered that in an attack by two boxes of 18 miror. It each on such targets the chances of a mechine gun's being put out of action are .054. The chance of a direct hit on a pillbor is less than 2 per cent. It is to be observed, however, that rejects from the ground communder in the Utah eres sivied that the pin-point bombing of the beach targets was excellent, and that he leter transmitted a commendation to IX Bomber



Command. In particular the light resistance encountered by a unit of the lolst Airborne Division in occupying a battery west of St. Eartin de Varreville was declared by a ground observer to be "due to the excellent air force bombing."

In attacks against constal batteries, usually housed in heavy concrete emplacements, hits were reported in the vicinity of the guns, but no physical damage attributable to the bombing was discovered at a later date. It is noteworthy that in all bending of such targets the effect of other than direct hits may have disrupted controls and communications and demoralized personnel, thus effectively neutralizing the gun position at a critical period.

IX Fighter Command Operations in the Assault Phase

Fighter-ballers of the IX and XIX Tactical Mir Commands, functioning under the operational control of IX Fighter Command, provided the required convoy and high beach cover throughout the day. They also supported the daylight operations of IX Troop Carrier Command by providing escorts and by carrying out area sweeps. These operations were amazingly uneventful, the only report recording the presence of enemy planer being from aircraft engaged in convoy cover. These reported eighting and chasing off the Times III fact no claims were made by fighter-bambers in the course of the whole day's operations—the only claims for the Winth Air Force on D-day being two chemy aircraft dectroyed by mediums and three destroyed and one damaged by recommaissance circust.

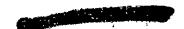


Such a record, notably in respect to shipping lane and beach cover, is tribute to the efficient execution of the plans for the provision of such cover by the three air forces participating. It also reflects the success of preliminary operations against the German Air Force which resulted in the destruction of its aircraft in the air and on the ground, and in the destruction of and damage to its ground installations and production facilities. To this success the limits Air Force had made its contribution, although adjor credit belongs to the Highth Air Force and the Tay. The net result of preliminary operations and the efficient execution of P-d y plans was that Alliel air supremay over the vital shipping have and the equally vital beach area was complete.

In addition to their provision of cover and escort, the fighter-bombers of the limith Mr Torce performed a considerable variety of other discions on D-Ley. Of the nine special targets assigned to them in the assault phase, five were definitely hit. In the remaining cases reports do not exactly specify the target boulded, but indicate that an equivalent target was attacked. The attacks, usually in squadron strength, were delivered between 0550 and 0653.

The constal full brief of Knisy II and Gefesse were hit with result- reported "good" and "excellent." The attacks were by 13 and 15 aircraft, dropping 27 and 50.5 tons respectively.

Bridges at St. Surveur do Pierre Pont, Deuseville, and Compeville were balbed as assigned. One others in the ranguage were also hit,



while railway installations at Carentan ware attacked. Results were reported generally as "fair." A total of 100 planes chared in these acquits on communications and dropped 82.75 tons of books.

Other Operations of IX Bouber Command

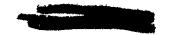
IN Bouber Command continued its activities throughout the day, dispatching a total of 1.011 aircraft, of which 800 made attacks. This averaged five-plus boxes per group. The best rate of performance hitherto achieved had been an average of four boxes per day. For the first time, more aircraft were dispatched than there were crews waitable. Hence many crews flow on two missions.

Coastal batteries again servel as objectives for the meliums. In the British area 100 craters were produced in the target area at Denerville, and hits were carrol near the employeements of the batteries at Houlgate and Trouville. At Gatteville, on the northwest tip of the Cherbourg penincula, equally good results were reported. Two toxes attached in each instance.

Road junctions or highest bridges were attached at Caen and Talmina in the British area by a total of 85 aircraft dropping 164.05 tons with but and I results. In the U.S. area, similar targets in proximity to the battle area were hit at Valences, Argentan, Ecouche, and Carontan. A total of 130 aircraft dropped 165.5 tons on these targets, inflicting appreciable demage.

The melium also attacked four muchalling yards east of the Seine in afternoon missions. Front -five 7-28's dropped 49.5 tons





on Amiena with damage to rolling stock and buildings. A-20's bombed Longra lea Corpa Sainta, Abancourt, and Serqueum. The results of the A-20 attacks by 30, 7, and 35 aircraft are not image.

Other Cogrations of IX Fight in Command

After flying their assigned missions in the first assault phase the fighter-balbers continued active. In pursuance of the interdiction program the bridge at Oissel, under repair by the enemy, was taken attacked. In the first booking by 31 aircraft 30.5 tons were dropped, while 36 tons were dropped by 47 circraft in the second. The oridge remained standing, in spite of six direct hits after the first attack, but it was claimed that the northern half of the south upon that in the river after the second.

eight are: requests submitted to headquarters by the Combined Control Control. Three of these missions were arend recommissiones along the reads leading from Coutaneer to Carentan, St. Io. and La Haye du Pults. Pailway targets and a highway bridge wore tembed. A motor transport column was requested attacked. It was not found by the sireraft dispatched, which however stranged a train at Airch. Similarly the request that another motor transport column northeast of St. Io be attacked led to no action against the privary target, but targets of opportunity were hit. An urgent request for dive-building can employments north of Islany resulted in claims of hits in the target area. Other batteries shelling the bracket from the visinity



of Carentan were attached, and 12 direct hits were claimed on aix gun emplosments, with three other like targets claimed destroyed.

Contrered targets, including aix gun positions, were hit between Isigny and Bayeum. The reported aits of a heavy gun near Fontenay was bombed with supposedly good results. Batteries at Maisy which were firing on Utah beach were also hit by dive bombers. The call for an artillery adjustment mission was answered.

Thus out of a total of 13 requests for air-ground cooperation submitted at advanced headquarters, eight were accepted and acted upon.

One was refused on the ground that no aircraft were available. Weather and the lateness of the hour left to no action in three includes,

while in another case the request was held up, pending a report on a mission which was in the air at the time it was submitted.

It should be noted that the experience of D-day led to a slight but significant change in the plan for fighter direction. It was found that there was need for a number of squadrons to be available on short notice for missions against targets of opportunity and for armed reconsciousness at the direction of the Senior vir Representative for Torce "O" on board V.S.S. Ansan. The procedure of laying on such riscions through Advanced Headquarters ARAF and the Combined Control Center had proved slow. Accordingly, at fixed intervals squadrons were and available to the Senior Air Representative for use against targets of opportunity and for armed reconstitutions behind the enemy's lines. Such targets were reported to the Senior Air Pepresentative by the Air Support Party on shore or determined by reconscisionce whose





reports were intercepted by the Ancon. Since U.S.S. <u>Barfield</u> occasionally experienced difficulty in communicating with fighters but could usually contact the <u>Ancon</u>, whose facilities were good, the Senior Air Representative for Force "U" occasionally made use of the <u>Anconis</u> facilities in laying on missions in support of that force.

Minth Air Force Total Mifort on R-day

The full effort of the Ninth Air Force on D-day appears in the following summary: 2

<u> Medium Rombers</u>	Dis- interior	- <u>Ions on</u> <u>Target</u>	lissing in Action
Hedium-altitude virual bumbing Pathfinders Fotal	1,005 817 6 6 1,011 823	1,435.605 6.00 1,441.505	11 11
Fighter-benders			
Asscult area cover froop carrier eccort Dive booking eccort Dive booking Total	1,016 976 514 497 32 32 577 <u>E60</u> 2,139 2,065	<u>396.16</u> 393.16	<u>9</u>
Trose Carrier			
Clider tugs Troop corriers Gliders Total	104 103 821 825 104 104 1,029 1,012	******************	21 104 127
Reconnicterance			
Photo recommissines Visial recommissance Weather recommissance Artillery limison	80 50 89 67 14 14 2 2		::
Photo reconnaismance escort Total	$\frac{7}{192} \frac{7}{102}$	elepage laurer all-division	2
Grand Fotel	4,371 4,060	1,827.765	149

Road Bridges. Minth Air Force attacks on road oridges over the Seine produced equally good results. Those nearest Faris at St. Germain and Maisons Lafitte were not attacked. The bridge at Bennecourt was attacked twice by fighter-bombers and once by mediums. A medium attack led to the destruction of one span and the remainder were destroyed by the last dive-bombing mission of 3 June. Courcelles was first attacked by mediums which caused one span to sag. Two attacks by fighter-bombers and another by two groups of mediums led to the destruction of three spans as reported 3 June. A single dive bombing broke the bridge at Conflans, while two similar attacks on 30 key rendered that at Elbocuf impossible. Single missions by mediums in two-group strength broke two spans of the road bridges at Mantes-Gassicourt and Vernon, and demolished eight and nine spans respectively of the bridges at Meulan and Poissy.

Half of the read bridge at Pent de l'Arche was destroyed by dive bombing, while a like mission against Enngipert caused the structure there to sag. Two read bridges at Rouen were the objectives of three tighter-bomber missions and of two medium attacks. Since these bridges had been given first priority on 27 May the mediums attacked with three groups on 30 May and with four on 31 May. By the latter date the East bridge had been rendered impassable. The West bridge suffered a similar fate as the result of dive bembings on 2, 3, and 4 June. Although dive-bombed twice on 30 May the structure at St. Fierre du Vauvray was reported standing. It was the only listed target of this type which remained intact between Conflans and Rouen (inclusive) when P-day came. 4



Mir-Graund Conservation

Request Medices

As V Corps extended the original Casha beachholds in the period 7 to 18 June, the Firth Mir Torce frequently compercied. Joint action tas never more evident than on D plus 1. Late on 6 June the commanding general of 7 Corps requested "continuous flighter tenter support to cearch out and attack energy artillery firing on [Casks] beacher." In response IX Fighter Command directed that beginning at 0600 on 7 June and continuing until 2200, one of its squadrons should always te over targets in the Aure Piver-Bayeux-Aircl area. The squadrons, furnished by 360th, 366th, and 369th Tightor Crows, were to remain in the crea for 30 minutes, or to the limit of their endurance, and to give gun positions texpet priority "as they have taken herry tell on beach Challe." Furruant to these orders, 23 and dren-strength idealons vero flown in the designated area on 7 June, 467 planes attaching targets of opportunity with 1,000-pound OP bombs and frag clusters. Highway and rails y targets (including II and rolling stock), together with those furnished by energy consentrations and stores in the ferests of Cericy and Dalloroy, were those test frequently singled out for attack in the course of the a missions. However, five gun positions. including one of 88-lillineter gunc compuflaged under struc stacks, vere discovered and bombed with unimous results. Thester-burbers also stinded in bridges in the Carentan rea on 7 June and another on the 8th. They reported that gras were term in three of the oridges



the revolting of traffic. On 10 June mediums booked concentrations in the Foret de Cericy with unknown results. Equated enemy headquarters were also attacked. The mediums mixed the building at Littry (7 June), but hit those at St. Hartin des Decaces and Jurques (15 June), while flighter-bunkers gartically destroyed a headquarter obsteau southwest of Hantreuil (7 June). The signal communications repeater station at St. Io was so well hit on 13 June that the enemy abundance its use.

Heardle VII Corps was enlarging its Utah beachbook, and as it moved with against Mintebourg and west through St. Saweur le Viconte to the const at Permedille, sir-ground cooperation was even more in evidence than in the Cache area. Healths struck at five military installations in the Car Burfleur region between 7 and 14 June, but the heavy concrete structures which constituted their targets at such points as In Permelle and Mintsfarville were not materially decreed even by 2,000-pound GP bombs.

Fighter-bombers silenced a bettery at living on 7 June and between that date and the 17th attached some 15 gam positions in the northern Cotontin area with special emphasis on those in the Earfleur and Hontebourg areas. Clear evidence is lacking of result; obtained with the exception of the attacks on (mineville (7 June) and Crisberg (10 June). In both of these cases ground forces reported excellent result;. On 10 June fighter-bomber groups flow four request missions, one against strong points north of Montebourg, the others with some nine bridges in the Ericquebec-Le II we du Points area as their targets. All were



asciciated with the northward and westiand advance of VII Corps. The etrong points were hit with results reported good, and ground observers confirmed the destruction of two bridges, with possible damage to rails in their vicinity.

Troop concentrations reported in the area from St. In to Barfleur and St. Inweur le Viconte were attached by fighter-bombers on five occasions between 10 and 18 June with unknown results.

Highway Bridges and Road Blocks

Higher targets appear frequently in the operational records of 7 to 18 June. Recrit all of the objectives by north of the line Cousterces-St. Lo-kuray our Clon and in such proximity to the battle lines as to cause missions against them to fell into the category of joint air-ground operations. Fighter-bombers attacked them on councion, either as specified targets or as those selected by the loaders of area missions. Incident to such attacks the incomplete reports for this period specify fighter-bomber claims of over 1,000 LT and 14 tanks destroyed. But the mediums, which flew nearly 40 missions against highery targets in the nine days 7 to 15 June, played the more conspicuous role.

It was the intent of the mediums to disrupt enemy novements by the destruction of bridges and the establishment of road blocks.

IN Bouter Command demolished the highway bridge at vernon (8 June), destroyed another at St. Sawour le Vicante (10 June), and claimed to have destroyed two more at Conde car Poireau (15 June). 8 Those





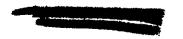
attached at Velognes (10 June), at Argentan (14, 12 June), and at Lessey (15 June) appear to have received intest although buildings in the area were deadlighed. The results of the bombing of Clen bridger (8 June) were the same, although the Commanding Cen ral, first Army Group estmended the attach then delivered.

To produce sub-tinitial road blocks the addition as a rule attacked highery junctions within towns in the expectation that rubble from destroyed buildings would obstruct them. Such blocks were created in some instances; excellent excepted are Isigny, attacked by two groups on 6 June. Valogues, bombed by single groups on 8, 10, and 12 June. Periors, hit by a chapte group on 8 June. Amay our Ofon. attacked by one group on the 18th and by another on the 14th, and St. Causeur to Vicente, which experienced attack by one and one-half groups on 10 June and by a single group on the 13th. In all cases high my obstacles were created by debris from demolished buildings. Bousver, later ground investigation indicated that the read not in the area lambel and generally such as to permit the detour of road blocks, although at some possible inconvenience to energy movements.

Interdiction Program to Icolote the Battlefield

Litter D-dry the Minth Mir Force was more than over mindful of the requirement that a taction air force should prevent the reverent of hostile troops and supplies into the theater of operations or within the thater. In the course of motions proparatory to the invacion it had participated in attacks on energy rail centers, and in the month



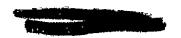


prior to the account it had successed in destroying the rail bridges over the Ceine from Conflans to Rouen. Had the care been in unrestricted control of the rail system of northern Trance he would have been able to curease the Alliel rate of build-up in the long-cent area once invasion took place.

The the invasion under any it was no longer necessary to observe covarity in attaching with rall point, and the "cover" plan had no longer to be maintained. With an inlarged and more obvious plan for rail interdiction than before, the Binth Mr Force devoted a conciderable proportion of its recourse, to this program which was designed to isolate the haith-field and dear to the enemy the use of communications leading into it and existing within it. The program was built upon a rail accomplishments and was very closely related to the they attacks on rail bridges over the Sains.

The Flan

The destruction of the rull bridges over the Selac denial case access to the bat-le area from the cast. It was desirable that access to it from the couch to restricted by the destruction of rail bridges over the laire from Orleans to the call. This task was assigned to and executed by other British and American air forces. Other assignments to the Blath, together with the distance at which the targets lay from the bases, procluded its general participation in this feature of the rail interdiction gragate.



A gap, w riourly described as the Paris-Orleans or the Saine-Laire man, existed but seen the two rivers. It too must be closed to rail traffic if the program were to be fully developed in the number now greatly to to desired. In the region of the gay were some alight oridies of critical importance class they controlled all lines leading into the buttle area. They were Henten-Couries art, Cherisy, Fogent le Loi, Mintenon, Chartres (Olyame), Chartres (Southeast), Ologes, and Delay, oney. In the list of such bridges as first compiled, that at Epermon appeared in place of the two at Maintenon and Magant le Not. The substitution of these two for Ryernen was made because the embarbreats at Thermon could be so easily repaired. Eventually somewhat dary yours tore to be attended to supplement the blocking of the gap. producent among them being Bourth, Egon: Medicaed, and St. Rear sur lyre. This yet the word necessary since it early became evident that only if all available through lines upra blocked could the markets affect of the program to rediced.

It was do include, however, not serely to destroy bridges over the Seins and the Loire and sithin the gap, but also to deap the enemy the use of communications within the area between these and the sea. Within their area, and controlling secences to the buttle line, lay a number of "ladders" of communication running generally north and couth. The pertermination of them, haders are that of Avranches—Tennes—Hearter, the contempost that of Evreux-Chartrer—Voves. For the paragon of determining sotions against these lines of communication



cach ladder that divided into a northern and a couthern section. In all there can to be aix northern sections and twelve southern as follows:

Boxthurn Cretions

- l. Rennes-Dol.
- 2. Witre-Tougorez-St. Hilpira
- 3. La Chapelle-ikyanne-Domfront
- 4. In Mutte Colombiores-Monson-Arganian
- 5. Mortagna-Inigle
- 6. Conda sar Huigze-La Loupe-Vernouil

Southern Sections

- 1. Ploermel-Diman
- 2. Hess. c-Remns
- 3. Chateaubriant-Witre
- 4. Grann-Limil
- 5. Grez-Lavul
- 6. Suble-Sille le Comilleure
- 7. Lelkas-Cille le Guillame
- 8. Lolkas-La Futte Colombi-ros
- 9. Lellans-llanors
- 10. Beille-Moment le Rotrou
- 11. Courtel ting-Togent le Rotrou
- 12. Courtelains-Brou

The program was elektrate becomes the rail network was intricate. Tail centers, bridges, rail lines, and rolling stock all constituted opposerate targets. 10

In carrying out this general program of rail interdiction in the period 6 to 13 June 1944 the Finth Mir Force make full are of both 1to major vectors. The nature and results of the major malium and flighter-bander missions which enough are best displayed in summary form.

Attacks on Marchalling Yards

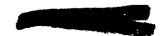
IN Indian Constal attacked more than 20 different marchalling

yards or didings between 7 and 19 Jane, no less than 10 being banbed on the first day of the period. A fee of the targets such as Velognes and In Hard du Puits were proximate to the tattle area of the time: all very related to rail lines in the interdiction come. Reported rerules wary griatly. On 7 June fair results were reported at Hort Secret and Is the and possible delays at Brioune; but nost of the trucks were cut at There and at ingentum, through traffic was blocked at Wire and Lyranches, while at Valogues one line was damaged. The next de all lines were out when the part at St. Lo was destroyed. At Dratigmy (10 June) concentrations fell in the target area but the through lines remained open. Two attacks (8, 15 June) atruck Lavel, the first probably blocking through traffic, the second destroying 13 local stives and 30 cars, to eather with rails and buildings. 11 La Howe du Pulto was also hit buise (7, 10 June) and severe dost go inflicted to the murshalling yard. 13 Folligny, hit by mediums on 7 June and by flighter-tombers on 12 and 14 June, was later found to have had all trades effectively broken by over 40 outs. The medicus' to thing had also chapte two troop trains in the yards, or route from Dennes to Continues. Both were destroyed with credibly reported cusuating of COO milled and COO wounded. 13 Ground investigation also reported caximu, effects of Tennos produced by medium offects on 13 and 18 June in one- and two-group strength respectively, and by dive tembing on the 14th and 18th. It is of interest to observe that the last manel attact was delivered by the flighter-burbers which especial the I-IS's. Together they put the gard out of action. The passenger station was

75 per cent Camplishel, and CO per cent demage was inflicted on the freight station and shops. The turn-table was destroyed, and 12 leachedives out of 85, together with 100 out of 400 cars, damaged or destroyed. Wearly all of the medium attacks had been delivered by single groups. On occasion, as at Flore (7 June), he have du Puits (7, 12 June), Medium (14 June), and Conde sur Foireau (15 June), some temb concentrations struct business and residential areas with dire results.

In the two period fighter-busbers attacked marshalling yards on more than 15 occasions. Targets at he holay (7 June), Airel (7 June), Licons (7, 0 June), St. Sluweur le Ticonte (11 June), La Haye du Puitr (15 June), and Sottewast (15 June) lay within the battle zone. Folligny (12, 14 June) and Granville (14 June) were proximate to it. Fontorson (7 June), Alencon (12 June), Chatesudum (14 June), Rennes (14, 18 June), Hayenne (15 June), and Fougeres (15 June) were farther removed, but still within the interdiction area. Piloto' reports are not particularly informing, but in two cases among those mentioned above ground observers recorded the effects of dive-bombing and straffing missions. At Libons (7, 8 June) the attacks stopped all rail traffic and destroyed the empty conches of the Cherbourg-Taric express. At St. Saureur le Viconte (11 June) all tracks and through lines were cut, an assumition train destroyed, and heavy damage done to rolling stock.

The net results of these attacks on marshalling pards are difficult to assess. Notable damage was inflicted on rails, but traffic on





Broken down by types of direr if the same figures present the following record:

<u> </u>	Iype	<u>rje</u> –	Atta-	Tone on	Mering in
Hadiwa-altitude visual banding	1./C	pr.tchai	c'ting	Target	
Hadiu-altitude visual banbing	P-26	723	511	1,175,605	6
Puthfinder	E-26	6	6	6.00	_
Hodium-althouse vicual bombing	.i20	269	236	260.CO	ຣ
Ascouló uros cover	P-33		ಖಚ	-	
Troop carrier escort	₽ -€3	129	127		
Dive torbing	P-58	49	46	33.50	2
Photo recinaliselnes	P-38	59	33		
Photo recommender men ercort	F-33	7	7		
Photo reconscirrance (night)	P-39	1			
Account area cover	P-47	809	773		
Iroop carrier escort	P-47	238	£31		
Dire dembing	P-47	481	467	307.16	7
	P-47	47	47	45.50	
Dive bombing escort	P-47	32	32		
Troop carrier eccort	P-51	97	89		
Visual reconnaissance	P-51	89	87		2
Photo reconnederance	P-51	න	19		
Weather recommissance	P-51	14	1.4		
Artillory linison	P-51		ລ		
Glider tug	C-47/53	104	103		2
Troop carrier	C-47/E3	30 <u>1</u>	3C3		21.
Troop carrier	C3-41	104	104		104
Totalc		4,371	4,062	1,826.765	149

The Period 7 to 18 June 1944

On P-day Alerican forces went achors at Onella and Utah beaches.

Detwork that time and 18 June the original beachteads were in general improved and consolidated; while, in particular, American ground forces pushed through to the vest court of the Cotentin peninsula in the vicinity of Larneville. Then these actions were completed a lodgement area on the continent had been secured, and one part of the Binth Air Force investon mission had been accomplished.





battle area by forcing the use of long road detours, and aggravated the maintenance problem for armor and motor vehicles which had to take to the roads. In addition, the destruction of bridges created temporary blocks behind which traffic piled up, thus affording admirable targets for fighter-bombers.

Fail Cutting and Folling Stock

Two groups of melium tembers were assigned the mission of catting rails on the line St. Lubin-Ligle-Herlerault on 17 June, and their bomb patterns were reported to have fallen across the tracks. Aside from that one action, flighter-backers had a numberly of such attacks. The records of the period 7 to 18 June indicate that they flevent least 15 group missions and 15 squidron-strength missions with rail cutting as their primary specified task. In addition leaders of armed reconnecteachee frequently included rails and rolling stock among the turgets collected for attack in the course of their area missions. As a result even the incomplete list of claits for this period includes specific claims of at least 83 cuts effected and some 62 locomotives and 600 cars destroyed. The results reported for some individual miscions are of interest. A train was claimed destroyed between Granville and Vire on 7 June, and on the same day 10 amountion cars spaced at intervals on the line north of Alencon were attacked. Photographs should that at least two exploded, cutting the rails for a distance of 200 feet. One riccion on 10 June left a E0-car train in flance at Arranches and damped others at Villediev. By such actions



the energy was allowed only restricted use of the claterate wall naturally work work of the Grine and north of the Loira which had such conspicuous a neuro at Tire, Forner, Laval. In them, Popent 16 Retron, Chartres, Micheon, Laighe, and Evreux. The actions ranged over such of this area from Vire and Evreux in the north to Chattanhriant, Sable our Sible, and Chattanhun in the couth; and from Floratel in the west to the Facile area in the enet.

Each rail cotting, which supplemented the attacks on bridges, intensified all the result, produced to bridge breaking. It appeared the entire problems of repair and, through multiple cuts on many lines, reviewed rail novement has rious if not impossible.

Tagar Comminger

In mid-June 1994 Allied communities could merely entimate the over-all results of the interdiction program. The enemy, however, have the intimately as is shown by evidence derived from the "Mar Pierry of the 7th German Army." As early as I plus I lie entries begin to record the difficulties exising from our insistent attacks on transportation targets. Potations under the date of 11 June indicate that at that time many were in evidence. "Ending transportation is impossible because the trains are observed and attached in short order." "Troop movements and all supply traffic by wall to the army and within the energy meet be considered as completely out off." Intry after entry fits into the picture of an exceedingly vicious circle, the relationship of whole garts the enemy was at pairs to explain. Tamage to



realways forced "the conversion of the entire supply and transportation system to notor transport." This led to "an entrans attain on notorical shipping space which is only available to the army in very limited quantity." Such strain and increased by the "constant attack" of Attaican air forces at the front and in rear areas which "has led to delays and an woldable lossed in vehicles." For acrety was the movement of personnel affected and "the calculations of the time needed for any movement" by them rendered hopelessly inexact, but last of rail transport caused some runits to user out their machines in moving to the lattle zone, while once they were consisted to action their mobility was restricted "face to the lack of fuel and the unreliability of the amountain supply. "If Mr a much later date field flar had you family that to declare that the cordition of the hardly backed french reads and rail lines around P-Lay-particularly those in the Fari, area-prevented him from bringing up treeps to counteratteets. 19

Attacks on Inc. - Smolter

In in effort to accentrate the energy's shorting of fail and and million, damps containing such ampelled were attached by ardiums and Mighter-backers of the land his Torce from 7 to 18 June. Three such terrete beated by mediums buy in the Poinfront-Alereon areas at Penfront itself (18, 16 June), in the Foret d'audeine (17, 15, 18 June), and in the Foret d'Accentance (15 June). All three were also subjected to flighter-backer attach (18 June). Medium also street damps close to the battle area in the Foret de Grinburg (3 June), at Valorate (18 June), and at

Coir du Hemiet (18 June), and others further removed at La Louge (17 June) and Conches (18 June). Fighter-bombers attacked dumps in the Charbourg area (13, 10 June) and one not vira (15 June). With the targets used the last and the last of the targets used the forest areas it is not to be expected that immediate reports of results would be very enlightening, although alread and employions followed one of the three medium attacks on the Forest d'Andrine (13 June), and fighter-bombers reported a transcrious explosion in a dump couthy set of Cherbourg (16 June). Some faither evidence in furnished by ground observers' reports, but since these record the cumulative effect of the attacks in this and later parish their consider then it postponed.

Smooth L. Terrola

A tactical air force is nothing if not versatile. Thile consentrative, their attention or such obviously high priorities as air-ground composition, the interdiction program, and attents on enemy stores, the circulate of the Minth on occasion performed special missions in this period. They simpled the power house at Vire (15 June) and diveloped radar installations at Cap Frehel and Points du Grouin (12 June) and one man St. Pierre Eglica (15 June). Recliums booked three philothess aircraft-launching sites (18 June) on SFF, while fighter-tombure, returning to their bases in England, destroyed three "fight, tombe" in the min on the same day.

The Puriod 10 to 30 June 1944

The Ground Situation

From the time when incricon troops reached the west coust of the



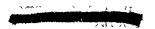
Cotentia peninsula (13 June) until the Chertoury peninsula was fully in their hands (1 July), operations of the linth Mir Force maintained the essential characteristics which they had displayed in the earlier period of the Little of Formendy. Frominent swent these was airpreund cooperation which was exhibited on a notable scale in the course of the movement spainest Chertoury (20 to 30 June) and elsewhere to a leaser degree. Attacks on communications targets related to the interdiction program were almost continuous. Two damps were subjected to further attacks, and on occasion enony airfields were the targets chosen. All of these activities were related to the second feature of the Night Mir Force invarion mission as defined in the Tactical Mir Flan—"to support the Armies of the Tirst U. S. Army Group in the development of the lodgement on the continent. . . . "

In respect to cir-ground cooperation it should be observed that the developments around notable proportions in the period 19 to 30 June 1944: first, the provision of new instruments for the direction and control of fighter-bankers of the Minth Mir Torce, and second, the movement of fighter-banker units to permanent bases on the continent which had been constructed by IX magineer Command.

A New Aceney for Lir-Droyed Commerction

From 6 to 17 June direction of air-ground contraction missions had been in the hands of Handquarters Finth Air Force at Unbridge which functioned in close absociation with the Cambined Control Center of also Army Group. Such direction was limited only by the central provided by the Center Air Representative on board U.S.C. Ancon from 6 to





10 June and by 70th Highter Ming from 10 June forward. On 10 June, houseur, under General Order Fo. 163, Readquarters Minth Air Torce, IN IAC and charged with operational control of all fighter-bombers arriving on the continent. IN TAC the in a position to assume this remon-ibility since its first mobile operations echelon had arrived at Au Gay on the 9th and established IX TAO Readquarters, there the folicing day in close proximity to Headquarters First V. S. Arry (FUSA). On 18 June the newly established herdquarters began to energice operational control through 70th Sighter ling, which had been set up at Griquevillo 9 to 11 June. A further and more significant stem in the provision of continental controls was taken at additable 17-15 June when Herdquinters IX TAG, in conjunction with FUSA, assumed responsibility for designating both lines and for operating the Air Copport Not. It this to submit those requests which it could not heet with its own resources to Readquarters l'Inth Air Force at Unbridge. Pais action meant that as for an fighter-bimbers were concerned, effective direction of Finth .ir Torce sir-grown cooperation was placed in the hands of IN PAG. It was to remain there until operational functions were redistributed after E-adquarters Minth Air Force it elf because operational on the continent. Symbolic of their common interest and joint participation in current tir-ground operations was the granence in IX Tectical Air Command's operations tent of (-3 Mir and 0-3 Mir of TVSA and the intimate a section of IX Testical Air Comend's A-2 and TUEA's G-2 sections. 20



Combut Unite on Continental Brees.

The movement of fighter-bimber units to perminent bases on the continent depended on the ability of IX Ingineer Command to construct new admitteds or to restore enemy fields to operational use. In turn, IX Ingineer Command's ability to provide such takes depended upon the ability of the ground forces to cepture the intended sites. In general the construction schedule drawn up prior to D-day was not fulfilled due to the simple fact that few of the simpled sites were in our mossession at the time originally estimated. The achievement of the engineers in the month of June was nevertheless notable, as is indicated by the following table.

FROMISION OF CONDUMNAL ARFITTANS, JULY 1944						
No.	Location	Conntr. Started June	Conl.cs <u>VIC</u> June	Constr. Completed June	Used an Permanent Base June	FE Co.
Ξīs 1	Pouppeville	9 me	ouns	0 ures	o une	
				-		
L-1	St. Pierre du l'ont	8	20	21	ဆ	366
2	Griqueville	10	16	-	23	354
3	Cardonville	10	23	23	19	368
4	Down Juneaum	14	26	30	28	48
5	Chippelle	16	-	-	-	
6	Leuneville	8	11	17	23	371
7	Aceville	16	22	-	29	365
8	Ficauvillo	ລວ		**	***	
9	Le Molay	21	ತಾ	-	-	
10	Carentan	15	ဆ	30	25	50
14	Creteville	25	27	-	-	-
15	Haupertus	27	-	-	-	

The initial higher detackients were speedily followed by others and reinforced by Nieth Air Force Quartermester truck companies, and although the work was some hat heavier than expected, the rate of construction of advanced landing grounds was greater than that which had

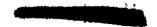




bein antisipated. On occasion, as at Pouppaville, St. Laurent, and Carenten, energy ground apposition was encountered. Air attach was likewise emperiment, although this transhes provented casualties from banding and structure. The greatest obstacle was dust arising from the cility and exceptively dry soil. This impeded the construction work of the angineers and such later to cause maint a new problem to the circulation in spite of the use of straw or Housian under square right-order matting.

In spite of all obstacles IX Unsineer Command begin construction in June of 12 cirfields thick thre to be used as permanent bases by fighter-benders. Even prior to the completion of full operational facilities on them, many fields user used for erach landings, supply and evacation, edinistrative traffic, and not notably, for roul-Tend by flighter-tember units operating from Inglish bases. By the end of the conth nine airfields were reported operational to MG's. At early at 13 June air units based on Tritain began their speculional ulo, and on 19 June the first operational use was take of an air Meld (Cordonville) by flighter-torbors porture the there. By the end of the month, as shown by the above table, no loss than seven flatterbomber groups were operating from analy built cirilelds on the continuat. The efficiency of the fighter-tembers and greatly enhanced by their ability to use continuated fields for roulement and, more particularly, as perminent bases. Turther are IN factical Mr Command had a constantly intesting number of diverget in this day available for its uco in sir-ground cogrer, tion. 32





The story of such assion in the operations against Charbourg in of each elimificance that it must be accorded first place in the operational marketive of this period and must be presented in full detail. The narrative of other actions of the same type in the latter part of June may be postponed for later and according treatment.

The Charles Counciles, 22 to 30 June 10 M.

The Flun for the Initial Operation

The plan for sir-ground cooperation in the projected attack thick and the for sir-ground objective began to take form in a similar conference at VII Corps Headquarters on M. June 1944. Contrain Drawton (Minth Lin Torce), Querada (LA TAS), and Collins (VII Corps) were propert.

The attack, with the 9th and the 79th Division participating, was to be launched on 20 June and had the high ground overlooking the city and the port as its impositive objective. Constal Collins indicated that he could nount it as late as 1600 to 1700 if early weather conditions were not propitious for the air assault. It was held that the enemy was disorgenized and it was believed that a heavy air attack inactively proceding the ground attack would greatly facilitate the advance of the VII Cospe by relucing the strongth of enemy hatteries and strong points along the lines of advance. Generals Breveton and Questable were ready to employ all available Finth Mr Force borders and flighter-touber in the delivery of the cir others.





Circumstances demontal that the sir plan be rushed through its later stages. Further conferences with Constals Drailey, Chasts, and Vendenberg, Air Hershell Cominghal, and Air Vice Hershell Grooms followed in swift succession on the continent and in Pritain. In the final stages no FUSA representatives were present. The completed plan. Them to the continent in the early moraling hours of 22 June, called for a very closely coordinated attack on that same day.

The area included within the coordinates 0-157204, 0-167163, 0-103163, 0-91184, 0-009202, 0-003213, 0-003214, and 0-144832 and marked out for the general cir attack, with certain localities within it assigned priorities. The couth and southwest boundaries of the attack area were to be sexical by white suchs had down by artillery. Refere H minus 80, U. S. artillery was to engage in counter bettery fire upon enemy fluit positions. Retween H minus 80 and H minus 71, four equadrons of code-t-firing typhoens from 21 flustic 1 Mr Tores were to strafe the northern half of the attack area, giving variender attention to fluit positions. Six equations of 21 fluits 1 Mr Tores flustings were to follow and ground-straft the attack area from H minus 70 to H minus 61. To bombs were to be dropped by 24 fluctical Mr Force units.

Tinth Mir Torce Mighter-balbers were to come into action at H minus CO. From that hour until H minus 5 minutes, 12 groups were to attack from wort to east at Mive-minute intervals. P-30's and F-51's were to carry two 500-pound and P-47's three 600-pound GP tembr. They were to book and strafe military installutions, troops, and transport





in the attract area and give operial attention to six pin-pointed localities.

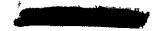
At E-bour, finel of 1900, the ground forces were to begin their account as Finish Mr Force median benters tegan delivering a switch of attacks design I to form an certal barrage moving northward in anticipation of the ground forces. All II groups of IE Ecober Command were to participate and to bond II different pin-pointed localities. Three of these coincided with localities singled out for special attention by fighter-bankers. The groups were to carry 30 x 100-pound frage, seven were to be located with cight 500-pound and two with six 500-pound GF bonds. Mine targets were, according to the final order, to be bonded visually, the balance on PIT. The attents were to be delivered at intervals ranging from two and one-half to 10 minutes.

Then as a whole, the plan involved the first large-scale and closely coordinated mir-ground attack since B-day.

Mir Striker, 20 June

Tighters. The sir similes proceeded as planned. The attack by 2d Inctical Mr Torce aircraft covered the period between 1819 and 1800 hours. Petween 1800 and 1805 some 807 Winth Mr Force fighter-bombers were over the target area. They strafed ground targets and, caploing dive-, glide-, and sing-bombing techniques, dropped a total of 200.5 tons of banks. Only one group righted enemy aircraft—which, however, refused encounter. I wanty-four fighter-bomber- were lost in attacks





thich carried them do m to 200 feet. At Octoville the marshalling gard and adjacent tracks three kendly hit; a single ED-foot cruter, estimist to require 300 juris of curts for filling, completely destroyed 800 feet of rail line. Precise results of other attacks are importible to nesect. Since direct hits were made on gen or machine gun captacamente, coren of thich were claimed to have been neutralizat. A first dump that hit and emploied. In addition a rulio station, two flat towers, and 20 buildings were chained destroyed. It should be torns in mind, on the one hand, that General Colling thoroughly underatool that no great material degree could be expected, and on the other that the describing effect upon troops, clroady disorganized in some degree, was very great. Prisoner of war statements, even when tolica with reservation, indicate that low-level fighter-bomber attacks produced a psychological effect for greater than the actual destruction or extualties exacted, and one thick on occusion ande it impossible for officers to hold their formations together. Such psychological shock pactor, and can only advantage attacking troops if they attack is mediately after the fighter-bedders have delivered their assault. Some confusion was caused in marking the trajet area with smooth shells which are difficult to distinguish from other tursts, friendly or one.y. their ciliciancy was further reduced by the dust and suctor produced by the first air situate. Three instances occurred of attacks by shall numbers of friendly directift upon our out troops, with little dange reported.



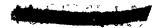


Eachers. Attache by modifical bushers upon 11 defended localities were delivered between 1191 and 1455. Approximately 270 planes were dispetched, 12 carrying window. Of these coal 375 attached, dropping a total of over 690 tone of bushs. Available swidence suggests that the material damage to the designated target: was small. Four localities were well hit; and in those cases where precise off simpould be destruined, gun positions, larrache, tank trape, and the defence systems were found to have suffered. In one instance (C-111714) later ground investigation disclosed that heavy damage was done to gene, to the fire control center, and to personnel. There was no evidence of damage to the targets in the remaining sowen group attache. In four instances results were negative or undetermined. In three cases the boats foll off the targets but damaged reads, buildings, and gun applications in other areas.

Coly a stall portion of the area at Med out for sir attack that compied by friendly troups up to 0000 on 23 June. However, this included valuable high ground in the vicinity of Chevrer. Take was an area to which both medium and fighter-to-wore had devoted special attention on the 282, and it was to serve as the base for further penatrotion of enemy positions routh of Cherbourg on the following day.

Tot until 23 June was the adr-attach area largely overran.

Powertheless, division commenters and the corps comment corcornel empressed themselves as well satisfied with air-ground cooperation on 22 June. Healquariers Finile Air Force valo that the operation was justified, although inclined to believe that the attach upon





collected pin-point throats by health between hight well have preceded the air strikes by flighter-touters whose attack inacdiately in front of friendly troops would as ist their abiday and uninterrupted advance.

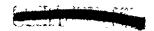
These operations of 22 June had not been without cost to the Finth Air Force, as is shown by the following table:

Tapor	Partrope !	Cot. "F"	Cat. Th	Oct. Pron	Cat H'"
Bonber	1	1	3	0	67
Ti <i>la</i> tor Total	<u> 24</u> 25		<u>_0</u> 3	<u>- 용</u> 용	<u>.5.i</u> 131

Operations, 23 to 20 June

Chereburg and the occupation of the perincula, the Minth Mir Torce continued its air strikes in cooperation with the ground forcer. On 33 June two groups of fighter-bombers traded strong points in the battle area with results reported as good and accellent. The following day are a larger-scale effort. Four groups of helium were assigned four targets consisting of gun batteries and strong points in the immediate vicinity of the port. Manny that was fort du Foule. They attached with 2,000-pound CP bombs, and in all cases the bulk of their loads fell within the target areas in a fachion which surranted accessions of destruction or dampe to carcastee or am positions in three instances. Ground force efficers cited these attaches as particularly good examples of air-ground cooperation resulting in quick movement by the infantry with congruntively little trouble. On the

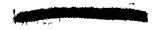




came day flighter-bankers delivered attacks against seven other strong points. All were successful, that by the squadrent on La Here es Congrae (0-167198) offering a remarkable example of air-ground cooperation since 18 direct hits on the encircled position assisted the infanty in occupying their objective. Abb Another attack on a strong point cast of Cherbourg was later found to have been exceedingly well hit. It had contained seven gans of various types and calibres. A 75-zillimeter field gan had been destroyed and two 20-zillimeter Al gans had been destroyed, although a hit 75 feet from an 80-zillimeter gan produced no damage. 28

On 25 June three equadrons of fighter-bombers attached similar targets west and continues of the city in a manor which wen the approval of ground force officers. Again on 27 June two squadrons of fighter-bombers attached batteries to the west of Cherbourg and in the Cap de la Rague region. Their claims of two batteries destroyed and two dateged were later verified. The Cap June three fighter-bomber equadrons gave their attention to batteries near Cap de la Rague, while another bended fort Central on the Cherbourg brestricter. This fort had held out against heavy artillary fire, but immediately after the cir attach it ran up the white fley. The bambs had done little physical datage to the fort's massive grante construction, but prisoners were unanitous in their statement that dive bashing rather than the fire of 185's caused their surrender. On this same day (2) June) three groups of mediums bomburded heavily defended positions in





the Cap de la Engue region. He hits were registered on those at La Pel er Hartins and Digulleville. At Anderville and Laye the heavy game were themselves underanged, but their operation was largely neutralized by direct hits on caplacements, traversing rings, and tracks leading to the magnificant storage area. Explosions were caused by the borbs falling on Laye.

Organized resistance within Cherbourg itself coased on 27 June, and the peninsula was fully in our possession by 1 July. Mir-ground cooperation by the Finth Mir Force, whether on a large scale, as on 22 June, or on a small scale, as in the attacks of 23 to 29 June, had assisted in preducing this result. 25

Other Mir-Ground Concretion Activities

With the exception of the actions against Cherbourg (22 to 39)

June) direground disperation appeared on a limited scale between 19

and 20 June. On the 20th, however, three fighter-balber missions were

flown against energy gun positions in the vicinity of Barfleur, Cherbourg,
and La Pernelle. In only one case are results certain. Hacre ground

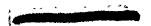
observers found that while the gun positions at Bermanville were not
not, the concrete buildings housing personnel had been destroyed.

Gun positions in the St. In area were also attacked by fighter-bombers

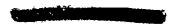
on the 20th, 27th, and 20th, while on the 22d challer targets on
Alderney and at Granville were dive-bombed. On 25 June a tark and
motor part south of Carenian were those and after are, however,

to be rated as incidental. At the end of the month, as ground forces





regen to now could against limited objectives, there was a rather greater cone atrution of effort. In this connection in request missions upra directed against enemy positions in the Villedica, La Here du Pulie, and Lessey areas on 29 July, followed by another on the 20th. Filoto reported hite or the neutralization of the targets in all cases. In the case of one attack of the 19th, which had the man positions applicated as targets, the ground forces reported that the dive-boubing attacks had kept the ensages observation posts from operating. Is linth in Torce planes approached, the energ decired into for holos and remined there while they were in the vicinity, while heavy pundire or sed after the dive bashing. Such results of cir action enabled our treeps to take positions could of St. Reuseur le Victate without too much interference. This testiment by ground the of peopliar value since settered or ters on the hillton targets wire the only material evidence evailable to supplement the flyers claim. C7 littleir on highway targets on 30 June were related to the ground forces' thrust against Casa. Hedium attacked read junctions at Thurs Bereturn and Conde sur Moireau with the groupe each, but with indefinite results. Dive terters element good results on roud to human sur Caen and Jurques. Hite were secred by the miditar which attribed the constill kattery at Houlgato (20 June) and a reguted headquarters at Force (33 June), out none reculted from a flighter-beaber attack on emother headquarters (20 Juna).





through lines was in most inchances interrupted for only a short space of time. For can it be claimed that injury done to rolling stack reduced the number of locomolives and care below the energy's essential requirements.

Attacks on Bridges.

In the development of interdiction in this period, three Saine bridges in close proximity to Paris, together with six bridges or enbunitionts in the Feris-Orleans gap, were subjected to a total of 12 attacies by IN Bomber Command. Only at Chartres (15 June), where traffic was blocked, was any considerable success achieved by the group attacks. Within the interdiction come the medium bombed six similar targets in the course of nine attacks. At Lessay, attacked by one group on the 7th and by two on the 8th, the subaniment was damaged. A first attach on Fontaubault (8 June) only damaged the embaricaent. but on the 11th a spin was brought down. 17 The center span of the Contances visduct fell under the attack of 10 June, and two spans of a cirilar structure at Iawal were desalished on the 16th. The most significant of the fighter-bomber attacks on bridges accordated with the interdiction program were those directed against the Seine bridge at Oleral which was reported desproyed by attacks on 7 and 8 June. They delivered amy attacks on minor bridges in the course of their mirpions and chimed the destruction of at least 10.

The circtice: on bridges is possed a maximum of delay on the novement of Graum forces and supplies, increased the fuel shortage in the





Interdiction Program

Har balling Yards

IN Pember Command devoted much of the attention to the interdiction program at did flighter-tembers under the control of IV Teetical Air Command and IV Flighter Command. Harshalling yards were frequent targets. On four different easy, the medium bashed s total of six seconds targets. At Hazabrough (24 June), Hemleon (18, 23 June), and Townger (27 June) there was no evidence of any considerable damps done. Bomb concentrations fell in the pards at Amenticaes (22 June) and Hazabrough (24 June), but in each case damps vis done also to business and residential areas. The bathing of the yard at St. Quentin (23 June) hit all east and west treets.

different aershalling yard torgets between 19 and 30 July. They ranged over a wide area from Granville to Laon, and from Orleans to Evreum and St. Quantin, and the extracts on them warded greatly in etrought and results. Cutstanding results accorded in some instances. Five hits at Chantilly (20 June) produced a large employien and flames. Five hits at Chantilly (20 June) produced a large employien and flames. Five hitself followed the attacks of Granville (20 June). In Loupe (21 June), and Chartrey (25, 20 June). Tour trains of eight cars each were element destroyed at Green (22 June), cars emploded and very left burning at Segre (27 June), and a total of 50 cm; were claimed destroyed in the four yards of Glar ont, Inon, Co piems, and St. Cauntin (21 June). Filota reported heavy dearge at Evreux (21 June) thich was construed by leter ground investigation. However, the ground



observers also discovered that the Germans had a large repair crew available, and by using alternative sidings and switches, restored through traffic in a day's time. 28

Rail Cutting and Rolling Stock

The cutting of rail lines and the destruction of rolling stock were continued in this period. On a single occasion (30 June) one group of mediums was assigned to cut rails between Dol and Kennes and another, those between St. Hilaire and Vitro. The results of their attacks, made on short runs out of clouds, were indefinite. Inevitably the bulk of these tasks was assumed by the fighter-bombers which attacked rails and rolling stock with an almost monotonous regularity in the course of area sweeps or on missions where such targets were specifically assigned. Reports of these many missions often fail to detail their claims, but those which are specified afford a picture of the approximate results of these operations. Eighty-nine rail cuts were claimed. In addition, excluding all indefinite reports and all claims of rolling stock probably destroyed or merely damaged, fighter-bomber pilots reported a minimum of over 50 locomotives and more than 900 cars destroyed. Incident to these same operations against railway targets pilots submilted claims of more than 250 MT and some 15 tanks destroyed.

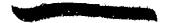
Mhere unusual targets were found, the results of individual missions were striking. A direct hit on an amunition train (21 June) blew up four others of about 25 cars each on the line Paris-Chartnes-Nogent. A train loaded with tanks was strafed and damaged (23 June); an attack directed against tanks on trains near Mantes



Guericourt (31 June) cohieved nothele success. Lecomotives, cars, and tarin were hill by direct ablact and the fixing of the tant cars thich formed part of the trains completed the work of destruction. In the came area and on the came day a locomotive and SO flat care carrying 10 times and as many the were straight and challed destroyed. Then a obstituting like of freight ours was found near to Terio St. Intin (24 June) 200 too': Aire as a result of strafing. Some care burst inbo flare after 100 had been strafed between Tay and Vitry (30 June), while enother mission (27 June), which claimed the destruction of four locomptives and 7% core, left the roundhouse to Chatchugiron in fluing. Two turnels were dive-bouted on 20 June and pilots regoried the desirection of both. Cround observers, herever, leter found that in one case (R-DiCC) the boulds missed his target, while in the other (I-1903) the objective was detaliched. 22 A hit on the of the tunnel near its portern calcarse caused a cave-in, thill other hits over the tunnel produced or six in the mesonry arches which reculted in lade and a general verbain; of the structure. CO

Bridges

Her bridges over the Coins or in the region of the Paris-Orleans the afforded targets for both sedium and fighter-bombers in the second helf of Jun. Those which had not been broken corlier required action. Those which had been effectively hit earlier were being regularly by deaper its Cornan tagineers and described further attention. The scaling attention five, each in group strength. The spans of a



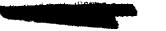
Anticircraft defences of marchalling marks and bridges, notably of those over the Seine, had been increased throughout the month and account for the heavier locace and buttle drange experienced in attacks on each targets. 33

The over-all results of interdiction were in line with those carlier noted, but since the progress was to be continued intensively throughout July, their full consideration is deferred until the end of that worth.

Enery Supplice

IX Douber Ormsend struct at roven different fuel Guips in the period 19 to 20 June. In attach by three groups on assumition stores in the Foret de Semonthes (25 June) resulted in large-scale explosions, subsequently confirmed. The Foret d'Andrine une bombed on the 22d and Alth by two and three groups respectively. Turate of flame Pollowed one attack: (25 June), but the majority of the bombs dropped on the 221 fell in the target area. The dulp in the Foret de Conches was liberies attached three times (20, 24, 70 June) and that at Bagnoles do l'Orne thice (89, 24 June), single groups attaching in each choo. Erus, the Foret d'Esouves, and Conde sur Vira were the objectives of one mission each on Si, S5, and S0 June respectively. Reasonably effective bombing of the target area the reported in roat of there exces. Tighter-bombers attached girll r targets on two occarions. To moralize were observed in the attach on 38. Sever (13 June), and no employions followed the direct lift second on Chabri-(SS June).





Brown Mirfields

On 21, 23, and 25 June flighter-bombers were directed against one or more enemy airfields. The attack on 3t. Andre de l'ilure (23 June) produced no substantial results. At Obertres (21 June) dispersal arcus suffered damage, while a total of four planes were destroyed on three fields near Bretonil (25 June). Hits were secred on the running at Greil and an emplosion producel (22 June), while concentratel hits on the hangure at Peronne were followed by a large emplosion.





Chapter IV
OPERATIONS IN JULY 1944

Air-Ground Cooperation

Relationship to Ground Operations

Throughout the month of July the Ninth Air Force continued its active cooperation with the ground forces. Fighter-bombers still maintained their patrol over the assault areas and furnished escort to IX Bomber Command, but air-ground cooperation was one of their two major activities. IX Tactical Air Command, with its headquarters and many of its groups on the continent, devoted the bulk of the aircraft under its operational control to missions closely coordinated with the ground effort of FUSA. Only on infrequent occasions did it share in the interdiction program. On the other hand, the headquarters of IX Fighter Command continued at Uxbridge, and the aircraft under its control coordinated their efforts with that of the Allied ground forces only in exceptional cases. Interdiction engrossed the attention of IX Fighter Command and called for the employment of nearly all of its available strength. The same was true of IX Bomber Command. Nevertheless, a complete picture of air-ground cooperation on the part of the Minth Air Force demands a consideration of the work of all three of the commands above mentioned.

The narrative of such operations can well be divided into three parts. The first embraces the period 1 to 24 July when the ground



forces were regrouping, reorganizing, and seeking positions from Caen to the west of the Cotentin which would favor their major assault. The second involves the dramatic contribution of air power to the break-through west of St. Lo on 25 July. The third must concern itself with air's share in the full exploitation of that initial victory during the rush south to Avranches and beyond.

The Period 1 to 24 July

IX Tactical Air Command

In the period 1 to 24 July, as throughout the month, IX TAC made its most substantial contribution by way of air strikes coordinated with ground effort. Characteristic of its many air-ground cooperation targets in these days were enemy strong points, troop concentrations, headquarters, and command and observation posts. Three strong points east of La Haye du Puits were attacked on 2 July with good results. a violent explosion resulting in one. Explosions likewise occurred when three positions occupied by dug-in tanks, MG's, or artillery in the St. Lo-Periers area were subjected to as many fighter-bomber attacks on 23 July. On 6, 8, and 23 July targets furnished by troop concentrations were well hit southwest of Carentan, near Beny Bocage, and close to Periers. An attack on a reputed headquarters at St. Germain sur Ay demolished a building on 2 July. A church tower, used as an observation post southwest of Carentan, was destroyed by the second of two attacks the following day, while buildings housing command posts in the Periers area were smashed by dive bombings on the 5th and 8th.





Although related to the interdiction program, attacks by IX TAC on bridges in the Vire valley, south of enemy positions at St. Lo, are properly classified as air-ground cooperation missions. Eight such attacks were delivered in squadron strength on 16 July. Two bridges were destroyed or rendered unserviceable, while direct hits were scored on two others. On the following day 17 bridges over the Vire and the Sienne were listed for attack. Two were made unserviceable and others damaged in varying degree. On the eve of the great assault (24 July) two other bridges in the same area were attacked with inconclusive results.

An interesting commentary on the air strikes of IX TAC is afforded by the letter of commendation written on 20 July by Maj. Gen. Charles H. Corlett, Commanding General, XIX Corps. On the 16th IX TAC had flown four missions at the specific request of XIX Corps and on the 17th six more. General Corlett expressed his thanks for the cooperation thus afforded his troops in the fight for St. Lo. He declared that air strikes arrived on time and on the target and added that they had broken up an enemy counterattack on the afternoon of 17 July. In conclusion he stated that "The presence of our aircraft over the front line troops has had an immensurable effect upon their morale. When our aircraft are over the front line the use of close in artillery and mortars by the enemy stops."

IX Fighter Command flew air-ground cooperation missions on only five different days from 1 to 24 July. On four days such missions were coordinated with the ground force movements west of Carentan. On the



3d five missions, ranging in strength from group to squadron, were flown against gun positions and defended localities in the Legsay-Periers area. Bombs fell in all the target areas, but the results were unobserved. The next day troop concentrations were bombed with unobserved results in the Lessay, La Haye du Puits, and St. Sauveur le Vicomte areas. Weather prevented most of the aircraft assigned to bomb gun positions in the bottleneck along the Carentan-Periers road from executing their missions on 10 July. The attacks were repeated on the 11th when gun positions southeast of Lessay and at Creances were reported neutralized and an ammunition dump destroyed. On that same day squadrons of 366th Fighter-Bomber Group, operating in the rain with a 1,000-foot ceiling, struck at tanks close to friendly lines in the vicinity of St. Lo. Three consecutive missions spoiled an enemy counterattack. Six groups were assigned targets in the St. Lo area on 24 July, but weather forced the recall of three. The balance bombed the target area with results unobserved.

IX Bomber Commard

In this same period IX Bomber Command frequently coordinated missions with FUSA and British 21st Army Group. As American troops moved down the Cotentin peninsula they were expected to reach points on the coast near Lessay by the evening of 4 July. In conjunction with this effort a group of mediums attacked each of the defended localities at La Moriniere and La Barberie with unknown results. Later, as a preliminary to projected ground operations, two groups were given three

enemy positions for attack in the St. Lo area on 15 July. As was frequent in this period, the attacks could not be carried through. Rescheduled the following day, the targets were attacked by two full groups. Some 25 craters were produced in one position, but little damage was done to the others.

IX Bomber Command laid on several missions from 5 to 8 July, all designed to assist 21st Army Group in its advance into Caen and beyond. A first attack (5 July) by a single group on two Caen bridges did not achieve their destruction, but both were rendered unserviceable by a repeat mission on the ensuing day. No less than seven groups were dispatched on 7 July against enemy troop concentrations in woods near Ussy, but only one group and part of another could attack. Fires followed their bombing, but other results were indefinite. On the following day, as the British developed their full-scale attack in the Caen area, five targets (strong points or bridges) were set up for attack by mediums. The results of the bombings by two full groups and parts of two others were not ascertained.

Further coordination with the British was evident on 18 July when 21st Army Group sought to consolidate its positions between Caen and Falaise. In cooperation all 11 groups of IX Bomber Command attacked a total of five gun positions in the Demouville-Giberville area, eight B-26 groups using 260-pound frags and three A-30 groups dropping 500-pound GP's. Again, results were indefinite or unobserved.

Weather, generally adverse from 1 to 24 July, rendered many of IX Bomber Command's air strikes abortive or caused them to be made with less strength than planned. It likewise made its contribution to the difficulties in determining the results of attacks delivered.

Evaluation of Air-Ground Cooperation

The commentary of the "War Diary of the 7th German Army" on the air activities chronicled above is brief but full of interest. It asserts on 1 July that "The enemy is conducting a thorough air reconnaissance both day and night, before and during the attacks. His artillery fire is directed by numerous artillery observation planes. Troop concentrations, movements and supply traffic are being bombed and strafed and, with some measure of losses, badly disrupted. " With reference to our attacks being pressed in the La Haye du Puits area on the 4th it observes that "the enemy air force has made any movement by us impossible." On 7 July, while insisting that the fighting of the 84th Corps was "a considerable defensive achievement," it makes a remarkable admission: "the situation here must be viewed as particularly critical for the enemy artillery fire and the continual air attacks against our troops are causing heavy losses in men and materiel. and sooner or later the time will come when the steady decrease in manpower will make our positions untenable. So far our own fighter planes and antiaircraft artillery have not been able to ease the pressure." The next day the statement of 1 July is repeated, almost verbatim. Admission is made on the 15th that during the previous week air attacks had been unusually strong, with heavy casualties resulting



from fighter-bomber actions. Finally, on the 17th, following two days of IX TAC missions against bridges in the Vire valley, the German record states, "the destruction of all Vire bridges west and south of St. Lo threatens to cut off the 352nd Inf. Div. and to make it impossible to move the heavy weapons in time." A withdrawal was therefore planned and executed that same night. Such observations constitute an excellent gauge of the efficacy of Einth Air Force airground cooperation in the first 24 days of July 1944.

Further evidence as to the effective role of air power in the invasion of Europe is found in letters of Allied commanders. Sir Bernard L. Montgomery, General Commander in Chief of the Allied Armies in France, declared.

We soldiers know very well that if the Allied air forces had not been able to dominate the Luftwaffe, then the armies could have achieved little. You did dominate the Luftwaffe, and you continue to do so, and we know that this state of affairs will continue to the end--of that we are certain. We know that much of your effort is best applied far afield; but we also know that in our hour of need you are always very ready to apply the whole might of your power to help us in the tactical battle in Normandy.

To this Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, Air Commander in Chief of the Allied Expeditionary Air Force, added,

I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to the Ninth Air Force for the enthusiasm and efficiency with which they have carried out the innumerable tasks assigned to them both during the preparatory phase and since the battle has started. They have already made a tremendous contribution to the wirming of the battle of Normandy. . . ."

Operation COBRA, 25 July

The focal point in the story of air-ground cooperation in July is



found in Operation COBRA—the closely coordinated air-ground effort, designed to break through the enemy's positions west of St. Lo—which was delivered on 25 July 1944. It had been planned originally for 21 July, but weather on that and the two following days had caused its postponement. On the 24th the Eighth Air Force inaugurated the air phase of the attack, but weather closed in and prevented further operations. On 25 July, however, the air strikes were executed essentially as planned, and the ground forces began their advance.

H-hour had been set at 1100. Between 0938 and 0957 eight groups of Minth Air Force fighter-bombers delivered a first bombing and strafing attack from low level against an area some 7,000 yards long and 250 yards wide, just south of the St. Lo-Periers road. The aircraft flew to their initial point over site A-10, checked with the Controller there, and then flew directly to St. Lo. where they made an approximate 90 degree right turn to their target. The target area had been divided into an eastern and a western area, the diving line as well as the extremities being marked with red smoke. The first of the assaulting groups attacked the eastern area, the second the western, and so on in alternation at three-minute intervals.

Cver 1,500 Eighth Air Force heavy bombers delivered an attack between 1000 and 1100 upon a large area destined for ground assault.

At 1100 seven groups of Ninth Air Force fighter-bombers resumed their low-level assaults upon the area marked out for their attack and continued them until 1118.



All 11 groups of IX Bomber Command's mediums then joined the assault. Three groups of Bostons concentrated their attacks upon the St. Gilles area, while eight Marauder groups bombed pin-pointed and area targets in the vicinity of St. Lo. Hebecrevon, La Chapelle en Jager, and Montrevil. The planes bombed between the hours of 1132 and 1223.

Area cover was provided by VIII Fighter Command, while P-51's of the Ninth Air Force flew deep defensive sweeps in support of the air operations.

All available Ninth Air Force fighter-bombers had participated in the two attacks upon the area just south of the St. Lo-Periers road. The weight of their effort is indicated by the following figures:

	Sorties	Tons (P)	Tons (frage)
Continent-based a/c	333	72.25	54.7
U.Kbased a/c	_216	<u>71.25</u>	14.0
·	559	143.5	68.7

Nine groups carried 500-pound GP bombs, three carried 260-pound frags, and two more a combination of 500-pound GP and frags. One P-38 group carried two belly tanks of Napalm on each of its attacking planes. With the exception of one bomb which was hung up, all bombs were dropped in the target area. There were no losses and no encounters with enemy aircraft.

Linth Air Force mediums had likewise exerted their full strength. Approximately 580 aircraft attacked. The Bostons delivered 137 tons of 500-pound GP's on their St. Gilles targets while over 4,000 x 260-pound frags were dropped from the Marauders. Again no exact estimate



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of results is possible although a large proportion of the bombs were reported to have fallen on the targets. One bomber was lost to flak. Unfortunately 42 B-26's dropped short on the 30th Infantry Division, causing casualties and delaying its advance.

Fighter-bombers under the operational control of IX TAC delivered further air strikes in cooperation with the ground forces after sharing in the assault phase of the 25 July operations. Between 1135 and 2104. 13 armed reconnaissance missions of squadron strength or less were flown over the mattle area to attack a great variety of targets selected by their leaders. Other squadron-strength missions were directed against specified targets. These struck communications centers, observation posts, and enemy headquarters and troop concentrations. Direct hits were made on important buildings, one church tower used for observation was destroyed and another damaged, tanks in a wood near Coutances were hit, while the dive bombing of roads in St. Gilles produced two large explosions. Before the day's and fighter-bombers had destroyed a bridge east of Gavray and, in evening missions. planted delayed action bombs (fused at 1 to 12 hours) on cross roads in the vicinity of Coutances to render night traffic hazardous to the eneny.

The Effect of Air Assaults by the Ninth Air Force

The immediately visible result of the combined air offensive of

25 July was the appearance of a pall of smoke over the entire area.

This was reported to be about 8/10ths, rising up to 2,000 feet and





funnelling out towards the north and beyond Carentan. Its northward movement tended to obscure target areas. As viewed from the air the effect of bombing upon the general area appeared devastating. More specific evidence was later derived from the interrogation of prisoners of war. These declared that communications were shattered with resulting confusion and that the heavy air bombardment caused troops exposed to it to be badly shaken, at least for a time. Both inexperienced and experienced troops appear to have suffered equally from shock, the younger among them being the quickest to recover. On the other hand casualties were reported to have been very light in proportion to the scale of effort. Dispersion, or even withdrawal, together with the slit trench or fox hole, prevented casualties except on occasions of a relatively few direct hits. Some materiel was destroyed or damaged by hits or fragments, but much heavy equipment was withdrawn in the intervals between successive air attacks. Apparently the enemy's avenues of retreat were not closed by the early assaults.

The "War Diary of the 7th German Army" exhibits further evidence regarding the air action on 25 July. Its observations, made on a high command level, are not entirely in accord with the evidence of prisoners of war. They insisted on the 25th that a break-through had been prevented, but stated that

our troops suffered heavy losses in the LER and in the artillery positions. These casualties were caused mainly by the tremendous commitment of the enemy's air forces and the artillery barrages which lasted for hours... In the over-all picture the enemy was repulsed on all fronts and he succeeded in penetrating only where our troops were hampered in the defense or completely eliminated by concentration of artillery or pattern bombing.



On the 26th a break-through was admitted and air's share in it indicated.

The enemy's unimpeded and concentrated employment of the air force proved, in the clear weather, a powerful check on our own defense and on the concentration of our reserves. The various penetrations effected by the enemy, which could not be enecked for the time being because of our lack of reserves, created a serious breakthrough on this part of the front.

Some additional evidence as to the results of the air attack is derived from U. S. Army sources. On the 4th Division front the enemy's communications were so disrupted that he was forced to resort to runners exclusively, a fact which contributed to the disorganization of the defense. Only small-arm fire was there encountered. Advancing U. S. armor was delayed in its progress until engineers could fill craters in the roads produced by 500-pound GP bombs without instantaneous fuz-Three regiments of the 9th Division attacked immediately after the aerial bombardment, gained appreciable ground, and ultimately won their objectives. The 47th Regiment, however, had been disorganized by short bombing and its attack was delayed for one to one and onehalf hours. In the interval SS and paratroops organized the most serious resistance which the division encountered. The 30th Division had been hit by short bombing both on the 24th and 25th. It suffered from resulting disorganization and from artillery fire coming from positions to the southeast of our troops, which gave trouble for the first 12 hours of the attack. It appears that after the partial attack on 24 July the enemy had removed heavy machine guns and almost all his artillery as far back as Marigny. Enemy infantry, however, offered little resistance.



On the basis of such evidence it is difficult to assess the exact extent of air power's contribution to the success of the operation which its bombardment initiated on 25 July. Nevertheless, there is ground for the confident assertion that the air strikes of the Eighth and Ninth Air Forces on 25 July were the critical factor in enabling the infantry to breach enemy positions west of St. Lo on the 25th and 26th and to open the way for armor to swing into action.

The Period 26 to 31 July

The break-through west of St. Lo was negotiated on 25 July. In the six days from 26 to 31 July the assault front was extended west-ward and armored columns spear-headed a rapid advance to the south through Marigny, St. Gilles and Canisy, Lessay and Periors. By the 28th they had penetrated Coutances and reached points near Brehal, Gavray, Percy, and Tessy sur Vire. Resistance continued strongest on the right flank of the advance in the areas about Villedieu, Percy, and Tessy, but progress continued in the coastal area. By the 31st, Granville had been taken, and the advance south had passed through Avranches to Pontaubault and Ducey.

IX Tactical Air Command

As armor and infantry thus exploited the break-through the Ninth Air Force was given its first considerable opportunity to coordinate its efforts with those of the ground forces in warfare involving rapid movement. As had long since been planned, IX TAC, under the command of Maj. Gen. Elwood R. Quesada and functioning in the closest



collaboration with FUSA, remained fully responsible for the provision and direction of fighter-bombers participating in air-ground cooperation missions. The tremendous scale of its effort from 25 through 31 July is shown by the following table.

Date July	Sorties	Tons of Bombs	F/A Claims	Lost (Alr)	Total Lost	Total Demaged	Recce Sorties
25	1,546	451.5	7-0-7	1.	4	24	79 /
26	1,561	507	17-1-6	2	16	43	122
27	1,451	344	11-0-5	0	17	43	104
28	1,250	157.5	12-3-1	2	10	18	96
29	1,038	285.8	0-0-0	0	8	17	29
30	1,320	294	15-7-6	2	14	67	84
31	1.019	241.25	5_0_3	3	9	6	141
Totals Total	9,185	2,281.15	67-11-27	10	78	21.8	65 5
Recce Total	655						
Sortie	s 9,840						

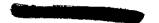
Armored Column Cover. The most characteristic and significant type of mission flown in this period was that described in the records as "Armored Column Cover." Such missions began on 26 July, as armor began its swift movement in three columns which soon fanned out to drive against Coutances, Granville, and Villedieu. Constant cover was provided by relays of four fighter-bombers armed with bombs or rockets and flying half-hour shifts over the head of a given column. Airground communication between flight leaders and tank commanders was effected by VHF radio, IX Air Force Service Command having installed air force type SCR-522 sets in the armored vehicles for the use of the column commanders. On occasion pilots accompanied the ground commander to advise him concerning the capabilities of air. If the armored column required cooperation it could call for air action and



specify its nature. In addition the flight leader was in a position to convey useful intelligence to the column commander and could attack profitable targets of his own selection, after coordination with ground control.

On 26 July four plane flights flew more than 70 of these armored column cover missions; on the following day 100 such missions were flown by IX TAC units. The other days of the period saw like actions on a varying scale.

Reports of air action of this type for 26 and 27 July give useful examples of the work accomplished in the course of the drive from St. Lo to Ayranches and beyond. On the 26th individual flights included in their reports such items as: 15 rockets fired, 2 tanks destroyed, 1 probably destroyed, 1 tank destroyed by strafing; 14 rockets fired at tanks, 2 destroyed, 2 damaged: 2 tanks destroyed by rockets. 2 by strafing; 8 bombs on 2 Mark VI tanks, left burning; 7 bombs on 4 tanks, no hits; 8 bombs on Tiger tanks, 1 destroyed, 1 probably destroyed; 2 Tigers holding up our advance, dive-bombed with poor results, then strafed and destroyed. Bombs were likewise reported dropped on gun positions, AA installations, road junctions, and a hedgerow on a road northeast of Coutances. The records for the 27th exhibit evidence equivalent to that afforded by the actions of the previous day and add other types of targets: command post southwest of St. Lo left in flames; 8 bombs on convoy south of Canisy, 4 tanks, 2 MT, 1 staff car destroyed, 8 trucks damaged, entire convoy dispersed; 8 bombs on



strong point near Quibehou, church and 4 buildings destroyed, town strafed, full of troops and guns; 8 bombs on target marked by white smoke; 8 bombs on convoy of 50-plus southwest of Coutances, 1 tank and 7 MT destroyed, 7 tanks and 8 MT damaged.

Targets like those attacked on 26 and 27 July appear in the records of the succeeding days' actions by armored column cover, notable additions being horse-drawn artillery and vehicles. One mission on the 28th claimed to have killed all horses drawing five guns and to have hit the guns and killed six horses drawing MT, while another strafed 40-plus horse-drawn vehicles, killing 90 horses. A mission on 30 July struck a three-fourths-mile column of horse-drawn artillery and men on the Villedieu-Granville road. Its claims were 65 horses killed, 20 artillery pieces destroyed, and many troops killed and wounded. Taken together, results of the sort indicated by the above selections from mission reports demonstrate the fact that armored column cover assisted the armor to advance by removing opposition, and suggest that by clogging traffic on roads it provided profitable targets for later armored attack.

Only on occasion is detailed evidence available of cooperation between tanks and their covering planes; hence the following episodes which occurred within this period should be cited. A single Sherman was surrounded by 13 German tanks. It was saved from threatened destruction by the covering flight which was directed to its assistance and dispersed the enemy. "Is the road ahead safe for us to proceed?" was the question radioed by a tank commander to a flight leader. The





answer came, "Stand by and we'll find out." In their ensuing search the four P-47's spotted four enemy tanks down the road which they attacked and put out of action. Returning to the friendly column the flight leader radioed, "All clear, proceed at will." When radio was jammed the bombardment of a railroad station by the tanks served as a signal for a dive-bombing attack on the same objective on the part of the accompanying planes. Tracer bullets from tanks served to indicate targets to the P-47's in another case. In response to a column commanders' request aircraft swept the road ahead with fire. They radioed, "Go ahead," but recalled that direction immediately. "There's one we missed. Tank at right side of road next building up 200 yds. ahead of you." The camouflaged tank was dive-bombed. On another occasion a Tiger tank was discovered hidden among trees. Strafing set it on fire and its crew were seen leaving the tank and surrendering to the armored column.

Armed Feconnaissance in the Eattle Area. Armed reconnaissance within the battle area was another characteristic type of mission flown by IX TAC from 26 through 30 July. On the 26th, 16 such missions were flown, eight aircraft participating in each. The 27th saw 11 missions of squadron strength and seven of eight aircraft each; five were undertaken by squadrons and five more by eight aircraft each on the following day, while six of squadron strength were flown on the 29th and a single one, again of squadron strength, on 30 July. Their individual and gross results were of a substantial order, none more so than those of the



10 missions flown by 405th Fighter Group between 1510 and 2140 on 28 July.

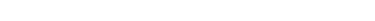
The 405th Group had been assigned to fly armed reconnaissance all day, but weather did not allow its planes to take off before the afternoon. They then proceeded to Villedieu, where they found few targets. However, as they widened the area of their search they discovered a mass of traffic moving south on the roads in the vicinity of Brehal, Gavray, and Percy. In places transport was moving bumper to bumper. From the very start the damage inflicted upon these enemy targets was enormous. In the case of one long column the head and tail were first attacked so that the whole was soon immobilized. allowing its elements to be systematically blasted. One pilot and his wingman asserted that they had set fire to 35 km in one long pass before they lost count. The first squadron to attack radiced the news to the Controller with the result that the group rotated its squadrons in the area throughout the afternoon, returning planes being rearmed and refuelled and taking off again. For more than six hours these attacks on transportation targets continued with a total of approximately 100 aircraft participating. In the midst of the melee a general radiced from a tank, "Go to it! Get one for me!" The pilots! claims would appear fantastic had the assault not been sustained in such strength for so long a time, and had the targets not been of so extraordinary a nature. As it was, pilots asserted that they had seen over 400 iff in flames plus 12 tanks and sundry other vehicles. A ground check, effected after much debris had been cleared from the

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roads, tended to substantiate the reports. The effect of this successful action upon the group was exhibitating. As one returning pilot declared, "I have been to two church socials and a county fair, but I never saw anything like this before."

Summary of Activities. Armored column cover and armed reconnaissance missions on any given day were usually planned in advance by IX TAC and FUSA. Other significant air-ground cooperation missions in the period were the result of action taken on requests from ground units for air strikes, which if successful would assist their advance. Such requests usually emanated from Army corps and called for attacks on targets on their immediate front. Themy artillery positions, command and observation posts, strong points and supply dumps were characteristic of the targets thus designated for attack. It is interesting to observe that the ground forces canceled a number of such strikes. They had been scheduled promptly after receipt of the requests, but the swift advance on the ground placed troops too near the targets to permit the delivery of the attacks at the times scheduled.

Other air-ground cooperation missions during the drive to Avranches need only to be mentioned. The practice of dropping delayed action bombs on road junctions in an effort to hamper enemy movement by night, begun on the evening of 25 July, was repeated on the 27th and 28th. While related to the general interdiction program the 10 attacks on bridges within the battle area on 30 July were determined by IX TAC and FUSA, which fact warrants their inclusion in the long



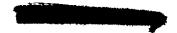


list of air-ground cooperation missions. Five other attacks, made the same day against targets in proximity to the battle area and by order of Headquarters Winth Air Force fall into another category, as do the armed reconnaissance missions beyond the zone of battle--e.g., those of 27 and 28 July and IX TAC's 16 strikes against fuel dumps on 31 July. In spite of such requirements and the occasional call to furnish escort to IX Bomber Command, IX TAC concentrated by far the greater part of its effort on air-ground cooperation missions from 25 to 31 July. Some of the results of such actions appear in its total ground target claims for the period. 14

Tanks	384
Motor transport	2,287
Railroad and highway bridges	33
Railroad lines cut	46
Railroad cars	194
Locomotives	14
Road junctions damaged	85
Horsedrawn vehicles	125
Troop concentrations successfully attacked	38
Gun emplacements successfully attacked	71
Artillery	71
Military-occupied buildings	45
Dumps	12

On two occasions after 25 July, mediums of IX Bomber Command cooperated directly with the ground forces at the latter's request. Following the break-through at St. Lo three areas near Harigny were marked out for attack by two groups each on 26 July. Weather was again bad and only one group was able to carry out its attack, claiming heavy damage to a single installation. On 30 July British armor was reported to have been aided in its advance through enemy positions near Caumont by the bombing of three areas by IX Bomber Command mediums.





Two groups assigned to one area carried through their attacks. In the seven-group mission against a second area 195 bombed out of 252 dispatched. Later in the day in a six-group attack upon a third area, 243 aircraft were dispatched, of which number 199 bombed. Weather was adverse, and patnfinders led all attacks. The exact nature of the damage done to the targets is unknown.

Planning Air-Ground Cooperation. Such extensive air-ground cooperation as has been described above required the closest possible coordination of the ground and air elements involved. To assist in providing such coordination it was desirable that the intimate association earlier developed between IX TAC and FUSA be maintained and perfected. Some air strikes, chiefly beyond the battle zone, might still be determined at Minth Air Force Headquarters, but the planning of the bulk of such missions was IX TAC's responsibility. To discharge that responsibility in this period its headquarters were established in close proximity to those of FUSA. first at Au Gay and later at Les Oubezux. There the close cooperation between air and ground reached its highest point in the joint conference held at 1930 hours daily, the purpose of which was to plan tactical air operations for the following day. Weather submitted its forecast; air and ground intelligence reported the results of the day's air and ground operations. A-2 then presented information from a variety of sources pertinent to current operations, and suggested targets for preplanned missions on the next day. G-3 (Air) then described the Army plan for





operations and presented requests for preplanned air missions, filtered from the requests submitted by Army corps. On the basis of the information provided, the air operations officer then proceeded to allot available air elements to various tasks -- 1.e., to air-ground cooperation, bomber escort, and targets deep in enemy territory -holding, as a rule, a small force as a reserve to meet unforeseen developments. Following this allocation of forces, specific missions were assigned to them, such assignments constituting a firm plan and the basis for the issuance of operational orders for the ensuing day. Such collective planning was essential to successful air-ground cooperation. It was reinforced by the continued activity of Air Support Parties with ground troops which assisted in formulating requests and in directing aircraft to their targets, and by ground liaison officers with air units who provided then with special ground intelligence, assisted in the briefing of pilots, and arranged for the marking of targets and the positions of friendly troops. The various elements involved in the provision of air-ground cooperation were so well integrated that in the extreme case of requests for missions to be flown "S/oon A/s/ P/ossible," only 60 to 80 minutes normally elapsed from the time the request was initiated until the aircraft were over the target. When such requests for immediate action were anticipated, this time could be reduced by having crews alerted on the runway with their commander in the briefing room to receive the targets. Such teamwork ripened into a habit with IX TAC and FUSA. It ripened the more rapidly because of their joint participation in the fast moving





and critical air-ground operations from 25 to 31 July 1944. 15

The Interdiction Program

IX Bomber Command

The Minth Air Force steadfastly maintained its support of the interdiction program throughout July 1944 and, as previously, employed both its mediums and its fighter-bombers in the effort. IX Bomber Command continued its attacks on rail bridges, flying missions against such targets on 13 days. In all cases the attacks were delivered by single groups.

Seine Bridges

The enemy had been active in repairing or replacing Seine bridges which had been destroyed in May and June, and the progress of his work caused five to be attacked by the mediums in July. That at Courcelles was cut by a bombing on 28 July, and the center span of the new bridge at Le Manoir was destroyed on the 31st. ¹⁶ Three attacks on Mantes-Gassicourt resulted in damage to rails and approaches only. No damage was produced by the bombing of Conflans, St. Honorine and Oissel. It should be added here that the repaired highway bridge at Rouen was destroyed by a bombing on 18 July.

Loire Bridges

Loire bridges, still intact or repaired after earlier bombings by other air forces, were now attacked. Eissions against them involved operational flights of some 750 miles from the Essex bases of

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June. The following day the northeast vicinet at Obertres 31 was completely several by the medium; denolition of three piers.

Attacks on Chericy (CS June) and Typrocoles, while he results were observed at Ciscol (32 June).

Fighter-bombers element hits in the course of all six missions flows against anjor bridges (21. 22. 21 June). A present attact on one at Emiter-Saccionary resulted in the claim of its destruction by glide booking (21 June), and two supporting columns of one at Charters more reported destroyed on the same day. Tighter-bombers on area missions included in their report, claims of same 20 subsidily worldges destroyed. That at Coltanville, in the Cherist area, was reported broken in four places. Ground observers, substantiated the claim that the bridge at Dupit had been despitabled. Its grass had earlier been destroyed by a heavy-tember attact, but had been regained with stack beaut. Direct hits destroyed these are the interdiction was reinforced by hits on the approaches and by red outs in the reinity. 32

The interdiction program had been all dilly maintained throughout the month of June 1944. The coals of the effect and the minimum cost at thich impressive results were obtained in addition by the following that the:

	irenuf;	Total Total	Tinter-resiser	<u>Total</u>
	ibi shin:	Losi	Losi	Lost
Harch Illing gards	C,757	5	3	3
Bridges	೧,୧೭೮	6	G	12
Reil cutting	2,204	1	5	G

IX Bomber Command, but the bridges' value to the enemy in bringing his divisions from the south into the battle zone required that they be flown. Such extreme-range missions forced many planes to refuel on continental airfields before returning home, or to accept the risk of flying to their base on the minimum supply which remained. Other aircraft were compelled to land on the continent because of flak damage. Nevertheless, the attacks went on. Between 7 and 31 July seven Loire bridges, from Nantes on the west to Tours on the east, were bombed in the course of 16 assaults.

The first four attacks on Nantes produced only incidental damage, but the fifth (31 July) destroyed the center of the bridge. Only one bombing (19 July) was required to destroy five spans of the structure at La Poissoniere. Two attacks on Les Ponts du Ce were inconclusive, but the second of two at Saumur (12 July) dropped the center section of the bridge into the water. The single assault on the Cinq Mars bridges destroyed the middle span of the East, and damaged the West bridge. Tours la Riche was four times bombed, three attacks (7, 9, and 31 July) producing substantial damage by destroying spans. The enemy's repair activities account for the repeated attacks and serve as a useful indication of the interdiction program's value. So strenuous were his efforts to keep this valuable bridge open that after one attack he repaired two broken spans in the extraordinarily short space of six days. Finally, the bridge at La Frilliere was cut in four places in a single attack (31 July). During the month six out of the seven selected bridge targets were put out of action, at least temporarily, by IX Bomber Command.



The Paris-Orleans Gap

Thirteen medium-bomber missions had as their objectives like targets in the Paris-Orleans gap, where six bridges and a viaduct were bombed. Damage to tracks or approaches resulted from single attacks at St. Remy sur Avre, Cherisy, and Epernon. The last of three attacks on Nogent le Roi (18 July) rendered the bridge there unserviceable.

Bombing of a bridge at Chartres on 25 July placed it in the same category, but another attack on the 31st produced no definite results. A first bombing of the vital structure at Cloyes destroyed half of it (6 July), and a return visit (25 July) completed the job. Probable severe damage was reported following the first assault on the Naintenon viaduct (6 July); but none was recorded after that on 25 July. In consequence of July attacks three bridges in the gap had been put out of action.

Bridges within the Interdiction Zone

In July, as in the earlier phase of the interdiction program, attacks on the rim of the interdiction zone (Seine and Loire river bridges and those in the Paris-Orleans gap), were supplemented by bombings of bridges within the zone itself, the total of 27 such attacks by IX Bomber Command involving 16 different targets scattered over a wide area. Results were rather less conclusive than those produced by the interdiction program bombings treated above. In eight cases the targets were destroyed or rendered unserviceable. The last of three attacks on St. Hilaire du Harcourt destroyed the bridge spanning a road (19 July), and the third of four bombings at Ambrieres (24 July)





resulted in a cut of 500 yards. At Boissei la Lande, Mirville, Souvigny, and Serguigny one attack rendered the bridges unserviceable. Although reported completely destroyed by the bombing on 16 July, Laigle was again struck with inconclusive results a week later, while the reconstructed span at Laval was destroyed on the 24th. The Damage to rails or approaches was the most that could be reported as the result of attacks on the remaining eight of these bridge targets, although one was bombed twice and another three times. It is to be observed, however, that such damage could be extremely significant. In one instance (Grosley sur Risle, 28 July) ground observers later reported that damage to approaches blocked traffic as effectively as the destruction of the bridge would have done. 18

Thus a total of at least 19 bridges of special importance to the interdiction program had been effectively broken or blocked by IX Bomber Command's actions in July 1944. A total of 35 such targets had been subjected to 64 attacks of group strength, 55 delivered by B-26's and 9 by A-20's. In 27 attacks pathfinders had been employed, in 23 instances for bombing targets inside the periphery of the interdiction zone. Available evidence indicates that in all attacks GP bombs were used, the B-26's dropping 1,000-pound GP's in 35 of their assaults, 2,000-pound GP's in 17 other instances, and 500-pound GP's in two more. They dropped some 260-pound GP's with 1,000-pound GP's in one case, and 1,100-pound GP's with 1,000-pound GP's in another. A-20's used 500-pound GP's in all their attacks, while





pathfinders employed a variety of GP's ranging from 300 to 2,000 pounds. The B-26's were responsible for the destruction of 16 bridges, the A-20's for that of the remaining three.

Attacks on Rail Lines and Embankments

On 6 July an earlier experiment was repeated in the use of IX

Bomber Command aircraft for a series of attacks against rail lines.

Six sections of lines within the interdiction zone were assigned to as many groups. On each section six pin-pointed targets, chiefly minor railway oridges, were marked out for attack. Five-hundred-pound GP bombs were to be carried; and two, six, or eight, as specified in the field order, were to be dropped on individual targets. The experiment was unsuccessful. Cuts were reported in rail lines at seven points, the most effective being in the vicinity of the Alencon bridge, a secondary target where six bombs cut all lines. There was no reported damage to the bridges which figured so prominently in the target lists. The experiment in bombing of scattered targets by portions of B-26 and A-20 formations was not repeated.

On the other hand, the interdiction program was effectively reinforced by attacks delivered by the mediums upon railway embankments in July. Such targets were assigned to single groups and successful results were reported following each of the nine attacks delivered from 11 to 31 July. The embankment at Bourth was bombed four times and those at Chaulnes, Evreux, La Croisille, Argentan, and Forges once





each. The blocks thus established were substantial, although the attacks on Bourth at three-, eight-, and six-day intervals suggest that they were effective only for brief periods.

Fighter-Bomber Attacks upon Reil Targets

The interdiction program had been conceived and developed on a grand scale. As previously noted, its success depended not merely upon breaking down the bridges within the interdiction zone and on its periphery, but also upon cutting the lines and destroying rolling stock within the zone. Fighter-bombers were the weapons chosen to cut the rails and blact locomotives and railway cars, their actions in July as in the preceding months being directed by Winth Air Force Headquarters at Uxbridge. Hissions flown against such objectives were seldom aimed at specified targets. Almost without exception they were described either as "armed reconnaissance" of given areas or as "rail cutting" along assigned sections of railway lines. It is to be observed that no useful distinction can be drawn between the "Armed Recce. Alencon, Chartres, Cloyes, Le Mans," and "Rail Cutting La Hutte Colorbieres-Le Mans. " The mission leaders were in both cases free to determine the precise objectives of their bombing and strafing attacks. In each case the chosen targets were certain to include bridges, rails, or rolling stock, alone, or more usually, in compination.

IX Tactical Air Command

Aircraft under the operational control of IX TAC were used to support the interdiction program only on rare occasions in July, since they were so heavily committed to the work of air-ground cooperation.



But on 16 July they cut tracks and destroyed rolling stock west of Angers. On the 16th, in the course of missions against five specified bridge targets, they hit the bridge at Cherley, damaged that at La Loupe, and destroyed the one at Andaevillers. Again on 30 July Ninth Air Force Headquarters directed that IX Tactical Air Command attack oridges named in orders. All targets were hit; that at Nantes and one of the two at Tours were claimed destroyed.

IX Fighter Command

In marked contrast to those under IX TAC, the aircraft under IX FC's operational control concentrated their energies upon interdiction. The plans for such actions were developed by the headquarters of IX FC and Einth Air Force whose joint action was facilitated by the location of both at Uxbridge. IX FC reported over 150 interdiction missions on a total of 24 days in July. Eventy appeared in the record of 4 July and 15 and 12 in those of the 6th and the 20th respectively. The average number for the 24 days of activity was 6.3. Almost without exception a group was assigned to each mission, although the attacks were delivered by squadrons.

The area subjected to most intensive and most frequent attack lay between the Seine, the Paris-Orleans gap, and the Loire on the one hand, and the battle zone on the other. It is of interest to observe, however, that as July wore on, attacks reached beyond these boundaries on the east and on the south. As early as the 6th, missions were directed to areas south of the Loire in an effort to discover and



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destroy enemy reinforcements moving north. Areas as far east of Paris as Chalons appear in the assignments for the 12th, while interdiction was extended to Clamecy, southeast of the capital, by the 16th. On the 19th, areas in western Belgium appeared for the first time in the July interdiction program in connection with an effort to destroy supply trains.

Bridges, which constituted the usual targets for IX Bomber
Command's interdiction activities, were but infrequently attacked by
IX FC's fighter-bombers. Such attacks as were made were reported
successful. A Seine bridge at Mantes-Gassicourt was claimed destroyed
by a bombing on 4 July, and Nogent le Roi was cut by one on the 14th.
In both of these cases the structures were marked for special attack.
A pontoon bridge near Louviers was destroyed on 8 July in the course
of a mission directed against such targets over the Seine, while in
area missions bridges at Segre (12 July), at Chateauneuf (13 July),
and near Hontfort (18 July) were singled out and broken by attack. A
bridge at Chartres was reported destroyed on the 29th.

The detailed results of fighter-bomber attacks delivered against rail lines and rolling stock at high speed and low level can better be estimated than precisely defined. A good idea of their character and extent may, however, be gained from an examination of the records of days of marked interdiction activity and outstanding individual missions.

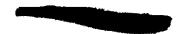
Leaving out of consideration such vague reports as "bombs on tracks," "train strafed," and "marshalling yard hit," the claims for



the days of unusual activity were

					LOCOMOTIVES	Cars
			missions)		5	113
			missions)		13	51.
20	July	(12)	missions)	35	11	69

High scores of 103, 75, and 70 cars destroyed figure among the claims reported by individual missions on 23, 4, and 14 July respectively. Among the results of a mission on 23 July was a claim of 43 rail cuts. while another on 8 July included 33 in its listings, in addition to an ammunition train which exploded under attack near Tours. A single mission on the 13th claimed 25 tanks and armored cars on a siding in the Nogent-Mamers area, in addition to 1 locomotive, 34 cars, and 3 rail cuts. Trains loaded with equipment were caught in western Belgium (20 July) and claims of 7 locomotives and 26 cars reported by the group attacking. Fuel tanks containing Napalm hit a steel train on 23 July, while rockets were employed in a mission which reported the destruction of 51 cars on the 17th. More typical records read "14 hits on railway Le Mans-Coulommieres" (4 July); "2 cuts, 2 locomotives, 24 cars (16 July)"; "3 cuts, 3 locomotives, 10 cars" (20 July); and "3 cuts, 1 locomotive, 24 cars" (30 July). In no case did a mission which reached its assigned area fail to inflict some damage. Because of the varied, and at times vague, reporting of missions of this type during the month it would be profitless to attempt to present the totals of the various claims for the period. It is evident, however, that they were impressive.





Two further items in respect to the interdiction program require mention. First, while some claims appear of motor transport destroyed in the course of area attacks, such claims were infrequent and small, possibly because of the enemy's restriction of road traffic to the hours of darkness but more probably because our aircraft concentrated their attention on rail targets. Second, in a few instances interdiction missions encountered enemy aircraft. When they did so, their actions contributed to the maintenance of our air superiority as the following table shows.

July	Fremy Aircraft in Air Encounters	Losses
4	5-5-3	0
4	0-1-1	\$
4	1-0-0	õ
6 .	3-1-4	2
13	4-0-0	õ
14	6-1-2	5 (missing)
18	10-6-14	3 (2 missing)
25	4-0-5	1 (unknown)
26	2-0-3	2 (unknown)
27	5-0-0	0
27	0-0-2	ŏ
Totals	40-14-34	15 (11 missing
		or unknown)

Planning Interdiction Operations

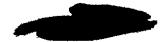
In July, as in all other periods of the interdiction program, it was essential that the rail bridges on the periphery of the area be denied to the enemy in spite of his vigorous efforts to effect their repair. It was likewise essential that he be denied the use of as much as possible of the rail complex within the interdiction zone through the destruction of bridges and the cutting of vital lines.





To achieve such ends extreme vigilance was required on the part of those who planned and directed the operations. It was comparatively simple to determine the main bridges to be brought down. It was more difficult to select those lines on which cuts should be made. But most difficult of all were the closely allied tasks of assessing the damage done to bridges and rails by attacks which had been carried through, and of planning further attacks to offset the enemy's repair work on bridge structures and to maintain constantly the requisite number of cuts on rail lines. In other words, constant vigilance was essential on the part of the planners if bridges were to be not merely brought down but kept down, and if rail cuts were to be kept at the desired level.

Reports rendered immediately following missions were of uneven quality; hence effective photographic reconnaissance became a metter of prime importance to the planners. Under favorable circumstances the task of obtaining such evidence in respect to bridge structures was comparatively simple, although the great number of rail cuts scattered over a wide area made their complete recommaissance coverage extremely difficult. In July, however, the situation was not favorable, for adverse weather severely restricted photo reconnaissance as well as other air missions. In its absence, therefore, the planners had to reassign some bridge targets for attack after the lapse of the estimated time needed to effect the repair of damage earlier inflicted, and without definite knowledge of their status. Similarly, since the stakes were high and since the principle that "when in douct, take





the trick" applied, they heavily accented the work of rail cutting even though exact knowledge of the number of effective cuts was lacking at the moment when further attacks on rails were ordered. lieticulous planning under difficult conditions, coupled with the skill and daring of pilots and the ability of ground crews to keep the requisite number of aircraft on the job, caused the interdiction program to achieve a notable over-all success.

Evaluation of Results

As has been frequently observed, the results of individual interdiction missions are hard to assess, and the assessment of the work done by the different types of planes employed is almost equally difficult. Enemy sources, however, pay tribute to the cumulative effects produced by the mediums and fighter-bombers which shared in the great work of interdiction.

Enemy Evidence

Such evidence is available in the shape of the captured "War Diary of the 7th German Army." Its observations speak for themselves. On 6 July the Diary states that "the transportation situation makes it impossible to forecast when the 275th Inf. Div., one combat team of which is already committed, can be brought up." Two days later entries declare that "enemy bombing and strafing attacks against troop concentrations and movements, as well as against supply traffic, continue and are inflicting noticeable loss," and assert that the prevailing scarcity of transport facilities is "attributable for the most





part to the overwhelming and constant air superiority of the enemy."

The point is again stressed on the 10th:

These units /portions of the 343d, 265th, and 266th Infantry Divisions in Brittany/ no longer possess any motorized transportation since everything available was used to motorize the combat groups that were taken out. The remaining vehicles, both our own and those requisitioned locally, must remain with the divisions to bring up supplies, especially since the latter has become extremely difficult due to the large size of the sectors and the destruction of railway facilities. The 2nd Paratroop Div. which is being formed is likewise completely non-motorized.

A statement on 15 July declares that the battle of supply as waged from the air by the Americans "was unprecedented in its severity."

Those which appear on the 19th and 20th elaborate this text:

The army supply situation must still be regarded as strained. It is true that there has been a slight decrease in the rate of gasoline consumption at the present time among the troops fighting in Normandy. However, since we cannot count on any supply worth mentioning for the next few days, and since the gasoline trains have not yet arrived, we must figure on a decreased supply. In consequence of the failure of rail transportation because of the long periods of heavy fighting, a decrease in ammunition supply below the basic quota was inevitable. . . . If the ammunition trains do not appear, a serious ammunition crisis must be expected within three or four days.

Only if several ammunition and fuel trains arrive, will the tense supply situation be eased. The difficulty is caused by the increased interruption in railway lines and the lack of sufficient motor transport space. If it is not possible to bring up the supply trains, a further deteriorization of the supply situation must be expected.

One cause of the crisis thus emphasized is given in the Diary entry for 20 July. "On the evening of July 19, four bridges over the Loire were eliminated because of the lack of antiaircraft protection." Actually the oridges had been "eliminated" by positive action on the part of 1X Bomber Command which attacked bridges at Nantes, La Poissoniere,

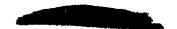




Les Ponts du Ce, and Tours la Riche between 1952 and 2002 on 19 July and gave a lower estimate of damage done than that contained in the German statement. An entry on 20 July rounds out the enemy's commentary on the interdiction program as affecting supply. Commanding General West and Field Marshal von Kluge then held that among "urgent measures" to be taken was "the assurance of increased munition and fuel supply by means of supply replacement transports, the security of which is to be effected through fighter and antiaircraft protection, particularly for the Loire bridges so important to the \$\int 7\text{th} 7\text{Army."}

On 25 July the effect of interdiction on reinforcement of the battle lines is suggested by the comment that an agreement was then reached to make a withdrawal which, by shortening the front, would free troops for use elsewhere. It was made "only because it was impossible within eight days to bring up fresh forces to the Army."

The above entries are all of unusual significance. Collectively they establish the fact that interdiction was in July, as previously, a cause of major difficulties to the enemy. Those of 19 and 20 July, describing the enemy situation in the days preceding the great American assault of the 25th, afford conclusive evidence that the long continued work of interdiction on the part of the Ninth Air Force was one of the fundamental causes for the break-through west of St. Lo and for its rapid exploitation in the remaining days of July.



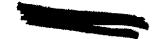
American Evidence

An official study by the Economic Objectives Unit. Economic Warfare Division, Embassy of the U.S.A. (London) reinforces the general conclusions drawn from German sources and adds pertinent details concerning the effects of the interdiction program on enemy troop movements in the period 6 June to 26 July 1944.

Destruction of bridges over the Seine forced elements of five enemy divisions to make the crossing by ferry. Some divisions coning from Holland, Rumania, or the U.S.S.R. detrained in the Paris area and moved on foot to the battle area. Six to seven days were required by the 16th GAF Division to make a march of 150 miles in late June, while the 9th and 10th SS Panzer Divisions detrained at Versailles and other points just west of Paris and proceeded by night marches on secondary roads. There was little uniformity in the time their units required to reach the battlefield: one arrived after two days, while others consumed two weeks in their movement.

The broken bridges over the Loire "for most of the time constituted an impassible barrier... More than half of the troops detrained at the Loire and marched six to 12 days into battle." Even those which did cross on bridges which were temporarily in operation did not advance more than 50 miles before detraining and subsequently moved on foot for four to 10 days, the extent of their march depending on the availability of motor transport for part of the distance which they had to cover. In consequence three divisions coming from





the Bayonne and Narbonne areas averaged from 120 to 130 miles per day south of the river, and only 75 to 90 miles per day north of that barrier. The movement of one of these divisions (276th Infantry Division) from Eayonne to the battle area began on 11 June and spread over a month's time, largely because of delays caused by the changing status of Loire bridges. "Had even one bridge been open over the whole period, the move could have been accomplished in a considerably shorter time."

The American, like the German report indicates that movement from Brittany to the battle zone was seriously restricted. The 266th Infantry Division required the full 15 days from 11 to 25 June to negotiate 140 miles, limiting their marches to hours of darkness and keeping as far as possible to side roads. In the same period the 353d Infantry Division took between 14 and 15 days to cover 150 miles. Both divisions utilized any available transport—e.g., bicycles and horse-drawn vehicles—to assist their movement. It is significant that elements of each were forced to detour around such places as Vire, Avranches, Villedieu, and Tessy because of bomb damage to highways within those towns.

Attacks on bridges, rail cutting, and the destruction of rail transport forced virtually all troop novements within the Seine-Loire arc to take to the roads. Continued attacks on daylight road movements by fighter-bombers forced the enemy to limit his marches to the hours of darkness and to disperse his columns over secondary roads. But the adoption of such procedures cost the enemy dear.



March timetables were perforce lengthened because the nights were chort and night movement is slower than that by day. Moreover, dispersed movement by company or platoon units meant that their arrival at their destination was disorderly, and caused units to be committed piecemeal with inadequate organization of commands.

Thanks to enemy repair activities, it was inevitable that all lines should not be simultaneously blocked and that, after the first two weeks had passed, careful routing of trains should neutralize in part some of the effects of the interdiction program. However, in splite of the enemy's energy and skill, attacks on troop trains in transit and the systematic interdiction of all available through lines affected divisional movements significantly.

The general conclusions drawn from such evidence by the American authorities are both clear and valuable. Because of interdiction "the enemy was unable to use the rail system inside the Seine Loire area for any large scale movement of troops. . . . "Furthermore, "the decisive reduction in the speed of movement to the front was that caused by detrainment at the rim of the Seine-Loire arc, and movement therefrom by "IT and on foot." The net result of the effort is summarized in the emphatic statement that "It is now evident that the enemy failed to match the Allied build-up in the lodgrant area, and that the continued attacks on his transport facilities played a large part in that failure. "22 The concentration of the Ninth Air Force upon the interdiction program entitles it to a considerable



share of credit for the results evident in the months of June and July 1944.

Attacks on Enemy Supplies

The Minth Air Force frequently attacked fuel and ammunition dumps through July. A variety of intelligence, chiefly that derived from prisoners of war, indicated that enemy shortages of these two essentials were often of a critical nature. With a view to reducing the enemy's stocks, already depleted through the success of the interdiction program, the Minth Air Force repeatedly attacked such dumps, particularly those in close proximity to the battle zone.

In the course of the month IX Bomber Command attacked 12 different targets of this type at least once, a total of 24 attacks being delivered against three ammunition dumps, a fuel storage depot, and eight fuel dumps. Since the dumps were usually located in dense woods it was seldom possible to gauge the results of bombings with any real accuracy. The appearance of craters in the target area was almost the only evidence immediately available, but the desire that already critical shortages should be rendered more acute caused IX Bomber Command to assault six installations twice, two three times, and one on four occasions within the period. The attacks were made by single groups in 12 instances, by two groups in seven others, and by three groups in four cases. The size of the attacking force was partly determined by the necessity of assuring reasonable success in area bombing.





In nearly all cases the target areas were well hit, out as noted above, no precise assessment of damage is possible with the exception of five targets where ground observers' reports cast light on the situation. In two cases results were negative. All three of the attacks on the fuel dump at Foret de Conches (6, 22, 23 July) were made after the enemy had evacuated it. 23 Some tank trucks in the Foret d'Ecouves (11, 12 July) had been destroyed, but it too was probably evacuated when the two attacks of this period were delivered. 24 In other cases positive results are established. The Foret de la Guerche was attacked on 16 and 31 July. There 100-pound GP bombs had been used with marked effect on the drums stored in bunkers or trenchers. Many were ruptured by internal expansion and all were burned or scorched. 25 The gasoline storage depot at Rennes was likewise twice attacked by the mediums, and also by fighter-bombers in July, but the attacks of the mediums on 9 and 17 July seem to have been responsible for most of the damage done. This included not merely 75 per cent damage to offices and warehouses, but also the destruction of some 2,000,000 liters of gasoline for which the Wehrmacht hungered. 26 The observers' report on their findings at the ammunition dump at the Foret de Senonches (20, 26, 28 July) includes the effects of the mediums' repeated attacks in June as well as of their three attacks by three groups each in July. Here the stores were ranged in over 600 stacks well dispersed over an area of two square miles. Seventy of these stacks had been destroyed, some by casual strafing on the part of fighter-bombers, involving the loss of



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some 10 per cent of the stores. Much of this damage, however, was apparently caused by an attack on 25 Juno. 27

Fighter-bombers also attacked fuel and ammunition dumps in the course of the month. On occasion IX TAC struck at such targets. Four were hit in the St. Io-Feriers area between 5 and 16 July with fires or explosions resulting. Similar results were produced by attacks of 18 and 19 July on two like targets in the same area, while black smoke indicated that some measure of success attended the attack on a dump at Vitre on the 17th. IX TAC's most concentrated effort against targets of this type was made on the last day of the month when no less than 16 strikes were scheduled on some 11 targets selected by Headquarters Minth Air Force. Fuel tanks at Tours were twice attacked and left burning. At Rennes fires and smoke followed two bombings of the target area. Since no fires resulted after direct hits on tanks at Pontorson and Angers, the containers there were believed to have been empty. Six other targets were hit with less definite results observed. Fighter-bombers on armed reconnaissance under the operational direction of IX FU selected such targets on occasion, as when they hit a fuel dump at Sens (13 July), destroyed an ammunition dump southeast of Bueil (16 July), damaged oil tanks at Orlcans (20 July), and destroyed one in the Amiens marshalling yard (26 July).

In the case of attacks by the mediums, available evidence suggests that where the dumps were stocked at the time of the bombings the results were the best that could be expected in view of the type of target attacked and the force employed. Furthermore, in





attempting to measure the success of any attack, whether by mediums or fighter-bankers, two questions arise. First, did the destruction of supplies contribute to the over-all shortage which we know existed? Here the answer is in the affirmative, although the extent of the contribution can but seldom be established. Second, did the damage done produce a local shortage of critical proportions? To this question no definite answer is possible. It can merely be suggested that, under prevailing conditions, even a small loss, particularly in the battle area, could well be the straw that broke the camel's back. 28

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Chapter V

OPERATIONS IN AUGUST 1944

The General Situation

The Changing Battlefronts

August 1944 was a most notable month in the invasion of Europe. The extent of the accomplishments is clearly shown by the contrasting situations which existed at its beginning and at its end. On 1 August the territory held by Allied armies was small, although the break-through at St. Lo was being rapidly exploited. The lines ran west and east through positions south of Caen and St. Lo and then dipped south, paralleling the coast a short distance inland as far as the area of Avranches. By 1 September Brittany had been overrun with the exception of its ports at Brest, Lorient, and St. Nazzire, and American lines had reached the Loire from the region of Nantes in the west to Gien in the east. By that same date Arerican forces had crossed the Seine above and below Paris and overrun a great area to the east of the liberated capital. Complegne, Laon, and Reims had been taken on the northern flank; to the east they had reached the Meuse at Verdun and crossed the upper Marne at St. Dizier; in the south they had occupied the regions of Troyes and Sens. On 1 August the Battle of France was only a week old. On 1 September it was rapidly drawing to a close.

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Such were the over-all gains registered on the ground by the Twelfth U. S. Army Group. The most dramatic action was that of the Third Army, which became operational on 1 August. It first drove its mobile columns through the Avranches bottleneck west into Brittany and south towards the Loire, cutting off the Breton peninsula. Then, with startling speed, some of its units swung northeast towards Argentan, tightening the noose about the Norman pocket, while others raced east to Paris and beyond to points within 60 miles of the German frontier. Meanwhile the First Army pushed south from St. Lo and fought to widen the coastal corridor by an eastward advance. In the early days of the month it stopped, in the Hortain region, the German counterattack which was designed to cut through to the coast at Avrenches and so sever the communications upon which the Third Army depended. That done, it, with the British, the Canadians, and the Third U. S. Army closed in upon the enemy, and as it swept east to and beyond the Seine, destroyed a large portion of his army in Normandy. The over-all results were phenomenal, and never had the joint responsibility of ground and air for the achievements recorded been more clearly evident. The Ninth Air Force was teamed up with the Twelfth Army Group, IX TAC acted in cooperation with the First U. S. Army, and XIX TAC cooperated with the Third. Throughout the month mediums and fighter-bombers of the Ninth were constantly employed to help win the Battle of France by missions involving air-ground cooperation. whose tactical worth was obvious, and likewise by missions whose bearing upon current operations was equally forceful--missions to



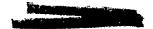
isolate the battlefield and to destroy enemy communications and supplies. The Kinth was continuing to function as a Tactical Air Force.

Winth Air Force Organization and Movements

On 8 August 1944 Maj. Gen. Hoyt S. Vandenberg assumed command of the Minth Air Force vice Lt. Gen. Lewis H. Brereton, relieved. A new hand was at the helm, but many earlier traditions were maintained, none more vigorously than that set forth in General Brereton's oft-repeated slogan "Keep Mobile."

For the proper performance of its tasks, mobility on the part of the Minth Air Force was a prime requisite. To operate efficiently Minth Air Force combat units must be based on the continent and as close to the fighting fronts as possible. The movement of fighter-bombers from Britain to France had been begun in June when seven groups became operational on the continent. It continued through July, and by early August all were based in France. With the rapid advance of the ground forces, changes of location in France were necessary, and movements from the original bases in Normandy and the Cotentin to others in the vicinity of Rennes, Le Mans, Chateaudun, and Paris were effected. Not every move was of immediate advantage. Airfield construction had been planned in accordance with estimated movements of ground forces, which in August advanced at a greater speed and at times in other directions than had been anticipated. On occasion a move might bring the fighter-bombers no nearer the fighting





then they had been in a previous location, and operational difficulties were often in evidence throughout the month as the front accelerated its eastward movement. Hediums had begun to shift from their Essex bases between 18 July and 5 August when the four groups of 98th Wing established themselves in the Bournemouth area. As continental fields previously employed by fighter-bombers became available, these same groups moved across the Channel (16 to 30 August). IX Bomber Command was itself alerted for such movement at the end of the month. Upon its arrival on the continent operational control of the groups based there devolved upon 98th Wing, which was furnished with a list of IX Zomber Command priority targets from which it prepared its missions.

Association of Air and Ground Headquarters

Mobility was likewise demanded of Minth Air Force Headquarters and headquarters of IX and XIX TAC. It was essential that the operations controlled by Minth Air Force Headquarters be developed in the closest association with Headquarters Twelfth Army Group, which had immediate tactical command of all American ground forces. Accordingly headquarters at Uxbridge in Britain and at Grandcamp les Bains on the far shore were both closed at 2400.5 August, and a single headquarters opened at St. Sauveur Lendelin at 0001 on 6 August. It was there placed beside Advanced Headquarters Twelfth Army Group whose G-2 Air and G-3 Air were established in the Minth Air Force Operations Center. Advanced Headquarters AEAF was located at the same spot. A



later move (23 August) to a position east of Laval maintained this close association of ground and air, in the main, although the immediate connection with Headquarters Twelfth Army Group was severed. 5

IX TAC strave to continue its intimacy with FUSA in its successive moves to Canisy (2 August), to Coutouvray (12 August), and to Haleine (22 August). 6 XIX TAC had established an advanced headquarters between Lessay and Coutances on 31 July, in proximity to Headquarters Third U. S. Army (TUSA). In an effort to maintain this association, later moves were negotiated to Beauchamps, east of Granville (3 August), to St. James (7 August), to Les Chenes Secs, north of Laval (15 August), and to Autainville, near the Foret de Marchenoire, south of Chateaudun (30 August). 7 If any headquarters was to maintain effective operational control of its components. complete wire communications with them were necessary, but as the armies raced eastward their headquarters moved with almost equal speed and at a rate which air force communications could not hope to equal. This was particularly true of TAC Headquarters. As early as 7 August, therefore, IX TAC constituted a flying column, and XIX TAC an advanced echelon to accompany Advanced Headquarters FUSA and TUSA, respectively. Completely mobile, the operations officers who composed these units maintained contact with the armies and with their own operational headquarters which, perforce, lagged behind. They were powerfully reinforced in their effort to effect full air-ground cooperation by the frequent presence of their respective commending generals





at the advanced headquarters of the army with which they were associated. 8

The association of Minth Air Force Hendquarters with that of Twelfth Army Group was imperative throughout this critical period. At best it was difficult to lay on preplanned missions. Bomb lines established by the armies were difficult to ascertain in days when the front was advancing at great speed and when communications were often improvised or inadequate. Intelligence was often none too plentiful, and the use of the combined resources of air and ground was required for the proper information of both. Horeover, German deception through the use of VHF required the provision of countermeasures and safeguards. Only through the full utilization of all available resources, those of air complementing those of ground, was it possible to plan and execute the extraordinary ground-air operations of August 1944.

IX Tactical Air Command

IX TAC flew 378 missions, aggregating a total of 12,305 sorties in the month of August 1944. The records for the period use the phrases "Armored Column Cover" and "Armed Reconnaissance" as descriptive titles for the greater part of these missions, the balance being special tasks undertaken at the direction of superior head-quarters or at Army request. With very few exceptions, the areas or targets assigned to all missions lay west of the Seine or north of the Loire. Moreover, by far the greater part of these areas and



targets were within or very close to the battle lines of the moment, notably as the lines drew nearer the great rivers. All operations were of a tactical nature, but because of the above facts it is difficult to distinguish between those which should be classed as direct air-ground cooperation in association with the battlefield effort of ground troops and those whose tactical relationship with such effort is to be classed as indirect rather than immediate. Such distinctions must, however, be attempted.

Armored Column Cover in August

Armored column cover missions, obviously involving close cooperation with FUSA's operations, were flown on 21 days of the month, aircraft from one to four groups being assigned each day. Largely because the CAF tended to be more aggressive than in the earlier period, eight aircraft now constituted the usual patrol, remaining in the area for one and one-half hours and conducting reconnaissance some 20 miles in advance of the column when requests had been accomplished or if no requests were forthcoming. The techniques earlier employed were continued and perfected. In one case the A-3 of 368th Tighter-Bomber Group spent five days with the 3d Armored Division in order that the latter's selection of appropriate targets for air attack might be improved. Towards the end of the month, as the distance separating air bases from the heads of columns increased, aircraft on armored column cover had to employ belly tanks in the execution



of their missions. 10 A few examples serve to indicate that, as previously, these missions were effective.

The most notable of these occurred on the second day of the month when "Foodle" (a combat command of 3d Armored Division) was held up by guns in buildings northwest of Mortain. Aircraft of 368th Fighter-Bomber Group were called upon to bomb, which they did, scoring direct hits which allowed the column to proceed. It was again held up at the next town, St. Barthelemy, but escorting aircraft again blasted the fortified positions and received their reward in seeing our armor enter Mortain at 1815 hours. On 5 August ground requested that both ends of a bridge be bombed to emplode mines, but asked that the bridge itself not be attacked. This was done. The next day a mission bombed a road northeast of Vire and destroyed a steeple (possible CF), an antiaircraft emplacement, and other gun positions. On 7 August planes of 366th Fighter-Bomber Group bombed woods south of Brecey and produced a terrific explosion. "Turpny" (21 Armored Division) then directed them against 88-millimeter guns located in woods. The results were good, since many oun flashes were seen in the area before the bombing and none after it. "Hurphy's" report was that the aircraft had done a fine job. The following day aircraft of 366th FB Group distinguished themselves when one formation destroyed 5 tanks and damaged 8 others, and another claimed 12 tanks, 8 12 (5 carrying ammunition), 5 horse-drawn vehicles, and 3 horse-drawn flak guns. The crews of six flak guns on a road west of liortain were wiped out by one formation on the 9th; another on the 10th attacked





gun positions near Sourdeval, which ground forces knocked out so completely as to deserve commendation. On 15 August aircraft of 404th FB Group, escorting the 3d Armored Division, twice bombed the town of Ranes at ground's request, and strafed near-by roads with marked effect. A single formation listed 15 tanks, 4 armored vehicles. and 2 gun positions among its claims; while the claims of the 11 formations of 404th FB Group, which furnished "flying interference" during the day, totaled 29 tanks, 12 armored vehicles, 5 half-tracks, 35 III, and 5 gun positions destroyed. The following day a formation affording cover destroyed two tanks, 11 MT, and an ambulance which was towing an 88-nillimeter gun. Fifty II were claimed by an escorting formation of 368th FB Group on 25 August. On the 27th 16 of 404th FB Group's F-47's engaged in escort were jumped by over 40 enemy aircraft. Their claims were 11-4-1 for a loss of four. Other armored column cover missions produced less striking effects individually, although the aggregate result of the sustained endeavor was great.

Air-Ground Cooperation, 1 to 7 August

Many area missions described as armed reconnaissance, many others undertaken as the result of joint plans developed by IX TAC and FUSA, and such few as were flown in this period at the request of Army corps and divisions likewise fall under the heading of direct airground cooperation. In these missions pilots had to exercise unusual care in bombing as the month of August wore on. On the one hand, enemy pockets of resistance remained within territory which was for



the most part occupied by American troops, while on the other hand friendly units were operating deep in enemy territory. "Know your target before you hit it" became the current motto by prescription. Selected examples must again serve to exhibit the nature and the results of these activities.

Air-ground cooperation missions of this type were but few in the first week of August since most armed reconnaissance was concerned with areas somewhat removed from the existing battle lines. However, on the 4th, ground control directed one armed recce against four tanks, two of which were destroyed. The remaining two were damaged and troops strafed. On the same day "Lurphy" gave another armed recce a target in the shape of a troop concentration in woods southwest of Vire. Twenty-four bombs fell in the area and produced a large explosion. On 7 August a divisional command post at Vengeons was hit as requested by XIX Corps, which marked the target with red smoke.

Air-Ground Cooperation in Critical Days, 8 to 14 August

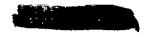
Air-ground cooperation missions on the part of IX TAC became an outstanding feature of its operations beginning with 8 August. On the night of 7-8 August the enemy launched his counterattack from the Mortain area with Avranches as its objective. This action, designed to cut the American communications in the bottleneck, had been determined on the 4th. It was vigorously pursued in the days which followed, but the joint resistance of ground and air was such that on 14 August the enemy was forced to plan a general withdrawal, and on





the 16th to order retirement beyond the Orne. Il British armies joined in the Allied countermeasures, and RAF's 2d Tactical Air Force likewise cooperated.

IX TAC exerted its maximum effort in the battle area. In the seven days 8 to 14 August it flew a total of 4,012 sorties, nearly all of them in direct air-ground cooperation. On the 12th, 675 were flown, dropping 310.8 tons of bombs. Daily claims, most of them derived from actions in the battle area, stand in direct relation to the effort expended and the targets offered. For example, on 8 August 532 sorties resulted in the destruction of 47 tanks and 122 IIT; on the 13th, 649 sorties accounted for 106 armored vehicles and 570 MT; and on the 14th, 614 sorties gave rise to claims of 56armored vehicles and 348 MT destroyed. Fourteen squadron-strength missions in the La Ferte-Falcise-Argentan area cleimed 18 tanks and 70 LT on the 13th. The actions of individual groups possess a like interest. On 14 August 72 aircraft of 368th FB Group claimed the destruction of 5 tanks and 94 13; on the 16th, 36 aircraft claimed 16 tanks and 53 LT; while the next day 40 aircraft listed 24 tanks and 37 IT among the enemy materiel destroyed. One mission by the 366th FB Group in the Argentan area demolished 6 tanks, damaged 4 others, and destroyed 12 HF on 12 August, while a squadron of 368th Group destroyed two guns towed by ambulances near Ger, and then at "Lurphy's" direction bombed the town and left it burning. That same day the 366th Group's claims of 8 tanks, 5 self-propelled guns, 1 gun





emplacement, and 89 km earned a commendation from the Commanding General, IX TAC. A formation from the same group did a notable job the following day (13 August). It first sighted two trucks under trees on a road near Carrouges and almost immediately noted what appeared to be trees in the middle of the road. Closer examination disclosed that some 30 gas trucks were parked in the area, and that at least six tanks were refulling from them. The area was both bombed and strafed; fires appeared along a line one and a half miles long, and emplosions of ammunition trucks were observed.

In accordance with the joint plans of IX TAC and FUSA three gun positions and two tank concentrations in the Sourdeval-Mortein area were attacked on 8 August. A total of at least 14 guns and six tanks were claimed destroyed. At the request of VII Corps a troop concentration near Juvieny was attacked on the 9th, and bombs fell in the smoke-marked target area. The next day a request by VII Corps for the bombing of tanks and 12 west of Sourdeval was answered with resulting fires in the area attacked. On 12 August the 2d Infantry Division requested that some five infantry positions be dealt with. All were attacked with reported results of "good" or "excellent."

In this same period (8 to 14 August) IX TAO and FUSA planned air attacks on road junctions in the Flers-Domfront-Mortain-Sourdeval area. On the 9th four such targets were hit with bombs carrying the usual fuzes. In the evening attacks against like targets on each of the four following days, some instantaneous fuzings were employed, but



for the most part the bombs were armed with fuzes providing delays of from six to 12 hours with the hope, as when such fuzings had been previously used, of impeding enemy movement at night. Several targets were assigned to each of the missions thus flown in at least squadron strength. Four took place on the 10th, four more on the 11th, three on the 12th, and one on the 13th. The origin and the location of the targets of these missions cause them to be recorded here rather than under the heading of interdiction.

Some unusual direct air-ground cooperation missions were flown in this period. Aircraft of IX TAC, flying escort to the C-47's of IX TCC which sought to resupply the 2d Fattalion of 120th Infentry Regiment isolated east of Mortain on 10 August, incidentally scored hits on three enemy gun positions. The following day a squadron of P-47's themselves dropped supplies. On 14 August 3d Armored Division requested that plasma be dropped for the use of one of their advancing units. Within two and one-half hours after the origin of the request the plasma was dropped and pilots saw it picked up by U. S. ground troops.

Air-Ground Cooperation, 15 to 31 August

Direct Cooperation

The developing ground situation determined that direct air-ground cooperation on the part of IX TAC should continue as a prominent feature of its activities during the remainder of the month (15 to 31 August). The German lunge against Avranches had been stopped and



Allied countermeasures threatened to annihilate his armies in Morrandy. The advance of the Third U. S. Army to the vicinity of Argentan, coupled with the British movement south in the Falaise area, steadily narrowed the only corridor through which enemy troops west of those points could hope to escape from the pocket thus created. By 17 August a fighter-bomber pilot reported that "the whole goddem German Army was moving through this gap," while the pocket had been so reduced that bomb lines within it were eliminated. Two days later, patrols of the 90th U. S. Infantry Division and the Folish Armored Division, operating with the Canadians, met. The pocket was mopped up in the days which followed, and Allied armies, advancing to the east, crossed the Seine at Mantes-Gassicourt and at Vernon by 23 August and compressed the remants of the German forces in Morrandy into a narrow area on the west bank of the Seine between Vernon and the sea.

Armed Peconnaiscance

In this period, 15 to 31 August, armed reconnaissance missions were of frequent occurrence and the areas assigned usually lay within the battle zone or in its immediate rear. The "Deep" area assigned on 17 August ranged from Mantes-Gassicourt to Houdan to Breteuil, and hence lay west of the Seine. "Seine Fiver Area" is the title employed in describing armed recess on 18 August and later. Not until the end of the month were areas assigned east of the Seine-Reims-Herpy-Juvincourt; those of Rouen-Beauvais-Soissons were prescribed on 27





August, and Amiens-St. Quentin-Compiegne-Beauvais on the 31st. tangled transport of the disorganized enemy columns and their means of escape across the Seine constituted the chief targets for IX TAC's fighter-bombers in a constantly shrinking area. IX TAC's total claims of 612 MT destroyed on 17 August, 419 on the 23d, and 227 and 294 on the 28th and 31st, respectively, indicate the extent of damage done on days when the hunting was particularly good. Armored vehicles were also hard hit -- 72 were claimed destroyed on the 15th, 34 on the following day, 69 on the 25th, and 24 on the 28th. 118 On 15 August one formation of 367th FB Group assisted tanks shelling Le Tremblay le Vicemte by bombing the town; while another, blocking a column of 30 vehicles and tanks by hitting its head and tail, scored 24 hits. Parges on the Seine or its tributaries appear in the claims of 18 August, when some 17 formations over the Seine River Area reported 58 barges, one lock, and a pontoon bridge (Les Andelys) destroyed. On the 20th seven missions of squadron strength accounted for 13 barges and damaged docks and a steamer. On the some day, and once again in the Seine area, an unusual episodo occurred when 75-plus IT marked with the Red Cross symbol were seen clustered about a ferry terminal near Venables on the west bank. They were first identified as military vehicles, and then bombed and strafed. Black smoke and violent explosions proved that the identification was correct. Ferries and their terminals were also hit on the 23d and 25th. It is noteworthy that on occasion leaflet bembs were dropped on the pocket and on the withdrawal areas (e.g., 15, 18 August) in the hope of lowering enemy morale.

Air Strikes on Communications Targets

Attacks on specified communications targets supplemented armed reconnaissance and were, in most cases, of a nature which causes them to be rated as air strikes in air-ground cooperation. Five LT were destroyed by Napalm on the road between Briouze and Falaise (16 August). An attack on the bridge at Thour (18 August) resulted in four hits on the approaches. A bridge under construction over the lower Seine was heavily bombed (22 August) with 15 hits reported in the target area; and a new wooden bridge near Oissel was destroyed (25 August), together with 50-plus LT which stood bumper to bumper. Earlier (20 August) six squadron-strength missions had dropped delayedaction bombs on Seine ferry crossings which the enemy was using at night.

St. Malo and the Ile de Cezembre

Direct air-ground cooperation on the part of IX TAC was further in evidence in the reduction of St. Malo and the He de Cezembre. On 17 August 35 planes of 370th FB Group dropped two Mapalm bembs on the citadel before they received word from ground that its surrender had been effected; they then delivered the balance of their load on the obstinate He de Cezembre. Again on 31 August IX Tactical Air Command attacked the latter stronghold, this time as part of an air, ground, and sea attack which had been carefully coordinated. Mediums of IX Bomber Command and Lancasters of PAF Bomber Command opened the aerial assault as H.M.S. Marsuite, covered by planes of



50th FE Group, delivered salvoes of 15-inch armor-piercing projectiles. At intervals field artillery directed the fire of 155's and 8-inch and 240-millimeter guns at embrasures, ports, and tunnel entrances. Finally, 33 P-38's of 370th FB Group rained down Napalm combs. G-3 Air of Twelfth Army Group reported that veteran artillerymen were lost in admiration as the Ninth Air Force planes circled the target, waited for the smoke to clear, and then peeled off and bombed. At 1800 a demand was made for the island's surrender, but no capitulation resulted until 2 September, since the German commander lacked the necessary permission of higher headquarters. 12

Other Tactical Operations

The above narrative of IX TAC's effort by way of air-ground cooperation in direct relationship to the ground effort indicates that such actions absorbed the bulk of its resources and energies throughout August 1944. Certain other activities must, however, be recorded to complete the picture. They, too, are tactical in nature and related to the ground effort, but their connection therewith appears to be rather less direct than the actions already chronicled. Their purposes were varied: to destroy enemy material, particularly by the attrition of his critical supplies, to disrupt his powers of command by attacks on headquarters, to delay his retreat, and by continued attacks so to harass his personnel as to reduce their morale.

Transportation Targets

During the first week of August missions in the nature of armed



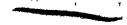


reconneissance occasionally carried aircraft of IX TAC as far afield as Cambrai, Soissons, Nevers, and Poitiers (1, 2, 4, 5 August). Some damage was done to rail targets, as when the locomotive and 10 cars of a troop train were hit and tracks cut in the St. Cyr-Orleans-Hevers area and when three trains were destroyed near Saurur (5 August). Again in the closing days of the month some armed reces flew to the east of Faris. On 27 August two missions in the Reims-Beauvais-Soissons area listed MT and horse-drawn vehicles, together with 13 barges among their claims. A third mission in the same area and on the same day concentrated on rail targets and claimed three locomotives and 50 cars destroyed, while a fourth claimed the destruction of over 100 tank cars in the yards at Chantilly. On 31 August two missions, each of group strength, in the Amiens-St. Quentin-Beauvais area claimed 123 IF. 9 armored vehicles, and 92 horse-dream vehicles as their contribution to the afflictions of the retreating enemy. Such actions as these were obviously related both to the activities of American ground forces and to the interdiction program.

Dump 8

In an effort further to cripple the enemy, IX Tactical Air Command continued to attack fuel, ammunition, and supply dumps.

Attacks on fuel distribution points had the greatest significance because the Eighth Air Force was engaged in bombing the sources of such supplies. In the opening days of the month dumps at Domfront, Rennes, and Angers, and in the vicinity of Orleans, Tours, and Groyes were attacked with



satisfactory results (1, 4 August); while the familiar targets in the Foret d'Andaine were hit again (6 August) with no results observed. In the period of the German counterattach further missions were directed against like targets on each day from 8 through 13 August. Dumps in the Domfront area, in the Foret de Coevran, Foret d'Ecouves, Foret d'Andaine, Foret de Senonches, and Foret de Rambouillet were hit, as were others east of Dreux and near Maintenon and Briouze. On 22 August supply dumps in the Foret de Bretonne were attacked and fired. As a rule the missions were of squadron strength. Exact results could not be determined, although some explosions and fires were produced.

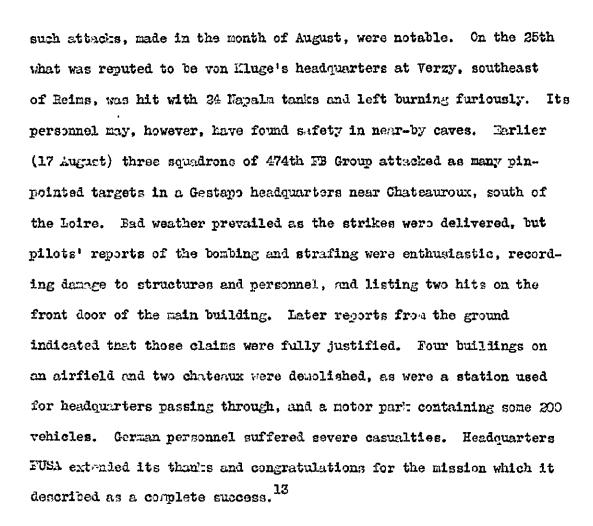
Airfields and Aerial Combat

Attacks on enemy airfields were in order in August because of the increased activity of the GAF. Runways were damaged and fires started at Beauvais-Tille (18 August). Dispersals, buildings, or runways were hit in attacks on fields at Laon-Athies, Laon-Chambry, Juvincourt, and Clastres, and on another near Roye in attacks which destroyed a total of nine enemy aircraft in the air and 10 on the ground (22 August). On 25 August IX TAC delivered exceedingly powerful blows east of Paris and likewise south of the Loire. Three squadrons of 379th FB Group were dispatched against airfields in the St. Quentin area. Hangars and runways were hit on several fields, but more important were the claims of 20-3-6 in air combat for a loss of seven. Two squadrons of 474th FB Group, sent against the fields

at Terguies, Laon-Chambry, and Herpy, engaged in air combat also. They lost 4 total of 11 planes against claims of 21-3-15. On the same day action was taken against fields at Cognac and Dijon, which the enemy was known to be using for the evacuation of troops caught between the American Third and Seventh Aruies. At Cognac two squadrons, one from the 365th and the other from the 367th F2 Group. destroyed 12 enemy aircraft on the ground. Ten were troop-corrying JU-52's. A squadron of 370th FB Group and another from the 367th attacked Bijon, destroying 21 enemy aircraft, including 20 JU-52's on the ground, and damaging three. The total claims of IX TAC for the day were thus 41-6-21 in the air and 21-0-3 on the ground, for a grand total of 62-5-24. Such claims, coupled with the stendy maintenance of armed reconnaissance and armored column cover, help to explain our overwhelming air superiority. Not the least of the results which were derived from this was the uninterrupted flow of reinforcements and supplies over the roads from the beaches to the fighting lines. The roads were of necessity crowded, and offered ideal targets for attacks from the air which seldom materialized. That they did not was one of the miracles of the Battle of France. Airfields in the Dijon, Bourges, and Cognac areas were again hit on 26 and 27 August with total ground claims of 22-0-4, while damage was inflicted at Peronne, Roye Amr. and Rosieres on the 28th.

Themy Headquarters

On occasion information gathered by intelligence caused IX Tactical Air Command to deliver attacks on enemy headquarters. Two



Recapitulation

Meather had an adverse effect upon operations of all types during the north. On three days (21, 29, 30 August) no operations were possible. Operations were frequently restricted on others, particularly when night dew was transformed into ground haze or fog over bases or in target areas. But the situation was such that missions were flown whenever there was any chance for their execution. The 673 sorties of 12 August constituted the month's high; the 161 sorties on the 19th was the low for the period. As previously remarked, the total



sorties by IX TAC in August reached the notable total of 12,305. Its effort, in which air-ground cooperation figured so prominently, was marked by the loss of 123 aircraft and by the month's total claims of 63-2-19 enemy aircraft on the ground and 98\frac{1}{2}-18-35 in the air.

XIX Tactical Air Command

The association of XIX TAC with Third U. S. Army (TUSA) was as intimate as that of IX TAC and First U. S. Army (FUSA). To an even greater degree than in the case of IX TAC, the missions of XIX TAC. under the command of Brig. Gen. Otto P. Weyland, were in direct airground cooperation. The problems involved were enormous. Technical difficulties in maintaining communications between ground and air units were frequently in evidence. Armored columns split up into two or more combat teams, thereby making demands for Air Support Parties beyond anything envisaged in air force T/O's. Notably after General Patton's columns turned eastward on 6 August and began their famous "end run," the rapid advance of the battle lines gave rise to the new problems concerning the location of headquarters, as was mentioned above, and left air bases so far to the rear that aircraft were often forced to operate at extreme range, returning to base with tanks nearly bono-dry or refuelling at a forward field before completing their missions. In spite of all difficulties, however, the achievements of XIX TAC were on a grand scale.

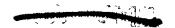


Three groups of fighter-bombers were available when XIX TAC became operational on the continent on 1 August. By the 5th a total of five groups was under its control, and by 7 August, nine. In the course of the month 12,292 sorties were flown, an average of 439 for each of the 28 operational days. On a single day (9 August) 72 missions were flown which involved 780 sorties, and on only three days (1, 24, 28 August) did the total sorties made fall below 200. 16

Characteristic Activities, 1 to 7 August

The very nature of the operations involved in direct air-ground cooperation precludes the possibility of rendering a complete and accurate report upon them. The fleeting nature of fighter-bomber attack, the indistinct quality of the targets, and the smoke and dust incident to the attack all contribute to such a result. Once again we must depend upon available examples to indicate the nature and effect of such action. 17

During the first week of its association with TUSA, XIX TAC provided excellent samples of the work it was to do throughout the month in direct air-ground cooperation. Flying cover for the 2d Armored Division in the Tessy area, two flights of 362d FB Group destroyed a total of seven tanks, damaged another, and silenced six gun positions on 1 August. Pockets of 406th FB Group destroyed two tanks and two four-gun batteries on the 2d, while its bombs covered a smoke-marked target west of Vire with results unobserved. On 2 August, also, 363d FB Group flew five eight-plane missions to cover



the Avranches bottleneck, while with a view to protecting communications between the advancing columns and that vital area, aircraft returning from armored column cover were directed to make periodic sweeps over the rear of their columns and in the direction of Avrancaes. On the 3d an element of 405th FB Group was vectored to a road south of Rennes which it bombed and strafed, destroying 22 MT and four horse-drawn vehicles. A squadron of 373d FB Group destroyed an AAA position north of Eennes on 4 August, and on the following day 11 missions by eight aircraft each of 405th FB Group claimed as destroyed 54 MT, 9 horse-drawn vehicles, and 3 self-propelled guns. On the 5th, likewise, 358th FB Group reported that American troops were storming into Mortain from the west. Two elements of 405th FB Group accounted for 13 tanks and 8 MT by rocket fire and for another 16 LT by strafing on 7 August. On the same day, 363d Group flew 15 armored column cover missions over the Brest peninsula, bombing an amminition convoy sheltered in woods at Plonagot. Peports of such characteristic activities fill the "Opreps" for the balance of the month. Transport and strong points, tanks and gun positions, smokemarked areas, and others designated by pin points were under constant attack by XIX TAC in the course of the 28 operational days in August 1941, and reports of the positions of friendly and enemy troops were regularly submitted.

The scale of this effort was notable: 363d Group flew 7 such missions on 4 August, 15 on the 7th, 12 on the 8th, and 15 on the 9th. On 4 and 5 August, 11 such missions were flown by 405th FB Group,



followed by 17 on 14 August and 15 on the 15th. The ordinary effort was two group missions per day, or six squadron missions or 72 sorties.

Techniques and Problems

Cover for the armored columns was furnished by elements of from eight to 12 aircraft, relieving one another in rotation. On arrival at the designated area, the leader checked in with the flight leader being relieved and also with the Air Support Forty on the ground. The relieving element was then ready to act on information received from the ground, and to carry out the standard operating procedure of patrolling sheed to a distance of 35 pdles to seek out the enemy, to attack suitable targets, and to report his positions to the armored column. The number of aircraft employed and their bomb load varied with the amount of enemy armor opposing the movement of the American column and the possibility of encountering enemy aircraft. For example, in the area between Le lines and Fonteinebleau, where few thick-skinned enemy vehicles were encountered, it was possible almost to dispense with carrying bombs, since the desired results could be obtained by strafing. Areor-piercing incendiary amunition was found to be the most effective for strafing, as for other purposes, and experience proved that tanks could be set on fire by strafing attacks from the rear. In the Mantes-Cassicourt region, close to Paris and the energ's fighter fields, only one-third of our aircraft were bombed up because of the frequency of encounters with enemy circuaft. The damage inflicted by intense light flak over concentrations of energy





troops rendered operations under 3,500 feet impracticable. For dive bombing a 5,000-foot coiling with broken cloud was required. The effective radius for the P-47 with full bomb load but without spare tank was 200 miles. The spare tank (150 gallons) increased this distance to 350 miles. For the P-51 the radius was 325 miles on fighter sweeps without tanks, or about 600 miles with it. The most frequently employed loading was two 500-pound GP bombs with instantaneous fuze. This bomb was suitable for use against most military installations not protected by reinforced concrete or masonry. For rail cutting an eight- to 11-seconds delay-fuze was employed. Frag clusters and 200-pound frags were on occasion employed against personnel and thin-skinned vehicles, notably against the concentrations in the Argentan pocket. Hapalm, placed in belly tanks provided with a detonator and dropped from minimum altitude without the use of a sight, was infrequently though profitably used.

Communications with the ground were often difficult and at times impossible—crowded channels, poor reception, and excessive "chatter" being frequently reported; but this situation was improved by a reassignment of frequencies. The enemy at times sought to confuse the situation by giving false directions to divert or to trap American aircraft. Demands for authentication usually disclosed the true nature of the sender, as in the extreme case where the enemy was asked—and failed—to sing "Mairzie Doats." 18

It is not to be assumed that uniform success attended all missions.

Eandon examples from the experience of 358th FB Group indicate that





results varied areatly and that they were at times disappointing. On 9 August this group dispatched 11 squadron-strength missions on assault area cover in the Le Mens-Laval-Fougeres region. In eight instances contact was established with the ground. In one case the indicated target could not be discovered, in another lack of fuel prevented investigation of the designated area. In four cases no targets were given to the covering planes. Furthermore, one of the squadrons -the last dispatched in the course of the day-was recalled, while seven brought their bombs back to base although planes from one of these (probably those assigned to escort and hence not carrying bombs) strafed horse-drawn artillery. Two enemy tank elements were, however, bombed; and gun positions were bombed and strafed in the course of the three other attacks delivered that day. On 23 August 358th Group flew eight missions to afford close cover to the 5th Infantry and 7th Armored Divisions in the area Etampes-Fithiviers-Montereau-Melun, Contact with ground was made in at least five cases, but again lack of fuel prevented search in one instance, while in another the given target was not located. One mission was recalled, one was reported uneventful, and bombs were returned to base by four others. missions attacked, their crews reporting direct hits on designated gun positions and on a supposed concentration of enemy troops, together with the strafing of tanks and horse-drawn artillery. In this connection, however, certain facts should be observed: first, that covering aircraft were available when needed: second, that when lack of fuel prevented investigation of an attack upon a designated target by



one squadron, the task could be passed on to that which relieved it; and third, that the constant presence of American planes in the assault area for the moment was a source of encouragement to our ground forces and provided them with a sense of security, while the effects upon the enemy were the exact opposite. Even when no air strikes were delivered, the aircraft of XIX TAC were serving the cause of direct air-ground cooperation.

Air-Cround Cooperation, 8 to 31 August

As has been frequently noted, air-ground communications were an essential to effective air-ground cooperation in the assault area. The brief narratives in the "Opreps" of the period are often inconclusive on this score. At times they report that contact was made and attacks delivered on a given mission, but do not specify that the targets were those designated by ground. In other cases they record attacks but do not mention ground contact, although such may well have been established. Accordingly such instances as exist which clearly indicate ground control of air-ground cooperation missions possess an unusual value since they establish the fact that highly significant results were obtained when communications worked well and when appropriate targets existed and were found. Examples of such action have added interest because of the types of situations or targets involved, the reported efficacy of air operations, and the techniques employed. Those given below are merely illustrative. They do not claim to be inclusive.



On 3 August a formation of 371st TE Group had bombed and strafed tanks east of Mortain when control referred them to a P-51, which led them to tanks and half-tworks under hedgerows in the same area. These were bombed and strafed, though with unobserved results. Two days later the same group was providing escort for XIX Corps in the vicinity of ingers. One of its formations was directed to a target reported to be horse-drawn artillery in woods; upon reaching the target, it discovered stationary trucks, which it bombed and strafed, reporting five destroyed. On the 10th, as the Argentan trap was being closed, ground vectored an element of 358th FB Group to tanks near Marolles: two of the six were left smoking as the result of direct hits. During the continued heavy fighting about Mortain on the same day "Hurphy" asked a formation of Z62d FB Group for an attack on 14 mortar positions north of the town. Fourteen 500-pound GP bombs completely silenced the position and draw the comment from ground that the results were the best ever achieved in air-ground cooperation.

Actions on 11 August afford further examples of effective operations. A squadron of 353th Group was giving cover in the Mantes-Angers area when it was vectored to woods southwest of Redon. Troops were seen running from the woods following the dive-bombing attack, which fact, together with the nature of ground fire received, suggested that an enemy concentration had been hit. As the result of a ground request received at XIX TAC Combat Operations, 303d Wing vectored a squadron of 358th Group to a railway gun which was holding up the

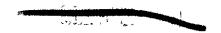




5th Infantry Division near Angers. Forty minutes after the request was received, direct hits destroyed the target. A squadron of 36th FB Group was informed that armored units were holding up our advance east of Alencon. Bombs dropped in the target area at St. Remy du Flain destroyed four tanks and the town was strafed with results unknown. Another squadron of the same group spotted an enemy convoy southeast of Sees. Ground authorized the attack which destroyed nine tanks and 24 I.T. Other squadrons of 36th Group were similarly active the same day. One was given targets northeast of Alencon by ground control and in a series of attacks claimed five tanks destroyed and eight damaged, the most notable results following an attack of a 10tank column which was first blocked on the road and then bombed and strafed. A second squadron was informed that an American column was held up by a Tiger tank northeast of Alencon. Fifteen 500-pound GP combs were dropped in the area--cresistance eliminated. Column advanced. "

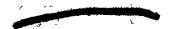
On 13 August a squadron of 371st FB Group, returning from bombing the Foret de Perseigne, was asked by ground to attack two convoys east of Argentan. Both were strafed with total claims of some 57 LT, 2 half-tracks, and 3 light arrored cars destroyed. In Brittany on the same day a formation of 358th FB Group was directed against a troop concentration in St. Gildas des Bois, and one of 354th FB Group to another near Paimpol. Both targets were hit. Squadrons of 373d FB Group operated in the Argentan-Falaise-Alencon area on 13 August. "Poodle" called upon one of them to eliminate a gun position





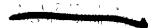
west of Alencon which was holding up a column, and "perfect team work with the flight destroyed the gun." Later (17 August), as American columns advanced through Dreux toward Seine crossings near Vernon, a flight of 362d FB Group was directed against enemy infantry and antitank positions at a road junction north of Dreux. Artillery marked the position with smoke. Boxbing and strafing followed and while trees and hedgerows denied observation of results to the air, ground forces congratulated the flight leader on silencing the guns.

Ten Tiger tanks at the Seine crossing near Bonnieres were smokemarked for attack by a formation of 371st FB Group on 19 August; combs delivered in the raid fell in the target area with no results observed. Ine 20th sau the battles west of the Seine from Mantes-Gassicourt to Vernon develop in intensity, with air making a substantial contribution to their success. Ground directed one flight of 558th FB Group against vessols ferrying trucks across the Seine. Their bombs missed one such ferry, but damage was inflicted by a strafing attack. Another element was vectored to an area where a tank battle was raging in the bend of the Seine near Moisson, and there damged two tanks. A third was sent against four smoke-marked tanks at La Leuniere (west of Vernon), where three bombs destroyed one tank and damaged two others. A fourth attackel a machine gun nest and claimed damage to five tanks. On the same day a flight of 362d FB Group checked Seine crossings west of Mantes at ground's request and was subsequently sent by another controller to bomb the toum of Pacy





sur Eure and three tanks in a nearby orchard. The town was bombed and then extensively strafed, while the tarks were found and one left ablaze. Another formation was vectored to the spot, and other flights of the same group were called upon to attack tanks west of Vernon. One bombed and strafed two with unobserved results. Another's mission was properly reported in greater detail. Ground had given the eight-plane flight a target of tanks which opposed elements of the 5th Infantry and 7th Armored Divisions. At the target the aircraft found American troops on one side of a wood with six well campuflaged enemy tanks in orchards and a town beyond. The flight leader searched the targets at very low altitude and directed individual planes to attack. Bombing destroyed five tanks, and strafing accounted for the sixth. On 23 August tanks were assigned to two elements of 362d Group between the Eure and the Seine to the east of Authouil. One squadron found a single snoke-marked tank and damaged it; the other found two, destroyed one, and damaged one. The same day 18 canouflaged tanks in woods east of Evreux were designated as the target for another squadron of the same group; it dropped three 500-pound GF bombs and six frag clusters in the target area with unobserved results. Again on the 22d, squadrons from 362d Group furnishing cover in the Chartres area attacked convoys. Ground cleared one such target for attack west of Fontainebleau, and directed that the other east of Sens be attacked. Claims of 32 MT destroyed resulted. On 25 August "Beagle" (4th Armored Division) directed a formation from 371st FB Group to a retreating German convoy east of Troyes from which was



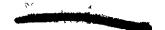
exacted a toll of 25 lT destroyed and 18 damaged. On the succeeding day planes of 40Jth FB Group were given a like target in the same area, now congested with fleeing enemy vehicles. They destroyed 20 lT.

On several occasions aircraft of XIX TAC were asked by ground units to act against enemy planes which were over our lines. Although the attacks were not heavy and countermeasures were not always successful, they deserve recording. American trucks under attack southwest of Avranches on 2 August asked action from a formation of 362d Group. It answered the call and discovered two 193-109's, which, however, escaped into the surrounding haze. On the 22d, planes from the same group responded to a call from the ground in the Vernon area where German strafing planes had left before ours arrived. Our formations had better luck on three other occasions. Once again it was an element of 362d Group which was vectored to two enemy aircraft over our lines at Le Mans. Cne was destroyed, and the 79th Infantry Division, which had caused friendly AAA to hold its fire during the encounter, voiced its thanks. Two enemy circuaft of those diving in the Dreux area, to which a formation of 371st FB Group had been vectored, were destroyed on 19 August. Finally, 362d Group reappeared upon the scene on the 23d in the region of Sons. The group had just bombed a gun position at St. Florentin then Betale" reported that it was being strafed near Villeneuve. 362d Group jettisoned the balance of its bombs, flew to the attack, and in the encounter which ensued with five 11109's claimed 2-1-0.



The inclances above cited of direct air-ground cooperation when ground requested that attacks be delivered against targets which it had selected or approved, coupled with the examples drawn from the first week of XIY TAC's activities, must serve as illustrations of the general run of its air-ground cooperation in the month of August. The number of such missions flown is so great as to forbid that all be narrated. Their number, and themanner in which they reported, do not justify the elaborate work of compilation that would be required to present an inclusive summary. Accordingly it remains only to mention a few episodes which, because of success achieved or because of the unusual nature of the target attacked, should appear in a narrative of air-ground cooperation for the month.

The advance of ground troops in this period moved at so swift a pace as often to outrun their own communications and to cause air to contact its assigned ground force at a point some miles in advance of that fixed for their rendezvous. Air reports of the position of friendly troops were therefore much to be desired and were frequently given in the formal reports which constitute our source of information. A few selected examples will illustrate the yoint. On 15 August 363d FB Group noted a steady stream of Allied vehicles moving towards Chartres. On 20 August 358th FB Group reported that our troops were entering Vernon. On the 27th the report of 36th FB Group included the remark that American troops were moving from the Sens area toward Troyes along every read. Such details are relatively





unimportant now. In the days of August 1944 when they were reported, they might contain information supplementing that of tactical reconncissance and ground intelligence and of great worth to air and ground alike.

The area of air-ground cooperation was that of the current battle front. But on occasion covering planes might sweep the region beyond it. For example, a formation of 371st FB Group, assigned to cover the XIX Corps in the vicinity of Angers, attacked a column of horse-drawn artillary and troops south of the Loire at that point on 10 August. The case is of greater interest because on the 6th, Central Meyland, in conference with General Patton, had assumed the tast of protecting the Third Army's southern flant as its columns raced eastward merely occupying key cities along the Loire. Here was an instance where air acted against a possible danger to that flank. Examples of such action south of the Loire are few, for as the invasion of southern France progressed, the main task which devolved upon XIX TAO was to conduct some armed reconnaissance and regular tactical reconncissance south of the river. Tactical reconnaissance could spot movements; armed reconnaissance could help prevent their combining into a real threat.

Unusual resolts attended some missions over the battle some. A three-squadron mission by 26th Group in the Argentan area came upon 900 to 1,000 vehicles standing on the reads on 13 August. The entire group strafed and reported the destruction of 400 to 500 (a dropped belly tank destroyed 12), thile another squadron in a later mission



in the same area destroyed 60. Three squadrons of the same group found MT bumper to bumper on the roads about Argentan on the 18th and claimed the destruction of 7%. The target was again unusual on the 27th, when one squadron of 36th Group struck road targets east of Nogent and northeast of Heaux with total claims of 20 horse-drawn vehicles, 8 pieces of horse-drawn artillery, 14 MT, and 3tanks destroyed; while another claimed 13 horse-drawn artillery pieces, 8 tanks, 25 MT, and 52 ammunition wagons in its attack on a convoy of 250 vehicles near Joigny. Such smashing attacks both stimulated and disorganized the German retreat. Action by an element of 362d FB Group produced remarkable results when it put seven heavy gans out of action near the Seine crossing at Le Manoir on 23 August.

Earlier, on the 12th, ground requested an attach by eight planes of 26th Group on six destroyers leaving the harbor of Lorient, one of which was left burning. Two actions against ground troops also should be mentioned here. On 9 August a formation of 363d FB Group giving armored column cover over the Brest peninsula, strafed a column of 100 horse-drawn vehicles until they waved the white flag. Even more remarkable was the action on the 14th of a squadron of 405th FB Group which was covering the 7th Armored Division in the Dreux-Hogent le Rotrou area. It had strafed trucks when it observed Germans in the road waving white flags. The squadron buzzed them several times as several hundred formed column and marched toward our lines. Ground was informed, and troops were sent out to receive that portion of the Wehr-wacht which had surrendered to XIX TAG.

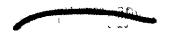




Other Tactical Operations in August

Armored column cover and armed recommaissance over the battle area constituted a first claim upon the resources of XIX TAC throughout August and absorbed the bulk of its energies. However, special missions and armed recommaissance directed against targets or areas well beyond the front lines were another feature of the command's ramifold activities. Since the many columns of TUSA were advancing over so great an area and at such considerable speed during this period. many of these missions are absort indistinguishable from those in the battle area. Moreover, many stand in some sort of relationship to the modified interdiction program then current, if only because rail and road targets—i.e., communications targets in general—were either assigned to, or selected by the leaders of such missions.

Chose more we must depend upon selected examples to present this activity in which XIX TAC was to some entent engaged on nearly every operational day during the month. For the sake of clarity, areas of activity will like is be selected. First, there is the region within the Seinc-Loire interdiction line where the relationship of armed recommaissance to the battle sons is generally most intimate. Second, activities in the area cast of Paris-Peine, Soissons, and eventually Verdun will be treated. Third, the area contheast of the capital—Hontargie, Gier, Troyes, and as far east as Newforstow-will furnish useful examples. Fourth, missions in the area south of the loire will be illustrated.





Transportation Targets

Lithin the Interdiction Zone. In the area vithin the interdiction liner most missions fall within the time limits of 1 to 19 August. At its outset there is a formation of 358th TB Group bombing hay wagons which concealed AAA guns near Lamballe (1 August), and another from 405th F3 Group destroying seven tanks and twice that number of IT in the vicinity of St. Ialo (3 August), as TUSA's columns overrun the Erect peninsula. At its close 362d FB Group is strafing barges southeast of Faris, destroying two and emerging more than 50, and the 405th FE Group is claiming 13 barges destroyed and 27 damaged in the lielun area (19 August), as American forces threaten to cross the river barriers south of the capital. In the intervening period a number of actions provide uneful examples. Armed reace (14 August) by two squadrons of 372d FB Group in the Donfront area resulted in claims of three rail cuts and 22 freight cars destroyed. Then squadrons of 36th Crown hit the marshalling yard et Chartres (7 August) 85 to 100 freight cars were left burning. A flight from the same group scored 16 direct hits on the rail center at lorient three days later and destroyed a flat battery and over 40 cars. In the Tours region three equadrons of 373d Group claimed on the 8th at least six rail cuts and the destruction of 38 cars, including many tank cars. The destruction of 13 tanks was reported after missions were flown by 36th Group in the Mantes-Lorient area on 10 August, and rail targets were hit by 405th Group in the Hogent-Vendone area two days later, with





claims of four locomotives and 68 cars destroyed. On 13 August 358th, 405th, and 406th TP Groups hit six trains during the day's operations. The claims of 405th Group included the destruction of 11 locomotives and over 120 cars, many of them carrying ammunition or oil; while 359th reported the destruction of 1T and hits on an armunition dump. In view of the battles racing in the Argentan area, such actions possessed peculiar value in denying supplier and reinforcements to the hard pressed enemy and in reducing his cap-billity to effect a withdrawal.

The Area Fact of Paris. Armed reconnecessance penetrated the area east of Paris throughout the month. On the 2d, 36th Group destroyed an ammunition train at Noyon, hit another at nearby Applily, and by strafing destroyed an oil train and many barges on the Cise canal. Five barges destroyed near Soissons, together with trains strafed, were among the claims of 373d Group on 7 August. Railway targets at Crepy en Valois, at Perome, and at Soissons were among those selected for attack by 363d Group's four missions on the 11th. Later in the month, coincident with the advance of ground forces to the east of Paris, actions on 25 August further digrapted enemy transportation in the general area of Soissons-Laon-Reims: 36th Group claimed 5 locomotives and 40 cars; 405th Group reported 19 locomotives and nearly 170 cars destroyed. In the vicinity of Soissons on the 27th, 373d Group sought out a different type of target and reported a barge, 34 17, and 6 tanks among its claims. At Youziers, on the Aisne northwest of Verdum,



rochets of 405th Group destroyed five gun positions on the closing day of the month.

The Arra Coutheast of Paris. The area southeast of Paris assumed unusual importance in the course of August-through it the enemy sought to funnel a portion of his troops in the course of his withdrawal, and into it MUSA's columns advanced on the roads to Proyes and beyond. Here, too, XIX TAC's armed reconnaissance missions were active. For example, 405th Group, operating in the Montargia area on the 10th, tombed a train of 30 cars, strafed 25 cars on a slding with fires and explosions resulting, and twice strafed a loaded troop train, inflicting heavy casualties upon its percennel. The group claimed a total of 11 locomotives and 146 cars destroyed during the day. On the following day the murchalling yard at Montargis was well hit by 406th Group and bombed by 373d Group on the 12th. In an attack by four squadrons of 360d Group on 18 August a railway bridge near Gien was rendered impassable by bomb damage; while at Joigny, further to the east, 373d Group out tracks, fired an assumition dump, and destroyed rolling stock on the 22d. Finally, on 28 August, a equadran of 405th Group Lade a particularly successful attack on the march alling yard at Newichoteau, come 25 miles south of Toul. Here they found fix localotives and a train loaded with JU-88 fuselages. Strafing destroyed three lecomptives and demaged the contents of the train.

South of the Loire. Actions in the area couth of the Loire possess special interest because of XI. TAG's mission to protect the exposed



southern flank of TUSA. Attacks on communications would inevitably affect the enemy's capacity to concentrate his forces. Such attacks were delivered as the following illustrations indicate. The 373d Group claimed the destruction of 15 freight cars at Villefranche and of tank cars south of Blois on the 9th. Two days later 406th Group reported the bombing of a train loaded with 60 tanks east of Montrichard. the complete destruction of a fuel train, and descree to another. On 12 August 373d Group reported tembing trains at Chambourg and Loches. while 382d Group bombed four rail centers south of Mantes. Trains south of Blois, near Issoudun, and at Mehun were struck by 373d Group on the 16th; the next day 405th Group attacked the railway center at Chateaurous, while 371st Group hit three others below Mantes. On 27 August 373d Group attacked canal and rail targets in the Bourges-Hevers area, while on the 28th two squadrons of 362d Group reported the destruction of no less than nine locomotives by bombing and four more by strafing in the region Saumur-Chateauroux.

The illustrations given above of XIX TAC's activity beyond the battle lines indicate clearly that such actions supplemented those of direct air-ground cooperation in powerful fachion. Such missions, and many others of like character, made their contribution to the total claims of XIX TAC, notably against communications targets, which are given below. The command was fulfilling one of the missions of a tactical air force by disrupting energy communications.

Aerial Combat and Airfield Attacks

Tormations of XIX TAC engaged in one or more air combats on some



17 days during August--a fact which indicates a greater activity on the part of the GAT than in the proceding conthe. Each day during the critical period 7 to 20 August the acrited by one or more such encounters. The enemy formations waried from small flight- to elements composed of from 20 to 80 aircraft; and then the larger units were encountered, American planes were usually output bored. On 7 August several encounters occurred. Inch of two squadrons of 373d Group met with SIplus on Ly aircraft in the vicinity of Chartres. They destroyed a total of five, while a third squadron in contact with a smaller for attenbrought the group's claims to 6-1-3 for the day. In eight-plane formation of 3021 Group spotted twice their number of German adversaft and shot down three. This in equal combat with 10 enemy planes over therene, circult of 354th Cropp claimed E-0-3 for a loss of two. A novel combit took place on the 11th then planer of 406th Group scattered on aggressive enemy formation by discharging their reducts. On the 18th eight direraft of 3631 Group bounced 12 OAF planes in the vicinity of Le line and scored /-1-1, thile another formation of the same group bounced 25 others in the same area and claimed 8-4-9. To locked were experienced in either combat. Three eight-plane sections of 3736 Group joined taitle with the CAT on 15 August. The first had bombed the carfield at Bretieny when they were bound by an equal matter of 1.4109's those pilote were aggressive but not tell trained. Chains of 5-0-3 were reported. The second section encountered seven enemy planet near Chartres and destroy of five; and the third, jurged by 20 Cornens near Corney, lost three plener in the engagement but downed four of its adversary's. The 16th say 35ith Group score 13-0-2 in





destroyed two, and forced the remainder to abandon their mission.

Two American planes were lost here, and as many more in a notable action over laintenan. Here the assemble area patrol of eight aircraft bounced a Cerran formation of 20 which was soon joined by 60 others. The entry was both aggressive and experienced, but was worsted in contact ranging from 11,000 feet to the deck, with claim of 11-0-0.

Equadron fortations of 400th Group met the enemy in the cir over the Faris area on 19 August. A first encounter with 30 energy planes resulted in the destruction of four. In the second, the American countries, can be without examination when attached by 12 of the CAF. hit the dec't, there skillful moneuvers on the part of imerican gilots enural two German planes to crash. One of our planes was lost in these engagements. Claims were C-C-1 on the SOCh, when eight planes of SOEd Group on a cover idealen met 32 Compresend a single pilot destroyed four. On 22 August 16 aircraft of 354th Group destroyed eight one. y plenes which they had bounced as they were taking off from an cirfield near Trernay. A squadron of 3620 Group counced 30 Germine over Mintee-Cascicourt with claims of 2-1-0, thile clearate of the 353th Group, flying cover for the ground forces west of Churtres, elei-ei (-0-1 for a loss of one in an encounter with 20 12-209 s. The 354th Group claimed a total of 36-1-8 on 35 impart as the result of three actions which developed in the course of flighter sweeps went of Teris. In the first, 11 of its plant bounced 20-plus of the entiry near Pethel, with claims of 10-1-3. In the second, a formation of 10 plumer attained to





Cermen formations of 10 each in the Boims areo and reported 13-0-2. In the third, two German formations of 16 each were attacked by 18 American aircraft thich claimed 13-0-3. The only U. S. losses were experienced in the third encounter when the report was four aircraft missing, no information on three others, and one pilot forced to built out. Other air encounters during the month by elements of XIX TAG brought the total score for the command to 162-16-24. On the one hand such figures, and the details of such actions as have been narrated above, show an effort on the part of the GAT to stay our advance on the ground or to protect its our bases in the Chartres-Paris-Beims region. On the other hand they exhibit the quality of American pilots as well as the contributions of XIX TAG to the maintenance of Allies air superiority.

A further contribution to that came result was made by XIX TAC in destroying energy sireraft on the ground, the total claimed for the month being 66-4-29. Unjor increases in this total were the concequence of attacks upon energy sirficlds serving the battle area. On 7 August 12 planes of 364th Group found a well computleged field near Chartres, where they destroyed 13; on the same day a equadron of 3631 Group destroyed eight and damaged three on another field in the same vicinity. Two days later 364th Group strefed energy sircraft behind revertents on a field north of Ecips and claimed C-0-2; and on the 32d it destroyed four on a grassed field at Epernay. On the 35th the same group reported claims of 10 destroyed near Ecouvais and three more in the vicinity of Ecips. Hine were claimed destroyed by 405th Group near Newfenateau





on 29 August. On infrequent occasions some damage was done to hangers and other installs tions in the course of these actions. Fields such as those at Bretigny and Chartres (15 August), at Creil (22 August), and elsewhere in the Paris area (23 August) were also attacked, although with less significant individual results.

The Breton Ports

No operational narrative of XIX TAC for the month of August would be complete without non-time of its purisipation in the assemble upon the enemy-hold ports in Brittany. Its activities at St. Malo were on a limited scale—o.g., 371st TD Group's missions against slaping in the harbor (4, 5 August) and its bombing mission against the Ile de Cezembre (33 August). At Breet it was another story as the ground forces began to exert strong pressure upon that citadel. The account of operations there will be given in another place.

Recomitulation

In conclusion, the statistics for the month's activity on the part of XIX 240 must be given. They exbrace, without distinction, all types of missions flown and therefore indicate the command's total effort and total claims. Both are improved we. The claims are of particular interact occase from them, better than from any other available evidence, an attache of the results achieved may be formal. It should be observed in this connection that the claims of most individual missions were small. The impressive totals are the result of supring up the results of the many missions flown during a month





of intermediativity. It is believed, moreover, that any possible exact ration of individual chains in more than offs to by the fact that observation of the affects of many missions was impossible, with resulting entries of IPO (no results observed) in the records. 19

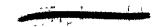
Describulation

Air Copretions	
Sorties	12,090
Loggra	114
Energy direruft (dir)	1631671
Decay aircraft (ground)	ES 4.02
Dacay aircraft (total)	220 20 62
	222-20-02
Ground Targets Destroyed or Damaged (pilots!	claims)
Motor vehicles	4,058
Tanks and arrored vehicles	460
Lorse-dra'n vehicles	
Locomotives	246
Lilrord car:	2,953
Dorges and river craft	1£5
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urear	* 10 A
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Since much of this improvive record was compiled as the result of air-ground cooper tion activities, the commandation of MIX IAS by Constal Publish, Commanding Constal, Third V. S. Army, is portional. His commandation in a croing General Jepland the Ironze Star is particularly portionat:



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The superior efficiency and cooperation afforded this dray by the forces under your community the test example of the combined use of air and ground troops I have ever utnessed.

Due to the threfere efforts of your flyers, large maters of hostile variety and troop concentrations shead of our edvancing column have been harecall or obliteration. The information proved directly to the head of the column from the sir has cared time and lives.

I am voicing the opinion of all the officers and son in this army than I express to you our additation and appreciation for your magnificant efforts.

IX Bower Comme

Podifications of the Interdiction Frommer

IN 50 continual to devote a considerable portion of its powers to the execution of the interdiction program during the month of August 1944. That program was, bothever, considerably modified during the yerico. On 2 imput it are processed at impy's request that no bridger. fuel deaps, or similar targets in the Britteny genineul should be etteched except on request of Weighter Group. The adversing columns of TUCA could, and did, make good use of bridges and of any fuel they with find. Furthervore, on the sure day and at the request of Indifth Army Group, it was determined that no real communications or facilities thould be lowbed; elt of, but not excluding, the line ofte. Combungs-Horkows an Ferch.-In Butte Controll a -Lord-inger- and thence to the sea following the line of the rains. Irring in appearant were exempted from this prohitition. In the line was letter shiffed to the exet. In 8 August no attacks were to be made on rail communications tary to sect of a line running fro. the six to Fourn and therea through Hinter-Charlester, Irven, Phinteron, Charless, and Clores to the Laire at

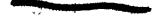




Decaying and down the later to I nice. The later bridges on this line were not to be bombed, but all others were on the eligibility list. The Later, at about 1900 on 17 August, AMT stipulated that no bridges of any hind were to be attached althout its approximation. Later still, on 37 August, it was stipulated that as far as possible no attache should be unde on railway cars left without enginer or blocked by rail cuts, unless it were known that they contained military appoints. All these prescriptions amereised a limiting effect, geographically or in respect to targets, upon the execution of the interdiction graph.

Contain of the above restrictions, coupled with the charging situation on the ground, caused a basic register of the interdiction program itself; bich are announced on 2 August. Under the terms of the achedules than issued, the Trimary Interdiction Project, enjoying first priority, was defined as including eight Coine ruling bridged down-river from Paris, 13 highest bridges over the river between Jaris and Louen, and six relivery bridges in the Paris-Orleans say. The purpose of this line of interdiction and, as previously, to days the energy access to the bestlessicial.

Second priority was accorded to 21 mile, periodes on the Second Dridge Interdiction line. This line started near the court at Itaples and swort in a wide we to the east of Paris, running through such critical points of Parenne and Non to the northeast, Figure and Pantovil to the sant, Pagent and Auxerra to the coutherst, and reaching the Loire at Haury. The purpose here was to ingede the enempia toward into the Paris area.



the sime general purpose course third priority to be given to nine railing bridges thich constituted the so-colled Oige-Kubr. Interdiction Line. If established and rantained, this usual reinforce such effects as were produced on the Casend Bridge Interdiction Line and wake access to Rari from the north doubly difficult. The bridges, all erossing the Circ, extended northwest from that river's junction with the Ceine, neer Cimilane, to Charny.

Pourth priority went to 19 supplementary interdiction points, attects on thick would reinforce results achieved by those upon tergets enjoying bigher priorities.

decause of its importance as a plan, the full achidule is given here.23

Interdiction Flan. 9 Amount 1944

STATE Interdiction Indicates. Time Enterities.

Endlity Dailgor

- L. Louin
 - 5. Le lasmil Ande
- O. Cheris: 13. Clarer

- C. Citari
- 6. Vernon
- 10. Lainteron 14. Recurerer

9. Innter-Cassicourt

- 3. Grivel
- 7. linter-Caralcourt
- Chartren-11. Olgene

- It I hair
- 0. lknter-Cascicourt
- 13. Charires (Coutheast)

Pickey Iridge

- 1. Rouan (vert)5. St. Fierra Je Vauvreje
- 2. Fourn (e of)8. Courseller our Scine Mrem

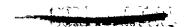
Litrate

- 7. Terron
- 10. Iragigari
- 11. Reulen
- 4. Pent de S. Form.court
- 13. Conflue
- 13. Foirm

CONTENT 3. Accord Orides Intendedien Line. Second Orienter.

- In. pler 8. It utor Irevial O. intry le Chateau
- Pooller Tirutt 10. Corbie 11. Kintouil
- J. Further 13. Les Foulons
- C. III.m. 7. Hontercourtl'. Sens
- 16. Fogent car Frinc
- li. Joign:
- hunre 10.
- 17. Clamecy
- 18. Hour cur Loire
- 19. Gien
- \mathfrak{P} . Sully
- 21. Orleans





<u>- Marchine in the Caracter Company of the Contract Contr</u>	SCHIDIT C.	Clev-Conbro	Interdiction Line.	Inira Priority
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1.	Confluer-Cire	4.	Valinfoic-l'Isla	7.	Verteria
	Liver		Adem	8.	Condicate
2.	Fontoine	5.	Dogwont		Chr. amer

3. Avere sur Oise 6. Greil Ct. Hawinin

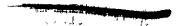
SECTION D. Smaller entery Interdiction Points. Fourth Priority.

			The state of the s		<u> </u>
1.	Econe-Mozieres	8.	Fithiviers	15.	Aveluy
2.	Incrmon	٥.	Sowner		Arien
	Conil: mg				Abbeville (cost)
' ±.	Melun (west)	11.	Tero on Tardenois		Abbeville (west)
	Montereou (cust)				Reaphle le Vieur
-	Gigora	•			and the same of th

7. Serguer M/Y 14. Plinecourt-Conde Police

A directive of Headquerters Finth Air Force trun_itted there ochecules to IN 20 together with a list of all tergeth corrently authorised for attack by it. It stated that in an over-all general priority communications, tergote ranked fir t. fuel dumps eccond, and an unitien dumps third. How tergets were to be purted to IN 20 by Headquarters Winth Mir Torce, if accepted in the dealy conference between that headquarters and invenced Economic terr in . From such actorials IN 30 was to and detailed relection of the targets and weight of attack for each day's open tions. It was to select the force employed with a vice to accuring adequate destruction in the initial attack and, where doubt wight emist as to the exact force necessary, to err on the side of over-situration. Righ priority targets attached unauccessfully were to be rescheduled inmediately. No attacks were to be made within the cities of Reims or Chartras, on the limitle bridge, or on shipping; and 0207 attacts were forbidden there the target's promisity to a city or village unnecessarily undergred its popul se or buildings. 22 In exercising its responsibilities, however, IN 20 was restricted by the



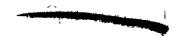


series of directives from 2 to 17 August. Brittany targets were prohibited (2 August), and those within the interdiction are were progressively reduced (2, 8, August). Although new interdiction targets were provided by the schedules of 9 August, all bridges were excluded from attack unless specific authorization were given on the 17th.

Interdiction Attacks

Seine Bridges

Under the new conditions described above, IX BC continued to follow up the interdiction program by attacking significant scheduled targets on each day in the period 1 to 16 August 1944. Bridges at two points on the Seine required further attention. A group mission against Hantes-Gassicourt probably rendered the structure unserviceable (3 August), and another cut the lines west of a temporary span (8 August). Oissel was attacked by a group of A-20's on the 6th and the approaches to the new span damaged. Possible damage to one of the bridges there was reported following the last of the attacks on Seine structures on 12 August. However, later ground investigation disclosed the fact that this railway bridge was being used for vehicular traffic at the time of the 12 August attack. Many vehicles were destroyed on the bridge, and the block thus created caused a notable traffic jem. For approximately five miles back into the country, ground observers noted a line of vehicles and guns. All vehicles had been either burned by their crews or set on fire by strafing.



Paris-Orleans Gap

In the Faris-Orleans gap six targets were bembed during this period. The few planes which completed their mission on 1 August did no damage to the railway junction at Epone-Mezieres, but three subsequent missions damaged the embankment or cut tracks. Lines were cut by the group which attacked the bridge at Maintenen (1 August), and while the first two of the three group missions against Chartres (1, 3 August) failed to destroy the bridge, the third (9 August) collapsed the east span. Epernon embankment was hit four times (4, 9, 10, 14 August), the last attack being delivered at Army request; and on each occasion damage was done to the lines there. Lines were rendered unserviceable by group attacks on the bridges at Nogent le Roi (7 August) and at Cherisy (13 August).

Loire Bridges

In the short period when Loire targets were generally open to attack (1 to 8 August), four were bombed by group missions. On 1 August the embankment at Bouchemain (near Angers) was cut and the bridge at Les Ponts du Ce rendered unserviceable. The same day approaches to the Cinq Lars bridges were hit, while the eastern structure was broken in two places by a follow-up attack on the 2d. Hits on the approaches to a bridge at Nantes made it temporarily unserviceable.

Inside the interdiction Zone

August directives speedily eliminated the targets within the





Seine-Loire are which had, in previous months, figured conspicuously in the operations of IX BC, and only a few attacks were delivered-all in the period 1 to 5 August. Both ends of the bridge at Negent sur Loire were severed by a bembing on the 1st, and severe damage caused by one at Marcy on the 3d. Seven bridges within the are were attacked by as many groups on 5 August, the most conspicuous results being those attained at Le Mans, where all lines were cut, and at La Croisille and Laigle, where approaches were reported severed. The other attacks, like those earlier delivered at Bourth (1 August) and La Chenaic (3 August), inflicted only incidental damage. On the 6th, however, a group attack on the Courtalain bridge destroyed its southern half and likewise a locemotive and 13 cars which were on the structure at the time of the bombing. The same day a group attack hit the approaches at Beaumont sur Sarthe. Thereafter there were no attacks on bridges in this area unless at Army request.

Bridges East of Paris

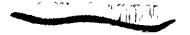
Although bridges on the new Interdiction line to the east of Paris (Schedule B, second priority) did not appear on a formal listing of targets until the 9 August directive, the campaign against them began on the 7th. Then the bridge at Nogent sur Seine was bombed by 14 aircraft to block the movement of divisions from the south into the Paris area, and hits were scored on tracks. On the same day the bridge at Corbie was partially destroyed by a group attack, while another caused the lines at Neuvy sur Loire to be



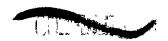
classed as unsorviceable. On 8 August no less than eight points on this line, ranging from Frevent in the north to Joigny in the south, were subjected to attacks of group strength. At Joigny hits were scored on the bridge and on a train crossing it. The structures at Manteuil, Feronne, and Jussy were reported unserviceable or probably unserviceable; and damage was done to the lines at Frevent, Doullens, and Les Foulons. Only at Inizy le Chateau did the attack lack effect. This bridge again escaped injury on 10 August; but on that day the northern half of the structure at Mogent sur Seine was destroyed by a group attack, and hits were scored on the approaches at Peronne. Fismes was again a target on the 11th and the 16th: the first attack made the lines unserviceable, and results of the second, when only three planes attacked, are unknown. On 13 August, Beautor was bombed for the first, Doullens for the second, and Peronne for the third time since 8 August. These group assaults damaged Beautor. rendered Doullens unserviceable, and probably displaced the structure at Peronne. Since the lines at Les Foulons were expected to be passable by 13 August, this target was again attacked, with probable heavy damage, on the 14th. On that day a group mission against Frevent blocked through traffic in the marshalling yards there. Altogether, 12 of the 21 points on Schedule B had been attacked between 7 and 16 August, with a result of six bridges partially destroyed or rendered unserviceable.

Oîse-Sambre Line

Attacks on the nine targets which appeared on Schedule C of the



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9 August directive were begun on the day it was issued, when five of them were bombed. After the second of two attacks on Chauny, damage to the bridge and its embankments classed it as unserviceable. Cuts at both ends were reported at Beaumont and the center span at Completine was destroyed; while at Valmandois-1'Isle Adam the lines were rendered unserviceable. A sixth bridge was struck on the 11th, when with a view to impeding the movement of three enemy divisions reported moving into the Paris area from the northeast, Creil St. Maximin was severely damaged. Second attacks on Pontoise (14 August) and Valmandois-1 Isla Adam (15 August) rendered the lines unserviceable in each case. On the 15th an attack on Avers sur Oise probably broke the bridge there. This attack, and one whose bombs blanketed the marshalling yard at Compiegne the same day, were designed to block an enemy division moving from Belgium into the Paris region. Nine attacks, each in group strength, had blocked traffic over seven Oise bridges, at least temporarily, between 9 and 15 August and by so doing contributed to the effectiveness of the interdiction program.

Air Strikes on the Enemy's Line of Retreat

While not integral parts of the formal interdiction program, certain attacks by IX BC on enemy communications possess special significance because of their relationship to the tactical situation on the ground. That the enemy intended to withdraw eastward from the Argentan area was suspected as early as 12 August; by the 14th such





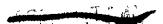
a movement was definitely under way across the Touques and Risle rivers towards Rouen. By the 20th, German troops were packed in the wooded areas on the west bank of the Seine in the vicinity of Rouen at ferry crossings which they could use freely only at night.

As this situation developed, IX BC was called upon to act.

Earlier it had devoted its energies to preventing enemy movement into the battle area. Now it acted with opposite intent--to prevent his movement from the battle area so that his armies might be there destroyed. Action followed action in the period 12 to 27 August, with this mission always in view.

On 12 August six groups were assigned the task of blocking roads west of Falaise and Argentan about such centers as Conde sur Moireau, Flers, Eriouze, and La Ferte Mace, although the towns themselves were to be avoided. Some 40 points were specified for attack. Aircraft were over their targets from 1931 to 2051 hours, and 153 planes dropped 237.55 tons of 100-500-, and 1,000-pound GP bombs, some with delayed-action fuzes to harass night movements. In the case of 13 road points, success was achieved in varying degree; in the majority of cases either no bombing took place or no damage was ascertained. Since some concern developed lest allied advance into the bombed area be hampered by 12-hour delay fuzings such as had been employed on some of the bombs dropped, later missions of like character used a six-hour delay as a maximum.

The following day the road net in the general area of Lisieux served as the objective, and upwards of 70 points were marked for attack. These ranged from Pont l'Eveque in the north, through





Bernay and Broglie, to the vicinity of Rugles in the south. A total of 281 aircraft from eight groups dropped over 430 tons of 250- and 500-pound GP bombs, with results generally more gratifying than those of the previous day. Damage was done in some 30 places where bombs fell on or across roads or where intersections were reported blanketed.

At Army request, bridges over the Touques River, which flows through Lisieux to the sea, were assigned as targets for three attacks by 18 to 19 planes each, on 14 August. Hits were scored at Notre Dame de Courson, and strikes covered two bridges near Quilly le Vicomte. At Gosset no damage was done.

On the 15th, road junctions east of the Risle River and four bridges over the river itself were ordered attacked by four groups. A total of 125 aircraft was dispatched, but all were recalled because of unfavorable weather. The Risle bridges were, however, rated as of such importance in the effort to block the enemy's escape routes that attacks were made on them in the course of the two following days, with a PFF plane leading each of the attacking formations. The first attempt on 16 August to bomb the bridges could not be carried through, but the second resulted in the boming of five on PFF. At Thibouville results were unknown. Possible damage was reported to structures at Fort Audemer and Brionne. On the 17th four of the bridges attacked the previous day were rescheduled for attack, together with six others. Weather was not favorable: two of the 11 groups participating did not bomb, while others bombed on PFF. Of 375 planes dispatched, 289 attacked, dropping



466.75 tons of bombs. The bridge at Beaumontel was blanketed and that at Launay possibly demaged, while the approaches at La Ferriere, Beaumont le Roger, Nassandres, Pont Authou, and Pont Audemer were hit. A second assault on the 17th against five other bridge targets in the same area again employed PFF. Four groups participated, one dividing its strength between two objectives, the others concentrating on one. A total of 238 tons of bombs were dropped by the 123 aircraft attacking. The bridge at Le Bourg was reported blanketed and the approaches damaged at Appeville, Foulbec, and at one of the structures at La Rabellorie. Later investigation on the ground indicated that road craters had temporarily blocked traffic in the attacks of 16 and 17 August at Brionne and Thibouville. In the first instance the town was badly damaged and heavy casualties inflicted on civilians. In the second, a large

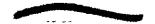
A few days later IX BC joined fighter-bombers in the effort to harass the enemy, who was then seeking to cross the Seine. On 20 August attacks on three forest areas just west of the Seine were planned, but only one could be carried out. Two groups, however, dropped over 120 tons of 260-pound frags on German concentrations in the Foret de la Lande. Nearly a week later like targets were hard hit in the same area. On the 26th seven groups attacked, followed by seven more the following day. On the 26th, 179 aircraft dropped 232.5 tons of 500-pound GP bombs and 260-pound frags; on the 27th, 141 planes bombed with the same weight of 500-pound GP bombs

together with 260-pound and 500-pound frags. In each attack the majority of the bombs were reported to have fallen in the target areas. No other evidence of the results of these attacks is available, although it is assumed that enemy losses were severe.

Enemy Supplies

Throughout the better part of August fuel and ammunition dumps figured as second and third priority targets for IX BC. Such targets, located in some 30 places, were in this period the objectives for 34 attacks delivered by 12 to 132 aircraft. The purpose of the attacks was to destroy stocks upon which German troops in the battle zone depended, and thus further to attenuate their supplies of vitel materials.

In the early days of the month, when the Argentan pocket was taking shape but before the mass withdrawal began on the 14th, 13 dumps in or near the battle area were bended. The familiar target of the Foret d' Andaine was subjected to attack by four groups which dropped over 164 tons of bends (6 August). Dumps in the Foret de Sille (5 August), the Foret de Perseigne (6 August), and Le Lude (2, 7 August) were also struck. All of these were in the immediate area of conflict, but hits were also made on targets some little distance from the troops which they served. Among them were dumps in the Rouen area at Caudebec (2, 10 August) and the Foret de Roumare (11 August) and another at Le Buisson near Evreux. To the west of Paris, fuel stocks at Maintenen were struck (3 August), and to the south of the capital those at Corbeil were bombed (13 August). Along



the Loire, dumps were selected for attack in the Foret de Blois

(6, 7 August), in the Foret de Montrichard, east of Tours (11 August),
and at Bauches du Desert in the Nantes area (7 August).

From 15 August the dumps stacked were somewhat farther removed from the battle area, although their relationship therewith was so close as to warrant army requests for bombings. Targets close in to Paris were bombed at the Foret de Chantilly (15 August), the Foret de l'Isle Adam (18 August), and Valentan (18 August). Others were hit in the Compiegne-Chauny-Laon region, Compiegne, itself, and Compiegne-Clairox (26 August), the Foret de l'Aigue (28 August), St. Cobain (26 August), Parisis (28 August), and the Foret de Samoussy (27 August). In the Beauvais area attacks were made at Larseilles en Beauvaisis (15 August) and at Fournival (26 August). Other attacks were made yet farther north in the Somme region at such points as Ham (28 August), Doullens (28 August), and farther to the west in the vicinity of Arques (29, 31 August), and at Querrieu (28 August).

In only a few cases is there direct evidence of results achieved. Reports of rany craters observed following the two attacks on the ammunition dumps at Le Lude (2, 7 August), of explosions and fires produced at Compiegne (26 August), and of like results at Doullens (28 August) and the Foret d' Arques (31 August) are exceptional. Even more exceptional is the statement that at Corbeil (13 August) the point at which fuel was transferred from tank cars to barges was completely obliterated by a group attack. In the other cases reports state merely that bombs fell in the target areas



or declare that the results of bombing were non-assessable, as in the extreme cases of night bombing of dumps at the Foret de Sille (5 August) and the Foret d' Halouze (13 August). In the course of the month over 1,600 aircraft participated in these ettacks, dropping some 2,288 tons of bombs.

The Breton Ports

IN BC participated in the efforts to reduce the enemy strong-holds at St. Malo, on the near-by Ile de Cezembre, and at the fortress of Brest during August 1944. In all cases the actions, planned in conjunction with the assaulting forces, are to be classified as air-ground cooperation and related to the efforts of Ninth Air Porce fighter-bombers against the same objectives.

St. Malo

In the case of St. Malo, IX BC attacks upon the citadel at St. Servan began on S August with an attack by two groups carrying 1,000-pound GP bombs. On the 11th a single group dropped 500-pound GP's, and on the 15th three groups bombed with 250-pound GP's, 100-pound incerdiaries, and 1,000-pound SAP's. A total of 208 aircraft attacked on these three occasions, dropping 319.5 tons. The target was an underground fortress, well provided with deep shelters, whose pill boxes, gun emplacements, and strong-points were all protected by heavy reinforced concrete. No penetration of these structures was found when the citadel was examined by ground observers, nor was evidence discovered of damage done by incendiaries.





Prisoners: statements indicated that the bombings were hardly felt in the shelters, and that attacks from the air did not influence their 29 surrender on 17 August.

Ile de Cezembre

The Ile de Cezembre, which controlled the deep-water channel to St. Malo and the approaches to Granville, was likewise attacked several times by Ninth Air Force mediums as well as by its fighterbombers. One group delivered a night attack with the aid of flares shortly after midnight 6-7 August, and reported that 250-pound and 500-pound GP's scored near misses on the batteries which were holding up the ground attack on St. Malo. Heavier attacks followed. Two groups, equipped with pathfinders and armed with 500- and 2.000-pound GP's and 1,000-pound SAP's, bombed the island again on the 11th. On the 30th two groups led by pathfinders dropped 500-pound and 1,000pound GP's in the target area, while the next day, when fighter-bombers attacked with Napalm, mediums of three groups, again led by pathfinders, mixed in a few 500-pound GP's with their main loads of 1,000-pound SAP's. Ground and navel artillery had shared in the bombardment of the target -- en island one-half mile long and one-quarter mile wide. When ground observers had an opportunity to exemine the island, they were struck by the fact that the entire island was covered with craters and debris produced by the serial attack. Open gun emplacements and an AAA position had been demolished. Barracks and the distillation plant had been destroyed. However, while Napalm had burned out one shelter it had appearently produced little effect on personnel.





Underground sheltors, magazines, control points, and the well protected OP were intact and casualties were apparently few. The surrender on 2 September was in part induced by a water shortage to 30 which the destruction of the distilling plent had contributed. A total of 255 aircraft of IX EC had attacked the island and dropped a total of 465.5 tons of bombs. On 3 September the Commanding General, 83d Infantry Division expressed his appreciation of IX EC and IX TAC's air attacks of 31 August which had demolished buildings that could have been used as firing positions in defense of the beaches, sheared off weapons in the open, and by removing earth from camouglaged shelters and pillboxes, allowed heavy artillery to reduce the latter with direct laying. "Undoubtedly the will of the defending troops to resist was greatly lowered by the combination of heavy bombardment, the jellied gasoline bombs, and the heavy artillery, to the point where surrender was necessary."

Initial Attacks at Brest

As American forces closed in about Brest, two efforts were made by IX BC to destroy in the harbor ships which it was reported the enemy planned to use to block its approaches. On the 7th one group ettacked; on the 9th, two. No damage was done by the first, while possible damage to one ship was claimed after the second attack. Later attacks on Brest are nerrated below.

Recepitulation

In the course of the month of August IX BC had dispatched 9,142



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aircraft of which 6,554 attacked. Thirty-four aircraft were lost and 1,032 damaged. Total tonnage of bombs dropped was 10,470.69. Claims 32 were 2-0-2, and total casualties 204 in combat missions.

The Minth Air Force in the Brest Campaign, 25 August-19 September 1944

The air-ground assault on "Fortress Brest," postponed because of weather unfavorable to air operations, was finally launched on 25 August 1944. It was resolutely continued until 19 September, by which date Brest itself, and likewise the Crozon peninsula, had been entirely reduced. Because it constitutes a distinct entity, it is treated in full here regardless of the time limits elsewhere observed in this section.

The Roles of IX Bomber Command XTX Tactical Air Command

Direct air-ground cooperation was afforded to the ground assault on all save three of the 26 days involved. Fighter-bombers were active on each of the 23 operational days of the period, while the weight of medium bombardment was applied to Erest's perimeter defenses on six days during the assault period. Heavy bombardment of other air forces was also employed, but the main responsibility for tactical air operations fell to the Minth Air Force. Until 9 September, when it was declared that Brest no longer constituted top priority for the Minth Air Force, SHARF determined that air strikes in that area should be accorded a very high, and at times the highest priority because of the value then attached to the port as a potential supply base. Therefore, when IX Ecober Command operated, it operated in strength from its



bases in Essex and those in the Cherbourg peninsula, and fighter-bombers rendered vigorous air-ground cooperation under the direction of XIX TAC throughout the period. The position of this command was unusual, since at one and the same time it must cover the operations of TUSA in the east and those against Brest in the west, and hence direct operations at points over 300 miles removed from one another. Its own resources were not always sufficient to meet the demands of both; hence in the period of intense effort at Brest from 5 to 10 September, two or more groups of IX TAC were placed under the operational control of XIX TAC on each of those six days. On 5 September alone XIX TAC employed its own seven groups plus five from IX TAC.

Coordination of medium bombardment with ground effort occasioned some difficulties. Information as to the structure of the targets to be bombed was at times so meager as to prevent the selection of the most appropriate bomb loads and fuzings. On occasion targets could be designated only by means of coordinates, a fact which made their identification difficult at the time of the attack and therefore led to spotty results. Fighter-bombers were rather more fortunate. Their normal function was to furnish air-ground cooperation to the assaulting units, the ideal situation being that in which they gave continuous cover during the operational period. The techniques of sir-ground ecoperation were essentially those which have been earlier described; and contects with the Air Support Farties of VIII Corps were generally successful, the targets assigned by them being attacked from the air. However, since the enemy fired white smoke shells on our positions in an effort to cause them to be attacked by friendly aircraft, colored



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smoke came into use to mark enemy targets. In default of targets given them by the ground, fighter-bombers might attack predetermined targets, and in some instances they were given their targets at the time of take-off. Leather over bases, or over the Brest targets, frequently conspired to reduce the intended weight of Ninth Air Force attacks or the continuity of cover and on occasion forced hurried briefings when a mission had to take advantage of a momentary break.

The Initial Air Strikes, 25 August

On 25 August, the first day of the assault, air strikes by the fighter-bombers were chiefly directed against shipping. These unusual targets were attacked successfully. The 362d FB Group flew four missions and caused the explosion of a cruiser which was observed burning the next day. Two vessels were destroyed by rockets in the course of 406th FB Group's nine missions. In four missions by 358th FB Group two vessels were claimed destroyed and a third was left burning. The same dey, one group of IX BC was assigned to each of nine targets in the Brest defenses -- four coastal batteries, three AAA positions, and two strong points. In only three cases were positive effects reported: two gun positions severely damaged at Kerviniou coastal battery, one direct hit and a concentration on the AAA battery at Pointe d'Espagnols, and tracks and a road cut near the strong point in the arsenal. A total of 278 aircraft of IX BC had attacked, dropping 389.7 tons of bombs (100-, 500-, and 1,000-pound GP's together with 260-pound frags).





Air-Ground Cooperation during the Assault

As the air-ground attack progressed, IX BC continued to attack the same types of targets, the only notable variation being the bombing of bridges over the Penfeld River (1 September), while fighter-bombers attacked ground targets almost exclusively. Troop concentrations, barracks, flak positions, and above all, gun positions figure in the list of their designated targets with an almost monotonous regularity. Pilots' reports are of necessity less informative than one would desire. They specify the point attacked, on occasion declare that a battery was silenced, but more often are content to declare results poor, fair, good, or excellent, or to state that their bombs hit the target area. The nature of the attacks, the character of the targets, and the atmospheric conditions rendered more exact reports impossible. Because of adverse weather, coupled with the absence of flak, bomber attacks were often delivered from altitudes of 8,000 feet or less.

The two days 5 and 6 September saw an unusual effort on the part of medium bombers and fighter-bombers alike. The latter flew an average of over 40 missions each day with an average of over 500 aircraft dispatched on missions which attacked. The former attacked with 310 bombers on the 5th and 545 on the 6th, the planes dropping 517 and 984.65 tons of bombs, respectively. Fighter-bombers were to reach to greater heights than previously on 8 September, when 49 missions were flown with 574 aircraft dispatched to share in the operations against Brest.



Scale of Winth Air Force Effort

The total Ninth Air Force effort in air-ground cooperation is set forth in the following table. In it are listed only those attacks which were carried through by some of the planes dispatched.

Air Operations Against Brest 25 August to 19 September 1944

		Fighter-bombers		Medium Bombers	
		Missions	A/C Dispatched	A/C Dispatched	A/C Attacking
Aug.	25	17	157	320	278
Aug.	26	9	143		
Aug.	27	7	144		
Aug.	28	3	45		
Aug.	31	6	90		
Sep.	1	11	103	187	115
Sep.	2 3	2	24		
Sep.	3	20	313	252	181
Sep.	4	1	12		
Sep.	5	42	544	364	310
Sop.	6	39	463	706	545
Sep.	7	18	205		
Sep.	8	49	574		
Sep.	9	24	189		
Sep.	10	11	172		
Cop.	11	21	168		
Sep.	12	12	99		
Sep.	13	2	16		
Sep.	14	6	4 8	230	144
Sep.	16	12	69		
Sep.	17	9	56		
Sep.	18	5	32		
Sep.	19	5	27		
Totals		331	3,698	2,059	1,573

Results Achieved

Most unfortunately, there is a decided lack of exact evidence as to the results produced by these attacks which involved such considerable use of Kinth Air Force resources over so long a period.





Ground investigations plus a few statements on the part of the ground forces do, however, permit some general observations and afford examples which are helpful. That our exact knowledge should be so limited is due to two factors: first, the fact that intense artillery fire in addition to various types of air bombardment so churned up the area within the perimeter defenses as to prevent the evaluation of most Ninth Air Force attacks; and second, the absence, at present writing, of any considerable mass of evidence derived from the ground forces participating.

Fortified Positions

emplacements were negative. These structures proved practically impervious to air attack, and there appears to be no authenticated report of one being so destroyed. A 1,000-pound bomb falling close to a battleship-type turret of five-inch steel failed to inflict damage upon it. In the case of masonry forts there is one example which shows that medium bomberdment could be effective. Ft. Keranaux was an old stone structure provided with a moat. Three attacks (1, 3, and 6 September) completely reduced the old fortifications and partially filled the surrounding moat, although modern emplacements suffered little. That the bembings should have been so effective is possibly due to the fact that the target was easily identifiable from the air. Attacks by mediums upon open emplacements seem to have produced good results, the number of bombs dropped in such actions increasing the chances of scoring the needed direct hits.

Fighter-bombers merely by their presence in an area served to



silence the fire of enemy artillery which they threatened. However, dive bombing of modern emplacements not previously fractured by sustained artillery fire was not effective. Direct hits on open emplacements were destructive, and blast and fragmentation effects were produced by near misses.

Evidence Supplied by Ground Commanders

From 29th Infantry Division sources come isolated examples of results produced by air strikes. Five days' softening of the strong point at Kergonant was followed by a dive-bombing attack immediately preceding the ground attack on 7 September. In the final air strike by formations of P-47's, damage was done to material and personnel which, coupled with the fact that air action kept the Germans under cover, allowed the capture of a first critical position. It was much the same story at the strongly defended position on Hill 89. The air strike here registered only one direct hit, the balance being near misses; but again the enemy was kept under cover as the 116th Infantry Regiment advenced and seized the position. What was in some ways the most interesting example of direct air-ground cooperation was afforded by the action against Fort Toubroch on 3 September. The commander of the 5th Ranger Battalion asked fighter-bombers on air alert for a bombing of his objective. They complied, and as their last bomb struck, the Rengers closed on the fort and took it before its defenders had an opportunity to organize for further resistance. It was reported that leading elements of the Rangers reached the position six minutes after the last bomb fell. Eere the value of the close coordination of ground essault with air strike was fully demonstrated.

Evidence furnished by the 29th Infantry Division is supplemented by that of the 2d Infantry Division. On 27 August an air strike by 12 P-47's, coordinated with heavy artillery fire, knocked out Battery Domaine (coordinates 005047), producing marked effect on its bunkers and emplacements, some of which were only 200 yards from our front lines. A strafing (3 September) by eight Thunderbolts on enemy positions 150 to 200 yards in front of the 23d Infantry Regiment opened the way for their capture. Even when an element of 38th Infantry Regiment was strafed at the beginning of a run, the men who took the enemy strong point remarked that they were gled to have had the direct cooperation which had reduced an emplacement. An allafternoon attack, in which targets on Hill 90 were pounded by artillery and bombed and strafed from the air, allowed the hill to be occupied without resistance the following morning; while Hill 100, which constituted the dominating terrain feature at the eastern edge of Brest, was completely neutralized by dive bombing and heavy artillery. In consequence it fell without excessive loss to the infantry. The infantry break-through at Ilico on 11 September followed immediately after fighter-bombers had bombed in the vicinity of the enemy's center of resistance.

General Conclusions

Such facts as the above do not give the full measure of the results produced by the several hundred missions flown by the Ninth Air Force in the assault upon Brest. They do, however, prove that on



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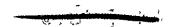
some occasions air made notable contribution to the success schieved, even when only small air formations were employed. They further suggest that the almost constant presence of our aircraft over the assault area not merely produced an adverse effect upon the enemy's norale but also lessened his capacity to resist by reducing the volume of his artillery fire. In this connection it should be observed that our air supremecy over Brest was complete throughout the assault period. There were no encounters with enemy planes, only two aircraft of IX BC were lost in the course of its attacks, and fighterbomber losses were remarkably low. The rate of loss from flak was undoubtedly reduced by artillery fire on flak positions prior to major air strikes. In addition it is evident that effective air attacks could be delivered against enemy positions close to those occupied by friendly troops--the entire absence of ground casualties from attacks by friendly planes constitutes further proof of the possibility of such actions. Furthermore, the value of air alert as an instrument of air-ground cooperation was fully demonstrated. Its use averted the hazards incident to planned missions, which must of necessity be laid on well in advance of the attack and without knowledge of rapid changes in the datails of the ground situation produced in the interval between the briefing and the actual air strike. The device likewise allowed the ground commander to concentrate air power on active targets close to his own lines and to effect such concentration within the shortest possible time limit. Ground agreed with air on these points.

Two other matters connected with air's participation in the reduction of Brest require mention. First, air was able, as a commander



of the 29th Infantry Division testified, to make effective attacks upon targets beyond the range of ground observation. Second, throughout the assault tactical recommaissance planes of the Ninth Air Force assisted in directing the fire of artillery. G-3 Air of Twelfth Army Group stated on 7 September that artillery officers felt that the spotting by aircraft engaged in "Arty R" throughout the 37 Brest campaign had been the best that they had experienced.

Attacks by the Minth Air Force continued until 19 September. On that day early missions were flown, but others were recalled, control informing them that "the war was over on the Crozon peninsula."



Chapter VI

OPERATIONS IN SEPTEMBER 1944

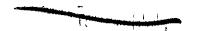
The Ground Situation

Ground force operations for September 1944 fall into two wellmarked phases embracing equal portions of the month. The first, a
continuation of the Battle of France, was marked by further German
withdrawals end persisted until 14 September. By that date American
forces had reached Menstricht, faced the Siegfried Line from Aachen
to the Moselle, reached that river at Thionville and in the Metz
area, and crossed it south of Pont a Mousson and Maney. Initial
penetration of the Siegfried Line south of Aachen on 15 September
began the Battle of Germany and marked the advent of the second
phase of the month's operations, a phase in which operations stood
in marked contrast to those of the preceding period. Problems of
supply, weather, and terrain limited American capabilities, while
the enemy reorganized his forces and generally stood his ground,
giving way only at points in the Aachen area, in the vicinity of
Metz, and south of Nency.

Ninth Air Force Movements

Headquarters

The further advance of the ground forces in September determined that movement should continue to be a feature of the



life of Ninth Air Force units. Its main headquarters gave up its
English station at Sunninghill Park and established itself at
Chantilly, to the north of Paris (15 September). Advanced headquarters, streamlined to provide only essential operational personnel,
accompanied Twelfth Army Group to Versailles (6 September) and Verdun

[20 September]. In keeping with the movement of the armies with
which they were associated, the headquarters of IX and XIX TAC moved
eastward. Versailles (2 September) and Jamioula, near Charleroi in
Belgium (11 September), served as headquarters for IX TAC, while
XIX TAC's headquarters first moved to Chalons sur Marne (13 September)
and later to Etain, near Verdun (22 September). The first continental
headquarters of IX BC was opened at Chartres on 18 September.

Combat Units

These movements of headquarters were paralleled by the displacement forward of combat units. By the end of September the fighter-bember groups of IX TAC were based on fields in the region of St. Quentin and Cambrai and on others in the Reims area, with a single group at Florennes in Belgium. The group last mentioned had occupied a Normandy base at the outset of the month. Its third move placed it on the most easterly field assigned to IX TAC at the month's close, by which time three other groups of the command had begun their movement to Belgian fields. The requirements of air operations in the Brest area caused XIX TAC to maintain some of its groups in the western area until after the reduction of the fortress on 18 and 19 September, but by the end of the month they were all



based on fields in proximity to Reims or farther to the south in the Vitry le Francois area. By 2 October the last of IX BC's groups had left Britain and become operational on the continent. The 97th Wing was by that date based on airfields just south of Paris and 99th Wing well to the north of the capital, on airfields scattered from Cormeilles through Beaumont sur Cisc and Beauvais to Roye Amy; while 98th Wing had shifted from its first continental bases to a second series in the vicinity of Dreux, Chartres, Chateaudun, and Crleans.

Despite such forward movements, the fighting front outren the advance to new operational sites until mid-September, and the fighterbombers in particular operated under disadvantages. For them the increase of the distance from their bases to the front lines was critical since an increase of that distance from 50 miles to over 100 miles served to increase the average duration of fighter sorties from two hours to almost three hours, and to boost their operational gas consumption by 50 per cent. A change from one field to another 200 miles nearer to the front did not obviate the necessity of using auxiliary fuel tanks, nor did so great an advantage as might be imagined accrue when a field which had been bombed early in the month was occupied before its close. On occasion the necessity of providing sufficient fuel caused a limitation of fighter-bomber tactics by preventing the use of external loadings. In early September the combination of tactical necessity and the location of their bases forced fighter-bombers of XIX TAC to make an initial flight to such forward bases as Chateaudun, Coulommiers, Juvincourt, Reims-Champagne,

and St. Dizier, where they refuelled before flying their missions. Even then the omnipresent problems of providing adequate fuel supplies and services occasioned further problems. On one occasion fighter-bonbers abandoned a mission because of lack of fuel at the advanced base; while on another, dolays in refueling caused the same result. Such difficulties were only in part offset by using advanced bases for roulement planes refueling at these bases on flight to a first mission, returning for fuel and emmunition, and flying a second mission therefrom. The demands upon transportation caused by movements at a time when transport facilities were limited, coupled with difficulties of maintaining effective communications between combat groups and IX AFSC, caused the ordnance supplies of fighter units to become perilously low on occasion. The absence of trucks interfered with the effort to prestock airfields before they became operational, and with their resupply after they were in use. The absence of communications caused requisitions to move slowly with resulting delays in filling them. In spite of these handicaps no operations were canceled due to the absence of ordnance supplies. the front was in some measure stabilized in mid-September and when further eastward movements of bases were effected in a later period could these problems be reduced in size and their effect upon operations be limited.

Organizational Changes

Certain organizational changes in the Ninth Air Force require mention here. Relieved of its assignment to the Ninth as of

26 August, IN TCC disappears from the operational narrative. September IX BC was redesigneted as the 9th Bombardment Division, by which name it will be described throughout this chapter. close of the month a somewhat confused but brief relationship was established between the Ninth Air Force and XII TAC. This command was part of the Twelfth Air Force, and had accompanied the Seventh U. S. Army in its drive from southern France into Alsace. As directed by higher authority, the Ninth Air Force assumed operational control of XII TAC units on or about 24 September, and soon afterwards was delegated the administrative responsibility which USSTAF had assumed. Leter, the establishment of the First Tactical Air Force (Provisional), designed to function with Sixth Army Group, of which the Seventh U. S. Army was a part, led to the attachment of XII TAC units to it. However, some measure of operational and administrative control over XII TAC on the part of Ninth Air Force contimued under verbal agreements until approximately 16 November. Meanwhile a step was taken to provide XII TAC with added strength for the better performance of its mission. On 29 September, the 50th and 571st FB Groups, formerly with IX and XIX Tactical Air Commands respectively, together with ancillary units, were assigned to XII TAC. However, since the complicated relationship of XII TAC to the Ninth Air Force was so brief, and because the story of its activities, like its operational records, belongs to the First Tactical Air Force (Provisional), no attempt will be made here to set forth the operational narrative of XII TAC.

IX Tactical Air Command

Air-Ground Cooperation

The provision of air strikes in cooperation with ground units of

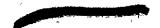


FUSA was continued by IX TAC. However, examination of operational records indicates that many covering missions developed into armed recommaissance missions beyond the enemy's lines. The increased use of "Y" service for the control of airborne planes partly accounts for this change, but the main cause is to be found in the changed nature of action on the ground. The shift from pursuit to position warfare inevitably influenced air tactics. It is also true that the sume records give even less graphic information of air-ground cooperation than the earlier reports record. Nevertheless, when examples are found they indicate that joint action had lost none of its efficiency. In the days when the pursuit was continuing in the north, three armored vehicles moving to attack our troops near Arlon were designated as targets and destroyed. Likewise the advance of the 3d Armored Division near Limburg was furthered when elements of 368th FB Group successfully attacked a barn where a gun was hidden (10 September), achieved what ground termed "perfect results" in bombing vehicles (10 September), and destroyed an antitank gun (11 September). Later (16 September) the same division asked planes of 404th FB Group for a strike against a German counterattack near Tirlemont, and ground reported that 10 armored vehicles were destroyed. The 366th FB Group destroyed three gun positions at the behest of 2d Armored Division (11 September), while planes of 363d and 368th FB Groups responded to that division's request for the bombing of tank traps and dragons' teeth as it sought to advance south of Archen (12 September). By air action gun emplacements were destroyed east of Haastricht (16 September) by a formation of 50th FB Group, while



another of the same group bombed woods in the same area at request and also positions near Valkenburg (17 September), with results described as good by ground control.

Pillboxes in woods north of Aschen were the target for 24 bombs dropped by 474th FB Group in what ground termed "a beautiful job," while Leidenborn and gun positions were hit by planes from the 50th Group (22 September). "Excellent bombing" by 368th FB Group was reported following an attack requested on Geilenkirchen, north of Aachon (26 September). Other examples of joint action are found in accounts of air strikes associated with the stiff fighting in the general area of Stolber; and the Rotgen and Gemund forests. There 368th Croup obtained very good results on a smoke-marked target in Rotgen forest (23 September) and excellent results on indicated strong points in the same area (29 Soptember). An interesting feature of the latter attack was the ground request that the aircraft orbit over the area after their bombing to draw the enemy's attention away from the advance of friendly troops. The same group attacked artillery in Genund forest and scored well in a requested strike on a smoke-marked troop concentration west of Stolberg (29 September). The 367th was credited with a "beautiful job" in dropping four tons of bombs on smoke-marked targets in the Hurtgen forest (28 September). Stepping over into the TUSA area a formation of 48th FB Group had patrolled an area west of Lietz where engineers were building a bridge, and at ground's request broke a near-by dam. Cut of such incidents was the story of air-ground cooperation by IX TAC composed. In the first 15 days of September alone, 183 missions had been dispatched to enable





the command to discharge one of its major functions. The missions were usually of squadron strength with a portion of the participating aircraft assigned to the provision of top cover.

Highway Targets

Armed reconnaissance was likewise a marked feature of IX TAC's activities. The considerable effort directed at interdiction and railway targets will be treated later in connection with the interdiction program. The other missions of this type were largely concentrated in IX TAC's area of responsibility on the FUSA front, although on occasion a mission might be flown in the Dijon area (6 September) or south of the Loire in the region of Bourges-Chateauroux-St. Amand (8 September). As previously, road targets were among those attacked, particularly in the early days of the month when roads in the north were crowded with German vehicles moving to the east along the line Peronne-Cambrai-Valenciennes-Charleroi. In the first four days of September, IX TAC emassed the unusual total of 2,201 MT, 128 armored vehicles, 485 horse-drawn vehicles, and 25 horse-drawn artillery destroyed or damaged in this general area. On the single day of 3 September active hunting in the so-called Mons pocket yielded the largest claims for any day to date -- 919 MT, 58 armored vehicles, and 757 horse-drawn vehicles. Again on 9 September 368th Group, operating with the 3d Armored Division in the Aachen area, submitted claims of over 100 IT and 20 tanks destroyed or damaged. Thereafter the claims on individual days were smaller, but totals for the month amounted to 3,017 LT, 293 armored vehicles, and 1,468 horse-drawn vehicles. The claims inevitably fell off as the battle lines were stabilized. Barge

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traffic on the Rhine was occasionally attacked, as on 14 September when a formation of 367th FB Group destroyed four paddle boats and three self-propelled barges south of Koblenz. The month's claims of boats and barges destroyed or damaged were 31.

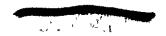
Special Missions

Special types of missions were occasionally flown by IX TAC. Then the airborne "Operation Market" was initiated with critical bridges in the Metherlands as its objectives (17 September), 48th, 366th, 367th, and 474th FB Groups flew group-strength missions in its support. These concentrated their attacks on gun positions in order to reduce the volume of flak in the area which the troop carriers must penetrate, and they reported some guns destroyed and others silenced. Neather caused the abandonment of the efforts to continue this support on the days which immediately followed.

Night Intruders

Since the enemy was moving as little as possible in daylight because of the unrelenting efforts of fighter-bombers, night intruder missions by P-38's were attempted with a view to attacking and disorganizing his movements by night. SCR-584 was employed to bring the planes to their target and to direct their return to base. This control functioned well, but weather severely limited the number of missions which could be flown, and the malfunctioning of flares and bombs on occasion reduced the effect of such as were flown. From four to nine aircraft participated in five night intruder missions by 474th FB Group (10, 12, 17, 29 September); one plane was lost to friendly and





one to enemy flak. A marshalling yard was bombed at Mayen and the destruction of two locomotives claimed. Elsewhere trains and convoys were bombed and strafed with results usually unobserved.

Propaganda Leaflets

Leaflet bombs were likewise dropped on occasion either by missions flown for that specific purpose (e. g., 48th Group, 6 September, in the Haastricht-Tongres area), or as a feature of armed reconnaissance (e. g., 405th Group, 26 September, in the Euskirchen-Geilenkirchen area.)

Actions against the GAF

Airfields

By attacks on enemy airfields and in air encounters IX TAC assisted in maintaining air superiority and further reduced the strength of the Luftwaffe. An attack by planes of 48th Group, on a field near Giessen (9 September) resulted in pilots' claims of 3-2-5. On 10 September a field in the Frankfurt area was hit by 370th FB Group and another on the following day by the 367th, pilots' claims being 2-0-0 and 19-0-0, respectively. At an airfield near Bonn, explosions and black smoke were produced by an attack of 50th Group (12 September), while an element of the same group damaged the hangars at Hanau and claimed 11-0-2 enemy aircraft on the ground at Seligenstadt (13 September). The latter two fields were in the general area of Frankfurt. In the Koln region hangars and buildings were hit by 48th Group attacks on Ostheim and Wahn (13 September).

Air Encounters

11 September was an unusual day inasmuch as more than 70 enemy



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aircraft were sighted, with two encounters taking place. When four enemy planes had the temerity to bounce 12 of a 365th Group formation in the Ecnn-Duren area, all wore destroyed at no loss, while a squadron of 368th Group destroyed five attacking NE-109's for the loss of one in combat over Eupen. The next day more than 70 enemy aircraft attacked 20 P-33's of 474th FB Group near Duren. Five of our planes were lost as against pilots' claims of 8-1-9. Three encounters occurred over Aschen on the 16th, together with a sighting which did not develop into combat since the enemy turned toward Koln and its strong flak defenses. A formation of 33 P-38's of 370th Group, when jumped by more than 50 enemy planes, lost one but claimed 2-0-3. Seven P-47's of 404th Group joined in the combet, engaging nine enemy aircraft and claiming 4-0-2 for no loss. In the third action of the day e squadron of 50th Group wes bounced by 12 FW-190's and claimed 6-0-2 for no loss. It is significent that the day was one of continued ground effort to penetrate the Siegfried Line in the Aachen region and that the enemy was aggressive. Two days later (18 September) one squadron of 365th Group lost four planes when bounced by 36 to 40 enemy aircraft over Aschen, but claimed an equal number destroyed. Another squadron of the same group sighted 36-plus of the enemy leaving the Aachen area, but failed to pursue them. Three eir actions transpired in a single hour on the 21st in the Bonn-Moln region, three group formations of IX TAC sharing the honors without loss. The 50th Group destroyed three of the 10 FW-190's which they attacked; 48th Group claimed three out of some six !E-109's which attacked them; and 367th Group reported



4-4-2 when they were jumped by 30-plus IE-109's. Further encounters occurred on each of the three days 26 to 28 September. Over Bonn (26 September) a squadron of 365th FB Group claimed 2-1-1 in a combet in which some of the enemy planes appeared to be old ME-109's. In encounter with over 50 enemy planes over Dusseldorf (27 September) 16 P-47's of 365th Group lost one but claimed 5-0-1. Finally, when 36 aircraft of 404th Group attacked 20 of the enemy over Arnhem (28 September), they suffered no loss in scoring 7-0-2. Of the enemy planes destroyed, a single pilot claimed six.

Total claims reported by IX TAC for September in respect to enemy eigeraft were 70-11-33 in the air and 24-3-7 on the ground. In the course of the month the command had flown 307 missions, dispatching 12 9,708 aircraft and dropping 1,993 tons of bombs.

XIX Tactical Air Command

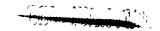
Air-Ground Cooperation

The Metz Area

Examples, rather than a complete narrative, must suffice to indicate the nature of air-ground cooperation between XIX TAC and TUSA on the eastern battlefields. As XX Corps developed its attack south of Metz on 10 September, a series of squadron-strength missions by 36th, 362d, and 371st FB Groups took action so effective as to earn the commendation of the ground forces. Red sucke marked a fort as target which was struck with results reported good. At Arry, east of the Moselle, one formation struck at tanks and trucks, destroying one of the former and two of the latter at request; while another made 40 individual passes at 15 tanks in the town and left them smoking and



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immobile. As requested by 5th Infantry Division an enemy-held area near Amanvillers was neutralized by strafing, and an amaunition dump in the same area was hit by 20 bombs which started fires. XX Corps reported that the successful attacks facilitated the infantry's advance and that they knocked out some fortifications and led groups of enemy troops to surrender during the bombing.

On 15 September, 5th Infantry Division instructed a covering squadron of 405th Group to bomb a crossroads near Fagny, south of Metz, where two tanks and 17 LT were destroyed; and on the 20th two more were destroyed near Fleury, where the area was blind-bombed. The 5th Infantry Division reported that hits were scored and a gun position destroyed. Joint efforts continued in the Letz area where forts were usually the objectives. The 405th Group delivered a series of attacks against these targets. On 20 September a squadron dropped Napalm tanks and bombs on Fort No. 1. On the 24th the fort at U-7753 was bembed and straied by one squadron and hit again two days later by three squadrons whose bombs and Hapalm tanks fired barracks. The next day (27 September) three stubborn forts were attacked -- one by four squadrons and two others by one each. All were well hit and ground doclared itself pleased with the results at U-7950. On 28 September 90th Infantry Division marked the fort at U-7858 with smoke, and 36 aircraft of 358th Group dropped 22 x 1,000-pound GP and 23 x 150-gallon Napalm bombs on the target. Direct hits were made and a fire started. Three other forts were hit by another mission on the part of 40 planes from the same group on this same day. Later, on 29 September, a





squadron of 36th Group, assigned to cover units of XV Corps, was picked up by 90th Infantry Division of XX Corps and directed to attack the villages of Amenvillers and Semecourt which it successfully bended and strafed. A pilot who bailed out in the course of this mission later reported himself safe and acted as a ground controller. On this day, also, a directed attack on troop billets in Maizieres les Letz dropped 22 bends on the town and then strafed it, producing many fires.

The Mancy-Apinal frea

When 80th Infantry Division was attacking east of the Moselle between Font a Housson and Mancy, sir cooperated at "Ironclad's" direction. At its request five towns in the area of its advance were thoroughly fired on the 15th by the strafing attacks of three squadron-strength missions from 373d FB Group, to which ground reported, "You are doing a damn good job strafing, keep it up." On the strength of this the squadron went on to silence two near-by gun positions.

On 13 September XII Corps was driving against Nancy from the west, and at its request one squadron of 36th Group silenced an 88-millimeter jum position, while another rendered a bridge unserviceable. The same day French armor expressed its thanks to 406th Group for its intervention in a tank battle near Dompaire, west of Epinal. Eare ground confirmed the destruction of 15 tanks by one squadron which dropped four frag clusters and then strafed. Two other squadrons also attacked and destroyed five more tanks between them. The enemy's attack, delivered by 45 tanks with two infantry companies



in support, had threatened to overrun the French command post at Ville sur Ilion; but close liaison between ground and air, coupled with the 14 speed and accuracy of the air strikes, had saved the day. Later when XII Corps was moving east from Nancy towards Chateau Salins on 20 September, 4th Armored Division requested an attack on 20 tanks and as many LT southeast of the latter town. A squadron of 36th Group attacked. Its bombs accounted for five tanks and its strafing for five LT.

On the 24th the same division experienced a counterattack at Laneuveville en Saulnois, northwest of Chateau Salins, and instructed a squadron of 405th Group to attack an area in which there were 50 tanks. Weather was troublesome, but two tanks were destroyed by bombing, and near-by woods were strafed. Ground reported that air had repulsed the counterattack. On the 29th, 405th flew nine squadronstrength missions in cooperation with XII Corps and furnished several interesting exemples of eir strikes. Ground fog was heavy, but the planes struck with good results the towns of Jallaucourt, Mallaucourt. and Fresones en Saulnois, as directed. At Chambery bombing was through clouds, but the violet smoke marking the target penetrated them, and ground reported good results. One squadron observed a tank battle near Arracourt. The 30 German tanks retreated at their approach; but one tank was destroyed, two probably destroyed, and four damaged, while the American ground column advanced. Another squadron was directed to a tank battle south of Haraucourt, where 20 to 30 enemy tanks faced an American motorized column. The squadron dive-bombed the tanks. destroying three and damaging one. It then strafed the woods in the





vicinity, believed to contain enemy troops, set fire to a house, and destroyed two half-tracks and a truck. The ground controller reported that the squadron also flushed six tanks which were knocked out by our ermies and artillery.

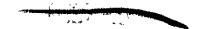
General Elster's Surrender

An interesting episcde connected with air-ground cooperation occurred on 16 September, when at the request of the commanding general of the Minth U. S. Army, General Weyland, in command of XIX TAC, was present at the surrender of the German General Elster and 20,000 of his Merach Gruppe at Beaugency Bridge. General Elster and his forces were part of those elements of the German Wehrmacht in southern France which had sought to join the battle north of the Loire. Plenes of XIX TAC. discharging their mission of guarding the southern flank of TUSA, had located the enemy, cut his communications, and prevented any effective action on his part. When on 10 September the negotiations were begun which led to the surrender as the columns eventually reached the Loire. General Elster had signified that he was ready to capitulate if a halt were called to air ettecks. The attacks were stopped, but the constant threat of their renewal kept the German leader to his resolution. Air power had thus been the greatest single factor in forcing the final capitulation.

Attacks on Road and River Transport

Road tergets were regularly subjected to attack in the course of ermed reconnaissance by XIX TAC during the month of September. As previously, the net results were impressive, made so as the result of

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the accumulation of numerous small claims. As in the case of IX TAC, the most extensive claims for the operations of individual days are found at the beginning of the period. On 1 September 405th Group flew six squedron-strength missions from Mezieres and Arlon to Thionville, Metz, Nancy, and Toul and claimed the destruction of 200 MT, 28 horsedrawn vehicles, 5 tanks, and 4 horse-drawn artillery. Two days later three of its squadrons claimed 63 LT, 3 horse-drawn vehicles, and 5 artillery pieces in the Saarbrucken-Strasbourg-Basle area. Even more striking were results achieved south of the Loire as the enemy streamed westward to escape the converging Third and Seventh U. S. Armies. On 1 September 36th Group earned a commendation from the Commanding General, XIX TAC. It had flown three squadron-strength missions in the Poitiers-Chateauroux-Clamecy area and had found a large convoy of mixed vehicles east of Chatellerault and others near Poitiers. They claimed the destruction of some 500 vehicles and damage to many more. On the 7th, 406th Group flew two group-strength missions, their assigned targets being a mixed convoy discovered near Chateaureux by tactical reconnaissence. Claims of over 450 vehicles destroyed were submitted. Later reports indicated that French Forces of the Interior took prisoner the remnants of the column. Incident to operations in this general region, plenes of XIX TAC dropped propaganda leaflet bombs in the Chateauroux, Epinal-Dieuze, and Luxembourg-Chateau Salins areas (9, 11, 20, 29 September.)

Rhine barges on occasion offered good communications targets. One was destroyed and six others were driven aground by an attack from 373d



Group on 15 September; and on the 29th the same group destroyed 15, together with a tug. On the 29th, likewise, 362d Group was assigned barges at Bingen for dive-bombing attack. The assaulting squadron dropped 21 x 500-pound GP bombs on 14 oil barges. Large fires resulted, and six barges and a tug were destroyed.

Attacks by XIX TAC upon railway communications targets will be treated in connection with the interdiction program.

Actions against the GAF

Air Combats

Air combats between enemy aircraft and XIX TAC units were infrequent in September. A single enemy aircraft was shot down over Saarbrucken during a sweep of that area by 354th FB Group on the 10th, and another was destroyed when 20 enemy planes jumped 15 aircraft of 371st Group west of Karlsruhe on the 28th. The following day a squadron from 406th Group, while rail cutting near Landau, sighted 30 enemy planes. All dropped their tanks and 12 to 15 closed in combat in which the 406th lost two but claimed 6-0-3. Aside from such actions the air encounters of 12 September were outstanding. A squadron of 405th Group, covering the XII Corps near Pont a Mousson, was jumped by enemy planes and claimed 5-0-5 for the loss of two. Two formations of 354th F3 Group had encounters in the Limburg area. One formation of 11 P-51's had attacked an airfield when it was asked to help another squadron; in complying it tackled at least eight enemy aircraft with resulting claims of 6-0-1. The second, with 15 P-51's. was bounced by over 40 FW-190's which had Me-109's flying top cover. The 354th's leader and his wing man sought to divert the covering formation, but no combat resulted. The balance of the formation, however, engaged in dog fights with the Fi-190's end shot down 24 without loss as the enemy pressed his attack.



Airfields

A few actions resulted in the destruction of enemy planes on the ground. On 1 September the score was 2-0-2 after 10 aircraft of 406th Group strafed a Metz airfield which was their assigned target. A squadron of 354th Group claimed 1-0-1 after its attack on a Frankfurt field where heavy flak limited its attack of 12 September. The same day another of the 354th's formations strafed a field near Limburg where its claims of eight destroyed brought the group's total for the day to 39-0-3 in the air or on the ground. On the 27th a field at Germerscheim was strafed by 15 aircraft of 36th Group, which destroyed two enemy plenes and left a hangar burning. XIX TAC control then gave them an sirfield near Metz as a target, but lack of fuel prevented an Etteck. The next day 31 P-51's of 354th Group strafed three airfields in the course of a sweep. On one west of Speyer they destroyed one and damaged another. We attack was delivered on a field northwest of Frankfurt since heavy flak would have rendered it unprofitable; but at Erbenheim, north of Mainz, and at a field south of Frankfurt scores of 4-0-2 and 2-0-0 were run up, with a glider also destroyed. In addition 354th Croup set two fires on an airfield east of Weisbaden on this same mission. By such actions, and by the strafing of a field south of Letz on the 29th, the Luftwaffe was harassed and its capabilities in some measure reduced.

Recapitulation

In the course of September XIX TAC had flown 7,791 sorties and dropped 2,015 tons of bombs. It had conducted operations on all days



of the month save two, but its air activities had been considerably reduced by weather on 15 others. Against enemy aircraft its total claims were 32-9-5 in the air and 34-6-24 on the ground. Among ground targets claimed destroyed were 2,122 LT, 196 armored vehicles, 376 16 lecometives, and 892 railway cars.

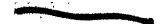
In connection with all fighter-bomber activities during this month it is to be observed that the relatively stabilized warfare of the period presented few close cooperation targets. Accordingly, fighter-bomber effort was concentrated on armed reconnaissance against traffic supporting the enemy's attempted build-up along the West Wall. However, valuable assistance was rendered in protecting the American Hoselle bridgehead against air and ground counterattacks; and in cooperating with limited objective attacks of the Twelfth Army Group all along its front. As usual, the American armies enjoyed an almost complete immunity from enemy air attacks during this period when they were regrouping, strengthering their supply situation, and coiling for another strike.

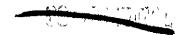
9th Bombardment Division

Air-Ground Cooperation

The Nancy Area

As previously noted, 9th Bombardment Division cooperated in the esseult upon Brest in September 1944. It likewise engaged in air-ground cooperation at various points on the eastern front during this same period, although its activities of this and other types were considerably curtailed by weather. Thile the attack on Brest was





continuing, initial blows were delivered in the general area of Nancy. Elements of TUSA had crossed the Moselle to the north of Pont a Mousson and it was desirable that their southern flank be protected by donying to the enemy the use of the bridges at Custines and Pompey (north of Nancy) over which some of his forces to the west of Nancy might have moved to the Pont a Mousson area. Accordingly, on 10 September, 84 aircraft from three groups attacked the bridges and reported probable damage to both. On the 10th, and again on the 12th, German forces in the Forot do le Haye were bombed in an effort to hasten their retreat eastward through Nancy itself. Each of seven groups was assigned a defended area in the forest on 10 September, and two days later four groups were sent against a total of seven targets, chiefly artillery positions. Bombing accuracy varied considerably in these attacks. and the wooded character of the area provented any clear assessment of results. Later, on 28 September, part of one group bombed the Foret de Parroy in cooperation with the 79th Infantry and 4th Armored Divisions. The attack had been scheduled but abandoned on each of the three preceding days, and on the 28th only 37 planes of the four groups assigned were able to complete their mission--with indefinite results.

Metz Attacks

On 11 September 9th Bombardment Division cooperated with TUSA in its drive against Metz. In morning missions seven groups struck at as many targets ranging from positions north of Thionville to others south of Metz. In the afternoon four of the same groups bombed four other targets in the same region. Thousand-pound GP's and 500- and





1,000-pound SAP's were dropped in the designated areas and inflicted some damage, although there was no evidence of serious effect on the concrete gun emplacements which constituted the bulk of the targets.

The Siegfried Line

In connection with VII Corps' advance against the Siegfried Line sevon groups of bombers were dispatched on 12 September armed with 1,000-pound GP and 1,000-pound SAP bombs. Four attacked antitank barriers, artillery, and machine gun emplacements and lookouts in the Schoid area, and three others were sent against like targets near Echternach. At Schoid the bombs of 30 of the 112 aircraft attacking fell in the target area; while at Echternach, where 54 planes attacked out of 110 dispatched, reports were indefinite. Later, at TUSA's request, points in the Siegfried Line west of Zweibrucken were singled out for experimental bombing by 9th Bombardment Division. However, missions scheduled for the 16th, 17th, and 18th were not carried through, and on the 29th only 12 aircraft of the two groups dispatched dropped their 250-pound GP bombs. The results of this bombing were undetermined.

Action in the British Sector

On two occasions 9th Bombardment Division acted on the British-Canadian front. In the first instance German communications with their positions north of the Scheldt estuary were the objectives. Here a viaduct near Eath on the isthmus connecting Zuid Beveland with the mainland was the target for 77 bombers from three groups on 16 September. They inflicted severe damage and left the viaduct unserviceable. A second target on the same day was the embaniment at Arnemuiden associated

with the span connecting Walcheren with Zuid Beveland. The attack here, delivered by 73 planes from two groups, scored hits on tracks, on the highway, and on the embankment itself. Later, on 30 September, the bridge over the Neder Rijn at Arnhem was bombed for the first time in an effort to deny its use to the enemy after the 1st British Airborne Division had withdrawn to the south bank. The 28 tons of 1,000-pound GP bembs dropped by the 14 aircraft of the group which had been dispatched did not damage the structure.

Leaflet Missions

In an effort to undermine enemy morale, 14 leaflet-dropping missions were flown during the month with from four to eight aircraft participating in each. Aircraft of a single mission were often assigned a very considerable area. For example, Ostend, Dunkirk, Calais, Boulogne, Le Havre, Erest, Crozon, Lorient, St. Nazaire, and Arras were assigned to eight planes of 391st Bombardment Group on 5 beptember. Pathfinder planes were almost exclusively employed for these tasks after 10 September.

Tests of the A-26

It should be observed that, beginning with 6 September, service tests of A-26 aircraft were carried on as a first step in their introduction as standard equipment for 9th Bombardment Division. Eight medium-altitude missions were flown, in the course of which no enemy aircraft were encountered and no strafing was attempted. The September tests were considered preliminary, and more extensive and thorough ones were planned, with an A-20 group re-equipped with A-26's and flying on missions assigned to units equipped with A-20 and B-26 type aircraft.





Summary

Including its activities against rail targets, which will be treated in connection with the interdiction program, 9th Bombardment Division as a whole operated on a total of 21 days during September, although the operational days of individual groups ran at the lower level of 9 to 14 days. A total of 5,390 aircraft were dispatched, of which 5,103 became sorties and 3,349 attacked. Movements to new fields. plus the foul weather of a European fall, were the main causes of this decline. Later it was determined that in the course of 40 days prior to 25 October, 25 per cent of the missions sent out had no appreciable weather difficulties. But on the other hand, 25 per cent of such missions were completely abortive, while another 50 per cent had the attacks on their primary targets reduced in strength by from 20 to 80 per cent because of adverse weather conditions. The number of planes dispatched was 59 per cent of the August figures and the number of those attacking, 62 per cent. Twelve aircraft were lost with 101 personnel casualties. A total of 5,591.125 tons of bembs was dropped which amounted to 53 per cent of the August total. Bombing accuracy deteriorated in some measure, due partially to the decreasing percentage of bomber crews which possessed extensive mission experience.

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Chapter VII

A NEW INTERDICTION PROGRAM, SEFTEMBER TO NOVEMBER 1944

Genesis of the Plan

<u>Freliminaries</u>

A new program of rail interdiction designed to isolate the bettlefield west of the Rhine took form in the course of September and early October 1944. Its inception is found in a request on 8 September that Twelfth Army Group make an exception to established rules and cut rails to prevent enemy movement into the Siegfried Line. A day later the Army proposed a list of some 19 lines which, if cut, would produce the desired result; and on 10 September Advenced Head-quarters Einth Air Force issued orders assigning seven stretches of line to IX TAC and seven more to XIX TAC in the initial version of the new program. All 14 lines lay west of the Ehine and north of the rail crossings of that river abresst of Karlsruhe. The tactical air commands were directed to attack these targets and to persist in such assaults so that the lines might be kept continuously immobilized.

On 12 September a new feature of the progrem appeared when six rail lines, located east of the Rhine and converging on the river's crossings at Earlsruhe, Rastatt, and Strasbourg, appeared among the eight new lines assigned as targets of MIX TAC. Two days later five other targets of like character were given to MIX TAC, together with two others west of the river, and a substitution was made in the original seven lines assigned to IX TAC. The list of lines to be



cut, as published on 14 September, was to remain in force until the 28th.

The Frogram of 14 September 1944

The program of 14 September provided for rail-cutting operations by fighter-bombers of IX TAC against seven lines extending westward from Rhine crossings at Dusseldorf, Koln, Remagen, and Koblenz. To XIX TAC were assigned 11 lines running west from Rhine crossings at Bingen, Painz, Worms, Ludwigshefen, Speyer, Germersheim, and Harlsruhe, and another 11 lines east of the river leading to the rail centers at Karlsruhe, Pastabt, and Strasbourg. The full list of cuts as determined on 14 September was as follows:

INTERDICTION FROGRAM AS OF 14 SEFTEMBER 1944

Lines which appeared on the initial lists of 10 September are marked Grid references are to Army/Lir maps 1:250,000.

IX TAC (west of Rhine River)

*Julich F-0359 - Ameln F-0967 *Julich F-0359 - Duron F-1148 *Eschwoiler K-9647 - Euskirchen F-3229 *Sotenich F-1715 - Euskirchen F-3229 *Ahrdorf L-3398 - Dumpelfeld F-4205 *Zeun L-3678 - Mayen L-6292 *Jengerchr L-4253 - Koblenz L-8996

XIX TAC (west of Hhine River)

*Hermeskeil	L-4120 -	Simmern	L-8554
*Heimbach	L-6312 -	Ead Kreuznach	M-0835
*Altenglan	L-8008 -	Lauterecken	L-8917
*Lendstuhl	ଦ୍-8890 -	Kaiserslautern	k-0194
*Zweitrucken	્-7572 -	Pirmasens Mord	Q-9074
*LanJau	H-2868 -	Scheidt	R-2551
*Generalein	R-4869 -	Junction	R-4059
Keisersleuts	rn R-0395	Neustadt	R-3082
Mi nterwèi den	thel R-016	7 - Landau	R-2766
Pirmasens No	rd Q-9074	- Kaiserslauterh	R-0093
Gemersheim	R-4869 -	Worth	P3950

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XIX TAC (east of Rhine River)

R-5048 - Graben R-5463 Durlach Durlech R-5048 - Bruchsal R-6258 R-5048 - Pforzheim R-7033 Durlach Ettlingen R-4839 - Pforzheim R-7033 R-4510 - Klosferreichenbech W-5092 **Porbech** Gegenbach W-2278 - Haussch ..-3264 Kerlsruche R-4648 - Tongreben R-5561 Grotzingen R-5443 - Bretten R-6949 Restatt R-3628 - Freudenstadt W-5686 Offerburg W-1686 - Heslach 1.-2665 Offenburg W-1686 - Lahr 77-0872

Development of the Program to 8 October 1944

In the period during which the directive of 14 September was in vigor, the importance of the interdiction program was stressed in two orders, those of 21 and 25 September. The first celled for accent on the plan for rail interdiction since the enemy was transporting large quantities of equipment and personnel to the bettle area by rail.

The second provided that the tactical air commands should concentrate on rail cutting and consider such operations their first priority.

Further consideration of the interdiction program by Twelfth Army Group and Minth Air Force resulted in its revision and elaboration between 26 September and 8 October. The revision involved changes in the lines to be attacked and in the distribution of the new lines between the four tectical air examends (IX, XIX, XXIX, and XII) operating on the American front at this time. The elaboration of the program involved the addition to the revised lines for attack of another series lying farther to the east. The first was styled the inner line of interdiction, the second the outer line of interdiction. Cuts along the outer line would reinforce the dislocating offects of those made upon the inner line. By way of further



claboration the Ninth Air Force requested that 2d TAF (RAF) be allotted the task of keeping cuts on northern extensions of both the inner and the outer lines, to render the interdiction program more complete in respect to communications leading to the entire battle area. On 29 September, when the outer line first appeared in orders, the points specified for attack lay beyond the existing tactical area, and therefore clearance by Ninth fir Force Headquarters was required before missions against them could be flown. This situation was remedied by the eastward extension of the tactical area's boundaries on 1 October. Thereafter the outer line was fully at the disposal of the Ninth Air Force for rail-cutting operations.

The changes described in the preceding paragraph were effected by a series of orders and messages. As a result, the program in vogue on 8 October was as follows:

INTERDICTION PROGRAM AS OF 8 COTOBER 1944

Tnner Line of Interdiction

IX TAC

Baal K-9772 - Junction F-0883
Julich F-0359 - Imeln F-0867
Duren F-1350 - Elsdorf F-1759
Duren F-1350 - Junction F-2757
Norvenich F-2346 - Junction F-2855
Euskirchen F-3529 - Liblar F-3645
Euskirchen F-3529 - Stadtmeckenheim F-4925

XXIX TAC

Dorsel L-3398 - Junction F-6518 Daun L-3679 - Mayen L-6392

XIX TAC

Wengerohr L-4253 - Woblenz L-8996 Herneskeil L-4120 - Sinnern L-8554

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Nohfolden	L-5610	-	Sobernheim L	-9432
Homburg	Q-7180	-	Lautereckon L	-8917
Homburg	Q-7180	-	Kaiserslautern	R-0194
	iler 0-9014	-	Kaiserslautern	R-0194
Landau	R -28 68		Neustadt	R=2884
London	R-2868	_	Spever	R=5181

XII TAC

Graben	R=5563	-	Hockenheim	R-5980
Bruchsal	R-6359	-	haldorf	R-6878
Brotten	R-7149		Eppingen	£-8661
Junction	R-8140	-	Beitigheim	S-0341
Pforzheim	R-7133	-	Calw	R-7-114
Freudenstadt	15036		Eutingon	77587
Junction	W-3465	-	Villinghen	17-5540
Freiburg	₩-0933	_	Noustadt	1:-3624

Outer Line of Interdiction

IX TAC

Hemm	B-0544	-	Neubeckum	B-2057
Soest	B-2631	-	Lippstadt	B-4242
Soest	B-2631	-	Belecke	B-4222
Junction	B-3206	-	Nuttlar	B~4808

XXIX TAC

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Junction G-3669 - Allendorf G-6570
Junction G-5258 - Junction G-7353
Staufenburg G-6930 - Colbe G-7451
Junction G-9225 - Neder Gemunden G-9333
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XIX TAC

Stockheim	M-9193	-	Lauterbach H-1727	
Gelnhausen	N-0378	-	Schluchtern	N-2796
Aschaffenburg	11-0253	_	Lohr	N-3256
\crtheim	N-2931	-	Lohr	N-3256
Konigshofen	N-4407	-	Heidingsfeld	N-5932
Konigshofen	H-4407	_	eikersheim	N-5700
Hall	S-4659		Crailsheim	S-7062
Schorndorf	G - 3225	-	Aalen	S-7329
Plochingen	S-2414	-	Geislingen	S-5606
Heilbronn	S-0762	-	Junction	8-0672



Thus, under the arrangements in effect on 8 October the inner line was made up of 25 lines of which 17 lay west of the Rhine and eight east of the river; while the outer line was composed of 18 selected lines, rangian from Hamm in the north to Geislingen in the south, all of which were over 45 miles east of the Rhine. Although targets different from those of 14 September were selected to compose the inner line of 8 October, the same rail communications were affected in both cases. Generally speaking, all towns and especially the more populous termini of the listed sections were to be avoided because of flak. The sections were made as long as possible to offer a wide selection of points of attack, and multiple cuts on a single section were desired for maximum effect, even though it was held that a single out on each of the designated sections would produce the result desired. By orders of 5 Cotober, cuts and their maintenance were accorded first priority since, as in the case of the earlier interdiction program, the success of this plan depended upon the effectiveness of numerous cuts at any given moment.

Addition of Bridges to Interdiction Targets

On 7 Cotober previous instructions were canceled and all bridges on the U.S. front except those over the Rhine were opened for attack, with first priority accorded to those included in the rail sections assigned for cutting or to those whose destruction would duplicate the offects of rail-cutting operations. On 9 Cotober an initial list of 10 bridges was given to the tactical air commands, and other individual structures appear in the operational orders of later dates. Later



(17 Cotober) all Rhine rail and road bridges were cleared for attack, and on 18 Catober Twelfth Army Group requested that the significant battle area be isolated by the cutting of 17 listed rail bridges over the Issol, the Rhine, and the Moselle. If the Winth could not attack the Rhine bridges north of Koln, it was suggested that heavy bombers be requested. First priority was for the moment seconded this program even if the diversion of fighter-bombers from cir-ground cooperation should be necessary. In case the specified bridges could not be attacked, it was requested that the Minth Air Force cut sufficient rail bridges on the inner line of interdiction to accomplish the same result. The importance of the interdiction program was thus stressed and an added means of carrying it into effect was provided. On 19 Cotober the operational order issued by Advanced Headquarters Ninth Air Force prescribed that for all tactical air commands rail cutting on the inner line of interdiction should have first priority and bridge cutting on the outer line second priority, and that these two programs should take priority over all other commitments.

The Problem Defined

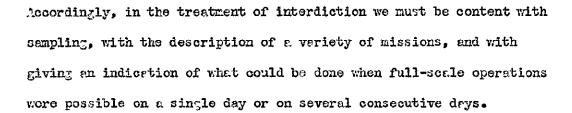
Certain facts must constantly be borne in mind in considering the development of the interdiction program and its execution in September and the months which immediately followed. Full success could be achieved only if all vital lines were cut and kept cut. In view of the extraordinarily complex nexus of lines in the German railway system, an intense and sustained effort was required. This was the more necessary because of the enemy's familiarity and skill in making



use of his transportation system, and because of his provision of an elaborate and efficient system for effecting needed repairs. It appears that on occasion he was able to restore, in a matter of hours, traffic over a line which helbeen cut. On the other hand, it was later learned that considerable damage was done to the rails themselves by the impact of 50-caliber projectiles used in strafing rolling stock. Constant vigilance was required of track walkers in this connection, for while the injury might appear superficiel it was of a nature which might cause the eventual collapse of a rail and the consequent derailment of a train.

Furthermore, a full knowledge of the existing situation on the target sections was, as previously in France, an essential to effective planning of interdiction operations. Such knowledge was not available in the fall months of 1944. Filot's reports were helpful, but frequent check-ups by aerial reconnaissance were a requisite. Visual reconneissance was limited by many of the factors which lessened the value of pilots' reports. Photo reconnaissance was therefore of poculiar volue. But weather, in the shape of the all-too-prevalent clouds and ground haze, reduced the amount and value of photographic evidence, just as it limited the amount and effectiveness of combat operations. Photo reconnaissance was further limited by the fact that on good days photographic units had tasks of extreme urgancy to accomplish for the ground forces as well as for the air. Under such circumstances the operational direction of the interdiction program was beset by many difficulties, and the historian's endeavor to narrate its course and appraise its results is attended by as meny more.





Interdiction Effort by IX TAC

September Activities

In the early days of September, when the interdiction program was taking form, IX TAC achieved considerable success egainst rolling stock on reils east of the bettle area, as a few examples will indicate. On the 5th three squadrons of 404th FB Group attacked a heavy concentration in a marshalling yard northeast of Koln and destroyed six locomotives and 20 cars. A railway center at Julich was hit the next day by a single squadron of the same group which claimed 21 locomotives and 10 tenk cars destroyed. On the 9th, likewise, one squadron of 365th FB Group strafed six trains and bombed another in the Bonn-Aachen-Koln area, another reported five locomotives destroyed, end a third claimed eight destroyed near Trier. A squadron from the same group blasted a 50-car ammunition train west of Koln and struck three trains south of Euskirchen on the 11th, while a squadron of 368th FB Group attacked five others on the line Scheid-Sotenich-Lissendorf.. On the 14th a squadron of 474th FB Group spotted 10 locomotives pulling cars loaded with troops and equipment in the Eschweiler-Erkelenz area and claimed the destruction of nine loconctives. It should be observed that the only rail targets assigned for attack in these missions were the two marshalling yards. The others were selected by the leaders of

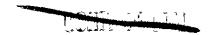


formations whose priority assignment was armed reconnaissance, air-ground cooperation, or-as in one instance--leaflet dropping. Throughout the month similar actions against rolling stock built up the altogether creditable total of 321 locomotives and 1,321 cers claimed destroyed.

TX TAC mounted a comprehensive rail-outting effort on 10 September, the very day that the first list of rail interdiction sections appeared. Two areas and five lines were listed for attack. Included in the latter were five of the program's sections and another which did not figure in its listings. One line was to be attacked by two squadrens, while each of the others, together with each of the two area, was assigned to a single squadron. An additional squadron was to provide top cover on one mission. Thus a total of nine squadrons (102 circraft), all from 404th Group, was to be dispatched.

Enltiple outs were made on the sections Mongerohr-Moblenz and Sotenich-Duskirchen, both of which appeared on the 10 September list. Five others were scattered over a wide area. Rolling stock had offered attractive targets, and 24 locomotives and 120 cers figure among the total claims; but it is obvious that if interdiction were to be effective, efforts like that of 10 September would have to be made almost daily. Other commitments and weather did not allow this in the days which immediately followed.

Nevertheless, an example of sustained interdiction effort on the part of IX TAC is found in the nine-day period 21 to 29 September. Seven of these days were operational, and on each of them one or more missions were flown with rail targets as their special objectives.

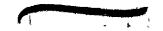


The total of such missions was 14, and all save one were of group strength. Their targets ranged from the Venle area in the north to the Moselle River in the south. Rail cutting was clearly their priority assignment, although accounts of attacks on rolling stock figure in their reports.

Conservativo claims of cuts indicate that their number and frequency clong some lines were sufficient to constitute a formidable traffic obstacle. Such obstacles were probably established by the moderate concentration of cuts on lines extending to the northeast and scutheast of Venlo, along those connecting Rheydt with Roermond, and on those in the immediate vicinity of Julich. Farther to the south similar effects were produced by like concentrations between Dumpelfeld and Remagen, and on the line Wengerchr-Hoblenz. Much more considerable results occurred in the rail complex within a 20-mile are west of Moln where the concentration and the frequency of cuts were by all odds the heaviest. The line running west to Duren and the north-south lines between Eedburg and Zulpich were hard hit, as were those extending from Euskirchen north towards Koln and southoast towards Reichenbach. Cuts, some of them rultiple, were reported at some 70 specified points during these seven days of operations, with others listed in general terms. It is of interest to observe that of the seven sections essigned to IX TAC under the formal program, only one-Wegerohr-Roblenz-wes considerably affected.

During September c few cuts were made by IX TAC on lines east of the Rhine. Four group-strength missions were dispatched to this region, but weather prevented one from finding its targets. A mission on the





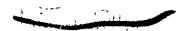
22d reported six cuts on the line east of Dillenburg and six more on rails west of Marburg. On the 27th, when two missions were flown, several cuts were secred on the rails cast of Limburg and on those near Lullmenroth, where a bridge was also destroyed. Since the attacks could not be continued, the damage must be rated as incidental.

Cotober Activities

In spite of its generally reduced scale of operations in October, IX TAC systematically pursued the interdiction program. On 15 days it sent missions to cut rails west of the Rhine (Green System) and on eight against those east of the river (Red System). Each mission reported cuts ranging from two to 17, with a total of 217 claimed during the month on these and other missions. By no means all of these were on the sections singled out for interdiction attack.

The missions were usually of group strength. On eight days two such missions were dispatched against the Green System and on three days the same weight of attack was delivered against the Red rails. On the last two operational days of the month a particularly notable effort was made when on the 25th six group-strength missions and one of squadron strength were dispatched, and on the 25th nine of group strength. On both days, particularly on 29 October, the attacks were concentrated on lines west of the Rhine, with priority given to bridges.

In view of their decidedly unusual weight, the attacks of 28 and 29 October are worthy of analysis. A total of 534 aircraft was dispatched--231 on the first and 303 on the second day. Five bridges were



claimed destroyed, four on the line Ahrdorf to Remagen and one between Morvenich and Mcdrath, west of Kolr. Damage in varying degrees was done to three other bridges on the Morvenich-Modrath section, and to five in that from Ahrdorf to Remagen. Cuts were made at 11 specified points on the 23th and at 18 on the 20th, with concentrations in the areas just west of Moln and east of Euskirchen and on the rails from Ahrdorf to Remagen. A single group of P-38's struck at lines east of the Ehine and effected cuts in three places in the Rotenburg-Paderborn area. Weather prevented only one group from attacking rails.

The small size of the bridge targets belos to explain why they so often escaped destruction; and it should be remembered that when they escaped injury, damage to their approaches and to rails in their immediate vicinity was considerable. Moreover, it is clear that as the result of heavy attacks on these two days the lines Remagen-Ahrdorf, Modrath-Forvenich, and Bedburg-Duren were put out of commission, at least temporarily, by rail cuts and by the destruction of small bridges. On the other hand, it is evident that success on such a scale was not regularly achieved, either because effort could not be so concentrated as on 26 and 29 October, or because of adverse weather. The attacks of these two days indicate what could be done when circumstances were 10 fevorable.

November Activities

In November IX TAC's interdiction operations were on a limited scale, partly because of the denands of the American drive towards Koln, but to a greater degree because of continued adverse weather. Heny

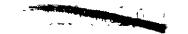
planned missions were canceled, while others which were dispatched were prevented from carrying out their assigned tasks. However, between 3 and 11 Movember, 13 missions attacked rail targets as did six others between 18 and 26 Movember. Of these six, all of group strength, bended at points east of the Rhine. They struck the mershelling yard at Dillenburg (26 November), claimed the destruction of bridges near Elseffthal (18 November) and Fredeburg (19 November), and reported a few widely separated rail cuts, none of which were on sections listed in the formal program.

The remaining 13 missions struck at rail targets west of the Rhine. Most of these were in group strength and had rail targets specifically assigned. They hit railway centers near Euskirchen and Mechanich and partially blocked a tunnel near Ahrweiler (3 November), while two bridges near Morren were claimed destroyed (11 Movember). Rail cuts, largely effected in the period 3 to 11 November, were concentrated on lines between Moln and Aachen and upon rails to the east and west of Euskirchen. Such concentration, because of the areas struck and the timing of the strikes, may have had some effect upon the enemy's transportation. It cannot be rated as significent, however, since the total of cuts claimed for the entire month was 11 only 70.

Interdiction Effort by XIX TAC

September Activities

XIX TAC hit rail targets associated with interdiction on many of its September missions. The targets of any day's operations were varied and emphasis shifted from one type of target to another as



opportunity offered. No sweeping generalizations are possible, but examples will serve to indicate the character of the work accomplished.

On 13 September, as the interdiction program was being inaugurated, 405th Group dispatched a total of 63 aircraft on five armed reconnaissence missions, each of approximetely squadron strength. These missions attacked rail targets in general. Three of them reported cutting rails in the vicinity of St. Die, Colver, and Nohfelden in the course of attacks which ranged from Nohfelden in the north to Mulhausen in the south. Cnly the cuts near Kohfelden stood in immediate relationship to the formal program. Marshelling yards were special objectives chosen by each mission, and those at St. Die, Kochern, Zweibrucken, homburg, Colmer, and Nohfelden were bombed. As the result of bombing and strafing a total of 23 locomotives were claimed destroyed in the yards or in attacks upon individual trains, and other rolling stock was destroyed or damaged. On the 22d the same group sent out three squadron-strength missions, with rolling stock earmarked for special attention. They operated along the lines Saarburg-Zabern-Brumath and Saargemund-Magenau with conspicuous success, as evidenced by their total claims of some 10 locomotives and 103 railway cars destroyed. An ammunition train, one made up of 30 oil gondolas, and another whose 20 cars were freighted with tanks were among the targets attroked. No cuts were reported except those in the vicinity of Brumath and at Zabern; nor do cuts appear conspicuously in any reports until the closing days of the month, although missions against rail targets were flown on at leest a dozen days in September.



Then a significant example of rail cutting activity on the part of XIX TAC aircraft is found in the operations by two of its groups during the three days 27 to 29 September. During that period 406th Croup dispatched 13 missions which attacked rail interdiction targets, and 362d Croup dispatched 16. All were of approximately squadron strength (12 to 16 aircraft) and involved a total of 403 planes. A grand total of 59 cuts was reported—21 by 406th and 38 by 362d FB Group. Their distribution is of interest. Thirteen were on lines specified for rail cutting in the formal program, and six others were closely associated with such lines. A single cut was on the line Daun-Mayen. Four lay along the line Wengorchr-Koblenz with another just west of Lengerohr. Two were made on the Hermeskeil-Simmern line, and four on that between Altenglan and Lauterecken, with three others south of Altenglan. Two cuts were effected between Landstuhl and Kaiserslautern, with two others just west of Landstuhl.

No cuts were attempted east of the Rhine and more than two-thirds of those made lay west of the western termini of the listed interdiction sections. However, the more notable concentrations were directly related to vital rails over which the enemy positions east of Luxembourg and in Alsace received reinforcements and supplies. The line parallel to the Luxembourg frontier between Lissendorf and Trier was cut in three places. Lines within a 20-mile are from Scarbrucken, including Scarlautern, Ottweiler, Neunkirchen, and Zweibrucken, were cut in 13 places. Those between Bitsch and Hagenau and between Scargemund and Hagenau were each severed in three places. Eight cuts were made on the rails connecting Saarburg with Brumath,

and four on lines leading to Mutzig from St. Die on the west and Schlettstadt on the south. As a result of these cuttings on three days of more than ordinary interdiction operations against vital lines, a considerable volume of the traffic from the Khine crossings between Koblenz and Straebourg to the battle area was at least temporarily affected.

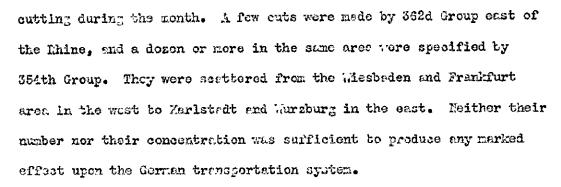
Other results accound from attacks on rolling stock and rail fecilities in the course of those same missions which further increased the enemy's problems of supply and communications. A total of 44 locemotives were claimed destroyed in the three days' operations. The Fed Krouznach mershelling yard was hit by 22 x 500-pound GP bombs dropped by 362d Group on the 20th. These caused an ammunition and tank car train of 30 cers to blow up, producing great fires in adjacent warehouses and a heavy explosion after the planes had left the target. A squadron of 406th Group on the 27th strafed an ammunition train west of Eagentu. One plane was destroyed by the resulting blast, and other explosions—apparently from an ammunition dump—were observed over a 12 five-mile area.

Ostober Sctivities

In October MIN TAC contributed to the interdiction program by cutting rails, destroying bridges, and attacking marshalling yards. It was a month of restricted operations in general, and those against railway targets were no exception to the rule.

The "Oprops" for the period disclose the feet that two of XIX TAC's groups--354th and 362d--personnel a virtual monopoly of rail





A greater number of missions which had rail cuts as a feature were flown west of the Rhine. In their reports the stereotyped phrace "some /rails/ probably destroyed, many damaged" appears time and again and suggests considerable, although indefinite, results. A charting of cuts for which grid coordinates are given indicates that a few were effected in the area east of Motz and in the vicinity of Saarburg.

Others temperarily broke the lines leading into Maiserslautern from the west and those extending costward from that center in the direction of Bad Kreusnach, horne, and Maustadt. Some interrupted traffic on the rails leading southeast from Trier, but the most conspicuous concentration was on the lines Trier-Moblenz, where the relationship of the cuts to the formal program was most in evidence. In other instances such relationship is difficult to discover, although the lines attacked were clearly serving the battle front. Four tunnels were hit in the course of these operations with results claimed good.

Pridges were subjected to attack by various groups. Because of their location over water or in valleys these targets were often hidden by mist or cloud, and numerous missions were forced to seek other objectives. When attacks were delivered the bridge structures on





occasion escaped injury, but effective results were obtained on approaches and rails near-by. In spite of such disappointments, howover, come definite results were obtained on bridges in the Saar area. At Herneckeil 13 planes of 362d Group knocked out a bridge on the 13th. On the 28th a structure near Maiserslautern was destroyed by three direct hits made by 1,000-pound GP bombs dropped from 43 planes of 353th Group. On the next day 38 aircraft from 362d Group damaged the structure at Eochspeyer (east of Kaiserslautern), and 45 planes from the same group destroyed that at Firmasens, together with a locomotive and 15 cars which were crossing the bridge at the time the attack was made. In Alsace elements of 405th Group bombed a bridge north of Hagenau on the 26th, 28th, and 28th and destroyed one span, while on the 29th two other bridges were hit. At Kaltenhausen (neer Hegenau) 405th Group left the bridge unserviceable after two squadrons attacked, while 32 aircraft of 406th Group saashed the Schlettstadt (Selestet) bridge north of Colmar.

Railway centers and marshalling yerds appear to have been favorite targets in October when over 25 were attacked either as designated objectives, or more often, as objectives selected by the leaders of elements on armed recommaissance and other missions. On the two days 14 and 15 October squadrons from 405th Group struck six east of the Rhine--one southeest of Mainz, two in the Heidelberg area, one at Forbach, and others north of Lohr and east of Stuttgart. In Alsace five were bembed in squadron-strength attacks--Saargemund by 362d Group (2 October), Kriechingen by the 358th (2 October), Saarunion by the 362d (20 October), and Ingeweiler and Pfaffenhofen by the 358th



(26 October). The remaining targets of this type lay within the Saar area. Here the more significant yards attacked were Simmern (2, 6, 13 October), Searbrucken (2 October), St. Mendel (3, 13 October), Lendau (6 October), Hermeskeil (13 October), three rail yards east of Bad Kreuznech (14 October), and Speyer (28 October). Of these attacks those on Landau, Kaiserslautern, and Speyer were delivered by elements of 406th, 405th, and 367th Groups respectively; all others were made by units from 362d Group. The effects of such attacks in damage done to rails, rolling stock, and facilities were generally satisfactory.

Traffic and facilities on the Rhine-Farne canal were hit by 358th Group on the 7th and by 362d Group on the 9th with claims of some 24 barges destroyed, 50 or more damaged, and locks and banks considerably damaged. Six Rhine barges were claimed destroyed by an attack of a squadron from 358th Group on 13 October.

Rolling stock was often hard hit in the course of interdiction and other operations, notably on the following occasions. On 3 October a squedron of 405th Group, assigned to operate with AX Corps, was vectored to two trains south of Trier, hitting both with good results; on the same day 11 locomotives were claimed by a squadron of 362d Group in the course of a rail-cutting mission. Three days latter a three-squadron mission of 406th Group included among other rail targets three trains at Ffeddersheim. On the 13th, when 12 aircraft of 362d Group behabed the marshalling yard at Airn, they likewise strafed a 20-car ammunition train which exploded and burned; and in the course of three squadron-strength rail-cutting missions on the next day 354th Group destroyed four trains, one a 50-car ammunition train. Once





chiefly from numerous small claims.

Movember Activities

Over-fll operations on the part of XIX TAC were further reduced in Movember and those related to interdiction were affected in marked degree. Few missions which had rail outs as their assigned purpose were carried through. Outs described by coordinates all but disappear from the records, and general claims are the exception rather than the rule. Thile attacks on bridges occasionally figure in the records, no instance has been found of any carried out with marked success.

Marshalling yards again figure rather prominently among such rail targets as were attacked. East of the Rhine, Oper Roden (southeast of Frankfurt), together with Gomunden and Sachsenheim, were hit by squadrons of 405th Group on 25 November. Explosions followed the bombing and strafing of the latter two. On the 19th 353th Group hit the yard at Restatt, east of the Rhine, and also at near-by Lauterburg on the west bank. On that same day two yards near St. Goar, on the Phine above Koblenz, were struck by an element of 362d Group. Yards at Schlichtigheim, near Strasbourg, were attacked by 358th Group on the 16th, and six locomotives, together with 45 cars and sundry buildings. were claimed destroyed. Another Alsatian target was the yard at Colmer which the same group struck on the 21st. Five of the remaining railway centers ettecked lay within a 20-mile radius of Searbrucken. A squadron of 362d Group destroyed seven amunition cars at Pargerten on the 9th. The 405th Group hit the same target on the 19th, together with the yard at Saargemund, and claimed a total of 12 locomotives destroyed. Fires





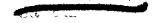
followed the strike at Merzig by the 362d Group on 15 November, and three days later an element of the same group claimed a locomotive and 30 cars at Neunkirchen, to which it had been vectored. A center near Lebach was bombed by 362d Group on the 20th. Still in the Saar but farther to the east, the yards at Minnweiler were hit by the same group on 19 November.

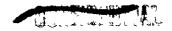
Damage to rolling steck has been noted in connection with attacks on marshalling yards. It likewise appears in the claims reported by other missions which include items such as the following. On 18 November, 404th Group claimed 15 lecomotives destroyed by Mapalm bembs and strafing near Mittringen. On this day XIX TAC ran up its highest score to date for destruction of railway cars, claiming 456, together with 74 lecomotives. In the course of four squadron-strength missions on the next day, 354th Group claimed 13 lecomotives and as many rail cuts. The 354th reported 21 lecomotives destroyed in the Saar area by two squadron missions on the 20th. On the 25th, 405th Group reported a train and six lecomotives destroyed near Maidelberg, while on the following day 354th Group claimed 12 lecomotives and 10 rail cuts in a 1421-plane mission east of the Rhine.

Interdiction Effort by XIX TAC

Cotobur Activities

XXIX TAC's October operations associated with the interdiction program were limited by weather which eliminated all activities on many days end restricted them on others. Yet interdiction was given attention both by missions which were assigned that task and by many others which made rails their targets of opportunity. Many cuts were effected, but





only those cases where they were reported by means of coordinates can be dealt with here.

west of the Rhine incidental and sporadic action against rails is often to be observed, but on 8 October and again on the 13th and 14th there was a notable concentration of effort on these targets by missions dispatched with varied purposes. On the 8th a squadron mission of 373d Group probably destroyed a bridge at Dumpelfeld and cut rails on either side of that town, while 36 aircraft of 36th FB Group effected some helf dozen cuts in the area west of Koln. On the 13th one 24-plane formation and another of 36 from 36th FB Group, together with one of 36 aircraft from 373d Group, made rails their principal targets; while several formations of 366th FB Group delivered incidental attacks. The following day 373d Group flew two attacks of 31 and 34 planes, respectively. Concentrations of cuts on these two days put several lines out of action for the time being--Erkelenz-Fheydt, Moln-Duren, Puron-Bedburg, Euskirchen-Bruhl, and Myllburg-Gerolstein. Other cuts interrupted traffic in the vicinity of Eheinbach, southeast of Buskirchen. Here was an example of what might be done under propitious conditions.

Bridges west of the Rhine were often designated or selected for attack. One at Rech and another on the Luxembourg frontier west of Echternach were claimed destroyed in attacks on 7 Catober by squadrons of 378th and 366th FE Groups, respectively. On the 8th, as already noted, the structure at Dumpelfeld was probably destroyed by a squadron of 373d Group, and a like result was reported on the 15th following a group attack by the same organization. A bridge north of Remagen was





dostroyed by 33 planes of 36th Group on 19 Cotober, and five direct hits scored by the 372d in a group attack knocked out a bridge near Grevenbroich on the 28th. The following day a group attack by the 36th left a bridge near Juliah unserviceable but standing; and 404th's group-strongth strike at the structure near Horran, west of Koln, registered direct hits.

On obsection Phine barges were attacked by XXIX TAC, as when a group and a squadron mission of 373d Group attacked on the 6th and the 11th, each reporting two destroyed. On 11 October, 35 aircraft of 360th Group destroyed nine and damaged eight other barges in the Hoblenz area, while on the 28th a group mission by the 38th in the Dusseldorf-Koln region claimed 16 barges, one tog, and one steemer destroyed.

Bothern 6 and 29 Cotober EXIX TAC dispatched cight group-strength missions against reils east of the Phine, another group selected reils there as its secondary target, and a 24-plane mission out rails both east and west of the river. The operations took place on seven different days. With the exception of one mission on the 20th which did little damage and two on the 29th which out rails in the vicinity of Sceet, on the line Arnsberg-Merchede, and farther south in the Signaringen area, all these efforts fell within the period 6 to 17 Cotober. Two lines specified in the formal interdiction program were out at Sceet-Lippstadt and Colbe-Staufenburg. Rails on lines Allendorf-Grankenburg, and Leasphe-Colbe, closely related to other sections in the program, were likewise severed in the other concentrations of the period. Enough damage was done on these lines to have interrupted



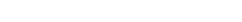
traffic on the sections for a time, but in the absence of attacks in the latter portion of the month service was probably fully restored and maintained. It is of interest to observe that in the two group-strength missions by 36th Group on the 7th 15 locomotives were claimed destroyed.

November Activities

In November the combination of bad weather and the tectical needs of the ground forces drastically reduced interdiction operations on the part of XXIX TAC. No such concentrations of cuts on rail lines as were effected in October were reported. In fact, reports of specified cuts are few; and those which were claimed are so separated in time and area as to be of negligible value. A total of 98 cuts was reported for the month. Attacks on bridges continued. In the area east of the khine, one bridge south of Kessel was destroyed by 36th Group (5 November) and another southeast of Heidelberg by the 404th (9 November). Mest of the river the destruction of a bridge near Brevenbroich was claimed by 48th FB Group (8 November) and another near Bulich by the 36th (19 November). Other attacks upon such structures produced less decisive results. Such attacks as were delivered on marshalling yards lack significance in 16 connection with interdiction.

Interdiction Fffort by 9th Bomberdment Division September Activities - Fershalling Yards

Just ac rail cutting on specified lines was the special assignment to IX and XIX Tactical Air Commands in connection with the interdiction program in September, so attacks on marshalling yards marked the



interdiction effort of 5th Bombardment Division in that period. purpose of the bombers was to impede reil movement from Rhine centers to Cermen positions farther to the west, and to restrict the enemy's capability to move troops laterally from one point to another along the front. If the effort were successful it would force the enemy to a greater use of motor transport, place added strains on that service, and drain his restricted supplies of fuel. In keeping with such purposes 9th Forbardment Division attacked 11 different marshalling yards in the course of the month, in the expectation of blocking traffic and of destroying facilities, together with such supplies and military personnel as might be found in the storage or transshipment areas associated with the yards or located on their crowded sidings. Only one of these tergets (Bingon) lay on the Whine itself -- the others were situated in relatively close proximity to the bettlefront between Aschen and Trier. All were related to the railway lines connecting the Rhine centers with the front, while six lay along main lines parallel to the front between Julich in the north and Trier in the south. The fact that nearly all the marshalling yerds singled out for bombing lay in FUSA's area indicates the priority on air effort which its operations enjoyed during the period.

Four of the yards attacked were part of the rail complex serving Aschen im ediately. On 19 September two groups attacked Turen with 79 sireraft, and one bambed Eschweiler with 37. In both cases all through tracks were cut at least once, and incidental damage was done to buildings and rolling stock. Julich and Euskirchen were assigned to four and two groups, respectively, on the 29th. Bambs from 45 of the

C6 miroralt which attacked blanketed the terret eres at Euskirchen. The 121 planes which dropped more than 226 tons of 1,000-pound 6F*- on the corting sidings and near-by varchouses at Julioh inflicted damage whose exact nature was unascessed.

Six other marshalling yards were in edicately related to positions in the Slegfried Line along the Luxenbourg frontier between Anchen and Trier. On 19 September a single group sent against Bitburg attacked with 24 sireraft whose beable; dustroyed three verehouses and damaged a berracks. Although some brocks were out, through trailic apparently remained possible. At Trior a full group bombed on the 20th, probably blocked all lines, and demaged both rolling stock and transshipment sheds. The following day Frontield, Gerolatein, and Ebrang were the objectives of group-strongth attacks. He damage was done by the 14 planes which bombed Fronsfeld. At Gerolstein 29 aircraft destroyed rolling stock and almost completely blocked traffic, while the 36 which attacked Euron; scored 60 hits in the target area, making through traffic impossible and destroying or deraging approximately 100 freight cars. On 29 Copterbor From received a first attack and Fitburg & recond. Thirty-five A-20's blankebed the Frum target ares with their 300-pound 62 bombs. At Bithur; a terracks erea, reported to house green troops ensiting movement to the Siegfried Line, was heavily damaged by the CS planes of the two groups which attsched; and 52 circust from two other groups which struck the marshalling yard left its facilities completely unserviceable and daraged adjacent warehouses heavily. On the 29th, likewise, bombs from some 30 of the 72 attacking A-20's probably



inflicted heavy damage at Bingen, which served as a Rhine base for enemy troops in the Metz area. Darlier, on 12 September, two groups were dispatched to hit a special rail target at St. Bendel, north of Saarbrucken; but only 14 aircraft attacked, with no damage effected.

It is to be observed that operations against marshalling yards were confined to four days (19, 20, 21, 29 September). Numerous other attacks on marshalling yards were scheduled, but were either canceled or aborted, largely on account of weather, which so often prevented the effective conduct of the interdiction program in the course of September.

October Activities -- Bridges

During Cotober, 9th Bombardment Division gave its attention almost exclusively to communications targets, among which railway bridges were most prominent. Such accent was in keeping with the interdiction program for the period, but on occasion tactical considerations led to the choice of such targets.

It was the ground situation which caused 9th Bombardment Division to be given several transportation targets in Holland, an area in which the Finth Air Force did not ordinarily operate. Here the Allied salient extending to the Leder Rijn at Arnhem required protection. The bridge at Arnhem itself, which 9th Ecmbardment Division had unsuccessfully attacked on 20 September, was twice assaulted to deny its use to the enemy. No darage was done by the group attack on 6 October, but on the following day another group destroyed the structure. In an effort to block the energy's attorpt to strike the selient from the east, three communications targets were scheduled. A group tombing on the 12th hit



Venraij highway junction so well as to win commendation. The next day the rail bridges at Venlo and Roemand were each bombed by a group of A-20's which destroyed the structure at Venlo and left that at Roemand unserviceable. Hongelo marshalling yard was somewhat farther removed from the Arnhem area but nonetheless served it. On 6 Cetober bombs from two groups fell on the city rather than on their rail target, but on the 7th a single group inflicted considerable damage upon rails, rolling stock, and facilities.

The desire to block the supply route of the German forces in malcheren Island caused one group to be sent against l'oerdijk bridge and another against that at Gertruidenkerg on the 20th. Led by pathfinders, the attacking planes claimed to have rendered the first bridge unserviceable, but did no damage to the second. Prior to its destruction by the Gormans, Moordijk was again attacked by 9th Bemberdment Division on the 20th, but the 33 aircraft attacking claimed only slight damage.

Attacks in the American area were more directly related to the interdiction program. In view of the current ground effort these were largely concentrated in the Aschen region where a marshelling yard and four railway bridges were attacked. The bridge at Lus' irchen was bombed five times (8, 9, 13, 17, 29 October) in group strength. Two attacks reported no damage, two more reported their results unknown, while the bembing on 13 October left the bridge serviceable but blocked the lines temporarily. Grevenbroich bridge was not hit by the group dispatched on the 8th, and remained undamaged after a second bombing by a group on the 12th. Tracks were cut when a group bombed the bridge at Ahrweiler on 12 October, but only 13 sircraft tembed out of the two groups dispatched

on the 25th--and these did no damage. No damage resulted from the borbing of the structure close to the Rhine at Sinzig on the 28th. Two groups were assigned to each of three areas at Duren on 6 October and their reports were gratifying. An ammunition dump was blanketed, a berracks ares was severely damaged, and the mershalling yard itself well hit. Julich, another road and rail center serving Aachen, was hit by bombs of six flights from two groups on the Sth, while those of one flight fell on Geilenkirchen marshelling yerd. Between the Aachen and the Metz area four railway bridges and one highway bridge were bombed in the course of six group-strength attacks, none of which were reported to heve vitally demaged the structures. Mayer was bombed on the 13th and again on the 29th. On the main line Koblenz-Trier, Bullay was attacked on the 7th and Eller on the 29th; while on the latter date a rail and a road bridge at Konz Karthaus, southwest of Trier, were also attacked. Considerable success was, however, reported after an attack on warehouses in the Trier mershalling yard (7 October) which supplied German divisions opposing the advance of the 26th Infartry and the 5th Armored Division. Three groups of A-20's attacked, destroying six warehouses and severely demaging four others.

In the area more closely related to the Metz front the bridge et Dillingen, on the main line from Trier to Searbrucken, was destroyed by the group which ettacked on 7 October, and that at Bed Munster was left unserviceable after a group bombed the following day. In this erea, as in the others, enemy supplies offered targets, and on the 12th three groups bombed the Camp de Bitche and claimed severe damage to at least a quarter of the target area.



These retacks on transportation tergots in October had not achieved conspicuous success, and their contribution to the interdiction program was but slight. Hissions had, however, been flown on 10 different days, one or more on nearly every day which permitted combet operations. In 18 many increases weather had forced the use of pathfinders.

Yovember Activities -- Bridges

Rail bridges at 13 key points on the lines serving the German front were the tergets assigned to elements of 9th Rombardment Division for interdiction attack on 21 occasions during Rovember. Five were bombed on the 2d, five on the 3d, and four on the 11th. bingle groups were dispetched in all cames and, with one exception, 23 to 32 aircraft bombed. In the exceptional case only five attacked. Simple attacks on the bridges at Bullay (2 October) and Ahrweiler (11 October) resulted in no appreciable damage, nor were greater results reported following the two ettacks on Feyen and on Luskirchen (2, 11 Catober). Later in the month the Rhine bridges in the 6th Arry sector at Breisach (18 October) and Meuenters (18, 19 October) were bombed without effect. In the case of the remaining seven rail structures attacked, the results of at least one of the attacks delivered on each was more satisfactory. A first attack or Konz Harthaus (2 October) rendered the bridge unserviceable, though that on the following day did not add to the darago. At Trier-Ffulzol (2 October) half of the span was dropped into the river, and Bad Hunster was severely damaged on 3 Cetober. Ecoults of the bombing of Morsheid and Maiserslautern (3 October) were





at first reported as undertermined, but in later records with demage was claimed. The same holds true of results at Leuwied-Ihrlich (3 Catober) and Sinzig (11 Catober). Both these bridges were subjected to further bombings, but the attacks on Neuwied (19, 21 Catober) and on Sinzig (21, 28 Catober) were inconclusive.

Surrary for the Pariod September to November

The interdiction program was planned on a grand scale. No less comprehensive plans could have premised to produce the desired results upon the intricate German rail betwork. But more than ordinary effort, as well as continued success in such effort, were both required if the lattle area were to be truly isolated. Not even in September and early Cotober, when the varied types of interdiction effort were most manifest, could the embassor to rated as extraordinary. For the better part of Cotober and throughout November its scale was even less, for at no time did aeather and other factors permit interdiction attacks to become a part of the daily routine of Math Air Force elements. Temporary achievements in some areas were recorded in the course of interdiction operations in these conths. But the energy's skill in using his railway network and his sufflict to effect speedy repairs were such as to classify the over-all results as "interruptions of traffic" rather than as "interdiction" of the sort earlier achieved within the Scine-Loire are.

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Chapter VIII OPERATIONS IN CONCERN AND NOVEREN 1994

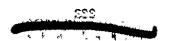
Major Greend Torce Letienc

Paring the monitor of Cetober and Formaber 1944 the ground forces developed four anjor actions. In Cetober a push against Anches by FUSA resulted in the encirclement of that stronghold on the 16th and its currenter on the Slot, while in the couth FUSA now I across the Scille in the direction of Chatcau Seline. On 8 Forceder FUSA imagurated an account which led to the capture of Nata, carried across the Hotelle to Sieghtical Line positions in the north, and reached positions farther mouth to the west of Forbach, Futtelenge, and Charalben. On 16 Forester the First and Minth U. S. Amico jumped off in the Anches area and moved steadily forward to new positions just year of the Loar Fiver.

Einth de Porce Lorencetz

Movements of the headquarters of Minih Mir Force and its elements, together with further forward displacements of its combat units, took place during this paried. Their Headquarters Finth Mir Force remained fixed at Chantilly, but the advanced headquarters followed that of Twelfth Army Group to Iuxenhours on 16 Cetober. In heavying with this move, Headquarters 9th Bombardment Division left Chartree and on 28 Cetober and blished itself at Deims, where communication with Advanced Ecualquarters Minth Mir Force and with Its our cabelons was simpler.

Therier, on 2 Cetober, IX The moved its advanced headquarters to



Vorviers, where it continued in recidence. Ideanced Headquarters KIN The war established at Paner on 12 Cetaber, and as noted below, that of the new MIN The was located first at Arlan (1 Cetaber) and after 22 Cetaber at Reastricht. Association with the headquarters of appropriate armies was in evidence in connection with each of the tactical air connectes.

The 98th Pembardment ling, within 9th Bemberdment Division, moved to its third continental area then its elements sattled down at Combrai-Meronics, Peronne, Clastres, and Loon-Athles in the course of the month. Thile to groups of IX TAG remained in the Reins area throughout Cotober, on the 1st 474th II Crow joined the 370th which had proceded it to Florence, and the 355th and 365th novel easters to Chievres by A Catober. Totard the end of Poventer, 200th III Group chifted from Laon-Cowron to the Belgian fleld at Asch. XIX TAG units continued at their carlier locations throughout Catober; but on 3 Povember 3001 IB Crowp moved forward to the neighborhood of Virdum, and octuern 30 and 30 Ferenter 354th ID Group advanced to Torieres en Maye, northwest of Pancy. By the and of Cetober the fighter-bombers of MMIN 7:0 were threed on Pelgian field, in the region of Ic Gulot and St. Trond, where they centified throughout November. Each of these developed involved on improvement of open tional facilities, incorrect us the new fields were approximally nearer the Irent team the old. I

Lorgarorce of MMIX Protical Air Co. and

In the opening degree of Catober the Winth U. S. Aray joined Welfth Aray Group on the front. Intlalpating its appearance there, a new



the scene so that each arry of Trolith imp Group wight have a command of this type associated with it. On 1/ September 1941, KKIN Trotical Mir Command (Provisional) had been activated at Vermand, near St. Grentin. Drig. Gen. Richard B. Fugent was announced as its commanding general, and the purconnel of its headquarters and headquarters equation were derived from 8/th and 1931 Fighter wing. Their, the initial phase of its anistence WIK TAS was abtended to IX IX for organication.

At Termind the or would performed of KAIX INS perfected their organization and, in accordation with four grappe of IX IA3, developed Yeals operational techniques without actually as anim, the direction of operations. By 3 Catober, he was, headquarter, of the Finch U. S. Arry he bear actability at Arlan and had term over the conthern sector of the old IUIX front. In today, this development, KAIX IAS had opened operational headquarters at arise on 1 Catober, on which date the 28th, 286th, and 3721 ID Groups, to other with the 2821 Institute Deconants once Group, were assigned to it. With the combitionant of its headquarters at arise, KAIX IAS was collevel of it. It when to III IAS for organization, braining, and operations, although in the wester which implicately followed, carbain of its group, were on occasion to be placed under the operational direction of IX IAS. Such notion was the more justified because the front of the thick KAIA IAS are associated to the more justified because the front of the thick KAIA IAS are associated to the more justified because the front of the thick KAIA IAS.

Whither the Finth W. C. in propriet accorded a Chebical air command

and long to remain in its first operational area. The many was exiteded to the extreme northern Chart of the American front, and increably KNIX TAG noved with it. On 20 Cetober, therefore, XXIX TAG exteblished its bandquarters along the that of the Finth U.S. Army at Montricht in Holland. Effective that date, 308th IP Group scienced to IX IN; but 20th and 3793 IP Groups in 3721 Listic A Recommediation from remained ander the control of Main TAG, and 10th and 10th IP Groups are consider to it. Mith four fighter-bander groups and one tastical recommists not group under its operational direction, XXIX INC togat its active comparation with the Finth U.S. arg. 1

Pictured of Them-Part of a continued the Committee

As a result of the reach other readjustments the accimment of flighter-booker groups among the three tactical, in command of the Winth Air Force on 31 Catobar 184 tank on follows:

(Tir t V. S. Arly)	<u>MIK IAO</u> (Ihird U. S. Arer)	<u>YVIX TAC</u> (Hinth U. S. Army)		
67560 II Group 67560 II Group 67500 II Group 67500 II Group 67500 II Group	40384 II Group 40384 II Group 40384 II Group 40384 II Group 40384 II Group	56th II Group 48th II Group 3771 II Group 401th II Group		

Committees in Colober

IX indica in count

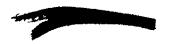
Mir-Crownl Stoper, tion

As would be anticipated. IN TAS most jointly lith FUSt in October. Direct air-ground cooperation was particularly in evidence from the



Od through the Olet thre cost and advisces to the north and couth of Anchon by WI and MIX Corpo isolated the city and forcal its currenter. On the 13 days of this 30-log period than weather alload gar and operations by the community at least half of each dig to mineton that applymed this elimidiant role. The flat that come were styled "Say, or b" and others "Aracl Reconnais" ace" matters little. In default of targetr arrighed by the Mir Caggori I arry a rose likel "Organis" mission toull proform areal reconstituted chock of the administration ground column. On the other hand, areal reconsiderable idealogs were Enough the election of the circums of the second controls of mexicus typer. The concentration of the resources of IX IMS when this essential riscion the particularly evident on A Catober than 17 out of 63 aloriens flow were in dir-growd congruttion, on the 19th than the rullo man 20:33, alon the 10th them it this 10:24. As a rule the Lightons were in equidron other th (13 circrest), elthough on concrete entire groupgardelphted. After Author's currender on the Alpt the recourses of IN Indicate increasingly devoted to the test of rail intermedian.

In gracult the to diregraph cooperation rission, were ungrestically but important, and displayed the star graph durint observations on these of the worlder parish. Hence only exceptional cample need to relate the model there. In accordation with XIX Corps' offers north of dush a on 2 October, 370th II Crosp borbol alght of the 10 pin-pointed positions assigned to it, while 474th II Group his four others turned by start.



equalizate of 40% the II Group on the Eth. Hacry arter were hit by two equalizate of 40% the II Group on the Eth. Hacry arter, gethering for counter 5thele on let Indentry Bluicien, and attract by one equalizate of 588th II Group on the 188th in that ground described as a "gorgeous iob," and a second equalizate bankler constabilition in the same arter with results unobserved. On the 188th, as American troops closed in on Anchen, defense positions near or in the city war, div shout, i by five algebras, four of group and one of equalization strength.

As 7 Congrestive's south of Hurigan Sowert on 14 Cotober, 02
PLA7's of 239th FB Group actached the team of Weathrath on request.
Artill or cooperated by counter tatter, Airs on flat positions and by taring the target with above at both and and in the middle. In concept meet the fighter-bothers had a clear run and destroyed or dam god mearly every building in the to m. As a result of this and other actions, i.i.f. Con. Thurst I. Tracks, Commanding Concret of 7 Corps, commanded IX TAS for "particularly line close support that had of the greatest assistance in regolding vicious Garman counterattacks. This support along has accounted for an appreciable number of and parasonnel and vehicles, including tanks and artillery."

On 15 Cataber, 49th TP Group flows total of mine and dren-strength missions in appointment with XIX Corps. Throughts contain were elicited from ground following four attacks on total, sum positions, and entranched troops. One equadron had already delivered one successful attacks here it was eather upon to similar a come nimition of some 20 tanks. It had only too looks left, but it dropped these on the energy

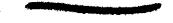


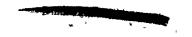
erfor and then flet over the front at 50 feet, striling the German troops as they attuated. The ground report declared that those who were not 'tilled or wounded turned and fled. Because of its importance this mission was commonled by IVSA. In in cylinders by such spectacular missions, and by many others well executed, IX INC was running true to form in an auting its task of air-ground cooperation.

Actions comingt the GAF

IX TAG liberice meintained its tradition by operations against the CAT with Cotober claims of SD-12-DD in the air and D4-9-6 on the ground. Acids from such actions as that on D Cotober then an element of SODAN ID Group forced a jet-propelled LL-2003 to crash, this achievement are largely the recult of actions on five days. On A Cotober a squadron of CO1th ID Group the attacked by an equal number of energy directly with results of E-9-1, while 30 P-35's of 367th ID Group bounced 10 FY-190's and demand three.

To days later 365th II Group secret a notable success. While on a success east of inches the group one vestored to the energy directed at Irretards id, there V-Intercept had be used that glass which had been ever our lines were landing. Tifty II-190's test atraction in the field with allies of 20-0-3, and two others were destroyed as they came in to land. Four groups whereal the kenter on 10 Cetaber. That are in easy aircraft northwest of Anches, 305th Group destroyed four for no loss. Tight planes of 367th Group was jumped by 35 III-100's and claimed 3-0-1 for the loss of two; units a equation of 365th Grown, joining in an action already unforcer, lost one but claimed 3-1-4 in combat the





~0.5

20 charge directiff. For glamer from 474th Group joined in the sight over Lichen and reported 2-1-1 without loss.

Ch 13 Catabor 23 aircraft of 677th Group have vectored to 29 such a planes in the Durin each had in the encuing encounter claimed 7-1-3 for the loss of three, while two planes on the may have bounced 16 Th-1907 and claimed one. The T-47's of 368th Group lost three in an encounter the case day with 10 EH-100's, claiming 1-0-1. Three groups shared the honors on the 20th had a total of 133 ChF planes had three a partic engagement with energy formations of 29, 16, and 7 planes, respectively, over Irahl and Insen. Sowen I-59's were lost, but the total claims were 2-3-13. Also on the 20th, 30 of the encurbenced 32 P-38's of 370th ID Broup in the Ione area, and 20 others encountered 11 I-47's of 365th Group near Totalens. In the first and counter claims were 2-1-3 for the loss of two; in the second to were 100th grain the district of 6-1-0.

In the Hobbert error complement succeed the schlerel by so Phines of the 205th Group in an afternoon want on the Slat. They first bounded SI to 20 energy aircraft, and then at their full was running low, att chall another formation of equal size. Their total challes were 20-3-11 for the lose of three.

Promitted tion

In the course of the menth of Cotober IN IN flore a total of 505 Lindon with C.751 fighter-bombers displatched-approximately one-third



luce than in the proceeding routh. A total of 1,007 tent of he be, including 130 leaflet tends and 135 leads, the dropped. Since the number of cortice full off, and his use the front was generally stabilized, ground of ice dropped considerably as the following last the many "

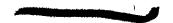
g larger de derm	70	Raul interdictal	7	
ir orth vehicles	16	Zrl·l _e ; r	3	
Horr -drin remiclos	1	232.57	1	
Logocolive ~	106	Gm porltion:	21	
Edlur car	217	Iroop concentrations	(12)	uusaasafull;
Lil cut-	21.7	lir ledlin vards		cttcctri

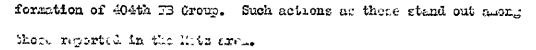
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Air-Ground Cooperation

Mr-ground cooperation on the girt of MIN INC one evicing on a limited so in Cotober. The Third W. S. Amay, with which is of match, the copy retively quiet, its region actions contaring about the Ports purpling Matains in an electronal advance from Fint a Mousem and Paner which resulted in crossings of the Schole River and of Chatera Caling. In both there areas MIN INC our active.

Consider all plants of Stoth ID Group structure there lists forth with results on the reported good by grownly while doth IB Group, experiting with IV Corps in the attack on Fort Irlant, alles nine squalren-strungth absence against this targets with good concentrations reported on one. Takes were soon nowing into the for' at U-7854 offer a equatron of 258th Group attacked on the 6th, and the next day a equatron of 2501 IB Group except at those to the cast of the city. On the 11th a trouble code with y can contheast of Materiaes cought out by a equatron of 353th ID Group which destroyed campulaged inetallations on railway tracks; while on the 14th gun positions at St. Remy were attacked by a





Others wire chillerly evident in connection with the lovement toward. Children Stiller. On a Cotober 405th Group beated tenic test of Licuze with unpreserved results and thoroughly atraced the town of implication our of iller, Julicuspurb, and Presser on Shalmole. On the 7th Conferent from the main group hit trees concentrations in rolds carb of Pont a Housean. A similar concentration couthwest of Chateau Called the beated and similar by a squadron of the Cocd on 10 Cotober, and a command sout desiroped. On the 13th one of the equalment of 205th Group hit an array of the tamb trops now Lemondouri, and on the 15th, 16 aircraft of 205th Croup beated a tark concentration at 7the, each of the South Texas. A code plan in the area reported that the backing the very accounts.

Attlete in directored composition were considerably directed to other where. On a Cottoer a equation from 198th FF Group was cent to toric 10th 79th Indianary Division (Sinth V. S. 1997), and destroyed that a larger deliteries cast of Blancat. To the east of Imag Loury, on the IVSL front, two tenns on the Ho. He were left by a formation from 2000th ID Group on the 6th. A week latter (12 October) a equation of 2000th ID Group joined in ICCA' satisfies as Alchem, where it discharged 10 receives at a formation of 20 tenter, destroying three and design as

in the all citade for Colivered by elements of 2001 in Group on 20 Cetaber. In the remains the equation office through intense fluir to





bould an earth and absorbly the at Floure with 1,000-pourl II bould.

10 of thich hit the day. I third equation on an afternoon mighten found that the earlier abthets had out a charact through the day, and all of to the damps by four additional bits. The purpose of the situation, to looke the impounds I waters of the Itany de Linda's before incriteen troops crossed the Callle in this area, so that the Comman algebra had not have an opportunity to out them off by blooding the dam after their projected crossing. Fland had been fully coordinated with XII Corps, whose viction has to deliver a limited objective attack in the area. Their exaction has so reconceful as to beginn our stanks, a due the hobility of acry on an elementar, and disrupt the Carona achies of annewers. As a further result of this direction then the american attack has reconstilly completed that a days later.

Actions against the Cil

Air combate were compared to the restabling period of Trades on equidrons of 408th Group had his the restabling period of Trades on the 6th their cover flight was jumped by 20 MI-100th. Other imminions aircraft joined in the encounter in which they lost one plane out eleired 4-0-1. The days later a squarron of the same group cought four entage interact in a tradite gate random the Tithic circled, destroyed them all, and chaired 1-0-3 on the ground. On 2 Coloter elements of SECth IR Group eighted three and y formations, but only one encounter resulted than three court aircraft thick attacked a equal over Chairman Poline were accounted for in the record of 2-0-1.



The out-tending action of the month the that in Adel Still ID Group participated in the Eastingen area on the SDth. Thirty-five P-Cl's tens blan bounced by 75 ID-100's thich had a SD-plane top cover that eventually joined in the SE-minute contact. In rich piloto reported that the enemy pilots were the post of the they had ever encountered, and that the maintained their formations in flight, of four. In spite of this the group oldered SM-S-S for a loss of three. Then a requirem of SESTE Group attracts the directed to Cocheantein on the Sta the ground claims term S-O-C. Turing the month KIX TAC's claims against enemy alrest themselved in the six and 93-10-16 on the ground.

Recapit Action

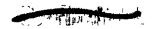
During October IVIX TAG lost the groups. In addition, teather prevented operations on reven days and livited that on 10 others. There facts in continuing reduced the community effort to a total of 4,700 certiar. Among ground claims may the destruction of 317 LT, 300 cm or 1 vehicles, 387 loss stives, and 1,300 radius, care.

WIN Retled in Council

Mir-Ground Cooper, tion

Cinc. the Finth U. C. Army and holding a quist and stable front furing the politic gart of Colober, air-ground congenution on the part of RMM TAG and conglevous by its absence, and the command as afric to devote its recovered to other tages. However, its units report





CCS

some actions in accordation with IVI.'s drive against Lachen then
200th II Group flow three equadron-strength aliminar of the usual
root on the 19th. On that same day 3700 II Group and the group-strength
wiselong for joint action with the ground forces in the Author area.
The first did that ground described as a "good job" on one task concentration north of the city, and group sied to attach the others near
Brokewiler. The second also structe at tasks and likewise booked buildings held by energy troops. I dies, after its accordated army had woved
to the north, 48th II Group flow three squadron-strength deciens on
23 Catober in accordation with XIX Corps. In the course of those
siscious the sample-marked town of Lacendorf was booked with results
unobserved, but other attacks on inhabited localities were held up
because the energy was throwing white and colored samp ability title

Actions against the GIF

Cally indrequently was action possible against the Gar in Cotober. The 3721 Group, however, had one of the squadring bounced by E0-plus energy planess over Moblens on 7 Cotober. It suffered the less of two aircraft, but its claims were 11-1-0. The only other considerable air combat during the north occurred on the 23th. Then 16 aircraft of CO1th Croup, whiting for a rendervous with bombers over Anderrach, were attached by 20-plus of the Car. In the answing action imprisan planes claimed 5-0-1 for no less. In actions in 2 Cotober energy planes were destroyed on the groups. On that day 256th Group and one group



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COL

mission against the similal at Gross Osthelm and another to that at Coor Ohm. In toth cases and so was done to installations, and at Oser Che four energy aircraft sore destroys I on the field. The same day 21 planes of 372d Group attached an airfield contract of Frankfurt site chains of 2-0-9 on the ground.

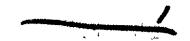
Oth In birthord Firsteion

Mir-Ground Cooperation

Acids from its attacks on the provision trajets in October, 9th Londers Link Plantation occasionally flat victions which are to be classified to direction depends on the court show of the Scholdt estuary. Crowd had requested the action which the designed to assist in Drectors' explore by the Dritten, and the target are also well hit.

Radier, on the Sd. in coordination with the NIS Corpor push north of Anchon, attached once Calivered against defended will gas. Threetic ions tooked are not a Herbach in attache by one, the, and threegroups. Cally part of one discion hit the assigned area. On the case
Cay the riscions were given thich as their target. The first, of
three-group strength, leaded in green error; while the recoal, of
simple-group strength, placed the backs of two riligia, in the surget
area. Limich, through which reinfercoments moved to Whach, was atruck
on 3 Cocober by a single group, two of whose flights Campad buildings,
reads, and a bridge. On the 18th and 18th, larger one, an obstaclin the gath of the 9th Industry Fivision, and bottled in group-strength





attract lite on mil line ramming through the term.

In the Help rea 9th Districted Elvicion atmost at two forces nowth of the city in an effect to newtralize gues which were holding up the advance of the 5th Infentry Pivision into Tort Eriant. Thirty-four E-901- theoret, dropping 68 tone of teahs, and reporting probable hours during to one birght and chick demand to the other. 10

Contions in Death a

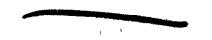
Li Retic 1 dr Comen

Mir-Ground Cooperation -- Open tion QUINT

Firing Postuber to their limited all operations on the part of IS INC. On time digar no combat operations over locality, on in colors from them 'CO continue or flows, and on only four were more than 300 migotic ted. Inversors, in many deposition operations were concurred to another reflected today afficients to a minute again. In a site of their conflicts ble in the tions, a fitting proportion of IN INC's effort was devoted to six-ground cooperation in operations which contered about Machen. Since the character of such actions has been fully defaulted in the narrative of surface seriods, only a number treatment is required in that for the month of overbox.

Detrois I and I Dominder from 10 to 53 per east of available of effort was planned to be well in the Tehniat are continued of Anchen three 18th Industry Division (V Corps) are recising to advance through the useded defiles of the European and Granul for size. Soundron-

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circulth missions of me regal sly flow-two on 3 and 7 Forelier, three on the 7th, four on the 5th and oth, and five on the 4th. In addition, as circultaneer demended and as well er gan ittel, missions of greater will be universaly appoint lander. Symbology, conjection directly with Air Sagart I riter, street at Alab positions, barrows, and cancenin disma of troops and amore they like the hit at the defended torne in the region at ground's request-Col ist itself are so attacked, together will the meighboring tours of Voccentia. Tehrburg, and orgitals. I distant was the applicable to make the tempets which ground which is to hime settedied. Ither to the in in agreeting sought to confuse the sitt tion by firing religher shells late the arang high by marian image. Coodel algebra of approximately group of neith were disputable into this area or some sin coemains in this limited m ries. It a CC liver It of 17 th II Group bouted too torms on the Pour aust of Cobrist on 5 Town for, and in the 6th emoth r 36 fro. the simple energy their borbs in a cubic energed area reported to contain conductations of an or and trader. The same dur the 205th flor a groupstrought direion , bich and example vericles its turn t. Plane bombe dropped by 570th Group on 7 Now more 2/11 on a pice-marked run positions near Durch and, lesseling to ground reject, especial the uris. On the 8th, 'With Group atmostratiths to meal Schoot, at am portions in the vicinity. In at the term of Burischell. Filot. regard tought that the balk of the individual aderions in the Con-let cares schieved fix a newer of everence. The content than a colved by



IN TWO look the Contrading the rel. Theorem in the area win to approved of the grand force. If

Operation WINT was the cole numbered to the joint sir-ground effort which had an advised from the cost of income to area the law and the Phin, are its general objective. The weather had forced the posternors at of the assemble from the to day between it and its Powerber, but on the 16th it was launched. Even that weather limited in operations.

On each of the 10 operational days from 16 to 20 However IN INC flow directors conjunction missions. Ordinarily those were of equation similarly, and their natural nation per day many? from a loss of the to a bight of 18, the natural being harpely dependent upon the weather. On 25 Formular, 18 out of 35 digitality missions were directly coordinated. This the ground effort.

On 16 For the abres of the soundines of the technology of the grown to the lumbhine of the grown towards.

Forther was pleased here all periods in 197th Group, we many more by the state, and 15 by the 377th, and 15 by the 377th. The 397th Group his it: there turn to in the vicinity of Turbyen. The had commented by such a mode, and ground signal I that the results on II there are supplied to the 375th.

Then there there is neglet by combined to I had aller, since the could be a made also a thirt of the factor of the first originally designated. The application of the first original of the for the 507th. This group had difficulty with



ordered and imaged the of it had not if the gradital area. Here were, a goal consequation was imaged on one decline and target and the following it is not a make the following the following and all the cooperation with indintary limitions reserved decirating with a ratio and labeled the terms of Julich and Cay, together with Jun positions at Friederm.

In the degree thick followed (17 to 50 Forenth r) IN ING concentrated its official in the buttle area. Its equations at risk at the would tradical tragace. Ground has placed with the obtact by 255th IN Crows on you gotified and hour a containing traces now Instantial (13 Forenth), on the last day tith Scotth's actual which forms for taking of biding at Metapean. The banding of a command goet and have out of hidden at Metapean. The banding of a command goet and have all the strading of routiliday as a Broketilar to elements of SCOTA Scott in the CD with reported as excellent. Then a creat Costs ID Group structure at a train, his amps, a wood, and at haptacete from Machine was. The main happy contained that the routile of the group structure is green position, and at the routile great in the Broketilar and the trace allered. In all the Istructing point in the Broketilar and the area allered. In all the structure, which is an old stag man of a Common of the given the great the stage rating.

the over, the reports of the order indicate that town and will greater the characteristic tangets given to, or relacted by, whatever or in-ground copyer tion. The relay had, in the period following the stabilization of the front in September, turned these into fortified

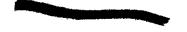


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goaldier of the plant then to be reduced, one effice the other, by wir and ground att che. Now then 30 different torque, of this type care hit in this period, come of them by repeated attaches. For the root part they care stituted in the any to mile by the fore Vi. I on the root will not the Victorian the Index of the vict, with notable consentuations on either side of the roude between Enchantary and Europe in the north, and in the scooled area count Europe in the could, regard as a lin can come by observation, on the part of ground controls, indicate that such a like one are under a more provided to have fallow on tacked area, producing flame and in one cased employions. To grow the fatall could be expected from the observation, and this the statement lade of it, they cannot the recruites that the capacitate of III.

2.0 did much to further TUIN's advance for any tillages in the test to root.

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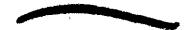
by a time from C70's Incide A I eraphine made Group, and control up a Antone of parameter tend touch.

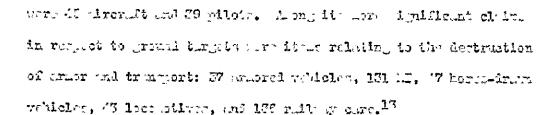
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Cultur by IN IN against reservational for Toysub a sons rought half the cold the gratious worth. On the grown 1-0-0 were eleted, ad "7-0-17 in the size. Thus east mitter desputed for the or flor part of those diversmal in antial cold. On 19 November one equation of 207th Group and ittlighted by CD TW-120th countries of Europe respect of the provide of Among John I in the encounter, and ingother they claims 7-3-5 for no less. On the and all more of the 3036h moomaand Maray planada in the Fistern are and without John child 1-0-0. Circhen F-17' of FIC'b Group with on on encomiwireless on the Cl. 1, but were western by ground control to CO-, la-.-U-1001 la the vicinity of Functions. The corr of 10-0-7 of the conclusion of the monditing control, whin without the winds lagre. It than fillin Crowd than out il Northbur, has like it give ton a it. than tith 10'9 Teff stry Tirrician troomnings. total of 29 taken tirem Sit to Color . Old a turn 1-0-3 for molecular is as int in to their 1000 Might Dighter Ogs from obsided the destruction of a robot of the in the interest of the control of the decoration and the control of the control o I like by 11 I-Site to the midit of 98-57 Forth r. 18

Research Little

In all of the operations in Townston, IN IND flet 177 circles., disputching E,100 plants of thich E,010 kitch ortics. The loss of





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Air-ironi Cooperation -- the Nate Area

to the operations that the City jumped all this is all Corresponding to the operations that the City jumped all this is all Corresponding of the City Corps joined in the establishment of the Land is all, and the chance are custained through the restrictor of the month. These for the unit of the right hir Tores units in the initial operations were blocked by as ther; but on his operational hoperation of the City and the characteristic role in the ground cooperation, flying on a my. 19 mirrical of this type on a dry than in the restriction.

On 8 Now where a first effort by 3821 FB Group against cataly command poste at Doubly and St. Avoid for underthing to the results produced by its bords and region, but a second decision of institute for against decisioned buildings and started first. In the case day, described of the 705th hit those of Toltre and Disconsult its meanth for the 195th hit those of Toltre and Disconsult its meanth for Wish and a squadron of the 196th destroyed that now Herville less Wish. The strike at Poltre and Disconsult that now Herville less Wish.

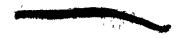


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complete to the with four others effording top cours. They his the target with 500 CP's, using delignabiling technique, and chical five buildings destroyed and seven others desspeci. This attack desold had the he lowesters of the 17th SS Jensey Grandier First ion which convei the he lowesters of the 17th SS Jensey Grandier First ion which convei to sold another of the Meta state; and the desirabilism of the common post, together with it resure, disorganized the systation for an approach bly period. Cooper ting with the COth and the COth Indiator bly period. Cooper ting with the COth and the COth Indiator Indiator Indiator and transfer. The color of the frage is a symmetry of the state of the frage. The COth Group's two equalson-stringth missions hit would not be Chick in Chick in Chick, and chapter Tapalla on transfer near Ricearst, and sixuals at woods near or.

The stirilite tegrin for his conjuncting with ground we must be your mind the exports. Three for these of SEOth Group Controlling and the providence of SEOth Group Controlling and the providence of a stilling and design dight to the on the Oth, as a squadron of the SEOth his composition, in a Total providence. The following I provide a squadron from the AOTH and their tenths of the limit of the standard providence. The following the standard providence of the control of the standard providence of the standard providence of the standard providence of the standard providence.

is in the mid mittern typical despite into the ensured line section Group digitable illustration thick destroyed S4 places of horestim in ritial result of ill man and inching (11 II) outer), beated grant platform



And of Clubur, Arough the oranders (10 Coarders), and destroyed four June in the coarders and 15% 10 direct hit (10 Coarders). A row from all SIGN Groups are recorded to a restructive fundage of a management of the coarders are fitted. In I the Coarders and the fundage of the coarders are coarders are coarders.

It is conditated the main terret for a my mindone, porticularly on the letter of a Mond dign of the onth. The care noted to of ruch lagortoner that in the con--Tallenberg (10 Township) em3 Compellinger (Ol Pavelbur) -- a effect of a line to hit that by to line under rober control through the prevedling everenst. Ine towns attacked were scattered throughout the assault area-Hermont, Borny, Bizange, I alway, and Char willing a being typical. Malalone flows by decal III Group on St and AS Now Little will serve to the tot but builty cosmolorally will all in the some of this ellert. The work dispetered on the Sir i derived cover on the second, with from the to city's dirorthic participating in each. Their objectives are then in a small are because the Incabourg frontier and Larrie, flet of thick were his on the 19th and down more on the passenting dig. In these extents on being Pylle we used in employed in the CD william, like on the Or's also . It fire to be built of particular yours and it is it is all 's any combatible material to them by the one of the grand The Creecesive Mijst - tell light Wir (to lie twilling og 20). · His Industry (to do worse treatment), and site the last (to come fir). The cit is the date of the that order. 13

In The Line will like one rightly tend throther to in the Ly depute time of a little of the control of the city and the cit

in 18 thread of 8000 Crop on 1 Torontor bud depote in the Charge in. (C. s. and) and to the conjection. It follows in its 18 the testing struck to and or in the testing struck to and of the following struck to and of the following fire. Or the condition to all the following fire of the condition is placed from 1800 Cooper Contrapt a building, and that a single placed the condition of the condition of the following the condition of the condition of the following the first condition of the condit

Seed his two will target applied in the rejects of MIX 2001- with a signal of all the larget rought to decrease the last tenter that the terms of the late of the fact that the terms that the terms of the shall all the same attention and the shall all the same attention and installations in the violation of Install to (19 Termsbor), 200th Cross Seetary ?

actions scinci de acc

The STANK IN Cropp had a normal notation, on compatitional and the mountain the Ulous grain to include the of the Plane. In about a country of the Color of the Plane, and the Color of the



Therefore, there is III-100 in bounded 10 alreads of 1001 Group bettern thanker does not be introduced. Challenger 11-1-1 for the local of three. Hereo days better a regulation from the raise grown destroyed the of the MC IV-100' which establish over There. On the 17th a the-plant element of the 70th have becaused by 10 anony directly at the falls. On plant the 10th, but the destruction of the operation whereast and challenged. The Committens of IIII Group had exceeded in the the Call over Ciralhourg to III from the and challed a total of I-0-7 for the loss of one. The following day to a resolution of IIII droup takes a facility of I-0-2 for the loss of the centh application will except form diams. Total challes for the centh application are alternatively and IIII challes for the centh application are alternatively of IIII of IIII and IIII and IIII are 10th the centh application are alternatively one IIII of IIII and IIII are 10th IIII are 10th III are 10th IIII and IIII are 10th III are 10th IIII are 10th IIII are 10th IIII are 10th III are 10th III

Reactive tien

Throughout Forcement the weather but been decemble, with only it could alight day and with 14 completely non-open dismile but a total of 3,500 contine for allow by MIN and, and 910 ton of book was dropped. Among the clother against an and targets to doubt allowers regarded decembed: 957 12, 79 amound webtelook 115 horse-law as webtelook 575 lecomotives, 557 realists ours, 166 am suplessments.

IMIT I clis 1 dr College

Lir-Ground Cooperation -- Coordition -- White

The whility of MIN I.S to geriful, in effectively in directions congruided to charly demonstrated in estimate related to Countries. This is an action on it is written by the Pinth in a 11 or by the Pinth is a 11 or by the Pinth is a 12 or the while

experience of stead and of could anity alice the arch in endonce on the name front of the arguetit alich XXIII INC and experience. A farth a contribution to easely and the flat that in the course of the proceeding and pilote had had an approximate to because thoroughte familiar with the term in order high the great no. called when to of a in intradivaly in a way close despire tipe of the leath.

In granul draground cooperation followed: now family restiern.

This life Topport of the directing the metions of planes over the immediate from and 150 h. Iguarters lights on the lens of Dinch U. C.

Armyla request. In the matter of tashings a little interesting to be served that IMIV IAC an occurries reverted to the prottice in voyable the out of of the invalide of providing as and column cover by morne of relays of formations of four elements each. This type of attom a particularly completed on it Fermion. The STA Group How Standard with lone in the course of the Lay, and on the 19th of Standard and the course of the lay, and on the 19th of Standard and the course of the course of the lay, and on the 19th of Standard and the first and proposed on in circles, as well as on another reconsiderance and proposed invalidations.

And in , the object direground cooper than in all up of may call incidents, and in north cases altered at your attended bloods are not go beyond the class. Determined in gillet 'regert's their record the best of of a five ablate as noted from the ir. The angle, the OD For the regerie of cortice of the Colon by equalities of this crop at the circular proof for the of the Colon by equalities.

record five att e a on tamier, or on the the same tellered to be constated in the wieldity of Boochede. The destruction of these timbe one obtained, and in the case of the ground told our that its both ore on the larget. There with r haren accordence, I ther supplemental by evidence from the ground force, thich indic to the through the limit of his materially and the in breaking up at least the dater hand mery counterester's until the team and the team prospect of our direct ft of an in crim subtil the entry's fire it entry. It Hotel r grown dir etcl in strike a likin dee garde of driently treege. me the dr action, both princt and effective, allevel graval merand the cotton of the torn. 27 Cuch where there is the for a le of back lie all are is anomal. It is a in addition, in grapual terms, in the chape of a letter from it. Con. W. H. Gillean, Semenung Comercia of Pinth V. S. Aray, the come als a Mill Ind for the "excell at ale a region's on 16 For the re thich teambridged materially to the initial record of the ground trease." Such prules wit the ore not the because wouther had restricted open thous to 170 portles on 10 Torontor and his cartail of the constally plants operations which had be a contained for their day.

Tailfor wit distinct to the form Alone Real 18 to 71 for where. There is no 1 a everythan 1 days (10, 10 for other) has smar don partial term possible. Co the other hand, there were these days (17, 20, 27 for 3 m) and 2 hy 1 m thus 100, and the subme (12 to 21 hours m) when there are most abidle.

In option of cuch difficulties the control in-groups cooperation



continued. At the inviduals because to the formir, the him to will are this bight on thitle are the tribed and the constantly rober I to nuther the commenced the more become to I see than FO were his ky attack of marting with the 10 Community woil. Fotograph that will also the all of the among over to different to al rowill get had been about, out of two registering. The eth ethinforces with the trees were a time from a und flights of four mister for rai the total daily dear to detail to la, and trading our correct. Ining-Sour Lineral of Cald Group find the total of Lamenton and Circles on to 1001, the drive hit between an discountillar on the With, while the no to not of the Pack and the to the chad of that river a resistant of few-plan for ations of 194th Group on 18 Postabler. Toras in the seconds are constituted fortisted and pr strongholde; those in the impair to me modition hald concentrations of troops, amor, or games itient op dit of deliging the advices of the Mark V. S. Andr. Therefore Inclusively sucked which in the colly and till my, but the in on all importance had grammi comings to direct an admissrant. In tom to this cap torm in high tollers in a farmely trusper nounced the Foor. This is protein affect of most differ current mor no at too, It is a profilerate or the the not resulte of incistes alt em un care mil. 1.

Latin Coins De 12

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air this lowestion. Engir and other Ancilisis mades destroy if or Cargol, but there were no obtain against aircraft on the ground.

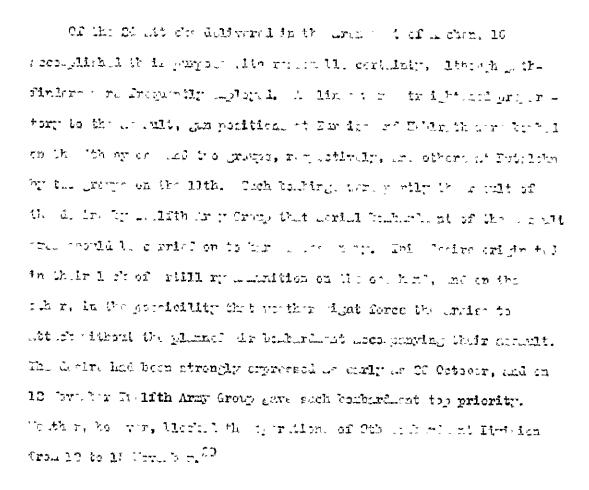
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GLOSSARY

ADGB Air Defense of Great Britain
ADLS Air Dispatch Letter Service
ALAF Allied Expeditionary Air Force

ALG advenced lending ground

FUSA First U. S. Army

LIT motor transport

Opreps operations reports

CRS Operational Research Jection, Ninth Air Force

FFF pethfinder

R/T radio telephone

SCU Statistical Control Unit

SHAFF Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces

TRS Tactical Research Section, Minth Air Force

TUSA Third U. S. Army

USSTAF U. S. Strategic Air Force

VHF very high frequency



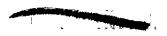
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- 34. IIS Report No. 139.

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- 31. Itr., CG 83d Inf. Div. to CG 9th AF, 3 Sep. 44, in 9th Bomb. Div. history, Sep. 44.
- 32. IX BC history, Aug. 44.
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- 10. 368th FB Gp. history, Sep. 44.
- 11. 404th FB Gp. history, Sep. 44.
- 12. IX TAC history, Sep. 44.



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- 13. Itt., Cot. 41.



- 14. Ibid., Nov. 44; XIX TAC November Operations.
- 15. Opregs. XXIX TAC units, Cot. 44; XXIX TAC history, Cot. 44.
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- 3. Eq. 9th AF G.O. No. 231, 29 Sep. 44; Hq. 9th AF G.O. No. 233, 2 Oct. 44; Hq. XXIX TAG G.O. No. 6, 2 Oct. 44.
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- 13. IX TAC history, Nov. 44.
- 14. Oprep. 405th FB Gp., 8 Nov. 44; Impact, III (May 45), 9; XIX TAC Nov. operations.



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SICLICORAPHICAS NOTE

Countienal Paranic

The main sources of the operational nurrative of the linth Mir Force are those thich comprise the collection which, for convenience, is decribed at "5th AS Operational Perords." "8th AS a-3 lission Files" were adminished by A-3 section, first at Mendquarters Whath Air Force, and later at its advanced headquarters. There bring together a variety of items relating to the operational and field orders issued by Feeldquarters Finth Air Force and by the headquarter, of its tactical elements. Completion field orders of other air forces likewise appear, as do some of the intelligence reports on the daily operations. This is the best collection swallable to indicate the injentions of the Finth Mir Force.

The Tasic source for information concerning operations actually confucted is the collection of "Cpreps." There are detailed individual decion reports bessi on the results of interrogation of pilots and one s. They were substituted daily by each group of the Minth Air Torce. Although based on the same interrogations that served as the courses for the "Cpsilother," the "Cpsilother," possess a superior value since they present the fully considered and exceptly developed facts concerning each mission. In contrast to thim, the "Cpsilother" are preliminary reports rendered in a minimum space of time after the coupletion of the dissions involved. The "Cpreps" are filled by groups and by det. under groups.



"Consulate and "Dib 'I Faily Commany of Germbiens" were preduced each day by Familymenter. Firth his Force on the basis of "Opilerhees" reserved from the proofs or of telephoned information. Both use to be used with some contion. First, brown a their courses are found in "quiet reports," and, second, because in their number of individual discions may be contabilited into a single report of action in a manner which at time obscures significant detail. They are useful, however, as a guide to a day's open tions by all elements of the Fint's his Force.

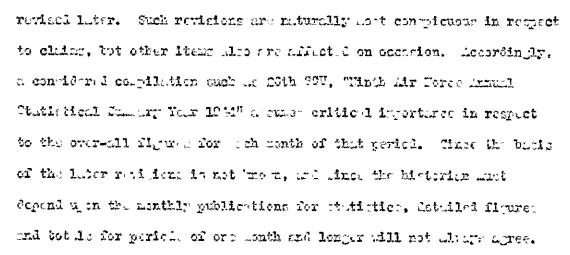
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"Thest U. S. Army and IX Tactical Mr Command Summary of Mr Countions."

A reperted file of this exists and may be supplemented by another appended
to the monthly installments of IX Flighter and IX Instinct Mr Command
histories. Since it offers recential details as to the origin of tactical
missions, as well a significant reference concerning such of the schief
collection has analyzed value. A second supplementary source of information is found in the analyzed installments of IX Paster Command (9th
Louterfacet Division) biotories. Here each riseion is carefully analyzed.

Finally, there is the Thinth hir Perce Benthly Challey of Operations," producted by C3th C3D. There existical culturation are based on the "Corrept" described where. They are useful in determining the extent of operations on individual days and for longer periods. The break-down of visations according to type of tergets is augmentive, but since many missions by fighter-bombers structed to varied types of targets, the summaries cannot be considered on each. It is inevitable, also, that some of the figures expering in the "Summary" for a given month would be



For details conserming the official regarding of open tions, it as by Lt. Col. R. H. George, Operations-Lisation Report. 2 April 1944 should be consulted, together with binched Eq. Sin AT, Head No. 88-8, Open Henral Massica Reports, 22 Larch 1944, and Eq. ATM. Operational Instruction Fo. 17, 23 March 1944.

Inde El forder

The histories of the several commands of the Nirth Air Torce, IN Testical Air Command, ANIX Testical Air Command, and IX Poster Command (9th Doub adment Nivision), provide helpful guides to the story of open tions. In the case of XIX TAC the publication entitle? "12,000 Thistor-Double Cortine" takes the place of a command history for the month of August 1944. For leter conths the history of XIX TAC is to be found in the compilation and monthly installments. These histories of the several commands are of add-d value products of their supporting documents and because of the retainties which they product in respect to operations and claims arising

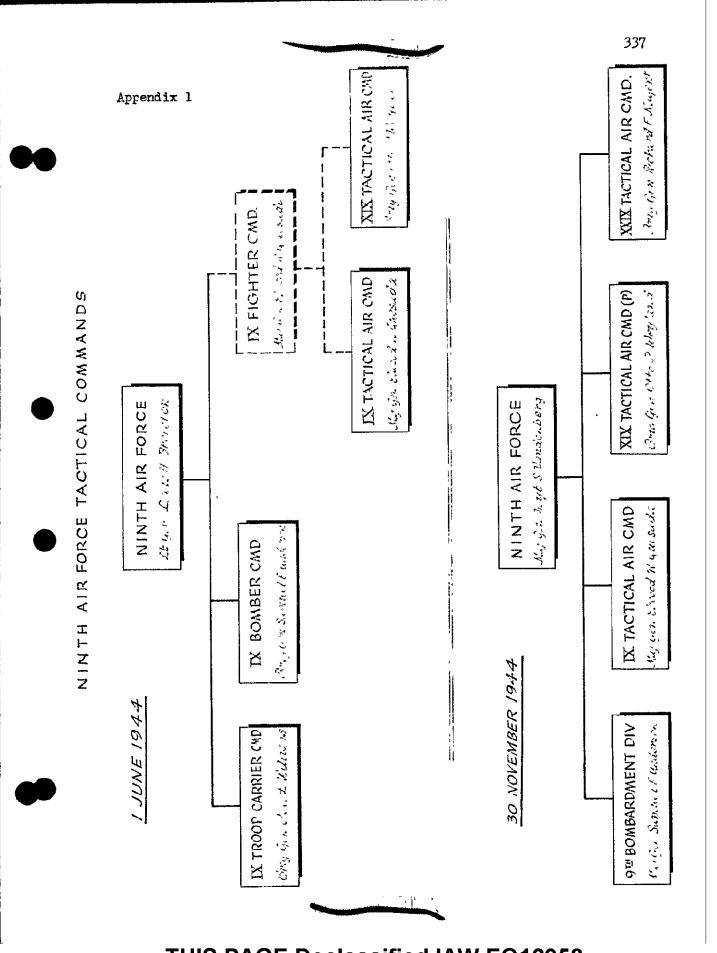




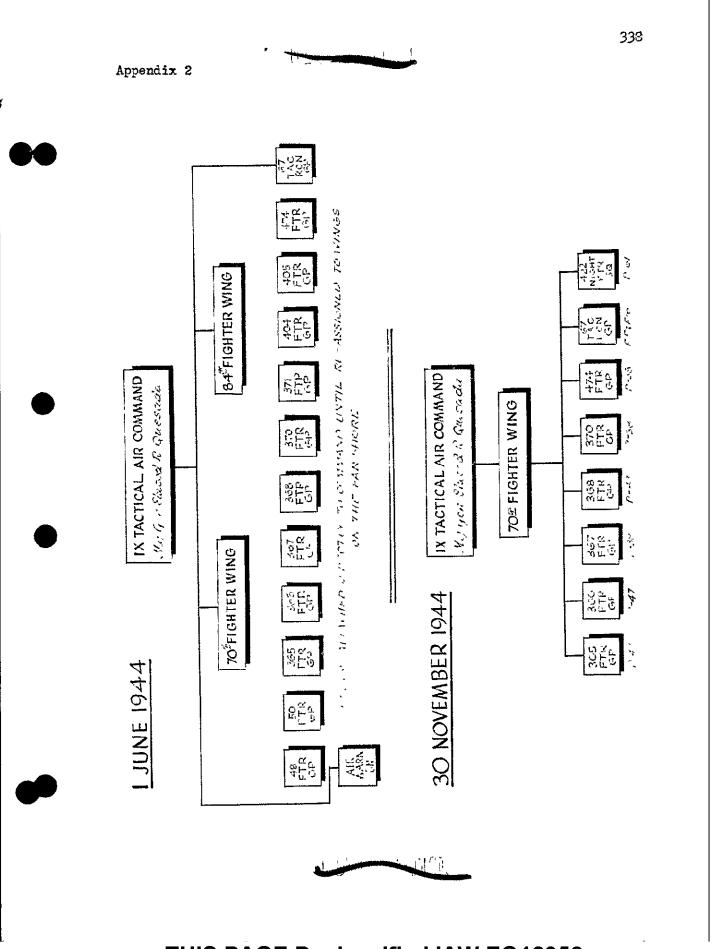
therefrom. Squadron histories are also exailable, and on occasion they contribute saled details and supply some local color.

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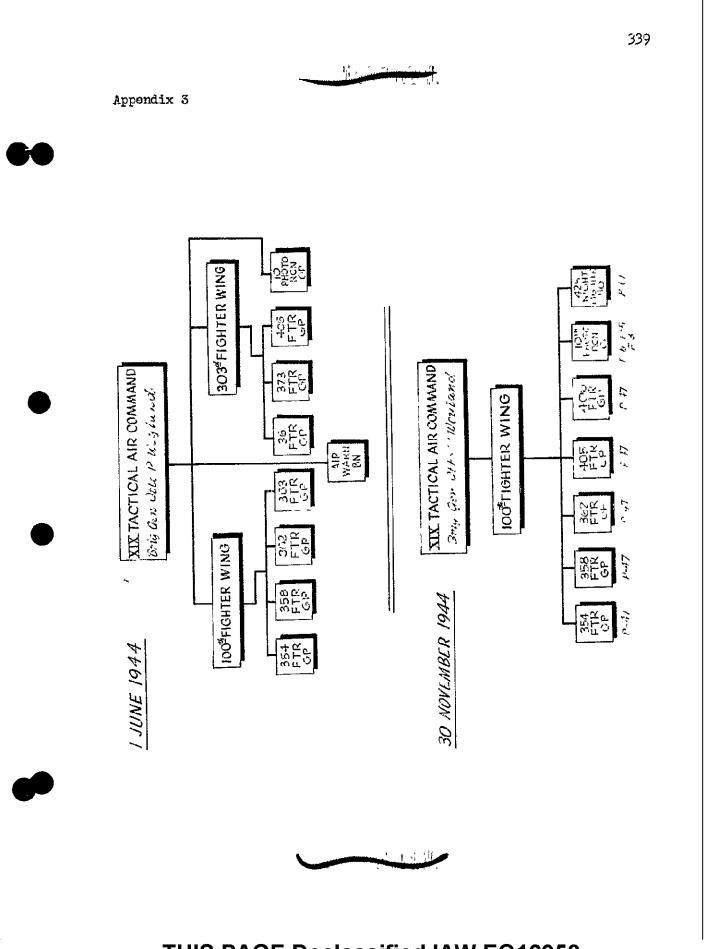
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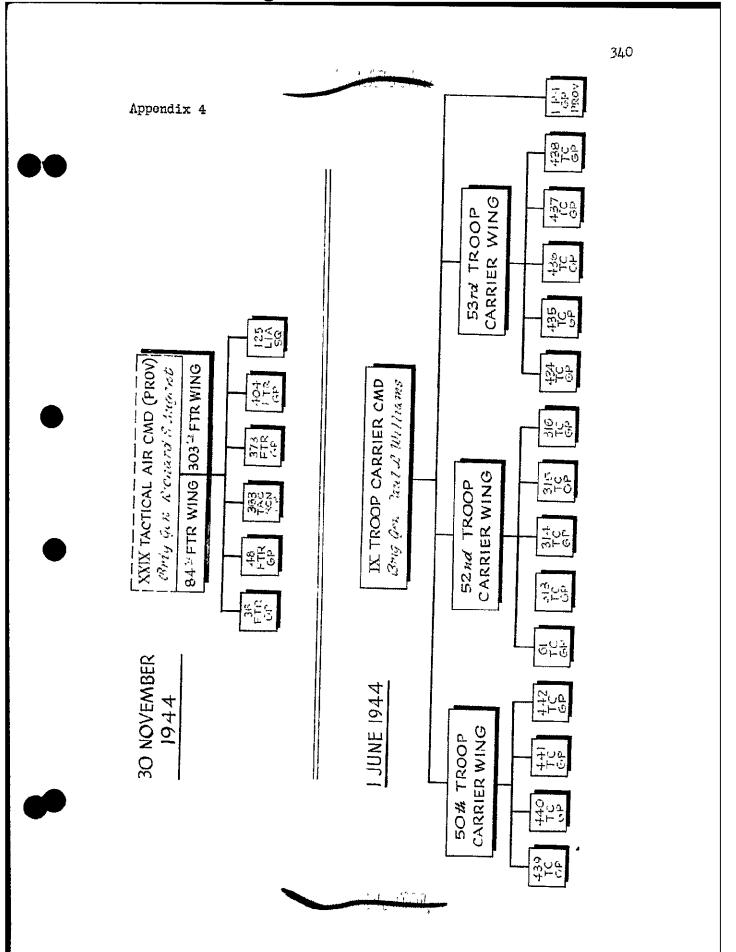
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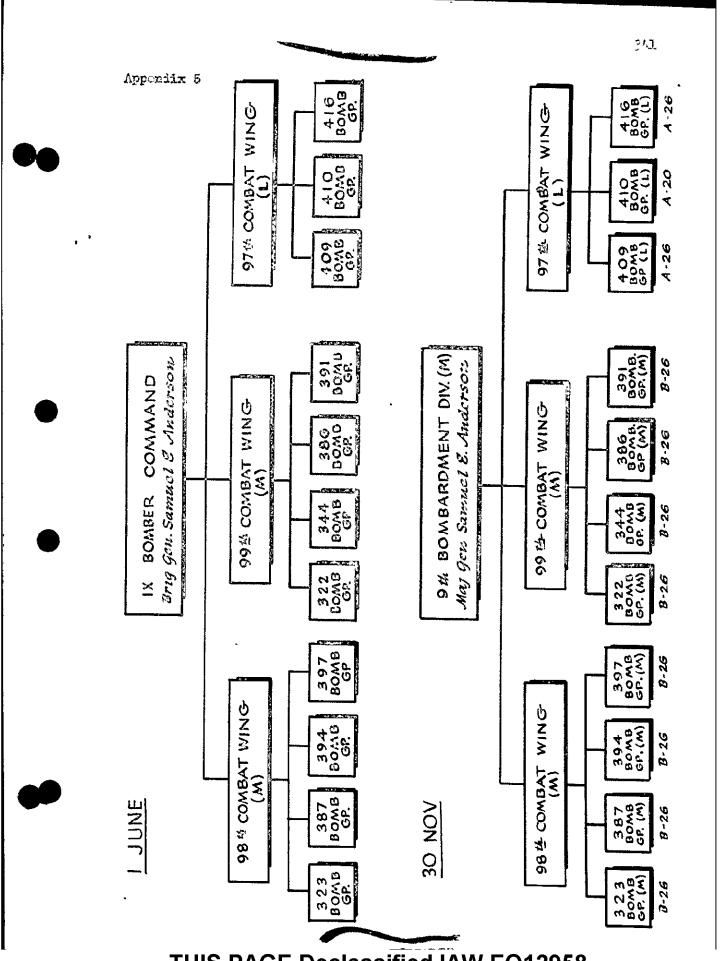
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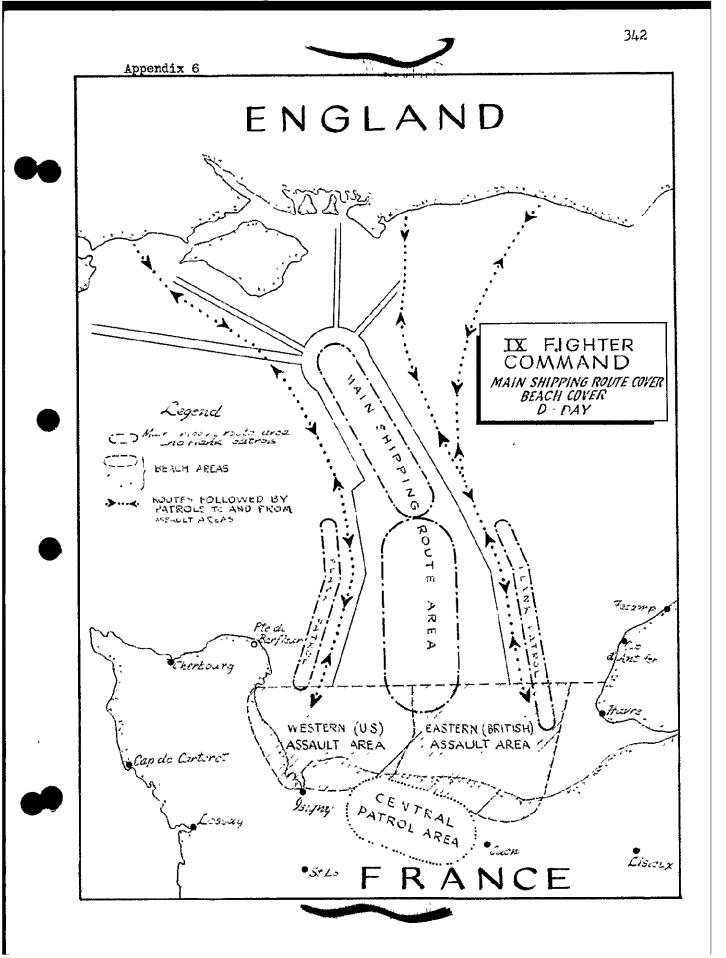
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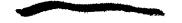
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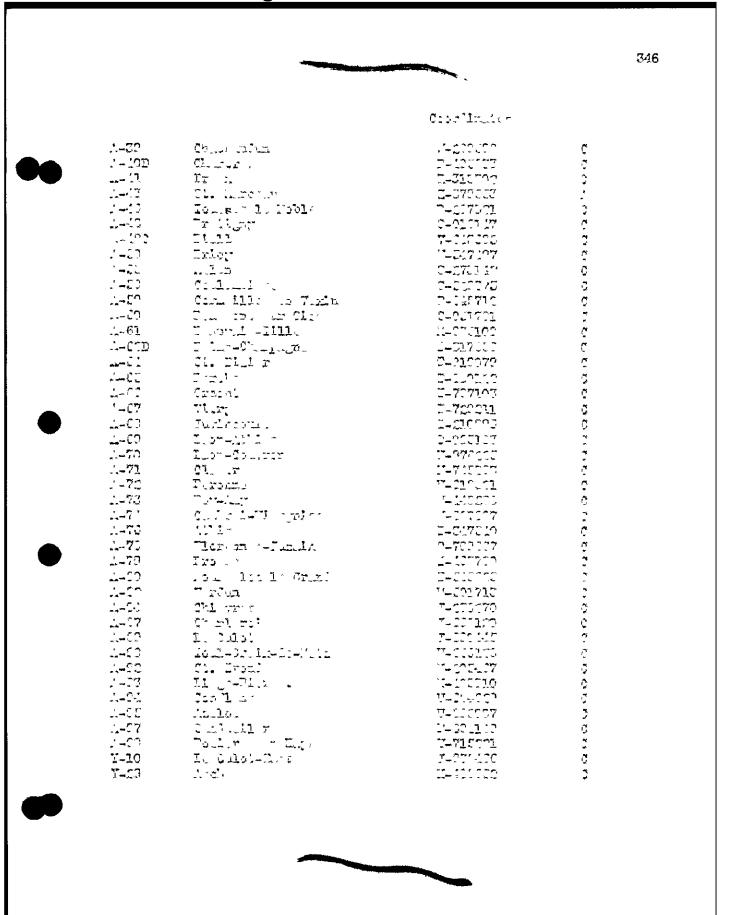
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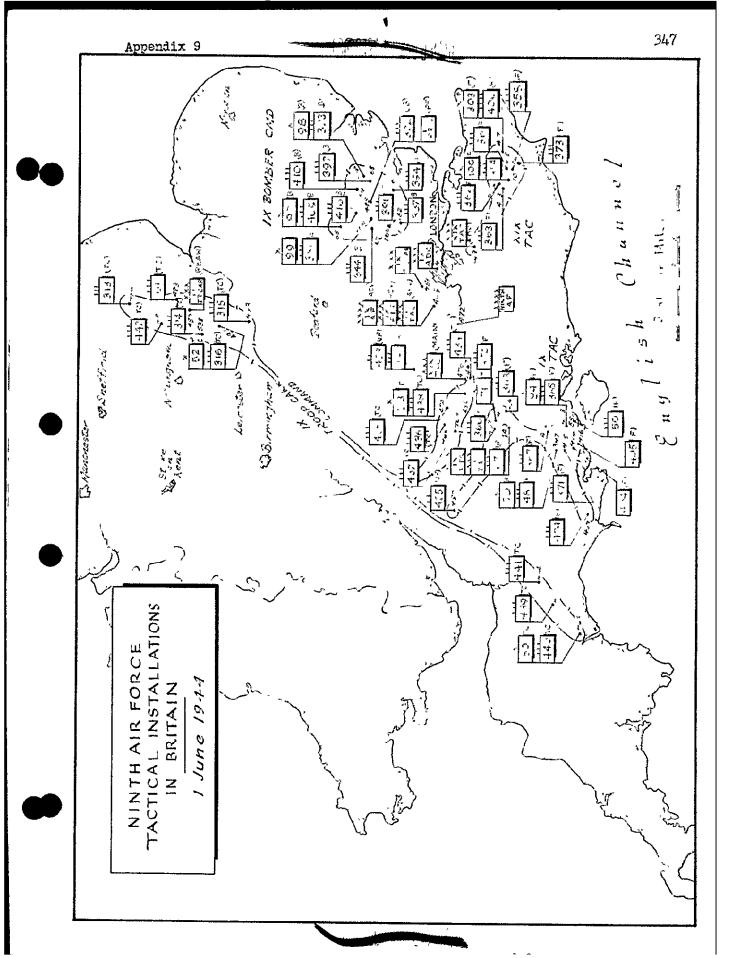
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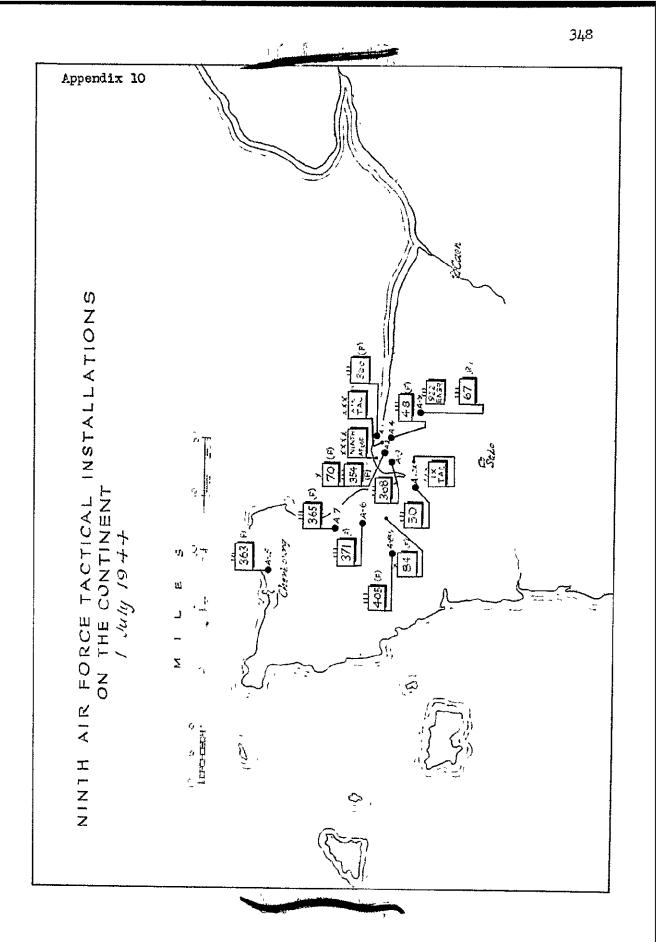
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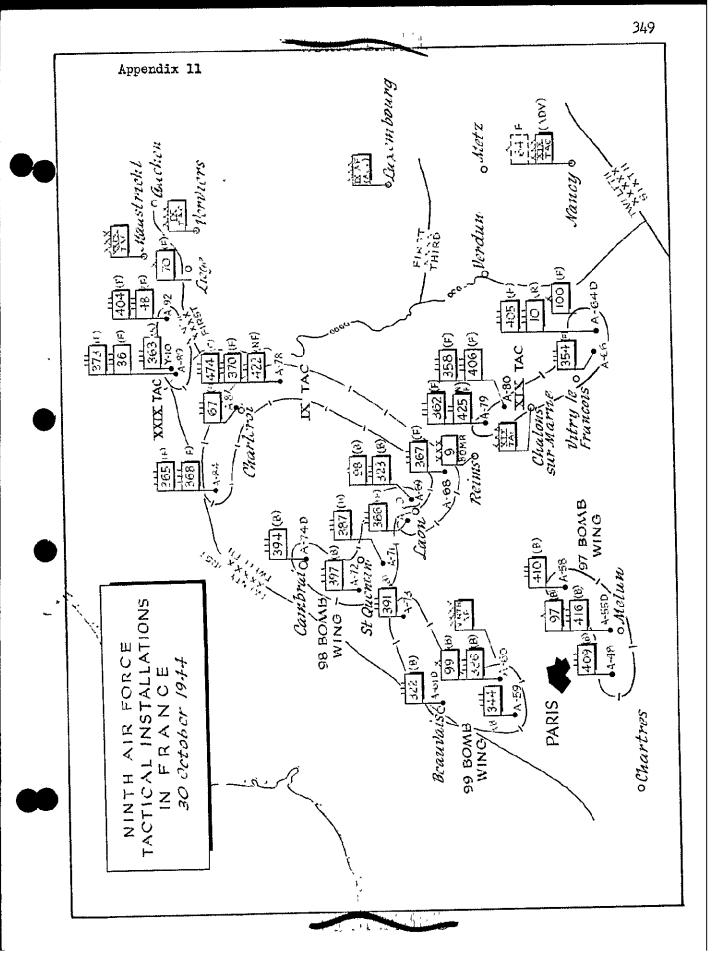




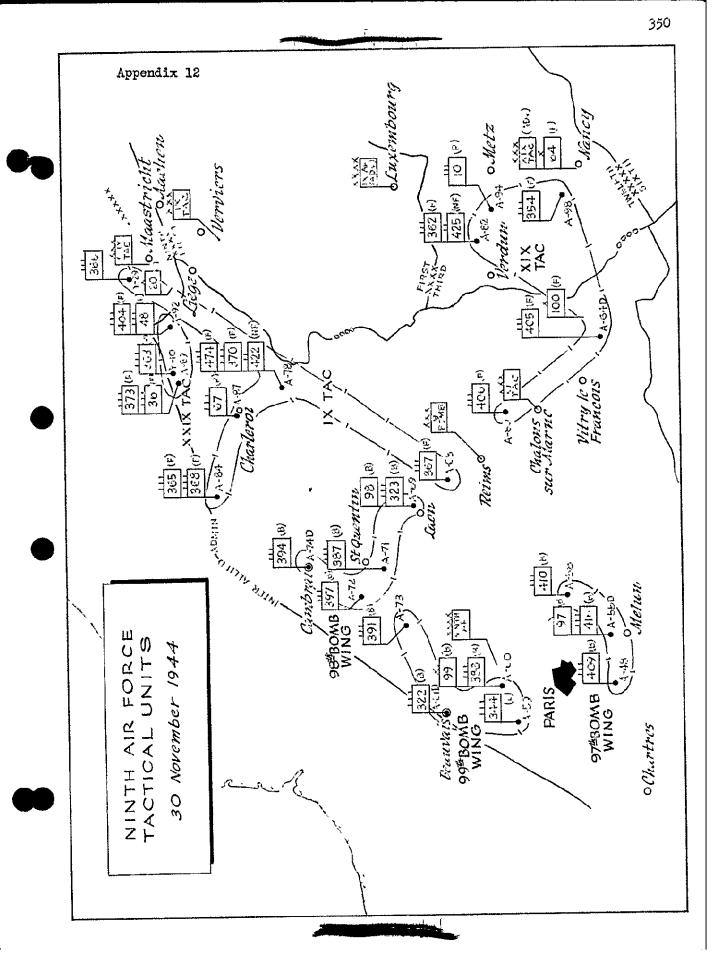
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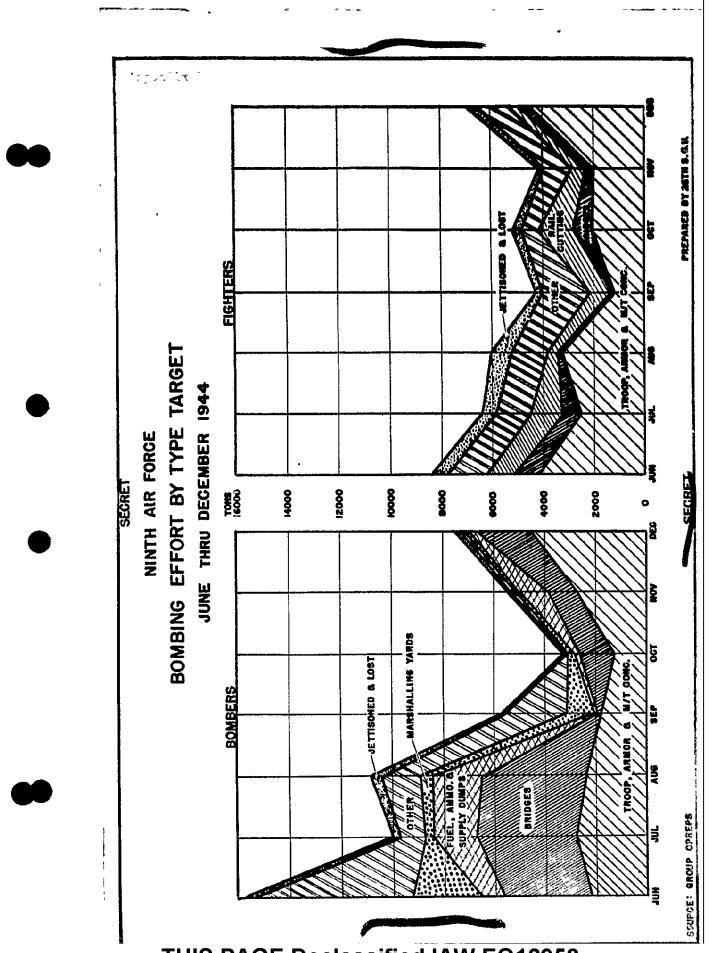
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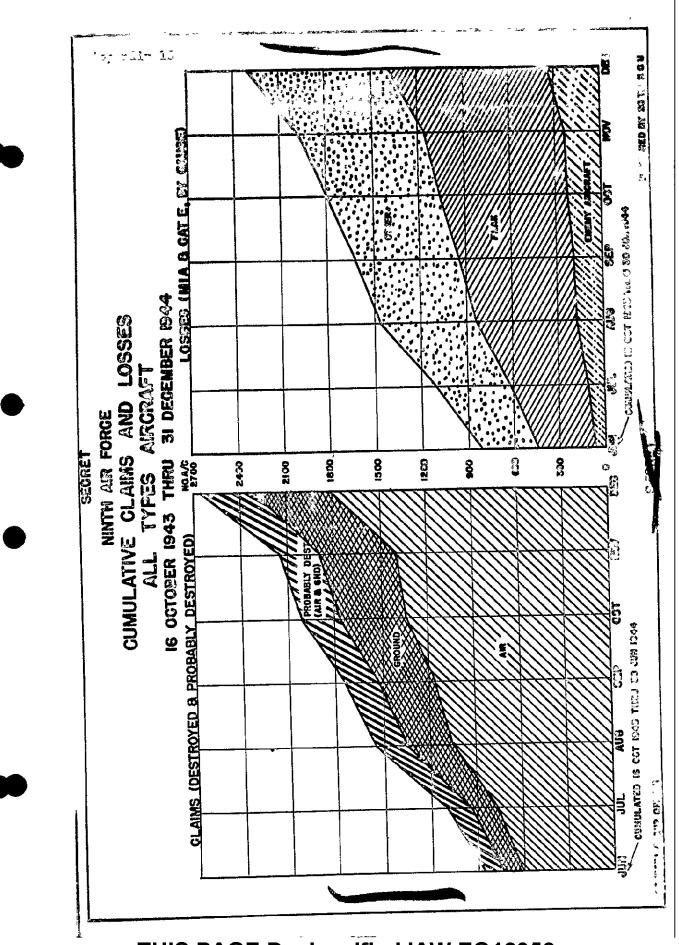
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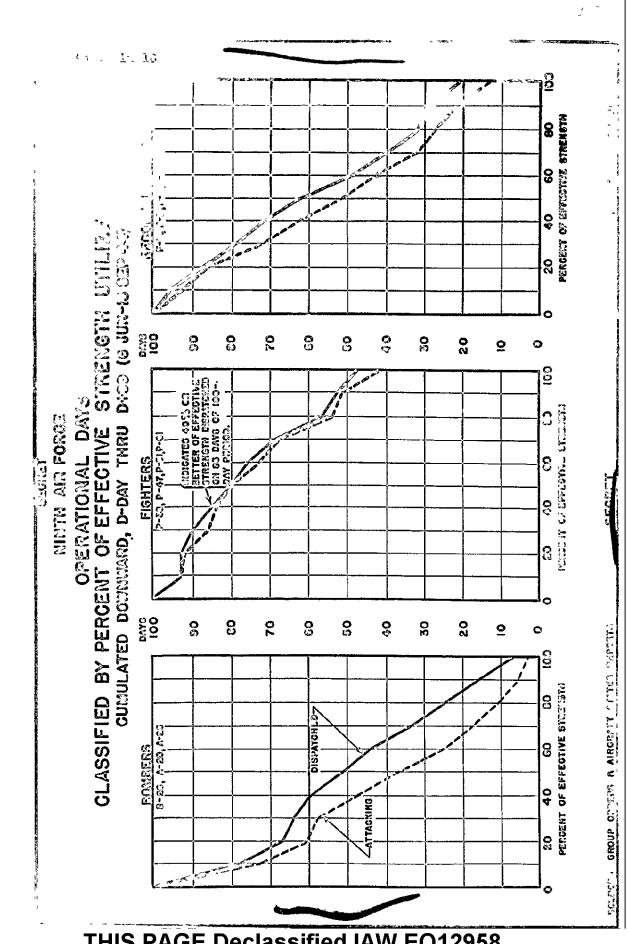




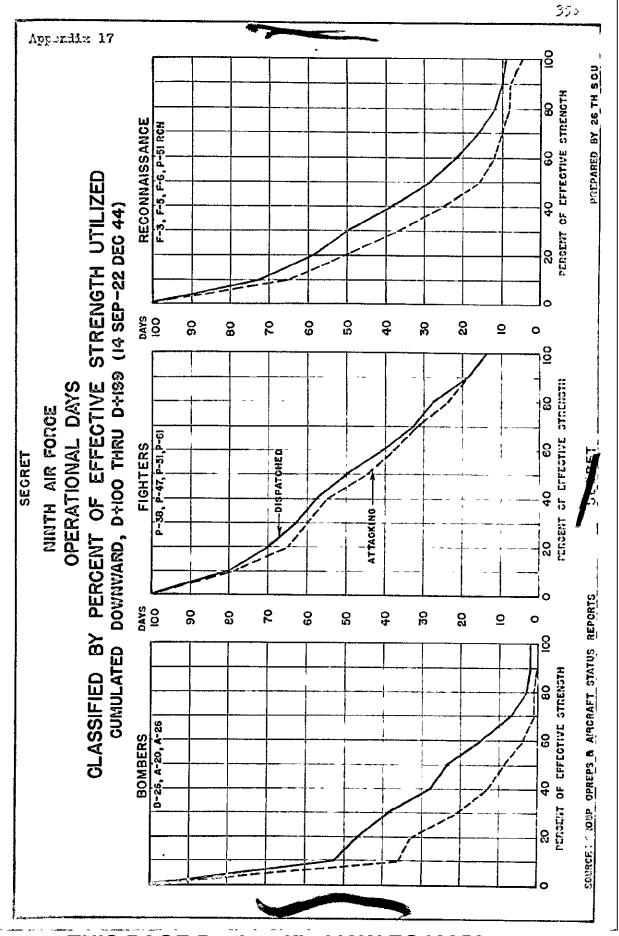
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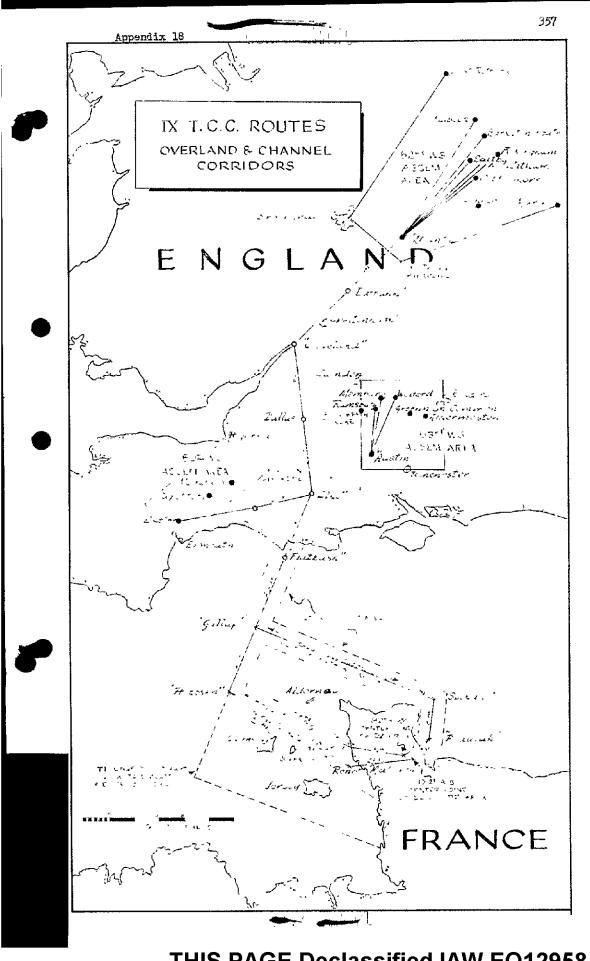
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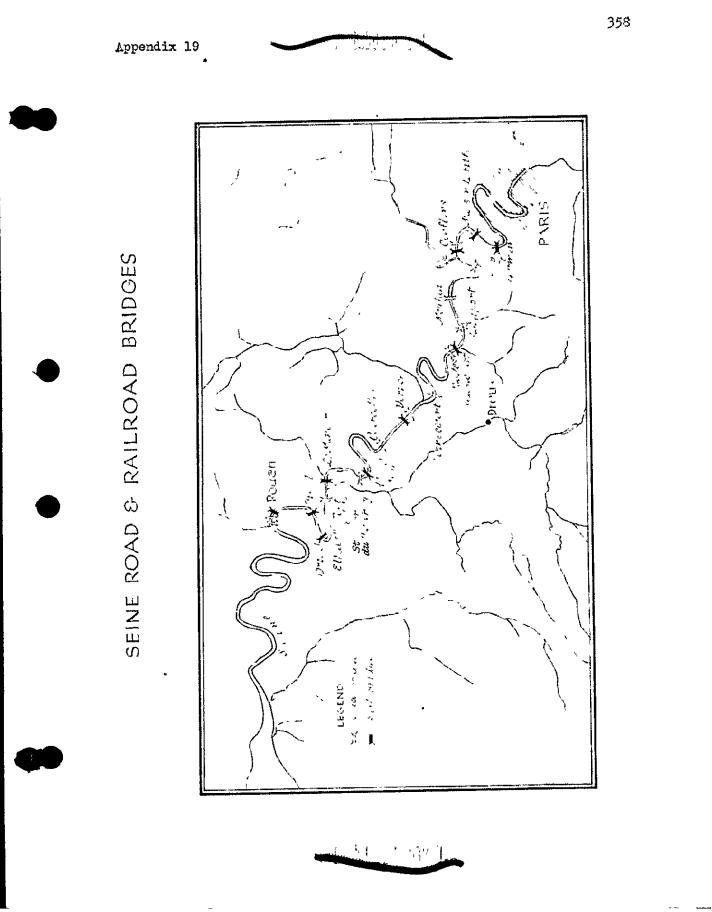
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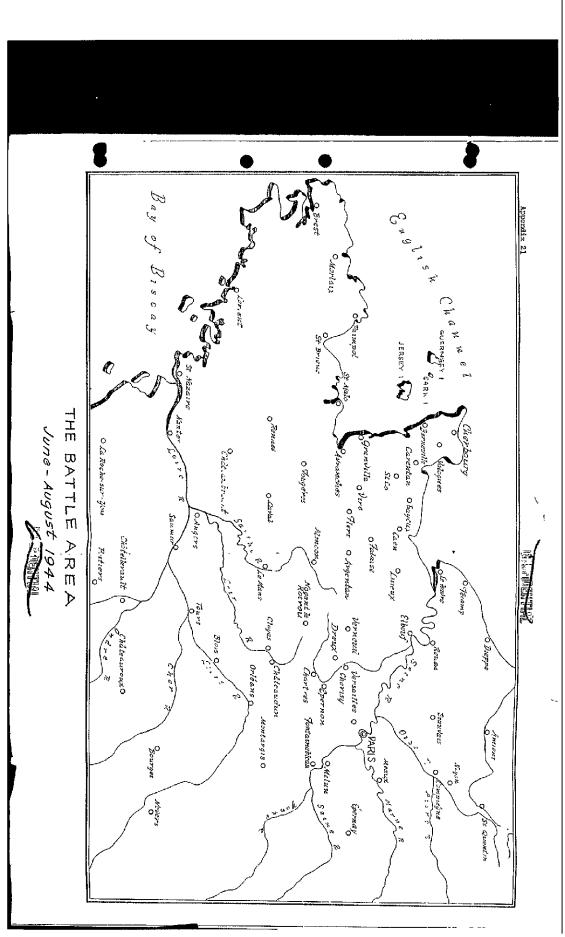
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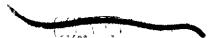
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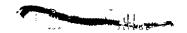


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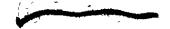
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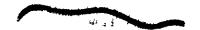
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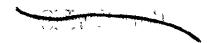
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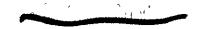
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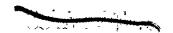
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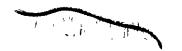
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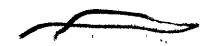
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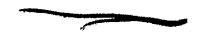
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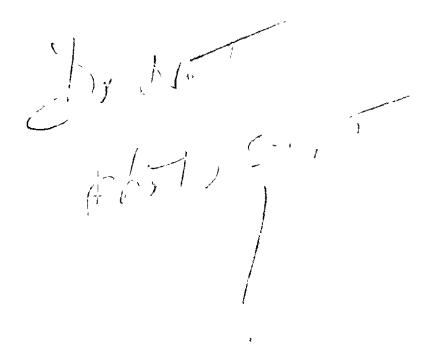
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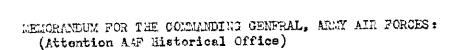
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