

## SERVICE DIARY

MARION TURNIPSEED

May 2, 1944

This morning we left US soil as we took off at Palm Beach Florida. We flew all day and landed on the Island of Trinidad at Waller Field. We are staying here for the night. This is my first time to sleep under a netting.

May 3

We got up real early this morning and took off at 7:30 and again flew all day to Belem, Brazil. Here we had to pull a twenty-five hour inspection on our plane, and I never seen it rain so hard in my life. We are staying overnight.

May 4

We took off at 11:00 today and landed in Brazil again at Fortalesa, we stayed here for two days. This is our last stop on this side.

May 5

We got a good nights sleep last night and worked on the plane all day getting it ready to fly the ocean. We cleaned our guns because we might have an attack on the way across. We took off at 9:30 PM and flew all night.

May 6

We landed at Dakar, Africa at 8:00 AM this morning. We stayed here all night. There are a lot of natives around here, and we bought some knives from them for a 100 francs.

May 7

We took off at Dakar at 9:30 AM for Marrakech which is in North Africa. We got here at 2:00 PM.

May 8

We are spending the night here in Marakech which is the last stop before England. Here they took the mail bags from our plane, which we carried over with us.

May 9

We took off from Marrakech at 9:30<sup>PM</sup> for England. This hop we had ammunition in our guns, because we go through German patrolled waters.

May 10

We came through alright and landed here at St. Mawgan at about 7:30 AM. Here we got something to eat and some gas and came on down to the base at Mitfield England. We sure were glad to see our trip end. We flew 62.35 hrs on our trip. We got to see our tail gunner again, he came by boat. Sure glad to see him.

May 11

We got up early this morning at 11:30<sup>PM</sup> and I was still tired. All everyone did was lie around and sort-of- unpack our bags.

May 12

Again we slept until late and did nothing but play cards and lay around. They took our plane to Scotland, to a Modification center. We have two crews staying in each hut.

May 13

Again we didnt get up in time to eat breakfast, but we sure made up for it at dinner. The chow here is real good. We layed out in the grass all afternoon in our shorts playing cards and getting a tan. I just finished a v-mail letter to Mother.

May 14

Charley and I went to the Mothers Day Services at the chapel this morning. Just fooled around the rest of the day. Had a good chicken dinner this noon.

May 15

Today we started a five day course of ground school, of how to escape from enemy territory.

May 16

We had school on gunnery and we engineers had a pep talk on how important our job is on the crew and how much we will have to do with bringing back the ship and that we were in charge of the enlisted men on the crew. We went to a show this evening, and I won a few pounds in a card game.

May 17

Gosh, it is cold and damp around here, raining most of the day. Went to school most of the day, and went to another show. Got two letters, one from Madeline and one from Ann. Just finished writing to Madeline and Mother.

May 18

We all went to school again as usual, and played more cards tonight.

May 19

We finished our ground school this morning and our ship came back from Scotland today. This afternoon we give it a test hop of an hour. It is now ready for combat. This eveing we went to the 9:50 show which was very good. I also met our crew chief today. He is a swell fellow and knows his job well.

May 20

We flew a short mission today, just a training mission, but we all had ammiition in our guns, we heard a German Plane was around last night. We are only 7.5 Minutes from the German bases. Close Huh. We will be bombed and strafed when we get into operation no doubt. We have to complete 30 missions in this theatre, the sooner I get started the better. I got 4 letters today, 2 from Mother and two from Ruth. This is the first I have heard from Mother since I left Pueblo.

May 21

We had another training mission this AM, dropped a few bombs on a practice target, Was supposed to fly with the Col. this PM but the flight was called off. They think the Germans dropped paratroopers as spys and sabatuers so we are on an alert. Carry our 45"s all the time. German planes fly over at night quite often.

May 22

We went to school this morning and did nothing the rest of the day.

May 23

We got up at 3:45 this morning and flew a practice formation at 20,000 feet, and was it ever cold and to top it off we have to stand guard all night, two men to a plane. This worse than back in phase training.

May 24

We got to bed this AM at 7:30 and at 10:00 our pilot came in and said I and the Radio operator had to fly, we had to go to another field and ferry some planes back here. Got back in time for supper. I've taken a bad cold, so I went on sick call and got some dope to take. I just finished a letter to Mother, I hope she doesn't worry to much. No mail again today.

May 25

We had a flight this morning scheduled, but bad weather prevented it. We did nothing the rest of the day.

May 26

We must be lucky because we had another day off. Played some cards.

May 27

Can't figure it out. Nothing again today. I did pretty good playing cards and shooting craps. Won \$177.00 today. Nice days wages.

May 28

I guess the world has come to an end. Nothing today, slept until noon. I won #38.00 in a card game this PM. We have to stand guard on the planes tonight. I bought a bike for 10 L's yesterday. Goodbye to walking.

May 29-31

We flew practice missions and had some ground school during these days, same old routine.

June 1

Today we do much of anything, I could get to like these kind of days.

June 2

Well, today was the day we had been training for for over a year now. Yes, we went on our mission today. We took off in the late afternoon. We went down by Paris to a town named Bertigen and bombed an airfield. I was pretty scared. We had a lot of Flak. and I do mean flak. The sky was literally black with it. Our Sqd lost one plane. Some of the fellows I knew for over a year now. Several planes in the 489 blew up in mid-air and no one got out. It was terrible. Our plane had five flak holes in it. We were some of the lucky ones however. We seen no fighters at all. I now full realize there is a war on. I'll be more scared on my next mission as I will know what to expect. I hate to think of it. We had several men injured. One plane that went down, almost hit us, but Johnny the Co-Pilot seen it and shot the plane down just in time. I looked up from my top turret and it was right on top of me. I let out a scream, because I was sure it was my last. All in all it was terrible.

June 3

We got up early this morning and flew a practice mission. I really hate to fly them. I hope I get more sleep tonight.

June 4

We got up early this morning and flew another mission. If they are all like this one we flew to day. We were over enemy land 5 minutes. We bombed the coast of France. Probably getting ready for the invasion. Thousands of planes were doing the same thing. We saw no flak and no fighters, so much different from our first, but we really sweat it out don't think we don't. The hard part is waiting until you reach the enemy coast, wondering if you'll be next. This was the first time I ever spent a Sunday this way.

June 5

I made my 3rd mission today, just a hop to the France Coast and back again, but for a few seconds we had considerable flak but no fighters. We ended up with 10 holes in our plane, one was very large and came close to the pilot. If we keep this up we will soon complete our tour of missions. We have lost one plane each mission so far. Our 4th mission coming up tomorrow I think.

June 6

I just came back to the hut. I left this morning at 1:30 AM and it is now 11:00 PM. We didn't get to bed till late last night either. We took tablets today that keep you going without sleep. We were over the French coast at 8:AM, but we didn't get to drop our bombs. We got credit for the mission because we seen plenty of flak. There was a complete overcast. The invasion started this morning and things are really popping. I guess we are doing plenty of good. We don't worry about our 30 missions anymore, we just hope we have good weather so we can fly a mission everyday till it ends. We really hated it that we could not drop our bombs this morning to help soften the beach heads up for the poor fellows on there way across the channel. I just heard the National Anthem a little while ago and it sounded different tonight. I could really feel it as never before in my life. I will be getting up again in a few short hours.

June 7

Today was a day of well earned rest. I never got up until 11:30 and just layed around the rest of the day, reading and listening to the news of the invasion. Sure sounds wonderful.

June 8

We were awakened at 1:15AM this morning and took off at 4:30 AM. We had 4 block busters in the plane, sure was a load. In fact it was more than our plane could take at the altitude we had to climb to get over the overcast. We had to come back down, our plane stalled out at 22,500 feet. We had been on the ground about an hour and was in the mess hall eating when we heard a terrific explosion. A plane had crashed on landing with its 4 block busters aboard, there was nothing left of the crew or the plane. In the dark this morning a gunner walked into a spinning propeller and they could find nothing left of him. So you can see why we sweat out these flights when terrible things like this happen almost every mission. We have lost 4 planes so far over here, two over enemy country and 2 over England. That's 40 men, Maybe only 30, at least we hope the one crew are just prisoners of war. I sure hope it clears tomorrow so we can give the fellows on the ground some help.

June 9

We didn't get up till 10:30 AM. It has been raining almost all day. We got paid this afternoon. We played cards before supper and I won \$50.00 and went to a show after chow, then came back to the barracks and got into another card game and won \$450.50, which made me very happy. It is getting late and I really need sleep after an evening like that.

June 10

Last night we just got the lights turned out and a guy came in and said we had briefing in an hour, so we never had any sleep at all last night. We bombed an airfield today, didn't get much flak just a couple of holes. We got some sleep this afternoon and cleaned our guns tonight and wrote some letters and so its time to go to bed.

June 11

Well, last night we got an hours sleep before they got us up, they say no rest for the wicked. We bombed another Air Base to day. It was close to the one we bombed the first mission, so you can imagine how much flak we had. We had a lot of holes in our plane and some came pretty close to some of the fellows. We lost one plane. We flew in this plane the day before. This was our 6th mission. I sent home \$600. today. My ears started hurting me this PM so I came down to the hospital, they sprayed something in my nose and I laid in bed in the hut, it hurt worse, couldnt stand it any more so I came down here again and they put me to bed and I thought I would go nuts till after a couple of hours until my ear broke, drained and I fell asleep. I'll be here in the hospital for a few days. It was caused from flying. I sure hope I am back flying again soon so I won't get behind on my missions.

June 12

I've laid here in bed all day, I've felt weak and think it was from the pain pills. My ear drained most of the day. Why does everything happen to me. The rest of my crew was in to see me today and brought the mail. They brought me some good news, I made T/SGT today. That should make me get well.

June 13

I spent this time in the hospital and got out today.

June 19

I'm just sitting around waiting for my ear to be well again, sur hope it heals soon. I'm getting behind in my missions.

June 21

I got word today that my cousin has been shot down over enemy territory, sure hope he is just a prisoner of war. I ran into Whitty in the mess hall tonight. Sure glad to see him again, but he is going to another base.

June 22

Today I was awarded the Air Medal with citation, sure is a nice medal. The rest of my crew has 13 missions and I only have 6. I'll never catch up. now.

June 23

Played some cards today just small stakes to kill time. The crew didnt fly today. Never got up until noon and nothing to do all day.

June 24

Im still waiting for my ear to get well. Went to London on a 3½ day furlough which we really enjoyed.

July 5

I flew my 7th mission today finally, we bombed an air field in France. We were over enemy territory about 45 minutes.. Had only a few burst of flak, no fighters. I like them this way.

July 6

We were going on a mission this morning but didn't get off because of plane trouble. We were going to Kiel in the northern tip of Germany.

July 7

We had a rough one today, it was my 8th mission. We seen enemy fighters for the first time today. We bombed an aircraft factory at Aschersleben, Germany. We had a lot of flak, but it was inaccurate, thank God. Four fighters, Me109's came by our plane but we didn't get to fire a shot at them. Glad they weren't shooting at us. B-24's were going down all over the place. The Germans lost 75 fighters. I saw several going down in a spin. Pretty sight.

July 8

We've been down these few days which I like in a way. We had our pictures taken during this time. They were taken around the plane and will be sent home to the home paper.

July 11

Today we had a really rough mission, what I mean rough. We bombed Munich, Germany. It was better than an eight hour mission, seven hours on oxygen. There was 1100 bombers on this raid, planes for miles everywhere you looked. We had a lot of flak but inaccurate, which I am thankful for. The sky was literally black with it. I guess there were a few fighters in the area, but we didn't encounter any. We lost 20 bombers and 6 fighters to flak, which isn't bad considering. They give us a shot of whisky a piece when we returned. You can't understand how completely exhausted a mission like that makes you. Near dead, I'd call it.

July 12

The group went to Munich again today in another big raid, but we were not called, Thank God. There were 1400 planes today and 26 lost to flak. We were so tired we didnt get up until noon, and slept all afternoon.

July 13

We had early briefing again this morning and pulled a very large raid on Scarbricken, Germany. It was not quite as long as Munich. I guess they hit Munich for the 3rd day in a row. Some of the bombs we dropped the 11th are just blowing up today. They were the delayed action, up to 72 hours. I always thought the US never bombed Civilian population, but we've been dropping bombs on the whole cities, just mowing everything down, it makes you feel funny to know that your bombs are killing women and children down there, but this is war, and the Germans never thought of that. Today was my 10th mission, my crew has in 19 now, I'd give anything if I were up with them. We had a lot of flak but inaccurate, reason being we were bombing through cloud cover. We bombed through cover or clouds and could not visibly see targets, the cameras can take pictures through the clouds and we know what damage we have been doing.

We carried 4-2000lb block busters in each plane today. It must really raise hell down there. I don't think we lost many planes, we saw no fighters.

July 14

The past 4 days we've done nothing but lay around. The evening of the 15th we had some excitement. The bomb dump blew up. I know what the Gerries feel like when we bomb them. The explosion wrecked about 20 planes but ours is on the other side of the field so the Renegade came through it. We went down to the line to watch it and while we were down there the biggest one came. It knocked us flat even though we were a long way from it. A huge orange ball and a mountain of smoke when it went. A piece of hot metal fell close to us.

July 19

Today I went on my 11th mission which was an aircraft factory. 50 Miles from the Swiss boarder. We were on oxygen about 7 hours. Cant explain how completely worn out you are when you are on oxygen for that long. You get out of the plane and your legs wont hardly carry you. I guess thats why we get the shot of whisky afterwards, to buck you up a little. We seen a lot of flak, no fighters. We lost no ships in our group, but some of the other groups caught it I guess. My crew is into their 20 missions now, I'd give anything if I were up with them.

July 20

Today we went over the boarder of Germany to bomb an airfield and a plane factory. We had a lot of flak but never hit us. We saw no fighters. The only thing wrong, the mission was 6½ hours on oxygen.

July 21

We've had two days of rest which was badly needed.

July 23

Today we went up to a field near Birmingham, where we left the plane and went into Birmingham and went to Lt. Getz's brother, who is a Capt. Doc. in the medics.

July 24

We just got to sleep last night when they woke us for briefing. We had a nice short mission to St. Lo. We were going to bomb troop concentrations, but we couldn't bomb after we got there because of undercast, and our troops were on the other side of the line.

July 25-29

Today we went on a 3 day pass. Charlie and I went to London, where we really enjoyed ourselves. We seen the whole city this time. We had a taxi driver show us where the King stays, Big Ben, Scotland Yard, London Bridge, Waterloo Bridge, which is new, and all the Government bldgs. Drove down Puddin Lane, London tower, William the Conquer's Fort where William Penn was christened, where Hudson who discovered Hudson Bay held a meeting before going on his voyage, Charles Dickens old Book Shop. Went through an old Church which was built in 1127, seen another church built in 1023, seen where the war of Roses was fought. Seen where dozens of churches was bombed in the blitz of "42". The Germans tried to bomb all the Churches. Seen all of Westminster Ave. We seen the show "Pin-Up" Girl. I met one of my old buddies from school.

July 31

Today we had a pretty rough mission to Lubwigshafen, Germany. I seen more flak today than I've ever seen in one place before in my life, but somehow our plane never got a single hole. We bombed plants of somekind. No fighters.

Aug 1

Today we bombed Roven, just inside the coast of France, oil storage Plant. There was a lot of flak but none was shot at our squadron. We sure seen some huge fires after we went over. Nice and short that the way I like them. This was my 15th mission. My crew has 24 missions in now, guess you know what I am thinking.

August 2

We had another short one again today. We bombed the Robot Bomb installation on the coast of France. We did ~~an~~ excellent bombing, seen lots of flak, but none close to us.

August 3

Again we went to the French coast to bomb the Robot Bomb installations, we hit the target. One in our squadron caught some flak and one ship went down, a new crew, We seen some chutes come out of it. This was my 17th mission. My Crew has 26.

August 4

Today we flew our 5th day in a row. I'm really tired tonight. We have another mission tomorrow. We went to Wismar, northern Germany. The longest mission we've had so far. We went across the North Sea and then went down into Germany. We seen very little flak, and no fighters, even though some of the Groups did encounter some. I could hardly walk when I came down, we were up in the blue all day sucking that darned oxygen, it almost drives you nuts to wear that mask all that time. I hear my sack calling me so I got to go.

August 5

We did it again, yes today we went to Brunswick, Germany. We seen plenty of flak but no one was lost in our Group. I'm so tired, I can't feel anymore. I haven't written a letter for 6 days.

August 6

Today we went to Hamburg, close to where we went yesterday. We bombed oil storage dumps, gosh what fires, we could see the smoke for miles and miles. We had a lot of flak over the target but our group never caught any. I saw something spectacular today. A plane in another Group got hit by flak and #2 engine caught fire and we watched the crew all bail out. The pilot put the plane on automatic pilot and the ship flew along about ten min. with no one in it, nice and level with no one in it and #2 engine blazing away. All at once there was a big orange ball and the gas tanks exploded, the left wing blew off and down went the B-24. I read a story once, Kings die proudly. The Kings were B-24's, and this one sure put up a battle but it lost. I'll never forget the sight.

August 7

Well, today was the day what I mean, we were stood down, the doctor stood us down, we needed rest, thank God, I am about to the end of my endurance.

August 8

We were off again this morning to bomb an air field south east of Paris. A pretty good mission. We had a little flak, no fighters. Everybody got back in our outfit anyway. Our crew chief won the bronze star the otherday for putting the Renegade through 30 missions without turning back on a mission because of mechanical failure, he's working for 50 now so he can get the Legion of Merit medal, sure hope he makes it. Two of the fellows on my crew finished tonight, they were replacements on another crew once so they were ahead of the rest of us. The crew finishes tomorrow with 31 missions, I'll have 22 tomorrow night only 9 more to go, but I'll have to fly with some other crew, darn. I hope we fly alot. Sure would like to be home by christmas.

8

August 9

Today we were supposed to fly but the mission was scrubbed. It was a hard one to, so I didn't mind so much. We need the rest anyway.

August 10

Today we had a rather long mission down south of Paris. We bombed a big bridge south of Paris. We bombed a bridge that the Germans are rushing troops over to the lines. We fixed them. There wasn't very much flak, but what there was, was accurate. A lot of the ships got holes, but none on the Renegade. The crew finished up today and leaves me with 9 more to go.

August 11

Today we flew, but not on a mission, we flew over to our new base and back, its not near what this one is. I hope I start flying soon so I can get it over with.

September 5

My first mission since my crew finshed up. They are all on their way home now. Today I finally flew my 23rd mission, we went to Karlsruhe, Germany, we seen no fighters, some vary accurte flak, but none hit us, although we came back from Germany on 3 engines, a push rod cover broke on number 2 engine and it lost all the oil.

Sept. 6-11, 44

I flew my 24th mission<sup>on</sup> the 7th to Karlsruhe, again a pertty nice mission. The rest of the time is the same old thing, just doing nothing.

Sept. 12, 44

Today I flew my 25th mission and I do believe it was the worst one yet. We bombed a factory at Hanover and the flak was terrible. the ship tha~~w~~ was flying off our wing blew up, the crew, Lt. Sparrows crew never had a chance to get out. Several of the ships were really shot up. We saw no fighters though.

Sept. 13 to Nov. 3, 44

All I've done during this time is fly a test hop now and then, but never a mission, I guess I'll be here all winter.

Dec. 31, 44

Well I finally got into the blue again, for I flew my 26th mission today, just like starting over again. It was more or less a milk run, we hit a rail bridge at coblenz, Germany, to help stop the German counter offensive.

Jan. 2, 45

I flew my 27th today and again we went to Coblenz for another bridge. We had a little flak but out side of that it wasn't too bad. I will be finished by sometime nixt month if the weather holds out. I'm flying with Lt. Baker and crew till I finish. Not a bad crew. Gosh, am I sweating the last few out, I'll be gray haired by the time I get done. This foggy weather we have to take off and land in is as bad as the mission almost.

Jan. 3, 45

We went to Landau, Ger. to bomb a supply dump. A nice mission, just a few puffs of flak. On my return to the base a cablegram was waiting on me. One of my sisters passed away, I'll never be able to quite believe it.

Jan. 8th 45

Today we went to Dasbury, Ger. in the Luxemburg area, a supply depot and cross roads, no flak, no fighters. I was just about not able to write this to-night because the oxygen system in my turret failed me in a way so that I didn't notice it. By the time I did it was too late. I realized I was in trouble with my oxygen and could see my indicator read zero but I was too far gone to do anything or call for help and I passed out, and remained so for about 15 minutes, when they found I didn't answer to my call, they pulled me from my turret. I was blue in the face, it took about ten minutes to bring me around, which they did by giving me oxygen. I felt sorta sick and had a headache for awhile. I hope I never go through that again. That made my 29th, 6 to go, won't belong now.

Jan. 19th, 45

Just came back after 10 days at a rest home at Glasgow, Scotland. What a wonderful place. I really enjoyed myself and hope to be able to go back when I finish my tour, which should be very soon.

Jan. 21, 45

I flew my 30th mission today. It wasn't bad, a little flak was all but it was too long, almost 9 hrs. Our target was Heilbronn, Germany, down and in from Strassburg. Five to go. If I weren't an a crew I would be released, as all extras are being sent home. No matter' which way I turn I get Screwed.

Jan. 29th, 45

Today I flew my 31st mission which took me to Munster, Germany. It was a pretty nice mission not much flak at all, no fighters. This leaves me 4 to go.

Feb. 3, 45

Today we went to Magdeburg, Germany which was my 32nd mission. We really sweat that mission out, but it wasn't too bad, although we did see a lot of flak, but none very close to our Sqdn. We had no enemy fighters. Our own fighters sure did a swell cover job. It won't be long now.

Feb. 6th, 45

The good lord was sure with me today, for I came close to not being able to be here writing this to night. We went to Magdeburg again today and bombed a railway yards. The flak wasn't so bad at the target but on the way back we got too close to Hanover and we got some very accurate flak. WE got several bursts right in our Sqdn. and one burst was very close to us too close in fact. A piece hit and cracked the co-pilots window and a piece took the dome right off my turret, from right around my head, but I was missed, but it wasn't very far. I first thought we had gotten a hit and the plane was blowing up, thank god it wasn't. The other planes were wondering if I were hurt when they seen the turret all shattered. I have 2 more to go and it will be over. That incident today will cause me to sweat all the more. Praying comes very easily.

~~Feb.~~ <sup>FEB</sup> 14, 45

Today we went to Magdeburg again and hit the oil refinery, we had more flak than before moved some more guns in I guess, this leaves me with one more to go.

Feb. 15, 1945

Well today was the big day for me, I finally finished up, I really have something to be thankful for. We went to Magdeburg, Ger. again and I think they had moved in still more guns, because we really caught it. Our ship came through in good shape, got one hole in the wingtip. There was eleven planes in our Sqnd. when we went out and six got back here. I don't think we lost anyone, but several landed on the continent. Some of them were really shot up.

I have been on missions when ships on our wing blew up and everyone got a lot of holes and we would come back without a bit of battle damage, guess I was just lucky, Thank GOD. It took me nine and a half months over here to get in my thirty five missions, while my crew finished in 68 days. I sure hope I am through with the War.

This the way we were  
dressed on missions as  
temperature was -30 to -40°

This jacket, pants, boots & helmet  
were leather sheep lined.

Inside of it was regular  
uniform. Over uniform was

electrically heated suit.  
Large gloves which snapped

to sleeves to make electrical  
connections. Felt boots over

our stockings that also  
snapped to pants for electric

connections. A yellow <sup>map</sup> ~~map~~  
vest was put on which

could be inflated. Over  
this was the parachute

harness, but actual  
hute was not worn as

no room for it. It had to  
be snapped on when

needed. Over all of this  
was worn a very heavy

leak jacket. We also wore  
steel helmet on our head

over other head gear.

