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Our only "Civilian" casualty was S/Sgt John J. O'Neill, who was wounded in London by a "Buss-Bock".

June 6, 1944-----

The day had finally arrived and at 2300 hours the night before we had been notified. It was to be a supreme effort on our part. At 0200 hours in the morning the first ship left the runway and headed for the French Coast. The assembly went fairly well and at dawn we were almost upon our target. There was a low layer of clouds and a heavy haze. We were flying in squadrons of six with a "Rocket" ship in the lead. At about 0537 hours we unloaded our eggs over the beaches near Caen. And this was merely one of the four missions flown on that eventful day. To keep that many ships in the air, quite a few of the ships flew with a crew of five and some crews got as high as three missions on one day.

It was on the 12th of July that Lt Bowen took over the job of Squadron Operations Officer, to replace Captain Cook, who was put back on a lead crew to enable him to more rapidly finish his missions.

To get back to the ground personnel, it was on the 15th day of July that the Squadron Adjutant was promoted. So now it's Captain Donald J. Ruth.

Shortly after Lt Bowen's captaincy came through.

Just a bit more on promotions while we were at it. The first week of September brought a Majority to Captain Walthall, whose work keeps him in Group Headquarters though he is carried as the Squadron's Executive Officer. Also a captaincy to Lt Tracy, our assistant operations officer.

Right about this time, Captain Letzer having finished his tour for the squadron, was transferred to Group, as Asst Operations Officer.

And then at last came through the approval of the Squadron Insignia.

Lt "Tommy" Thompson came through the 8th Air Force for the Silver Star awarded on General Order 500 for gallantry in action after having returned to England by himself, in a crippled B-24. The ship, shot up, had started to burn and the crew, including the wounded pilot were bailed out. Seeing that the fire was dying out, Lt Thompson chose to try and ride it back. Knowing it would burn if he tried to land it, he decided to bail out after heading the ship back into the channel. Three times he tried, three times he failed. Each time he left the seat and climbed to the nose wheel dorr, he noticed that the ship had swung back and was again headed for England. The fourth time he succeeded and bailed out, the ship exploding as it crashed into the sea.

It was on September 27, a day seared into the minds of all 445th personnel, that the squadron suffered one of its most smashing blows. For it was on that day that the group overran their target, temporarily of the bomber stream and was hammered by German fighters until finally twenty seven (27) ships had been destroyed in the air or sent crashing earthwards. On that day we lost four crews from this squadron, and considered ourselves fortunate not to have lost more.

On the 28th of September, following the catastrophe of the previous day, the 701st led the group and the wing back to the same target and devastated the MPI. Profitting by the errors of the first attempt, no mistakes were made and no ships were lost. Tension on the base ran high all day as rumors filtered back while the mission was still out that someone had radioed that the boys had been again hit by fighters over Holland.

On the fifth of October Captain Bowen finished his mission and Captain Tracey took over the job of Operations Officer. He had as asst Lt Mathews, just returned from the states to start a second tour. He later became the Operations Officer for the 700th Squadron.

And on the 19th of October Major Kriedler became the first Squadron Commander to achieve the rank of Lieut. Colonel in this group.

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