

Howard L. Sturdy

Diary
1944

22

MARCH

1944

13 MONDAY

Left Topeka, Kansas in the morning
arrived in Morrison Field West Palm Beach
Florida.

23

MARCH

1944

16 THURSDAY

Went swimming in a jungle stream

14 TUESDAY

17 FRIDAY

Trinidad to Blumen, Brazil had to
pull a 25 hour inspection in the rain

15 WEDNESDAY

18 SATURDAY

Left the dear old United States this morning
Bay did it look pretty. Arrived in
Trinidad man! was it hot.

Went to Fort Alagoz Brazil

19 SUNDAY

24

MARCH

1944

20 MONDAY

Left Brazzil for Dakar, Africa

25

MARCH

1944

23 THURSDAY

Still waiting for weather to clear over England

21 TUESDAY

Left Dakar to Maraguis, North Africa
what a place

24 FRIDAY

~~Still~~ Still waiting, ran into Frank Sloman today boy! What a surprise he is flying a B-26

22 WEDNESDAY

Waiting for weather to clear over England also pulling 50 hour inspection.

25 SATURDAY

On our way to England, this place is really pretty, Valley England

26 SUNDAY

Left Valley for Stone and arrived in the evening

28

APRIL

3 MONDAY

1944

29

APRIL

6 THURSDAY

7

4 TUESDAY

7 FRIDAY
GOOD FRIDAY

5 WEDNESDAY

8 SATURDAY

9 SUNDAY
EASTER SUNDAY

Went to Church first time this year

APRIL

27 THURSDAY

Arrived at my permanent base this morning. Our navigator flew his first mission this afternoon and the rest of our flew a practice mission. They don't waste any time.
Time 1:05

28 FRIDAY

Practice Mission over England 2:40

29 SATURDAY

Practice Mission over England 1:50

30 SUNDAY

APRIL

24 MONDAY

1944

25 TUESDAY

26 WEDNESDAY

MISSION #2 to Brunswick, Germany
 light flak going in, at the target heavy
 flak - Saw one B-24 in the group ahead
 of us blow up - Saw my first "dog fight"
 Two P-47's got on the tail of a German fighter
 they shot the "hell" out of him - The group
 ahead "453" lost 8-24's - Had very good
 fighter cover - Bombed by PFF - 6:14
 P.S. Saw where our Bomber hit when I went there the 19th
 we REALLY hit a ~~SAFERS~~ ^{FIRST} TUESDAY ^{the Germans will stand}
 MISSION #3 to FLORENNES, BELGIUM
 Hit a German airfield, didn't see any fighter
 going to the target but just before we got to
 the French coast on the way back a fighter
 came out of the sun and shot a B-24 out of
 the formation behind us, his tail came off
 then it blew up no one got out - MODERATE
 FLAK - 4:46

RECALL FROM GUTENSLÖH, GERMANY

3:01

MISSION #4 TUTOW, GERMANY BOMBED AIRFIELD
 which makes FW-190 - ENEMY FIGHTERS WERE
 UP BUT NEVER GOT NEAR US - FIGHTER COVER VERY GOOD.
 LIGHT FLAK ALSO A FEW ROCKETS

P.S. for once we hit the target it was one
 of the best bombings this group has ever
 done P.S. Found out later that P-47's intercepted
 125 Enemy fighters, almost 100.

MAY

1944

15 MONDAY

MISSION #5 ST. PAUL FRANCE - NO BALL TARGET
 It was a milk run, didn't see any "Flak"
 or enemy fighters - 4:35 20,000
 8 1000 LBS G.P.

P.S. WE WERE TWO MILES OFF COURSE
 WHEN WE DROPPED OUR BOMBS - THE ENEMY'S
 WHEAT FIELDS ARE REALLY TAKING A BEATING
 "AIR METAL"

16 TUESDAY

19 FRIDAY

MISSION #6, Braunschweig, Germany target
 was a air field results were perfect.
 Bomb load was 6-1000 G.P. ALT 22,000
 flight time 6:52 FLAK was heavy
 over the target and light FLAK going
 to and away from the target - Our
 plane was a virgin till today, we
 received two FLAK holes - seen one B-17
 explode and a B-47 go down in flames. ME-109's came
 in en masse. 20 SATURDAY but did not
 shoot at us, they had other things on their minds
 4 P-47 were on their tails.

17 WEDNESDAY

21 SUNDAY

PRACTICE MISSION - They are getting us
 ready for lead count, we had the formation

MAY

1944

18 THURSDAY

47

25 THURSDAY

23 TUESDAY

26 FRIDAY

24 WEDNESDAY

27 SATURDAY

MISSION #8 Only south ~~west~~ of Paris the target was a Winfield Stark was heavy. we received two holes in tail 12-500 GP 20,000 - our bombs missed the target we probably killed some poor Frenchmen. The beach was the bad planes' bomb sight was in error. The Group behind really hit the target.

MISSION #9 SAAR BRUCKEN MARSHALING YARDS
was target, we hit it. FLAK was intense. our
plane was shot up pretty bad. 12-500 GP 29,000
7:20

28 SUNDAY

29 MONDAY
WHIT MONDAY

1944

Practice Mission, Our co-pilot is getting Chicked out as a first pilot - 3:08
saw two B-24's, Crash a very nice fire
and one got out "T.S."

30 TUESDAY

MISSION #10, OLDENBURG, GERMANY, Target
was an Airfield hit were very good, Bomb-
load 52 in. 22,000 6.1/8 FLAK
MODERATE, Fighter cover very good P-38, P-51
Enemy fighters none - we were Dog lead
in the second sqd. of the second group.

31 WEDNESDAY

MISSION #11, LUMES, FRANCE we were recalled.
Just after we crossed the coast because of
weather, 3-2000 lbs, 2300 gals load 3:30
ONE GROUP CAUGHT SOME FLAK That is the reason
it was called a mission. AND BECAUSE OF THE
TIME OVER FRANCE

1 THURSDAY

1944

2 FRIDAY

3 SATURDAY

Practice over England - Flew OHI 2d Test
C-1 and Photo Bombed - 1500' - 20,000'
time 3:44

4 SUNDAY

29 MONDAY
WHIT MONDAY

1944

Practice Mission, Our co-pilot is getting checked out as a first pilot - 3:00
saw two B-24's, crashed a very nice fire
and one got out "T.S."

30 TUESDAY

MISSION #10, OLDENBURG, GERMANY, Target
was an airfield hit were very good, Bomb-
load 52 incendiary 22,000 6.1/8 FLAK
MODERATE, Fighter cover very good P-38, P-51
Enemy fighters none - we were Dog lead
in the second sqd. of the second group.

31 WEDNESDAY

MISSION #11, LUMES, FRANCE we were recalled.
Just after we crossed the coast because of
weather, 3-2000 lbs, 2300 gas load 3:30
ONE GROUP CAUGHT SOME FLAK That is the reason
it was called a mission and because of the
TIME OVER FRANCE

1 THURSDAY

1944

2 FRIDAY

3 SATURDAY

Practice over England - Flew OHI to test
C-1 and Photo Bombed - 1500' - 20,000'
time 3:44

4 SUNDAY

JUNE

1944

5 MONDAY

1944

JUNE

8 THURSDAY

47

1st CLUSTER *

6 TUESDAY

ON "D-DAY" H-Hour 6:30 -

ed shore installations and covered
 and forces landing. The Channel was covered
 with boats. We could see German Coast Guns
 firing and our Naval Boats were laying
 a pretty thick. Alt. 21000' 312 20[#]
 9. Bombs temp -12°C - 2nd Sqd. of First Group
 to over - seen a little "FLAK" on way out.
 enemy fighters 5:32

7 WEDNESDAY

Borted from Raid to the Beach head -

ison #4 ENGINE had an oil leak and
 1 to Feather it. Our bomb load was 10

1 G.P. - Chilton made a very nice landing

19 FRIDAY

10 SATURDAY

11 SUNDAY

Mission 13 to France - target a rail road south of
 Paris - did not bomb because of 10/10 cloud cover. #2
 engine had oil leak had to feather overchannel -
 Bomb load 4-2000[#] - 8,500' time 6:44

12 MONDAY

checked 250 for raid tomorrow
 Alt 15,000' Time 1:34

15 THURSDAY

checked 250 for raid, dropped ten
 practice bombs.

13 TUESDAY

MISSION #14 - Brest Pen. Guer. target railroad
 Bridge - Had super chargers shot out by "Flak"
 Near target lost the formation and dropped our
 bombs on an "AIRFIELD". Picked P-51 Fighters up over
 France - Navy head up and look we flew over
 edge of Guernsey Island got a few more "Flak"
 holes just a little lower and I wouldn't be here to
 write about it - this was the Groups 100th RAID
 IN 6 mo. ETO Record for Bombers - 6:32

14 WEDNESDAY

16 FRIDAY

~~MISSION #14~~ MISSION #15 MELUN time 6:32
 No Flak No Nothing.

17 SATURDAY

18 SUNDAY

checked 250

1944

19 MONDAY

MISSION #18 - VIGNA COURT, FRANCE - NOBALLY
 TARGET. FLAK WAS MED BUT NOT NEAR U.S.
 Bombed P.F.F. Temp. 21°c - 52-100 GR bomb
 22,000' TIME HIGH

20 TUESDAY

21 WEDNESDAY

24 SATURDAY

MISSION #17 - BERIGNY, FRANCE - TARGET 2 AIRFIELD
 unable to hit target because of 10% cloud cover.
 dropped in channel. 312 x 20th Frag. bombs
 23,000' - 22°c 5:38

*25 SUNDAY

MISSION #18 - LENS, FRANCE - TARGET ELECTRICAL
 PLANT - FLEW HEAD OF SECOND SYD. FLAK LIGHT & LOW
 ALT. 25,000' TIME 3:47
 20th CLUSTER

1944

22 THURSDAY

Test 250. TIME 1:00

23 FRIDAY

JUNE

26 MONDAY

1944

1944

JUNE--JULY

29 THURSDAY

FAREW ZEBRA to help form - 23,000 - 2:31

CHECKED 250 20,000 - 2:08

27 TUESDAY

30 FRIDAY

28 WEDNESDAY

1 SATURDAY

2 SUNDAY

JULY

1944

3 MONDAY

4 TUESDAY

5 WEDNESDAY

JULY

1944

6 THURSDAY

7 FRIDAY

8 SATURDAY

MISSION #19 To Rheims, FRANCE Target

BRIDGE, WE WERE LEADING A Sqd. OF THE HH5th GEN
INTO BAD WEATHER OVER THE CONTINENT, SO HAD TO BRING
BOMBS BACK. TIME 4:08 - 20,500

9 SUNDAY

10 MONDAY

MOVED FROM 445 TO 389 FOR P.F.F. TRAINING
CREW

CHILTON, J.H. PILOT - OKLA. SHAY, R.E. TOR. SOUTH DAK.
SUTHERLAND, H.E. CO-PILOT - MAINE BRIGGS, M.R. W.G. MAINE
ISCHE, R.E. D.R. NAV - WISC. MCCORMICK, G.S. W.G. TEXAS
HUDSON, C.V. P. NAV. - LA. MILLS, D.W. T.G. OHIO
JOHNSON, C.V. MICKY NAV - ARK.
TREFETHEN, P.S. BOMB. - MAINE
SHORNE, W.S. R.O. - WISC.

11 TUESDAY

14 FRIDAY

FLEW A MICKY RUN - / 5000 - 3:37

13 THURSDAY

12 WEDNESDAY

15 SATURDAY

FLEW A MICKY RUN - / 5000 - 3:26

16 SUNDAY

58

JULY

17 MONDAY

27
FLEW A MICKY RUN - 10,000 4:27
FLEW ALEX GERRY FOR NEW SHIP

18 TUESDAY

PRACTICE BOMBING OFFER WASH, 10,000 3:37

21 FRIDAY

MISSION #20. SAARBRUCKEN, GERMANY - FIRST TIME
IN P.F.F., THE FIRST TARGET WAS MUNICH BUT WEATHER
HAD MOVED IN OVER TARGET. DIDN'T SEE ANY ENEMY FIGHTERS.
LOST ONE PLANE OVER STUTTGART, CAUSE FLAK. FLAK OVER
TARGET WAS MEDIUM. CHAUNDS OVER TARGET 10%.

19 WEDNESDAY

22 SATURDAY

1944

1944

JULY

59

- 20 THURSDAY

PRACTICE BOMBING AND CHECKED NEW
SHIP. 29,000 • 2:09

23 SUNDAY

24 MONDAY

CHECKED G FOR MISSION 12,000 2:10

25 TUESDAY

Flew a Micky Run - 10,000 2:42

26 WEDNESDAY

27 THURSDAY

28 FRIDAY

29 SATURDAY

30 SUNDAY

31 MONDAY

3 THURSDAY

1 TUESDAY

4 FRIDAY

#ST 21 MISSION SCHWERIN, GERMANY - TARGET WAS A AIRFIELD. BOMBING WAS PERFECT ALL BUT THREE BOMBS HIT THE TARGET. WE HEARD THE 445TH GOT A LITTLE FLAK NEAR "KIEL". THERE WAS SMOKE POURING OUT OF KIEL TO ABOUT 20,000 FT. DIDN'T SEE ANY ENEMY FIGHTERS BUT THEY HIT A GROUP BEHIND US.
BOMB LOAD 2 500 LBS. G.P. & 2 SMOKE BOMBS
TIME - 7:51

2 WEDNESDAY

5 SATURDAY

22ND MISSION, BRUNSWICK, GERMANY - TARGET WAS THE AGRO ENGINE FACTORY. FLYING #2 THE LEAD PLANE DROPPED SEVEN MILES SHORT OF TARGET. VERY POOR MAY, GOT #2 ENG. ELECTRIC SYSTEM SHOT OUT & HYDRAULIC SYSTEM PLUS A LOT OF HOLES. ~~SATURDAY~~
COULDN'T FEATHER #2 HAD TO LET IT WIND MILK. JUST ABOUT DIDN'T MAKE IT BACK. PILOT MADE A BEAUTIFUL LANDING.
BOMB LOAD - 2 500 LBS G.P. & 2 SMOKE BOMBS
TIME - 7:16

6 MONDAY

10 THURSDAY

AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY

FLAK TO WOODBRIDGE TO PICK UP ANGLISHS
CREW AFTER THEY HAD CRASHED LANDED
NO ONE WAS HURT. 1000 - 1:16

8 TUESDAY

11 FRIDAY

9 WEDNESDAY

12 SATURDAY

MISSION #23 SAARBRACKEN, GERMANY, TARGET
WAS MARSHALLING YARD, FLAK WAS INTENSE &
ACCURATE. FIRST MISSION FOR SHIP PICKED UP
5 FLAK HOLES, NOSE TURRET GOT ALMOST DIRECT
HIT, HOLES IN #1 CELL OF #2 TANK, PROP BLADE ON #2
ENG. HIT, TWO DE-ICER BOOTS DAMAGED.

BOMB LOAD 4-250 LB. GP & 2 SMOKE BOMB

ALT. 21,500 FT TEMP. -20°C

TIME. 06:21

13 SUNDAY

AUGUST

1944

1944

AUGUST

17 THURSDAY

14 MONDAY

18 FRIDAY

15 TUESDAY

MOVED BACK to 445th FLEW OUR P.F.F.
SHIP HERE 700 FT 075

(16) WEDNESDAY

19 SATURDAY

20 SUNDAY

AUGUST

1944

1944 CLUSTER

* AUGUST

21 MONDAY

24 THURSDAY

MISSION #24, BRUNSWICK, GERMANY TARGET WAS
 A AERO ENGINE FACTORY, HAD VERY GOOD FIGHTERS
 COVER OF 51'S & 38'S NO ENEMY FIGHTERS. SEEN SOME
 FLAK ON WAY IN BUT WASN'T NEAR US. MED. FLAK
 OVER TARGET, GOZONE HIT ABOUT A FOOT FROM WHERE
 I WAS STANDING, IT HIT AN OXYGEN LINE BUT THE IMPACT
 WAS SO GREAT IT CRUSHED THE LINE. HAD VERY GOOD
 BOMB RESULTS. VERY LITTLE FLAK ON WAY OUT.
 22,000 2-500, 2-SMOKE BOMBS - 06:57

22 TUESDAY

25 FRIDAY

CHECKED 562 2000' 01:25

23 WEDNESDAY

26 SATURDAY

CHECKED OUR SHIP "562" 8000' 01:00

PRACTICE BOMBING 10 BOMBS 10,000' 01:40

562

27 SUNDAY

SEPTEMBER

14 THURSDAY

1944

1944

SEPTEMBER

11 MONDAY

7:25

74

20740 GIL FIELD

15 FRIDAY

12 TUESDAY

16 SATURDAY

17 SUNDAY

13 WEDNESDAY

MISSION 27 ULM, GERMANY, TARGET KLOCKNER
 HUMBOAT DEUTZ TRUCK AND ARMORED VEHICLE PLANT.
 WE LEAD THE WING. GOT FLAK ON WAY OVER AT THE
 SIEGFRIED LINE BUT WASN'T VERY CLOSE. NO FLAK AT THE
 TARGET AND VERY GOOD BOMB HITS. PICKED UP SOME
 VERY ACCURATE FLAK AT SIEGFRIED LINE ON WAY BACK.
 WE WERE ONLY AT 17000 FT. WHEN THEY HITS US,
 GOT A FEW HOLES. BOMBS 2x500 GPS & 2 SMOKE BOMB
 ALT 19500 TEMP -18°C TIME 8:25

25 MONDAY

1944

1944

28 THURSDAY

Spent the day in the woods across the river from a small town. That night I tried to find a bridge to cross didn't have much luck for finding a bridge but did run into Beiggs sleeping in a potato vine pile.

~~John Beiggs~~

26 TUESDAY

29 FRIDAY

We turned off the target and started for back home. Ted spent all day again in the same woods. We found min. Later the nose gunner reported light flak ahead, which a railroad bridge to cross and started out NW. was time fuzed 20 min. Things began to happen McCormicks walked all that night till day light.

Gun jammed and about the first good hit we got he left with my chute. Mills got one maybe more. Beiggs possible two and Hudson two, stay unknown. We recovered more hits in the bomb bay and the plane started to really burn. After spending some time finding Mac's chute five of us left together. spent the night in a German forest

27 WEDNESDAY

30 SATURDAY

*29 Kassel, Germany Target was suppose we hide for a while then decided to try and to be Anti-Aircraft Gun Factory Bomb Load 2. do a little walking by day we walked and rest 500 GP - 2 - smoke bombs alt. 23000'. Going to the off & on that day & night. it also rained. Target our mucky nav. Complained about his radar. Set Factory out once in a while, but thought it would be alright to continue as lead. We made our bomb run. we just walked & slept. all cross County and dropped our bombs on what was believed Kassel. clouds were over the target but we managed to see through a hole in the clouds that our bombs were hitting in some buildings. (continue above)

1 SUNDAY

we just walked & slept. all cross County

OCTOBER

1944

5 THURSDAY

sight of the blasting. Guess they were digging coal or some thing almost let two German hunters walk into us.

OCTOBER

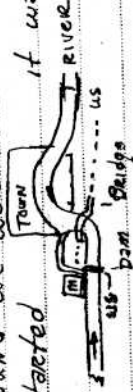
1944

2 MONDAY

We walked & slept still through wood hoping we were heading for Holland.

3 TUESDAY

I believe this was the day that we came across another River to big to cross. We followed it quite a ways (all at night) when we came to a mill & dam after crossing the dam and what we thought was a back water branch of the main river. We found we were back on the same side as when we started.



4 WEDNESDAY

For the next three days I can't remember the order of the things that happened. Beiggs caught four trout one of the days. We saw some P-47's giving some body a hard time.

We camped pretty close to a active German fighter base. Could hear blasting, what we thought was the western front until we got almost within to the road too long, we walked into a slave labor camp and of course were captured.

6 FRIDAY

7 SATURDAY

Bypassed a Large City and Found a nice hay stack to spend Sunday in.

8 SUNDAY

about sunset we left our cozy hay stack and headed out on a road to? We got real brave and walked through two small towns then Luck left & Fate took over. We stuck to the road too long, we walked into a slave labor camp and of course were captured.

OCTOBER

1944

9 MONDAY

After a cozy night in a wet cellar without our shoes & pants (they took them away to discourage us from leaving. That morning we got some soup and our first taste of German bread it was as sour as a lemon and as heavy as lead. An hour or so later I developed a good case of the runs. They (two soldiers) took us by rail to an Airfield about two hours ride from Uman.

10 TUESDAY

13 FRIDAY

OCTOBER

12 THURSDAY

1944

11 WEDNESDAY

14 SATURDAY

15 SUNDAY