

HORROR STORY

DATE - 17 July 1944

Position - A-2

Plane - #5364

Crew - pilot, Capt. Kennedy; co-pilot, Lt. Oliva; first navigator, Lt. Copeland; second navigator, Lt. Ostheimer; bombardier, Lt. Bonnett.

Navigators' Briefing - 2200, 16 July 1944.

Target - Avignon, France, Railroad bridge at west end of marshaling yards.

Route - from base to Lido da Roma, 10 miles south of Rome; to Monte Cisto; to Bastia, Corsica; to Hyères, France; to I.P. at Carpentras; to target.

Crew Briefing - 0400, 17 July 1944.

Weather - Clear, clear at take off. Route, cumulus building over Apennines; clouds with exception of low cumulus over Corsica, to coast of France; strato-cumulus layer with breaks at 5000 feet over southern France; clear over target. Visual bombing.

Return route, clear, with exception of cumulus to 14000 feet over Corsica, to Italian coast; scattered cumulus at 8000 to Apennines; cumulus building to 18000 over mountains; over base, cumulus and possible rain at E.T.R. Cloud base at 5000.

Wind - 5000' - 230°, 10 mph.; 10,000' - 290° at 14; 15,000' - 310° at 18; 19,000' - 310° at 20.

Formation - 459th group leading wing with 759th squadron leading group; Major Warren leading in #6462; Captain Kennedy in deputy lead in #5364. (Lt. Rafferty in A-5 position, directly behind les.)

Time - T.O. 0600; assembly over 459th base at 0645; on course at 0651; over I.P. at 1105; target time - 1115; E.T.R. 1533.

T.O. - east to west.

Altitude - assembly at 4000 feet over base; climb to 11,000 feet over mountains. Bombing altitude 19,000 feet.

Escort - Rendezvous with P-47's at 0817, 30 miles south of Elbe.