

**400** VENIT HORÆ **MISSIONS**





THAT'S  
MY  
OUTFIT—



The  
FIGHTING 97<sup>th</sup>



PRINTED IN CELEBRATION  
OF THE FLYING, FOR THE FIRST TIME BY ANY  
HEAVY BOMBARDMENT GROUP  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES ARMY AIR FORCES,  
FOUR HUNDRED BOMBARDMENT MISSIONS.



Dedicated to one

who has served us faithfully for three hundred and twenty-three combat missions. Greeting us after each attack against the enemy with a warm and cheery smile. Sharing our hardships as well as our joys. Standing by us through Algerian heat, Tunisian dust and the sun and rain of Italy.

To

MISS ELZA « FLIP » FRAME, ARC

we

respectfully dedicate this volume

Cover design by Sgt. Bruno Dutkowsky

Cartoon by Tech Sgt. Henry P. Chapman

Photographs by Master Sgt. Lowell H. Noll and Group Photo Section

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Let us pause for a moment before we review our past record to remember those who gave their all, inscribing such a magnificent history. Their sacrifice.... their heroism.... their gallantry.... have contributed to this memorable occasion.

Their names will be but mere words upon the pages of written history.... but in our minds.... their smiles.... their tears.... their greetings.... will continue to glow as we soar forth to carry on.





**LIEUT. GEN. IRA C. EAKER**

COMMANDING, MEDITERRANEAN ALLIED AIR FORCES

« I do not believe that any organization of equivalent size can, with justice, claim to have participated more definitely or extensively in the downfall of the enemy than the 97th Bombardment Group ».

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ira C. Eaker". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

**IRA C. EAKER,**

Lieutenant General, USA, Commanding.





### **COLONEL NILS O. OHMAN**

« Having been a member of the 97th Bomb Group at its activation and unfortunate enough to be left behind when the organization started its long trek to prove to the world that our type bombing could be done, I now consider it among my highest honors to be able to command such a fine organization.

« In reaching the 400 mission mark, the 97th has further inscribed its name into the pages of American history.

« Why mere words upon such an occasion as this.... Your magnificent record speaks for itself. »

**NILS O. OHMAN**

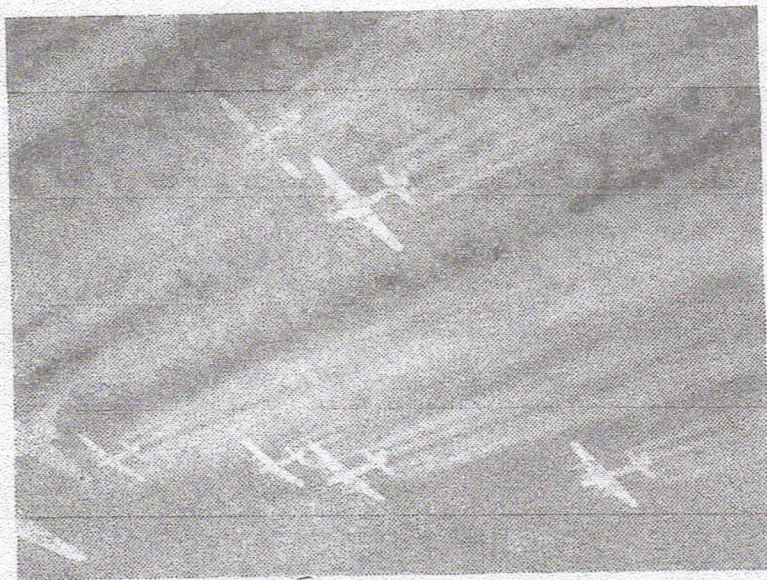
Colonel, Air Corps, Commanding



First Rome<sup>2</sup> attack  
July 19, 1943



First over France from Africa  
Salon Airdrome, Marseille - August 17, 1943

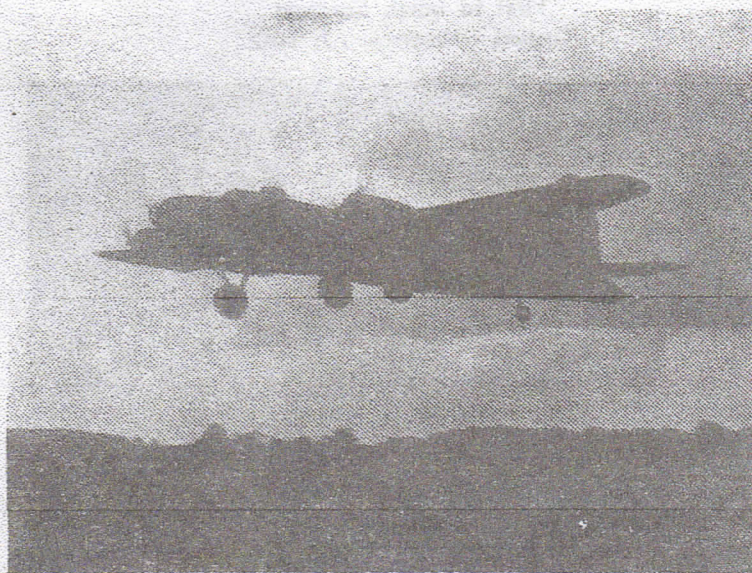




First Fortresses over Europe  
Rouen, France - August 17, 1942

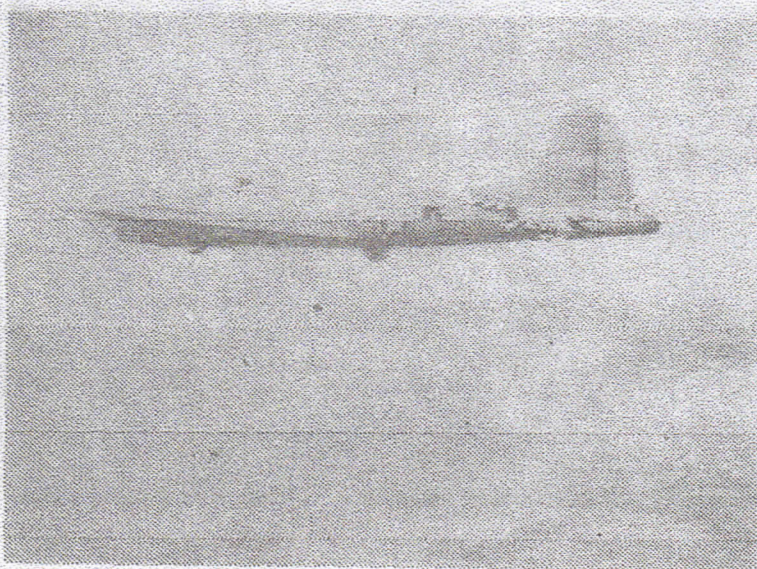


First heavy bomber to land in Northwest Africa  
November 10, 1942

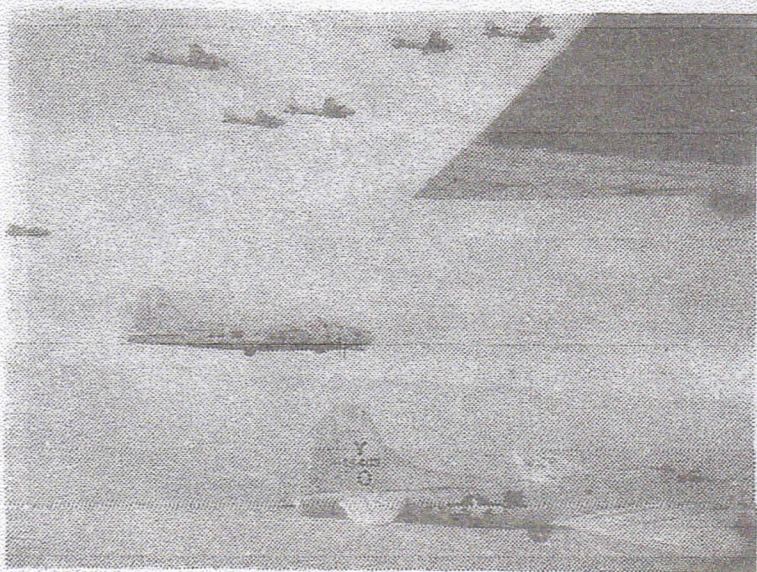




**First heavy bomber to bomb from Northwest Africa**  
Bizerte, Tunisia - November 16, 1942



**First to bomb Sardinia**  
Cagliari - November 23, 1942

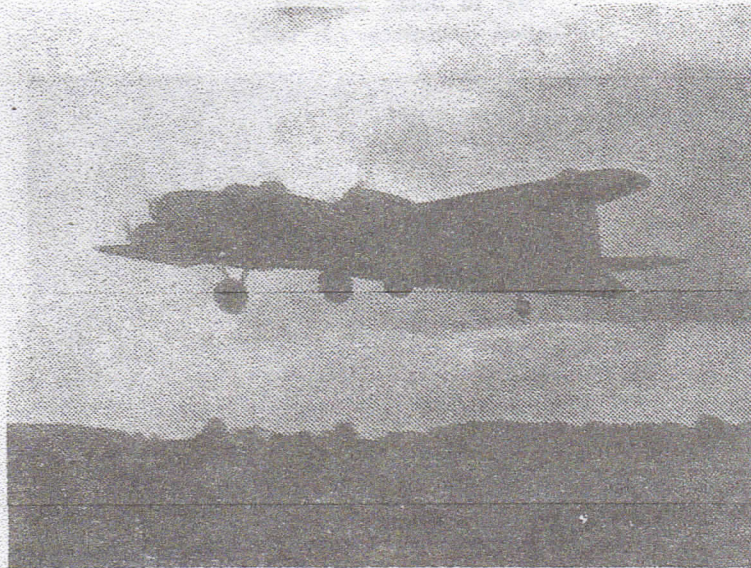




First Fortresses over Europe  
Rouen, France - August 17, 1942

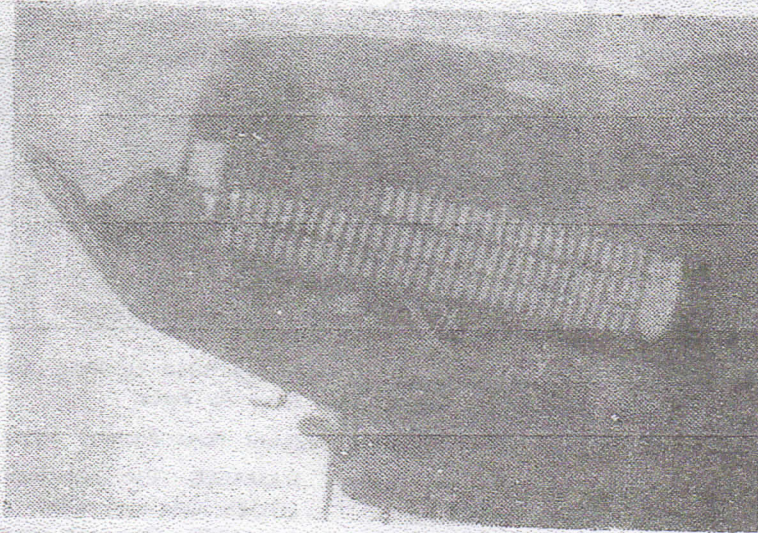


First heavy bomber to land in Northwest Africa  
November 10, 1942





First heavy bomber to fly 100 missions - Berlin Sleeper -  
Torre del Greco, Italy - September 13, 1943



First heavy bombardment group to fly 400 missions  
9 December 1944  
Oil refinery and storage depot, Regensburg, Germany



**Totals:**

Sorties 10,376  
Tonnage 22,642  
Encounters 3,533

**Enemy aircraft:**

Destroyed 376  
Probables 204  
Damaged 186

Our losses 101



**Summary of operations:** The 97th Bombardment Group and other Groups from Southern Italy will attack and destroy the Steyr-Daimler-Puch Aircraft Component Parts Factory at Steyr, Austria.



TARGET BEFORE



1st WAVE



HEIGHT OF ATTACK



RECON-2 HRS LATER

**PRESIDENTIAL CITATION:** Presented 6 September 1944 by Major General Nathan F. Twining, Commanding General 15th Army Air Force.

**TARGET:** Steyr-Daimler-Puch Aircraft Component Parts Factory, Steyr, Austria.

**DESTROYED:** One aircraft parts factory  
Four twin-engine fighters.

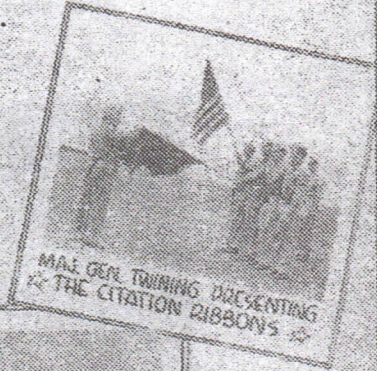
**DAMAGED:** Two twin-engine fighters.  
**LOSSES:** One man killed.

**PROBABLY DESTROYED:** Three twin-engine fighters

**DAMAGED:** One man wounded  
Eighteen Flying Fortresses.



MAJ GEN VANDEVORSE PRESENTING THE CITATION RIBBONS TO MAJ GEN TWINING



MAJ GEN TWINING PRESENTING THE CITATION RIBBONS

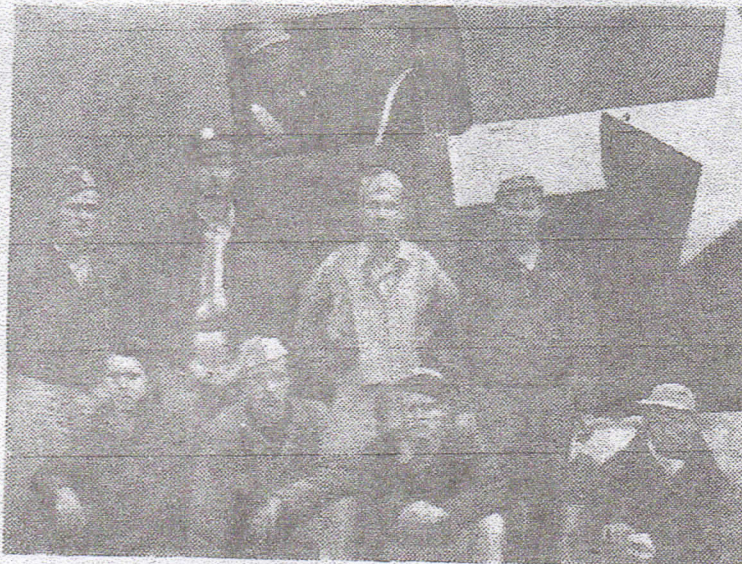


"PASS IN REVIEW"

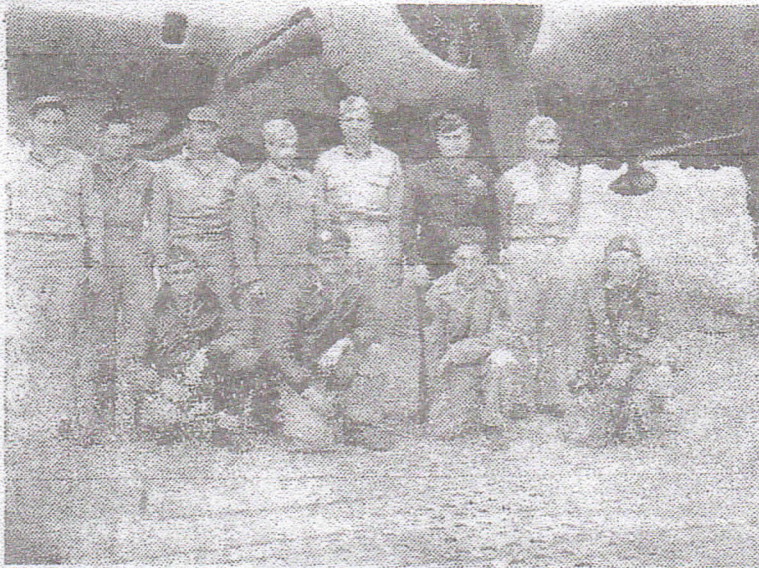


**First to bomb Germany from Africa**  
Augsburg - October 1, 1943

In the waist-gun window, left to right: S/Sgt. Hyman L. Pont and S/Sgt. Roger E. Reinhart. Standing: Capt. Wilbert A. Riemer, Capt. Edward W. Cole, Lt. Col. Robert E. Kimmel and Capt. Joseph A. Jones. Kneeling: S/Sgt. Bryson A. Lausch, Sgt. Raymond R. Youngblood, Sgt. Douglas N. Webb and Sgt. Louis Green.



**First heavy bomber to land in Russia on shuttle mission**  
June 2, 1944



Rear row (left to right) - Staff Sgt. Bruce L. Foss, waist gunner; Tech Sgt. Harry E. Herrman, engineer; Staff Sgt. Clarence E. Weeks, waist gunner; 2nd. Lt. John F. Smith, observer; Lt. Col. Floyd S. Cofer Jr., co-pilot; Lt. Gen. Ira C. Eaker, commanding Mediterranean Allied Air Force; and Lt. Col. F. J. Patrick Nolan, pilot. — Front row (left to right) - 2nd. Lt. A. Lincoln Sack, navigator; 2nd. Lt. Lewis A. Vollmer, bombardier; Tech Sgt. George A. Williams, radio operator; and Staff Sgt. Howard K. Edwards, tail gunner.



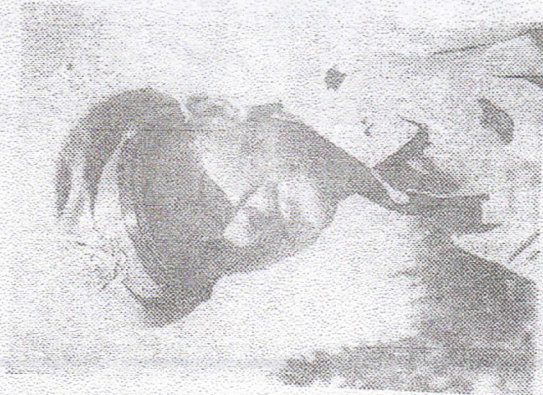


**Major General Nathan F. Twining**  
Commanding, 17th Army Air Force



**Lt. Col. Maurice E. Parker**

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER**



**Brig. General Charles W. Lawrence**  
Commanding, 5th Bomb Wing



**Major Jack Gibson**





**Major General Nathan F. Twining**  
Commanding, 17th Army Air Force



**Lt. Col. Maurice E. Parker**

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER**



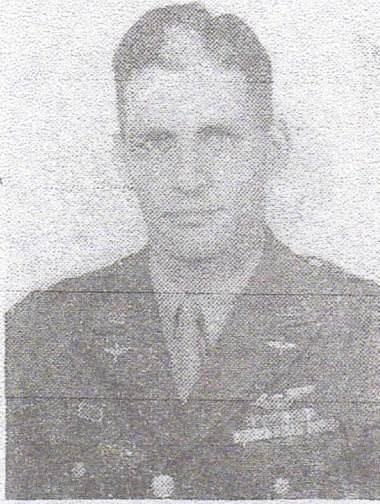
**Brig. General Charles W. Lawrence**  
Commanding, 5th Bomb Wing



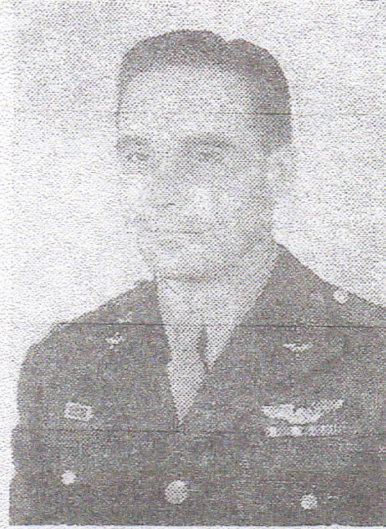
**Major Jack Gibson**



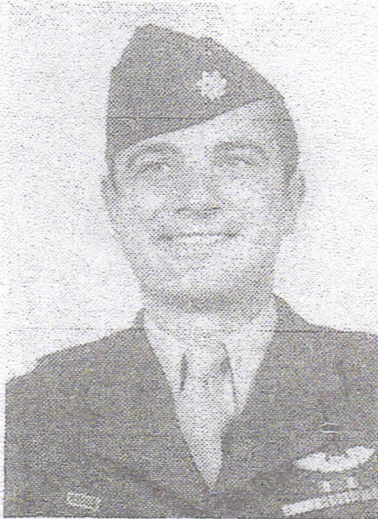
SQUADRON COMMANDERS



Lt. Col. Robert E. Shafer  
340th



Major Ira E. Hassler  
341st



Lt. Col. David J. Jones  
342nd



Lt. Col. Robert E. Stephens  
414th



STAFF OFFICERS



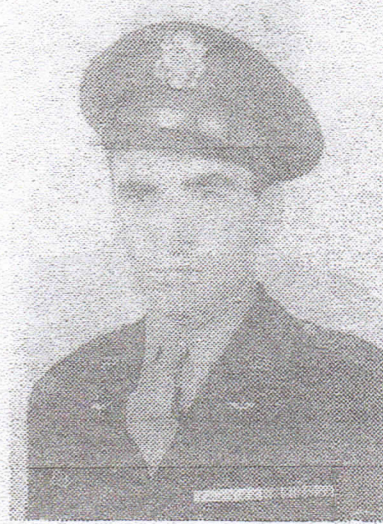
Major Samuel S. Rockwell  
Adjutant



Major John H. Vance  
Intelligence



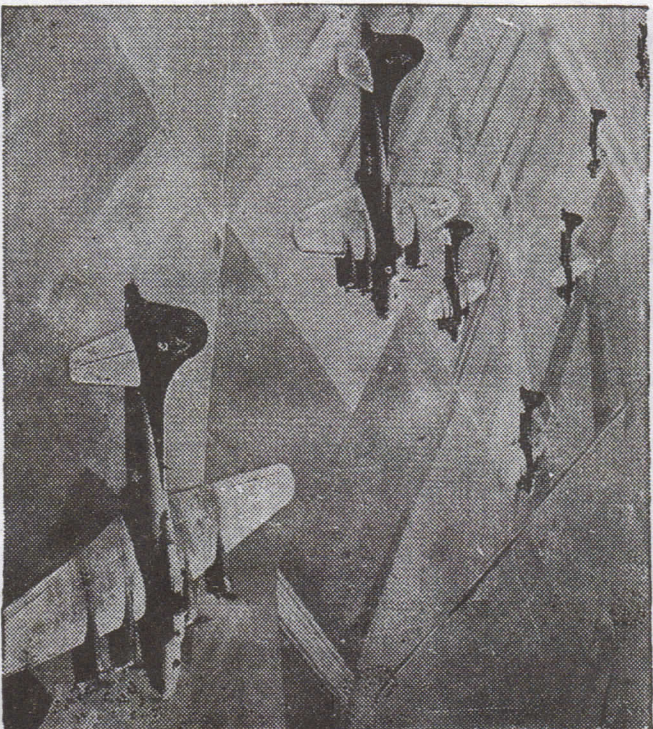
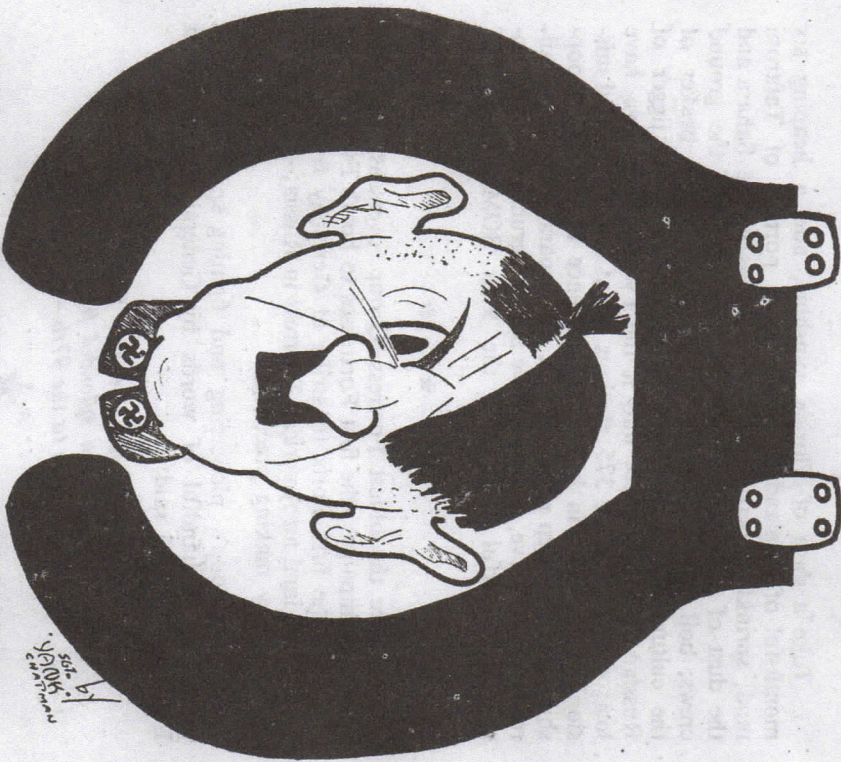
Lt. Col. Floyd S. Cofer Jr.  
Operations



Captain Owen K. Brown  
Engineering



GENTLEMEN — THE  
TARGET FOR TO-NITE-



THE OLDEST FORTRESS GROUP OVERSEAS

*Season's Greetings*  
FROM

THE

97TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP



## GIFTS FOR SCHICKLEGRUBER



Another German aircraft factory falls behind schedule as Fortresses from our Group invade Germany and drop tons of "presents" on the Fishamend Markt Aircraft Factory.

## Best Wishes from the 97th



Take a dash of Florida sunshine, add a heaping six monthful of England fog; plop in a portion of Tafari mud; sprinkle generously with the sands of the Sahara and the dust of Tunisia; stir with all the energy of the ground crews; boil under a burning African sun; add a beaker of the culture of historic Italy; top it off with a jigger of Russian vodka; squeeze into it the lives of those we have lost; chill with over 375 glorious sweat and thrill-filled missions; shake well in hellish reminiscence of stinking troopships, jostling jeep rides and the incomparable African railroads--then serve, and you have Schicklegruber's most abhorring and fearful high-ball... the 97th BOMBARDMENT GROUP!



We are the oldest Fortress Group overseas... veterans of four campaigns; the first Fortresses to bomb Europe from England; the first Forts to strike at Germany from Africa; the first to land an American Fortress in Russia;--- and many more history making precedents

Our Group's pioneering and fighting spirit was aptly praised in a handful of words by General Armstrong in England when he said:

*"I give you a toast: Here's to the Hun...a splendid fighter!  
And here's to the 97th—his master!!"*



*"Somewhere over there..."*