SECRET

BEING THE LIVES, DEEDS AND HERCIC SAYINGS OF

FLEET AIR WING SEVENTEEN

AND HER SONS

15 SEPTEMBER 1943

30 SEPTEMBER 1945
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PREAMBLE

This history of Fleet Air Wing Seventeen of Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET, admittedly is not a complete and detailed glossary of the Wing’s war effort. It was compiled under adverse conditions usually accompanying forward-area endeavors. Handicapped by a lack of personnel to devote full energy to the job of recording its history, the Wing also suffered from the disadvantage of not having been apprised early enough in the war that such a responsibility would fall to it. Many records, necessary for a minute recitation of the Wing’s work, were lost or destroyed in the hustle-and-bustle of keeping pace with the fast-moving and farflung Pacific war. However, a bonafide effort to retrace Fleet Air Wing Seventeen’s operations has been made, and this history is the result. It is hoped it might prove of some value to future historians and students of the recent hostilities.

Carroll B. Jones,
Captain, U. S. Navy.

SECRET
CHRONOLOGY

SECRET
FLEET AIR WING SEVENTEEN

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

1943

15 September Fleet Air Wing Seventeen of Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET, commissioned at Brisbane, Australia, with Commodore Thomas S. Combs, USN, Commanding. (Commodore Combs also was Commander Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET).

Squadrons Attached

15 September Fleet Air Wing Seventeen Headquarters Squadron commissioned at Palm Island, Australia, with Lieutenant Commander G. S. Hodges, USNR, Commanding.

20 October Captain E. R. Peck, USN, reported at Samarai Island, New Guinea, as Deputy Commander Fleet Air Wing Seventeen.

3 December Commander Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET, transferred headquarters to Samarai.

1944

7 May Captain C. B. Jones, USN, relieved Captain Peck as Deputy Commander of Fleet Air Wing Seventeen.

3 July Captain Jones relieved Commodore Combs as Commander of Fleet Air Wing Seventeen.

9 July Rear Admiral Frank D. Wagner, USN, relieved Commodore Combs as Commander Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET.
24 July  Fleet Air Wing Seventeen Administration departed Naval Air Facility, Samarai.

27 July  Fleet Air Wing Seventeen Administration arrived Seaplane Base, Lumbrum Point, Manus Island, The Admiralties.

7 September  Fleet Air Wing Seventeen Administration departed Seaplane Base, Lumbrum Point, Manus and established headquarters at Seaplane Repair Base #2 at Woendi Island, Schouten Islands.

26 September  Fleet Air Wing Seventeen Headquarters Squadron departed Seaplane Base, Lumbrum Point, Manus.

29 September  Fleet Air Wing Seventeen Headquarters Squadron arrived Seaplane Repair Base #2, Woendi Island, Schouten Islands.

14 October  Commander Fleet Air Wing Seventeen arrived Morotai Island, N. E. I.

19 October  Heavy and medium landplanes commence operations from Morotai.

3 January  Commander Fleet Air Wing Seventeen flew from Morotai to Leyte Gulf and based aboard the U.S.S. TANGIER.

4 January  Commander Fleet Air Wing Seventeen assigned administrative functions of Commander Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET.
20 January  Fleet Air Wing Seventeen Headquarters Squadron dissolved at Woendi.
23 January  Commander Fleet Air Wing Seventeen flew from Leyte to Lingayen Gulf and based aboard the U.S.S. CURRITUCK.
24 January  Commander Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET, reassumed administrative functions taken over by Commander Fleet Air Wing Seventeen earlier in month.
27 January  Fleet Air Wing Seventeen Staff arrived Lingayen and based aboard the U.S.S. TANGIER.
27 January  Commander Fleet Air Wing Seventeen moves from U.S.S. CURRITUCK to U.S.S. TANGIER.
31 January  Commander Fleet Air Wing Seventeen placed in command of all Naval Air Operations in Philippines north of 12°00 N.
5 February  Commander Fleet Air Wing Seventeen and Staff based at Mangalden, Luzon, P.I.
8 February  ACORN THIRTY FOUR arrived Dagupan, Lingayen Gulf, from the United States.
26 February  Commander Fleet Air Wing Seventeen and Staff arrived Clark Field, Luzon, P.I.
2 March  Aircraft under Fleet Air Wing Seventeen began flying searches from Clark Field.
1 May        Commander H. M. Drake, USN, (70026), Fleet Air Wing
             Seventeen Operations Officer, missing in action on
             flight over Hainan Island.

30 August    Fleet Air Wing Seventeen, with Captain Jones still
             commanding, became a unit under Commander Aircraft,
             Philippine Sea Frontier.

2 September  Japanese Empire surrenders subject to provisions of
             Potsdam Declaration. Fleet Air Wing Seventeen
             continues regular searches.

30 September Fleet Air Wing Seventeen commissioned as a unit of
             the Fifth Fleet. Organization summarized above
             becomes Northern Group, Fleet Air Wing Ten. Captain
             C. B. Jones, USN, detached and Rear Admiral H. M.
             Martin, USN, assumes command Fleet Air Wing Seventeen
             in Tokyo area.
NARRATIVE
Fleet Air Wing Seventeen of Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET, destroyed more than one-tenth of the Japanese merchant shipping blasted into oblivion during the 44 months of warfare in the Pacific.

The Japanese, themselves, admitted at the end of hostilities that 7,000,000-ton merchant fleet had been sent to the bottom, and Fleet Air Wing Seventeen claims destruction of 717,025 tons of that total.

Aircraft operating under Fleet Air Wing Seventeen's guidance sank or damaged 1,914 enemy merchant ships totaling 1,168,160 tons, helping cut the Jap's supply lines to the south and assisting in blockade operations in the waning days of the war.

Of these vessels, 966 totaling 717,025 tons were sunk definitely and 948 totaling 451,135 tons were damaged.

The Wing's aircraft also destroyed 173 enemy aircraft, sank 151 barges and destroyed a host of enemy targets such as blockhouses, warehouses, railroad yards and rolling stock and various military installations along the Jap-held China coast and outlying islands of the empire.

Commissioned 15 September 1943 in Brisbane, Australia, the Wing operated primarily to handle administrative duties for Aircraft EIGHTH FLEET, and its first commander was Commodore Thomas S. USN, who at the same time was Commander Aircraft.
SEVENTH FLEET. But as the war wore on, Fleet Air Wing Seventeen's responsibilities increased and it assumed operational as well as administrative control of various patrol and bombing squadrons.

In keeping pace with General MacArthur's advance to the Philippines, the Wing moved its headquarters seven times, going from Brisbane to Samarai Island off the eastern tip of New Guinea; then to Lombrum Point, Manus Island; Woendi Island near Biak; Morotai Island just north of Halmahera; Leyte Gulf, Mangalden in Lingayen Gulf, and finally Clark Field, Luzon.

The first operations demonstrated the astonishing effectiveness of the old-fashioned Catalinas in night attacks against enemy shipping. At the time the Japanese threat was very real. Strong forces were reported at the enemy naval bastion of Truk and at Rabaul. Over a one-month stretch in the waning days of 1943, the Cats damaged a Jap cruiser, three destroyers and a submarine, and probably sank two subs. They also sank or probably sank 35,000 tons of merchant shipping and damaged 19,000 more tons.

Besides this, they flew air alert and rescue missions, convoy coverage, night supply drops, special administrative and army courier missions, radar counter-measure flights and evacuation flights. On five evacuation flights in the Sepik River, New Guinea area for example, the Cats carried out 219 Australian officers and men and 25,000 pounds of machine guns, radio equipment, and miscellaneous gear.
Group command of the Black Cats was started by Commander W. O. Gallery, USN, who personally conducted tactical experiments for improving night bombing, and helping to isolate Rabaul.

A plan to improve air-sea rescue was inaugurated during these days and proved popular with Army airmen operating in and around the Bismarck Sea area. Air-sea rescue procedure then was very simple. The Cats only left their base when a call for help was sounded. This plan was soon discarded, however, and two to four Catalinas were sent out to patrol areas where the Army was striking, and rescued Army pilots soon were singing the praises of the Black Cats.

Two weeks before the scheduled invasion of Finschhafen (30 October 1943), Commodore Combs and his chief staff officer, Captain Edwin L. Peck, USN, arrived at Samarai Island where a seaplane base designed to facilitate the Bismarck Sea searches had been under construction since July 1943. Captain Peck stayed at Samarai as Deputy Commander of Fleet Air Wing Seventeen.

The Japanese on their drive south never reached Samarai except when they passed by on their abortive attempt to capture Milne Bay, but the Australians had applied the "scorched earth" policy when they pulled out of there early in 1942. Hence when Company "A" of the 84th Naval Construction Battalion moved in, its four officers and 129 men practically had to start from scratch in building up the base. They patched up a wharf, built a sea-
plane ramp, and Samarai was a going concern by late October.

At this period Captain Peck established his headquarters on Samarai Island and placed the squadrons under the skippers of the two tenders at nearby Namoia Bay. Plans were being formulated to improve the methods of striking the enemy’s vital supply line in the Bismarck Sea. The famous battle of the Bismarck Sea where the Army annihilated a convoy in those waters took place in November. The enemy then realized the impossibility of supplying their outposts by vulnerable daylight convoys and accordingly played into the hands of the Black Cats by making all their runs across the Bismarck Sea at night. The advantage of Samarai as a base then became apparent. The foresightedness of Commodore Combs and his staff resulted in a base, relatively close to the enemy, being ready at exactly the right time.

The way that the old, slow and obsolete Catalina was turned into an effective fighting machine deserves mention at this time.

All its disadvantages such as slow speed, lack of maneuverability, and altitude limitations were turned to advantages by using the Cat for masthead attacks at night.

Flame dampeners were installed and the hulls were painted a dull black.

The weight carrying ability of the old Cat was stretched to the limit here. Technical orders and other restrictions were jettisoned in favor of striking the enemy with maximum effort.
A good thumb rule for determining whether or not a plane would take off with the load imposed upon it was whether or not it would float after launching. If the planes floated with their heavy load, they could get into the air.

Various methods of attack on active enemy targets in the Bismarck Sea were experimented with at this time in order to develop the methods most acceptable to the pilots and most effective in destroying enemy shipping. Flares were used on several attacks, but were discarded on the unanimous recommendation of the pilots as they were blinding the pilots and bombers. Flares were used occasionally upon retirement after the attack to blind the gunners on the target ship. This did not prove very effective and often lighted the attacking plane and was eventually discarded all together. The method of attack eventually decided upon as most effective was to come in at low altitude with no illumination, pick up the target visually and attempt to pass over the target from bow to quarter or quarter to bow. Various loadings of bombs were used, and for the most part the pilots preferred four 500-pound bombs dropped in train with a spacing of about forty feet. All drops were made visually by seaman's eye from altitudes usually ranging from 150 to 50 feet. It was found advantageous to carry a load of parafrags which were tossed out through the tunnel hatch for the purpose of harassing the enemy gunners. This procedure was very effective in reducing the volume of fire from the enemy ships upon retirement. During the first attacks, the enemy made no attempts
to maneuver or change speed, apparently relying upon the cover of
darkness to hide them completely. This made it very easy for the
Cats since the wakes of the ships were plainly visible on the dark-
est nights. Soon, however, the enemy realized that darkness alone
was not sufficient for them to avoid detection and attack. They
then resorted to maneuvers, or, if the attacking planes were de-
tected early enough, they stopped dead in the water in order to
hide their wake. This ruse was also a failure since the Cats could
make their original detection and the first part of their approach
by use of radar. The antiquated radar in use at that time was not
directionally accurate enough to make a bombing approach. However,
the crews were able to maintain and direct the approach sufficient-
ly accurate to require minor changes of course when the target was
picked up visually. Also the enemy held their fire in order to
avoid detection. Soon however, they learned by bitter experience
that this was almost totally ineffective, so accordingly began
firing at the attacking planes if they came close enough to become
a menace. However, their fire except on bright moonlight nights
was directed mostly by guess, since the Cats remained invisible to
them, and was generally ineffective. Ordinarily the Cats strictly
avoided using machine guns for strafing the targets since their
best protection was their relative invisibility. However, strafing
was resorted to on occasions where a ship was badly crippled and
it was helped on its way to the bottom by pouring armor piercing
and incendiary fifty calibers. It was found, however, that fixed
forward fire power would be of tremendous advantage under the many circumstances and was used against most enemy targets which were not worthy and profitable bombing targets. Lieutenant Lehodney of VP-52 got to work and designed an installation of four fixed .50 caliber in the bow. The muzzles projected through a steel plate which was situated forward of the bomb window. This installation worked exceedingly well and was very popular with the pilots.

Proof that the Cats were really hunting the enemy was evidenced by their attempts to stop the Cats before they could get into the Bismarck Sea. The Nips established lines of flak ships across the entrances to the Bismarck Sea at Dampier Strait and St. George's Channel as well as reinforcing the anti-aircraft batteries along the shore lines. It then became routine for the pilots making passage through those straits to fly through a flak barrage every night.

Also the Nips began to patrol their convoys with night fighters. These were annoying, but generally ineffective.

So far material and equipment have been discussed. However, it is obvious that material could not be effectively used against the enemy without the skill, bravery and determination of the flying personnel. Bad weather was always encountered during some part of every flight. Dampier Strait, St. George's Channel and New Britain Island were usually covered by low clouds. Rain prevailed in the Straits which were usually negotiated entirely by use of radar. It was not unusual for pilots to spend three-fourths of their over-night flights on instruments.
At that time Captain Peck had under his administrative command two patrol squadrons (representing 12 FBY-5 aircraft and about 60 officers and 250 enlisted men), two small seaplane tenders and Headquarters Squadron 17, stationed at Palm Island, where major overhaul and maintenance work was handled.

In mid-November, Vice Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid, USN, relieved Vice Admiral Arthur S. Carpender, USN, as Commander, SEVENTH FLEET, and Captain Peck flew to headquarters at Brisbane to confer on future operations, especially in connection with projected landings at Arawe and Cape Gloucester, scheduled for December 15th and 26th. These landings would secure the eastern defenses of the gateway to the Bismarck Sea.

Commodore Combs transferred Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET, headquarters to Samarai, and Captain Peck relieved Commander Gallery from operational control of all squadrons.

The seat of operations of the Black Cat Task Group was changed from the tenders, U.S.S. HALF MOON, U.S.S. HERON and U.S.S. SAN PABLO, to Samarai Island the last of December. The Naval Air Facility at Namoi Bay, New Guinea, was employed as an auxiliary base and to accommodate excess personnel from Samarai.

The recreation problem for men cooped up on Samarai was solved by handball and softball. The squadrons put into effect their own rotation program, sending tired crews to Perth, Australia for rest and training. Captain Peck also approved a similar plan which allowed two per cent of Headquarters Squadron 17 to be at Brisbane for week-long rest periods.
Air-sea rescue and armed reconnaissance patrols continued throughout January, Squadron 52 flying the rescue patrols and Squadron 34, fresh from a rest at Perth, dealing out the punishment. Meanwhile VP-11's officers and men relaxed and trained at Palm Island.

At least 11 officers and men from Army bombers and transports were snatched out of the sea from under the very noses of the Japs during January, and 43,500 tons of shipping were destroyed in low-level night attacks.

Late in January, the tender, U.S.S. SAN PABLO, ran into some spirited action in the Langemak Bay, New Guinea, area. The U.S.S. SAN PABLO was sent into the area for refueling duty and at the request of the Advanced Echelon, Fifth Air Force, which was operating a new air base at Nadzab.

The tender underwent 20 alerts. Enemy aircraft dropped bombs in the vicinity on two occasions, but though nearby activities suffered, the U.S.S. SAN PABLO came through unscathed.

Although three Cat squadrons and three tenders were operating under Fleet Air Wing Seventeen, the deputy commander's staff at the time consisted only of three officers. These were: Captain Peck, the deputy commander; Lieutenant Robert Z. Collings, MC, USN, the medical officer, and Lieutenant Commander F. M. Nichols, USN, the operations officer; additional personnel being borrowed from Headquarters Squadron as necessary. "Captain Nick", as the operations officer was familiarly known, was one of the most colorful figures to appear in the Wing's history. He came to the
Wing after a tour of duty as squadron commander of VP-52.

Already ready to meet all comers in any game known to man, "Captain Nick" was a favorite with the personnel of the Samarai base.

Early in 1944, the Army had completed plans for occupying the Admiralty Islands, beginning with seizure of Los Negros late in February. The enemy had two air strips there which could be utilized for Army strikes against Palau and Dutch New Guinea and for expanding Naval land-based searches. Consequently, the Catalina night reconnaissances of the Bismarck Sea and the Admiralties grew in importance.

Squadron 34 handled this assignment until mid-February when relieved by Patrol Squadron 33, recently transferred from Perth. Enemy barge traffic was most hard hit during this period, but two attacks are especially illustrative of the great work the Cats were doing.

One pilot sighted an enemy merchant vessel, a midget sub and five small boats laden with troops and proceeding under cover of darkness. He went roaring in to attack at masthead-level with four 500-pound general purpose bombs, 30 fragmentation bombs and 1700 rounds of strafing. All the vessels were sunk excepting the submarine which disappeared.

Another pilot spotted a 10,000-ton tanker escorted by two destroyers. Two 100-pound bombs hit square on the tanker. It burst into flames, beached and was listed as destroyed.
After being relieved in mid-February, Squadron 34 remained based at the tender in Langemak Bay, flying mostly air-sea rescue patrols. Although the sleep of pilots and men of the squadron was interrupted nearly every night by the call to general quarters, the squadron carried on, turning in some remarkable rescue efforts.

Braving continuous fire from enemy shore batteries, Lt. (jg) Nathan G. Gordon, USNR, made four landings near the beach at North Cape in Kavieng Harbor and rescued 15 Army airmen shot down by Nip anti-aircraft. The War Diary of Fleet Air Wing Seventeen described this action of 15 February 1944 as one of the most outstanding operations ever carried out by Catalinas.

But rescue work wasn't all the Black Cat pilots were doing. Lieutenant J. F. Merritt, USNR, landed six Army Rangers at the south end of Momote strip on Los Negros on 27 February. The following day another Cat piloted by Lieutenant (jg) W. O. Pierce, USNR, swooped down, picked them up and roared away in a safe getaway from under the noses of the Nips.

Meanwhile, Commodore Combs and Captain Peck held forth in the "Governor's Mansion", a big white house at the top of a hill on Samarai. As Naval Task Force and Naval Task Group Commanders, respectively, they were in charge of Catalina operations. But Captain Peck directed much of his efforts toward keeping the squadrons at a high maintenance standard, ironing out especially administrative kinks in the maintenance setup.
The occupation of the Admiralties didn't alter, to any material degree, the Cat squadron assignments until late March. Until then, Squadron 34 continued to fly mostly air-sea rescue missions out from Langemak Bay with Squadron 33 handling the Black Catting out of Samarai.

Landing at Talasea, New Britain, late in the evening of 9 March, Lieutenant Commander T. A. Christopher, USN, picked up 24 wounded Marines less than a mile from Jap lines and returned them to Langemak Bay for hospitalization and treatment. He had to take off at night in the open sea to accomplish the mission.

Two nights later, Lieutenant Commander Christopher landed near Wakeo Island in the Schouten Group to rescue one officer and four men from a PT boat (No. 337) lost in action at Hansa Bay, New Guinea, 6 March.

Squadron 33's principal job was conducting night searches for enemy task forces that might jeopardize our forces recently landed in the Admiralty Islands, but it also got in some hard work against barges on the Rabaul run, and at the end of March Fleet Air Wing Seventeen's records showed 151 Jap barges destroyed (See destruction figures in appendix).

Shore targets were not neglected either. One Cat dropped a pair of 1000-pounders on an ammunition and fuel dump at Tadji and set a blaze visible for 60 miles.

Early in March, Lieutenant Commander Isaac J. Heizer, USNR, took command of Headquarters Squadron 17, thereby relieving Lieutenant Commander Hodges who had been selected to supervise setting up
a new seaplane repair base at Lumbrum Point, on the south shore of Seeadler Harbor in the Admiralties.

As our troops went ashore on Manus Island 15 March, Captain Peck journeyed to Nadzab for three days of conferences with officers of the Advanced Echelon, Fifth Air Force, regarding future operations of Navy search planes.

Among the topics of conversation was the scheduled eviction of a Navy Liberator squadron at Nadzab, and Liberators of Patrol Bombing Squadron 106, the first Navy land-based patrol bombers to operate in the Southwest Pacific area, began flying from there March 25th.

By that time the pacification of Seeadler Harbor was far enough along to allow Commodore Combs to start working under a new operations plan. At Seeadler, the Commodore transferred his flag to the U.S.S. SAN PABLO and assumed direct operational control of all seaplanes. At the same time Captain Peck was relieved from operational control at S marai, and ordered to Nadzab on temporary duty as Naval Liaison Officer with General George C. Kenney, Commander Allied Forces, who had operational control of Squadron 106's Liberators.

Squadron 52, resting at Palm Island, joined Squadron 22 at Seeadler to help fill the new Naval Air commitment -- flying 500-mile daylight sector searches between 320 and 030 degrees. Besides this, the Cats also supported Task Force 52's attacks on Palau with four consecutive diversionary strikes on Woleai in the

-19-
Carolines during the final week of March. Adding to the hazard presented under such a program were enemy snipers at Seealder who blazed away at the Cats as they came in for landings and while they were secured to their moorings.

At this time the U.S.S. TANGIER, a large seaplane tender, reported at Milne Bay, New Guinea, and was placed under the Wing's administrative control before moving forward to Seealder Harbor at the month's end, becoming Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET, flagship.

In April, Commodore Combs again assumed active duties as Task Group Commander and guided the searches from the Admiralties, under operational control then of the 13th Air Force. Squadron 34 came forward from Langemak Bay to fly rescue missions for Army strikes in the Biak area. The Cats also conducted special searches in conjunction with the simultaneous landings at Hollandia, Aitape and Tanahmera Bay on the 22nd of April.

When Squadron 106's Liberators left Nadzab for Los Negros 11 April, Captain Peck was relieved from temporary duty at Nadzab and returned to the Wing's Samarai base. Ten days later Commander Carroll B. Jones, USN, (soon to be promoted to Captain) reported as relief for the Deputy Commander of Fleet Air Wing Seventeen.

Captain Peck and Captain Jones flew to Seealder Harbor to report to Commodore Combs preparatory to the change of command. During five days there and at Hollandia, Captain Jones circled the operations of Navy search planes and inspected the seaplane base at Lumbrum Point to which Fleet Air Wing Seventeen was to be transferred in a few months.
Both officers returned to Eniwetok 7 May and Captain Jones, who won the Navy Cross and the Distinguished Flying Cross for extraordinary heroism in leading his squadron against the enemy in the Aleutians campaign, relieved Captain Peck as Deputy Commander of the Wing.

During March, April and May, the Wing’s toll of enemy shipping had declined as the Cats were occupied mostly with rescue work and special missions. However, with the advent of the Liberator daylight searches, the bag of enemy aircraft leaped considerably. In April, Squadrons under the Wing destroyed 14 Jap planes; they added 11 more in May.

Search operations from the Admiralties were expanded meanwhile. Liberators of Squadron 106 began flying from Momote strip, Los Negros, 12 April, and sectors ranging as far as Palau and Ulithi were flown with machine-like regularity until June. It was during this period that the bag of enemy planes soared upward.

Catalinas during May still were out front in the advance westward along the coast of New Guinea. By mid-month, the Cats were operating from the tenders, U.S.S. HALF MOON and U.S.S. ORCA, at Hollandia, doing air-sea rescue work and searching for Jap shipping.

Besides their nightly prowling, the Cats also spotted for friendly Task Forces supporting the Wakde Island landing 17 May and the Biak invasion 10 days later.

With Wakde secured, a strip soon was ready for the Navy Liberators, and on the 26th of May, six Libs of Squadron 106 flew
in from Los Negros and started flying three daily searches deep into enemy-held territory to the west. The searches reached to Halmahera, passed the northern shore of Morotai Island and touched as far as the Talaud Islands.

Replacing the six planes of Squadron 106 which had moved to Wakde, half a dozen Liberators of Squadron 115 flew to Los Negros from Green Island. Other elements of Squadron 115 soon went forward to Wakde to aid in the long-distance searching, and by the month's end, Squadron 115 was handling all searches from there.

From Wakde, Squadron 115 sent the first Allied plane to fly over the Philippines since the islands' complete occupation by the Nips in 1942.

Meanwhile, Liberator Squadron 101 had relieved Squadron 106 at Los Negros, and Squadron 106's officers and men went back to the United States for a well-earned rest.

At Samarai, Captain Jones moved to increase the efficiency of the scattered units under his administrative control. Importance of efficient communications and maintenance was stressed. Patrols 17-1, 17-2, and 17-3 were formed from the maintenance personnel of Hedron for greater flexibility and more efficient administration.

The Allied leapfrogging had progressed so far in May it was decided to abandon a plan to set up an intermediate seaplane repair base at Hollandia, and instead to create Seaplane Repair Base #2 further forward in the Bick area at Woendi Island. The tender, U.S.S. HERON, began "rolling up" the seaplane base at Palm Island.
and prepared to move to Woendi.

Personnel and equipment of Headquarters Squadron 17 were put ashore temporarily at Samarai, and a skeleton force was left behind to finish the "roll up". Headquarters Squadron 17 expanded facilities at Samarai to permit maintenance and repair of the Wing's Catalinas.

During June, the number of units under the administrative orbit of the Wing continued to increase. PATSU 1-12 reported 5 June to service seaplanes aboard the U.S.S. TANGIER at Seeadler Harbor. Nine days later the first contingent of Venturas, Patrol Bombing Squadron 146, arrived with its service unit, PATSU 1-8. They were based at Pityihu Island, one of the islands forming Seeadler Harbor. Soon afterward the tender, U.S.S. WRIGHT, anchored in Seeadler.

Squadron 146 immediately went to work, flying anti-submarine reconnaissance and daylight sector searches.

With Commodore Combs due to return to the United States under the rotation program, Captain Jones flew from Samarai to Seeadler for conferences and an inspection of the base nearing completion of Lumbrum Point.

On 3 July, Captain Jones relieved Commodore Combs as Commander of Fleet Air Wing Seventeen.

Six days later, Rear Admiral Frank D. Wagner, USN, relieved Commodore Combs as Commander Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET, with flag aboard the U.S.S. TANGIER.
When Admiral Wagner assumed command, Search Plan BAKER (see appendix) was in effect. Another sector had been added to the original three being flown from Wakde. The program of four Liberator searches out of Los Negros remained constant, but a sixth sector was added to the 500-mile Catalina searches fanning out northward from Seeadler. These sectors' right flank was protected by four Ventura searches out of Emirau Island, and the Cat searches north from Green Island were reduced to two. Besides these patrols, Cats of Squadrons 52 and 33 flew Black Cat and air-sea rescue missions out of Hollandia.

Samarai, in the meantime, was becoming far removed from the scenes of operations; and the Wing prepared to move up.

Under the Wing at this time were: Squadrons VP-101 at Los Negros, 115 at Wakde, 146 at Pityilu, 11 at Samarai, 33 at Hollandia, 34 at Seeadler, 52 at Hollandia and VP-101 (seaplanes) at Samarai; Green and Emirau Islands; the tenders, U.S.S. TANGIER at Seeadler, U.S.S. WRIGHT at Hollandia, U.S.S. SAN PABLO at Sydney, Australia, U.S.S. HALF MOON, U.S.S. ORCA and U.S.S. HERON all at Hollandia; PATSU's 1-2 at Los Negros, 1-8 at Pityilu, PATSU 1-12 at Seeadler, 17-1, 17-2 and 17-3 aboard the tenders; Naval Air Facilities at Palm Island, Samarai, Lumbrum Point and Woendi; two Landing Craft Tanks and five AVF's.

The Army had overrun Biak and was engaged in mopping up operations on Noemfoor Island, west of Biak. Owi, a small island just off the east coast of Biak was found suitable for a heavy bomber strip, and on the 15th of July, Navy Liberators of Squadron
115 discontinued operating from Wakde, and began flying from Owi. These missions were carried out under Search Plan CHARLIE under the Fifth Air Force.

The move to Owi represented a long step forward. Liberators now skirted the eastern approaches to Halmahera, Morotai and the northeastern tip of the Celebes, patrolling the straits between Halmahera and the Celebes. They also covered Davao Gulf and the eastern approaches to Mindanao in the Philippines.

There was little alteration meantime in the search programs from the Admiralties, Emirau and Green Islands. Squadron 52 moved to Woendi 17 July to fly air-sea rescue for the Fifth Air Force's planes operating from Owi. The Naval Air Facility at Woendi had not been completed then so Squadron 52 based aboard the U.S.S. WRIGHT.

Admiral Wagner effected a new operations plan on the 20th of July, and Captain Jones assumed operational as well as administrative control of all Naval aircraft in the Admiralties, under direction of the 13th Air Force.

The Wing Staff, now grown to nine officers, left Samarai 24 July and went ashore three days later at Lumbrum Point. Headquarters Squadron 17 joined the staff soon after.

Taking advantage of comparative "summer lull" in action during June, July and August, the Wing staff was built up for the more important operations in the not to distant future. By the end of July, the Wing had 16 officers listed on its roster. The chief problem was keeping in the air the old Catalinas which had been paying such amazing dividends.
But when General MacArthur's forces occupied Sansapor, Dutch New Guinea, on the 30th of July, Fleet Air Wing Seventeen was ready for the more important work it might be called upon to perform in the narrowing drive on the Philippines.

The "lull" continued through the first half of August. The two Cat squadrons at Lumbrum Point found the pickings rather slim, and most sectors covered by land-based planes were uniformly negative in keeping with the transfer of the fighting westward. From Biak, however, both land-based aircraft and the Black Cats found some good hunting and helped boost the total of ships sunk during the month to 19, totaling 19,015 tons.

Search Plan EASY became effective 19 August, necessitating a further rearrangement of Naval aircraft. Liberator searches from Los Negros were discontinued, and Squadron 101's Libs moved 750 miles west to Owi to join Squadron 115. Owi searches were increased from five to ten daily.

Black Cats of Squadrons 34 and 11 continued to lead the forward drive, flying night search and attack missions off tenders anchored at Middleburg Island near Sansapor -- the most exposed position in the Southwest Pacific at the time.

Sectors from Green Island were discontinued, but one Ventura search a day was inaugurated to safeguard Hollandia area shipping from submarine attack. Four 500-mile sectors continued to be flown from the Admiralties by Venturas of VPB-146.

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The 10 Liberators searches from Gwi now covered a quadrant from the north coast of the Celebes to the waters east of Palau, including within an 800-mile radius northern Halmahera, Talaud Islands, Davao Gulf and Palau.

The Wing Staff departed the Admiralties for Woendi, taking up quarters at Seaplane Repair Base No. 2, September 7th.

Captain Jones preceded his staff by several days to confer with Admiral Wagner, whose flagship was anchored at Woendi, regarding changes in plans brought about as a result of the scheduled landings on Morotai and the Palau group. These invasions were set for 15 September.

Headquarters Squadron 17 followed the Wing to Woendi at the end of the month.

Woendi was a much more comfortable spot than Lumbrum Point, thanks to a plentitude of shade trees and an obliging breeze from the sea. It rained frequently, but there was no mud. It was uninhabited by natives reportedly because of an ancient burial ground there. On the island were a seaplane base, a PT boat base, a hospital, a Naval Operating Base, three officer's clubs, two movies, tennis courts and baseball diamonds.

The comparative "lull" which had prevailed during June, July and August was over, and the Navy patrol-bomber pilots carved out a record-breaking month for themselves during September. They sank 117 ships totaling 111,040 tons and damaged 55 totaling 56,370 tons.
Dealing out most of the destruction were the Liberator Squadrons 101 and 115 flying from Owi, and the Black Cats of VP-33 operating from tenders off Morotai.

After the Morotai landings, Admiral Wagner sailed his flagship to Morotai to be closer to the scene of operations. Captain Jones, with headquarters at Woendi, assumed operational control of the Liberator squadrons at Owi.

Most of the Japanese shipping destroyed during the banner month of September was blasted out of existence by masthead-level tactics at which the pilots of the big four-engined Liberators and the ponderous Catalinas were becoming so adept.

But some of the pilots were becoming a little too "eager". Lieutenant Merritt, executive officer of Squadron 33, returned from a mission with a section of the mast of a ship he had sunk still imbedded in the Cats wing.

This prompted Captain Jones to pen a jovial warning (see appendix) to the Lieutenant, advising against "ramming of ships by aircraft".

However, this didn't deter the Cats of Squadron 33, and they continued to exact an unbelievable toll of enemy shipping. On 33 consecutive nights, beginning on the 19th of September, they sank 103,500 tons of Nip shipping.

High spot of the period occurred October 3rd when Lieutenant (jg) W. B. Sumpter, ignoring heavy anti-aircraft fire from escorting vessels, dropped his entire bomb load on a K.tori class light cruiser and watched it sink.
As operations moved closer and closer to the Philippines, the seaplane maintenance and repair bases at Palm Island and Samarai were decommissioned, and by September most of the minor overhaul work on the seaplanes was being handled at Woendi. Lumbrum Point took over major overhaul duties.

In October, detachments of PATSU's 1-8 and 1-2 moved into Morotai and began building a camp for the Navy search units which were scheduled to start operating from the Pitoe strip nearing completion.

After the unopposed landing on Morotai, the invading troops fencfed off the south end of the island with a line of bunkers and allotted that space to the 13th Air Force and Navy search planes. The spot given to the Navy was less than 500 yards from the perimeter. Personnel lived in tents, and roads were practically impassable until main bodies of the PATSU units arrived from Owi October 10th and began setting up a more permanent camp.

The invasion of the Philippines was set for 20 October. Captain Jones insisted that the place for a Wing Commander was with the most forward and most important search group. He accordingly departed for Morotai on 12 October to prepare for the arrival of the land based squadrons and to assume direct operational control on commencement of operations.

Search Plan FOX became effective 19 October, calling for the Navy to fly from Morotai nine sectors covering Palawan and the Sulu Sea from the northern tip of Borneo to about 60 miles from Mindoro; one sector east of the Philippines to 15 degrees north, and
a dog-leg sector along the northern coast of the Celebes and south in Makassar Strait as far as Balikapan. Four intervening sectors fell to the Venturas. However, Search Plan FOX was revised immediately upon its commencement. The Owl searches were reduced and the Morotai searches increased to provide two new sectors covering the Philippines to Mindoro Strait and the Sibyan Sea.

On the 21st sections 1, 2 and 3 were extended to 1000 miles and sector 3 was flown by two planes. In spite of these precautions early contacts with the Japanese fleet on its way to the battles of Surigao Strait and Leyte Gulf were missed.

Sector 1 was shot down by fighters on the 22nd in the vicinity of Balbao Straits, the day that the Japanese Fleet sortied from Brunei Bay.

The "San Bernardino Force" transited the areas covered by sectors 2 and 3 during the night and should have been contacted the next morning by sector Xray. Contact was prevented by the Japs combat air patrol over this force which intercepted sector Xray, shot out one engine and drove him to cloud cover.

The doubled up sector 3 contacted the "Surigao Force" (which had transited Balbao Straits in the afternoon of the 22nd and run across the Sulu Sea toward Mindanao Straits during the night) but was unable to get his contact through due to a congested circuit. He accordingly tracked this force until forced to return due to low fuel. Before leaving he had the pleasure of seeing the enemy being attacked by our carrier aircraft. It was later discovered that the contact and amplifying reports sent by sector 3 had been intercepted
by some station and rebroadcast on another circuit. Whether this report resulted in the carrier plane attack is not known. The other plane in sector 3 contacted a force of cruisers and destroyers in the north Sulu Sea. He too was unable to get his contact through. This force was probably a part of the "San Bernardino Force".

Numerous contacts with the remnants of the Japanese fleet were made in the next two days and they were eventually tracked to Brunei Bay where they were abortively attacked by B-24's of the 13th Air Force. It was considered highly probable that the retreating Japanese fleet would stop at Coron Bay in the Calamian Group for refueling. However, day and night observation of Coron Bay failed to reveal more than two destroyers there at any time. The war in the air, like sea and ground fighting, produces weird experiences that usually are hard to believe. An incident of this nature occurred in Wing history on 19 October, the first day of searching from Morotai.

Commander J. A. Miller, USN, Commanding Officer of Squadron 101, failed to return from a patrol over Palawan. The following day, the pilot in Commander Miller's sector couldn't find any trace of the Commander or his crew, but he did shoot down a twin-engined Jap bomber which crashed in flames on the shore of tiny Ramosaney Island. Not until weeks later when Commander Miller and crew had been rescued did the amazing facts come to light.

With characteristic daring, Commander Miller had destroyed shipping and planes in a raid over Puerto Princesa, Palawan, but was shot down by automatic weapon fire.

Three enlisted men lost their lives in the crash. After
several hours in the water, the survivors made their way to the beach on Ramosancy.

Next day they tried vainly to signal to a patrolling Navy Liberator, and watched the Lib shoot down the twin-engine Nip bomber. The Jap bomber crashed near Commander Miller and party on the beach, killing another man and wounding other survivors.

One of the Jap bomber’s motors rolled up the beach and over the leg of Lieutenant Read of Commander Miller’s crew. A lone Nip survivor came out of the bomber wreckage, apparently unhurt. Brandishing a knife in either hand, the Nip started for the helpless crew, all now disabled, but changed his mind when the Lieutenant rose and threatened him with a coconut in each hand. When last seen, the Nip survivor was out at sea clinging to some wreckage.

After more adventures with Palawan guerrillas lending valuable assistance, Commander Miller and crew were rescued and returned to Morotai by submarine shortly before Christmas.

When Captain Jones moved up to Morotai, the only Wing officer to accompany him was Lieutenant B. L. Davis, USNR, whose job it was to act as communication liaison officer with Army Air Forces present, the Army being responsible for Navy communications at Morotai. Transportation difficulties and other commitments prevented moving the Wing communication equipment to Morotai and its absence was sorely felt. Captain Jones sent out the first daily summary of operations from Morotai on 19 October. Except for these daily dispatches the
18 other officers of the Wing at Woendi knew nothing of the constant strain of enemy bombing and night ground attacks.

Back at Woendi, Commander Nichols acted as head of Wing administration until an attack of gall stones forced him to relinquish the command. He was relieved by Commander Allan W. Ams, USNR, a Navy pilot in World War I.

The U.S.S. SAN PABLO left Woendi for Morotai early in October to continue anti-submarine operations. Anti-sub flights also were flown from Woendi under direction of the Wing.

In mid-October, planes of Squadrons 33 and 34 began arriving at Woendi to await the call forward to the Philippines. Night and day P.TSU mechanics worked over the seaplanes on the ramp. Experts briefed pilots on survival in the Philippines, and at dawn 23 October, elements of both squadrons flew to Leyte Gulf where they were transferred to the jurisdiction of Fleet Air Wing Ten.

Two days later, the officers and men of Squadrons 33 and 34 witnessed the Naval engagement in Surigao Strait from a tender anchored almost directly in the line of fire.

Four days later the Battle of Leyte Gulf, four escort aircraft carriers of Rear Admiral Sprague’s original group of six limped into Woendi Lagoon after having stood off the Jap fleet off Leyte Gulf. All beer in Woendi’s three clubs was free to the carrier personnel that night.

From time to time Catalinas flew down to Woendi for repair, or flew from Woendi to replace many Cats destroyed by a typhoon in Leyte Gulf 28 October. A week later, the first Mariners of Patrol
Bombing Squadron 30 stopped at Woendi on their way to Leyte to start flying searches east of Luzon November 5th.

Although their primary mission was to sight and report shipping, the Navy Liberators, operating in new territory, accounted for a fair share of enemy shipping. In the last 12 days of October, they sank 30,400 tons of shipping and damaged 11,900 tons. They also shot down 26 enemy aircraft to boost the Wing’s total for October to 38.

The cost was heavy, however. Three Venturas and six Liberators were lost on patrols, while four other Liberators were destroyed on the Morotai strip by enemy bombing raids.

In these days, the Japs bombed Morotai regularly. Throughout the night alerts sounded, and pilots and ground personnel ducked into fox holes. Wing officers, arriving by two’s and three’s from Woendi, caught the share of these alerts. The Japs were usually expert enough not to miss their target — the bomber strip, a quarter of a mile from the Navy camp. But continued lack of sleep bothered both squadron and wing personnel.

Another source of anxiety and danger was the proximity of Japanese ground forces. Almost continuously bursts of rifle, machine gun and mortar fire could be heard on the perimeter. One night the Japs infiltrated as far as the ammunition dump just west of and adjoining the Navy camp. The Seaman Guard was doubled and jeeps were parked with headlights ready to shine on the jungle’s edge.

Nothing of a serious nature happened. But the danger was ever present. The Japs frequently broke into supply stores and as
late as December it became necessary again to double the guard around the camp. Souvenirs and trophies in the hands of visiting infantrymen indicated not all the firing heard on the perimeter had been designed to frighten off the enemy.

Snakes of the python variety were another unpleasantness. It was too often common practice to dispute ownership of a foxhole with a snake during an air-raid. Falling trees were a constant menace. Many tents were flattened by them and one evening a tall mahogany tree crushed the Wing administration tent, narrowly missing two enlisted men and reducing the home-made office furniture to kindling.

Soon after the Navy had insured control of Leyte Gulf, Search Plan FOX was again revised 5 November. Five sectors now could be covered by Fleet Air Wing Ten's Mariners flying north from Leyte 600 miles to Batan Islands between Luzon and Formosa, thereby allowing our sector covering the Philippines' east coast to be cancelled. Liberator searches from Owi were discontinued. That area could be covered more readily from a new strip at Pelilieu Island, Palau.

Under this plan Fleet Air Wing Seventeen's land-based squadrons at McRatai sank during November 28,800 tons of shipping, damaged 46,350 tons and destroyed 16 Nip aircraft. This was a tremendous let-down from the record-breaking months of September and October, but the occupation of Leyte had constricted enemy shipping to an extent that left the targets fewer and not so fat.
Late in November Squadrons 115 and 146 went home for well-earned rests. Patrol Bombing Squadron 104, relieved Squadron 115, and Squadron 137 relieved Squadron 146.

Patrol Bombing Squadron 71, consisting of 10 PBY-5A’s, arrived on Thanksgiving for Black Cat work. Their missions carried them to well-defended Mindanao, the Sulu Archipelago, Borneo and the Celebes. In addition, two planes and crews were loaned to the Army Second Emergency Rescue Squadron, flying rescue missions, covering strikes over the Philippines, evacuating survivors and reconnoitering parties from the enemy-held coastal area and searching for survivors at sea.

These flights were unique inasmuch as one Army and one Navy pilots were at the controls and the remainder of the crews was equally divided with Army and Navy personnel. The experiment worked with scarcely a hitch.

This was the typical of the close cooperation and harmony the Army and Navy achieved on Morotai.

The Commander of the Fleet Air Wing Seventeen held daily conferences with the Commanding General of the Thirteenth Air Force, and sat in on the daily briefing in order to obtain a complete overall picture of developments and to discuss any possible changes in the next day’s Navy search operations. This information Captain Jones passed on to his division officers at Fleet Air Wing Seventeen’s daily sessions.
Wing headquarters was moved from a tent to a building almost large enough to house the staff. The building seemed always crowded, but the work was done despite the hub-bub of personnel. In one end of the administration building, pilots off duty perused intelligence reports, studied charts and other information posted on the wall. In-flight sighting reports droned into operations continually. The aerology division carried on as best it could on a small table in the corner. In another room some 20 radiomen and six communications officers struggled with the traffic, no longer dependent upon the Army for anything except daily news reports.

All responsibility for operations at Wondi was turned over in November to Headquarters Squadron 17. The principal duty was anti-submarine patrol handled by two planes daily, one flying daylight and the other night patrols.

An air strip at Tacloban, Leyte, was ready to accommodate Liberators at the beginning of December so Search Plan FOX was modified again by the inauguration of six searches fanning out westward into the China Sea and north along western Luzon to Lingayen Gulf and on to 19-00 North. This called for some reduction of Morotai-based searches, but a new and important sector was added: a dog-leg taking in the northwest coast of Borneo to Brunei Bay. To handle the Tacloban searches, Squadron 104 moved up to Leyte. Squadrons 101 and 137 covered the Morotai sectors. At the end of the month, Squadron 130 relieved 137.

The hunt for enemy shipping from Morotai became less rewarding. The Japs were forsaking the old trade routes and staying
closer to the Asiatic coast, moving mostly at night and hiding under camouflage during the day. But the stories of returning pilots were packed with action. So much so that to repeat them all here would become monotonous. A couple picked at random will serve, however, to show the varied experiences and the depth of Navy air penetration into Jap territory in December of 1944.

On December 3rd, Lieutenant Commander Whitney Wright, USN, skipper of Squadron 104, spotted a 400-ton SUGAR CHARLIE just outside the harbor at Balikapan. He zoomed in at less that 50 feet and dropped three 100-pound bombs under the vessel's stern. Then he turned to make a strafing run, but didn't have time. The bombs exploded and the ship sank before he could get another pass at her. A little later he spotted a 1500-ton SUGAR BAKER. Roaring in at masthead-level, Lieutenant Commander Wright scored a straddle with a pair of centuries. On a second run on the vessel he scored a direct hit with a 500-pounder and she exploded, the blast sending flames 1500 feet into the air.

Later on, he encountered an armed Patrol Craft and went in after her at low level. He aimed his last bomb, a 500-pounder at her, but anti-aircraft fire from the Patrol Craft forced Lieutenant Commander Wright to jink and the bomb over-shot the target about 50 feet. Turning quickly, the Liberator made a strafing pass over the enemy vessel and started a fire around the dock house. It was soon extinguished, but some damage was inflicted.

A few days later, Lieutenant (jg) Joseph D. Shea, USNR,
of Squadron 104, bombed and strafed numerous targets around Brunei Bay. He destroyed a steamroller and an airstrip being near Brunei town and also damaged a truck. Circling south, he came upon a motor convoy loaded with troops and gave them a sound strafing. Results were unobserved as the trucks ducked under some trees. Flying over the harbor, he made three bombing and strafing runs on shipping, setting a 1500-ton SUGAR CHARLIE afire and damaging a 300-ton SUGAR DOG and six 50-foot luggers. One lugger and river boat were sunk, and a large warehouse along shore was left burning furiously.

Ack-ack from ships and shore batteries put a lot of holes in the Liberator during these actions, and one burst punctured the gas line from the main wing cell. Dangerous fumes filled the plane and bomb bays were opened to freshen the air. Two crewmen, Otto A. Adams, Aviation Machinist's Mate, third class, and William E. Abbott, Aviation Machinist's Mate, third class, scurried to the bomb bay to check damage.

They found gasoline pouring from a severed hose connection between the No. 2 tank and the No. 2 selector valve. Abbott attempted to transfer gas from the No. 2 to the No. 3 tank by holding the hose together with his hands. A third enlisted man tried to help out but was nearly overcome by fumes. But Abbott and Adams stuck to it, transferring fuel until Abbott was overcome and slipped off the cat walk.

Adams grabbed Abbott's legs and held on for a minute of agony, then slipping into unconsciousness, himself, and Abbott fell through the bomb bay doors to his death. Adams was dragged to safety by a fellow crew member.
It was discovered later that these two men had managed to save 100 gallons of fuel. And when the plane landed at Morotai, it had but 90 gallons of fuel left.

Another occasion demonstrates what tough adversaries the Liberators were becoming for intercepting Jap fighter planes. Lieutenant Henry S. Noon, USNR, also of Squadron 104, spotted three Nip destroyers in Balikpapan harbor and was going in for a look and maybe a raid. Suddenly, however, he found five Jap fighters on his tail and six more dead ahead of him.

Lieutenant Noon whirled his big four-engine bomber around quickly, heading straight for the Nips on his tail. This maneuver bewildered the enemy temporarily and helped the Liberator out of a tight spot. But the battle wasn't over yet. It ensued for 55 more minutes with the Liberator shooting down one enemy plane and probably getting two more. The Nips ran out of gas and had to break off the attack, but not before they'd put holes in all four of the Liberator's propellers, the No. 2 engine, the bombardier's compartment and the tail and after station. Lieutenant Noon brought his ship back safely, though, and only one man was slightly wounded in the affray.

In December, the Wing got a new operations officer, Commander H. M. Drake, USN, relieving Commander Ames, the Wing Executive Officer.

Search Plan GEORGE became effective 23 December, transferring the focal point of searches from Morotai to Leyte. Liberators and Venturas still flew from Morotai, but the Libs covered only two sectors reaching to north Borneo and the Venturas flew three including a dog-leg down Makassar Strait. Liberators under Fleet Air Wing Ten
flow 10 sectors out of Tacloban, covering the South China Sea from the region of Saigon, Indo-China, on the south all the way to Kiirun, northern Formosa's greatest port.

For the first time there were no wholly search-free shipping routes between the Indies and the enemy's homeland.

Fleet Air Wing Seventeen's toll of destroyed shipping fell off during January and February, but this was because the Wing was in a transitory status most of the time, making the moves that sent it from Leyte to Luzon and finally Clark Field where it wound up the war.

Late in December Admiral Wagner ordered Captain Jones to base aboard the U.S.S. TANGIER at Tacloban and to prepare to move his staff there by January 10th.

On January 4th Captain Jones assumed the administrative functions of Admiral Wagner, including the escort carrier pool at Samar Island, to permit the Admiral to take his flagship, the U.S.S. CURRITUCK, in on the Lingayen Gulf invasion.

Commander Ames as Wing Executive Officer turned over to the Commanding Officer of Squadron 101 the Wing's responsibilities for searches out of Morotai. This allowed the Wing time to move to Leyte.

The Wing left behind all but four elements of Squadron 101 and 130 to fly sectors set forth in Search Plan HOW which was effective from 31 December to 31 January 1945.

Fleet Air Wing Ten at Leyte had administrative and operational control of Liberators and Venturas searching from Tacloban.
and administrative control over Mariners operating from Leyte and Mindoro.

Squadron 104, flying out of Tacloban, got its first lessons in patrolling the China coast, Formosa and Nansel Shoto, lessons which stood it in good stead when Clark Field searches were begun three months later.

During its transitory status, Fleet Air Wing Seventeen retained administrative control of two Catalina squadrons and one tender. Squadron 33 continued to fly rescue missions from Green Island, the Admiralties and Woeendi until called forward to Leyte on 15 January. Throughout the rest of the month, the Cats of Squadron 33 flew anti-sub patrols out of Leyte and Mindoro.

Getting ready for another move forward, Captain Jones flew from Leyte to Lingayen Gulf in January and based aboard Admiral Wagner's flagship until the arrival a few days later of the U.S.S. TANGIER carrying Fleet Air Wing Seventeen's staff.

The Captain turned the administrative duties of Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET, back to the Admiral who took his flagship back to Leyte.

The Wing's trip from Leyte to Lingayen had not been uneventful. At dusk off Negros Island, the convoy beat off an enemy air attack, but not before one ship was damaged so badly it had to return to Leyte.

On 31 January Fleet Air Wing Seventeen was charged with control of all aircraft SEVENTH FLEET operations north of 12 degrees latitude, the area to the south going to Fleet Air Wing Ten.
A new Task Group was formed operating from Mindoro and was labeled Fleet Air Wing Seventeen, Group One, Commander H. W. MacDonald, USN, former skipper of VPB-117, was given the command. Making up Group One were Squadron 117, elements of Squadron 111 and Combat Air Service Unit (F) 56, (CASU(F) 56). (This group has submitted a separate history and its detailed operations are not included herein.

Operating under Search Plan HOW and under tactical control of the Fifth Air Force, the Mindoro-based Liberators flew five sectors ranging as far as Indo-China and the northeast coast of Hainan Island.

The Wing moved off the U.S.S. TANGIER and took up quarters at Mangalden strip on 5 February. The enemy still was in this territory and frequent bombings were experienced. Mangalden strip, from which Marine SBD's were flying ground support for General MacArthur’s forces advancing toward Manila, was planned as the temporary base from which to operate a task group of Privatiorrs, Liberators and Venturas during the dry season, and until a new all weather base could be established.

Hence it was decided to transplant the Leyte-based Liberators and a detachment of Venturas to Mangalden as soon as possible.

The field at Mangalden was made by filling in the irrigation ditches and dried-out rice paddies. Weather statistics indicated there would be little rain during February, and for a while the dust which whirled into the Wing quarters confirmed the forecast.
But then it rained —— for two days. As a result, the strip was unserviceable.

Captain Jones immediately informed Admiral Wagner that it was not practicable to operate from Mangalden. It was a difficult report to make, for on the strength of it Search Plan JIG, opening up new hunting grounds, had to be launched from Leyte, and Fleet Air Wing Seventeen faced three more weeks of reduced operational activity.

The Liberators and Venturas at Mindoro and VPB-71 conducting Black Cat operations from the Tangier and Mangalden carried the ball for the Wing during February. Mariners that were tender-based at Mindoro flew four sectors reaching nearly to Hainan Island augmenting Group One's operations from there.

During February, the Wing's search planes began cooperating with submarines in destroying enemy shipping along Indo-China.

These so-called "pro-submarine" operations were highly successful.

During the month Squadron 117 alone destroyed 12 ships aggregating 10,575 tons. It also bagged 11 enemy aircraft. Another 22 vessels totaling 20,025 tons were damaged or probably sunk.

The administrative responsibility of Fleet Air Wing Seventeen was extremely flexible during February. For every time a squadron, tender or service unit crossed the demarcation line of 12 degrees North, it came under the Wing's control.

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To Mangalden came Acorn Thirty Four with Commander H. J. Murray, USNR, commanding; CASU 57; CASU 9.1; Aircraft Emergency Units 1, 2 and 3, which supported the Cat Squadron 71, and Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 606. In Lingayen Gulf were two tenders serving Squadron 17's Mariners for rescue duty for the Fifth Air Force and Squadron 71 engaged in Black Catting since mid-January. Besides the Liberators and CASU 56, at Mindoro was a small tender servicing Mariner Squadron 28 which flew Plan JIG sectors until the Liberators took over.

The Black Cats prowled from Lingayen Gulf to Formosa, the Pescadores and the China coast during February, and Squadron 71 claimed destruction of eight ships totaling 14,740 tons and damage to nine totaling 29,180. These Cats went back to Leyte at the month's end.

With the Mangalden strip unserviceable, it was decided to handle Search Plan JIG commitments from Clark Field. Wing officers had visited the field still under fire, and reported favorably.

The move to Clark Field got underway, and by 25 February, the Wing Staff was situated in its camp area of no trees and ankle-deep dust between the village of Dau and the Army's Fort Stotsenburg. CHMU 606 pitched tents supplied by Acorn 34 while tanks rumbled up the road toward Fort Stotsenburg where just beyond in the Zambales hills the infantry battling could be observed day and night.

Still remembering the Morotai bombings, all hands hastily dug foxholes in the sandy, dusty soil. There were but two air raids.
however, and the rapid American advance soon pushed the enemy more or less out of range.

Some Nips infiltrated at night, but the Navy camp area came through unscathed. Nearby Army outfits suffered, though, and the enemy succeeded in blowing up some transport aircraft parked within a hundred yards of Fleet Air Wing Seventeen's camp.

The Liberator Squadron (104) and a squadron (119) of the Navy's newest four-engine patrol-bombers—the Privateer—moved into Clark Field, 1 March, and the Wing had everything set for immediate operations.

Pilots were briefed that evening by Wing Intelligence Officers. And the next day at dawn, the Liberators and Privatters were off on the long sectors as laid down in Search Plan JIG.

The first day's searches brought bounty. Lieutenant John W. Holt, USN, bagged the day's top prize—a FOX TARE BAKER off northeast Okinawa. Sighting a convoy of three destroyer escorts and three FOX TARE BAKERs, Lieutenant Hold, ignoring the fierce ack-ack from the destroyer escorts, sent his Privateer diving in at masthead-level strafing and bombing as he went. His bombs missed, but his tracers started a fire on the fan-tail of the 5000 to 7000-ton freighter-transport. The blaze set off an explosion which touched off additional blasts that crept along the FOX TARE BAKER's hull until she keeled over on her side and sank.

Not content, Lieutenant Hold trained his guns on one of the destroyer escorts and set it ablaze and started a fire in the superstructure of another FOX TARE BAKER. He had to break off the attack
finally for lack of ammunition. The Privateer came through undamaged, (two months later on May 1st, Lieutenant Hold failed to return from a mission over Hainan, with him on that fateful trip was the Wing's Operations Officer, Commander Drake).

Fleet Air Wing Seventeen's pilots started blasting enemy shipping in a fashion reminiscent of the record months of September and October of 1944, and by the end of the first month of operations from Clark Field, they had sunk 132 ships totaling 90,375 tons and damaged 132 vessels aggregating 101,315.

In an effort to quell this tide, the Nips started sending interceptors out after the Navy patrol-bombers. But this didn’t stop them, and before April 1st Fleet Air Wing Seventeen pilots had marked up a new Wing record of 99 enemy aircraft destroyed—the best month they had in 23 months of fighting.

The Wing reached a high peak of operating efficiency at Clark Field, and close cooperation between Naval Air and the Army's Fifth Air Force was enjoyed.

Intelligence information and photographs were pooled by the two services, and the air strip used by Navy Liberators and Privateers was operated by the Fifth Air Force.

Daily conferences attended by all commanding officers and department heads soon developed into a routine that left little chance for any problem to escape prompt attention. They opened with a summary of the preceding days searches and the Army Air Forces' strikes as well as the intents for the current day. Then followed a roundup report of war developments throughout the world. Maintenance officers reported on fuel supplies and consumption and bombs
and ammunition used and on hand.

Then followed a general discussion in which the Captain ranged from air combat tactics to policing of the camp and even the "sour" notes the base bugler was blowing every now and then. Many difficulties and problems were solved with dispatch in this open forum.

The most pressing problem in these early days at Clark was fuel. At Mangalden arrangements had been made with the Army to allow the Wing to draw gasoline from a pipe line to be laid from Lingayen Gulf to Clark Field.

The pipe line encountered difficulty after difficulty, including sabotage by infiltrating Japanese, and it wasn't ready for use until 1 April. Before that all gasoline was flown from Lingayen Gulf or Subic Bay by the Army Air Force, and the margin of reserve never was sufficient to eliminate that cause of worry.

By early May, CRMU 606 had made a good start toward transferring the Clark Field camp from a tent-city into a community of Quonset huts capable of housing 2500. The camp, carefully planned and neatly laid out, became one of the best in the Pacific war theatre.

It boasted an open air theater, a barber shop, a library, a Ship's Store, a chapel, two galleys for enlisted men and one officer's mess.

Unfortunately, the opening of the officer's club had to be postponed when wind blow over the bamboo palace that was abuilding. The club later held forth in an edifice of Quonset huts.
For recreation there were several baseball diamonds, tennis courts, badminton and table tennis. The Wing had teams representing the officers and enlisted personnel in two softball leagues.

With Fleet Air Wing Ten operating from a new base at Puerto Princessa, Palawan, from which Liberators could range as far as Singapore, Search Plan JTG was revised 4 March. The base at Palawan made superfluous all but one of the Morotai sectors. But there was little alteration in operations from Clark Field, the only change being a slight extension to the north just beyond 30 degrees North latitude.

A detachment of six planes from Ventura Squadron 137 arrived at Clark from Leyte 11 March and the following day took over coverage of the shorter sectors to the China coast. The Venturas had little success in the way of ship sinkings their first two months at Clark Field.

However, a plan was inaugurated that brought the Venturas into their own. On May 10th, four Venturas, armed heavily with rockets and bombs and led by the squadron commander, Lieutenant Commander John A. Porter, USNR, staged the first of a series of special sorties against selected targets. This first strike hit a Butanol Plant at Mato, Formosa. The Venturas scored 23 direct rocket hits on the plant, inflicting serious damage. After that the Venturas left the searching to the four-engined bombers, and finished up their tour of duty by conducting strikes through mid-May. During that time they destroyed eight land targets and inflicted serious damage on seven different Butanol plants on Formosa and 38 other assorted targets. Their most effective loads were rockets and 250 pound paradelpos.
During April, May and June Fleet Air Wing Seventeen's patrol-bombers continued to sink numerous ships, but the big freighters and transports were disappearing from the scene. They sank 101 vessels during April but the total tonnage was estimated at only 56,865; in May they sank 114 and the tonnage dropped to 38,485. It was even worse in June when 110 sunken Nip vessels were assessed at 20,760 tons. In July, they tallied 82 sinkings totaling 11,000 tons, and in August -- in the two weeks before the Japanese surrendered -- they bagged 20 totaling 1,215 tons.

Statistics on tonnage damaged during these months fell far below the tonnage sunk, indicating that the pilots were not letting crippled small craft get away.

During these months, as the searching patrol-bombers were finding similar pickings on the sea, they started looking overland for targets, blasting at blockhouses, warehouses, railroad yards and rolling stock and various military installations along Jap-held China coast and outlying islands of the empire.

The Japs didn't take this licking lying down, however. As Fleet Air Wing Seventeen's planes started ranging overland they found Nip anti-aircraft gunners becoming more accurate, and from time to time the Wing's planes either failed to return or were forced down in places like China, Luichow Peninsula and Hainan Island.

Operation casualties grew especially severe in May. From the 13th to the 19th, inclusive, six four-engine aircraft were lost. One plane vanished without word. Another left scattered wreckage after ditching, indicating it had exploded on hitting the water.
Another ditched off Hangayen after running out of fuel as a result of having a wing tank punctured by ack-ack over Haiphong, China. The pilot and an enlisted man were lost. The remainder of the crew was rescued by a destroyer (U.S.S. Conway) after 19 hours in the water. On the same day and in the same vicinity, another pilot was forced to ditch because his fuel ran out. The ditching was carried out successfully. Another plane had to be surveyed the same day because of an unusual accident. The No. 2 propellor flew off and cartwheeled through the pilot's compartment, breaking the pilot's arm and injuring the co-pilot slightly. A forced landing was made at Mangalden strip, but the plane was too badly damaged to be saved.

The following day another Liberator was shot up by ack-ack from a small Jap freighter and had to make a forced landing at Changting, China. This incident served to emphasize the work of the Wing Intelligence Division in briefing pilots on emergency airfields in China. The Changting strip was reportedly a hazardous one, but the pilot, Lieutenant Ira B. West, USNR, set his plane down safely with one engine gone. The plane was in no condition to take off again, and the crew was flown to Kunming where they were treated royally for a week prior to their return to Clark Field.

Another plane shot down over Luichow Peninsula in June didn't make out so well, however. Lieutenant Frank D. Murphy, USNR, was blinded by small caliber rifle fire while attacking a convoy of five trucks, and his plane crashed. Lieutenant Murphy and four members of his crew survived.

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The following day special search planes located the wreck-
age of his Privateer, and established there were some surviving crew
members. Fleet Air Wing Seventeen, Squadrons 119 and 28, the
Commander U. S. Naval Group China, the Fifth Air Force and AGAS
China pitched into a concentrated rescue effort, and finally managed
to get Lieutenant Murphy and the surviving crew members out alive.
A detailed report of this incident is contained in the appendix.

The dissemination of all types of information to Fleet Air
Wing Seventeen left much to be desired. Charts of the China coast,
for example, were unsatisfactory. A pilot in bad weather was con-
fused when his radar indicated a 20-mile long island which didn't
appear on his chart.

The oversimplified charts of China's coast failed to in-
dicate the many hideouts available for enemy shipping which sailed
by night and hid by day.

Different sets of charts varied so greatly that positions
on latitude and longitude were subject to misunderstanding.

Apart from charts, more than one-half of the intelligence
matter unloaded on the Wing had nothing to do with the Wing's area or
prospective area.

And much information, especially that on escape and sur-
vival procedure, often arrived too late. In this connection, MIS-X
(Army Escape Unit) was contacted suggesting prompter delivery of in-
formation, and conditions improved somewhat. But for a while after-
wards vital information passed through channels of command, from
MIS-X in Manila to SEVENTH FLEET Intelligence Center at Leyte, then
back to Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET, in Manila Bay, and finally to Clark Field. Much information was obtained by our pilots from direct observation and by returning survivors.

The Wing was fortunate, however, in having a submarine officer from the SEVENTH FLEET on temporary duty with the Fifth Air Force at nearby Fort Stotsenberg when it inaugurated in mid-April a pro-submarine program comparable to the one which had worked out so well with Group One at Mindoro.

This officer furnished Fleet Air Wing Seventeen the positions, calls and frequencies to be used the following day by patrolling American submarines and those on "Lifeguard" duty. Pilots, thereafter, began communicating with the subs in hope they might be able to lead them to a fat convoy. But the days of fat convoys were over.

During May, squadrons under the Wing were faced with problems arising from the abandonment of the policy of relieving entire squadrons by complete squadrons, and the substitution of a crew-by-crew relief program. This was found to lower squadron esprit de corps and to foster less efficient operation. In this connection the Wing Commander conferred with the Commander Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET, who dispatched a letter to COMINCH and CNO suggesting a review of the practice. (See appendix).

To single out every pilot and every department which cooperated to give Fleet Air Wing Seventeen such a proud record of its 23 months of combat would make a treatise of this sort much too bulky.

It should be noted, however, that the Wing's aerologists,
whose weather predictions and advice on storm evasion saved countless lives and kept the planes in the air without interruption, wrote a great and contributing chapter in the Wing’s history.

The war’s end didn’t mean termination of the Wing’s services. It continued operating after V-J Day under Search Plan LOVE, which had become effective 12 August, and MIKE, effective 21 September.

These post-war missions were concerned chiefly with reporting movements of shipping, dropping medical and food supplies to prisoner of war camp survivors, and flying weather recco to assist in the occupation of Japan.
It is believed appropriate in connection with the Wing History to comment briefly on various phases of and conditions pertinent to the operations conducted by units attached to the Wing. The opinion and conclusions are those of an individual but affected by those of others concerned.

General

The Wing, like many other good things in this world, was born of necessity. When the war, centered in the Solomons, began to creep westward, advance information on enemy forces and supply convoys moving toward enemy bases was vital.

The few squadrons available in the Southwest Pacific area were concentrated in Western Australia. Australia itself was too far removed from the enemy supply lines to provide a suitable base for searches in the Bismarck Sea area, that area being the most desirable as it was the route of the main enemy supply line.

Accordingly advance bases within enemy range were established, Fleet Air Wing Seventeen was formed, and operations commenced with such forces as could be spared from Western Australia.

The decision to make these searches at night was based on the fact that the obsolete Catalinas (the only planes available) could not penetrate the then strongly defended area without extremely heavy losses. The decision to make the searches offensive was based on the fact that most of the enemy movement took place at night and could not be attacked by the Army Air Forces who were unprepared for night anti-shipping strikes. The day shipping almost ceased to

-55-
exist after the Battle of the Bismarck Sea and interruption to the enemy supply was vital. The great success achieved by the "Black Cats" made it profitable to continue night offensive missions for the remainder of the war.

When the Southwest Pacific area became more important and more aircraft were available, Liberators and later Privateers were introduced for day searches.

The low level bombing tactics used so successfully by the Black Cats were also employed by the heavily armed and well protected PB4Y's when the tactical situation permitted. The primary mission of the day searches was, of course, enemy intelligence. When the necessity for gaining that intelligence was paramount the searchers were prohibited from engaging in any offensive missions.

Effect of Operations

The effect of the operations conducted by the planes of the Wing on the enemy must be obvious when one looks at the figures of shipping sunk, and damaged. An idea of its effectiveness can be gained by imagining ourselves attempting to conduct offensive operations on a large scale at great distances and suffering proportionate losses. Further attempt to visualize being harried day and night in waters supposedly so far removed from enemy bases that they should normally be considered safe. The effectiveness of the Black Cat searches was clearly demonstrated by the enemy's use of their shipping in Western New Guinea and the Dutch East Indies before the long range day searches were initiated in force. The enemy actually chose
to move in the daytime and to hide in harbors or anchor close to shorelines at night to escape detection and damage. This was proved by the observations of the Black Cats themselves who after finding the sea lanes vacant at night were forced to find and destroy their shipping targets in protected anchorages. When the day searches came into the picture the Nips shifted their shipping routes further away and discontinued any attempt to supply their beleagured garrisons.

Credit for the havoc wrought to enemy shipping must, of course, be shared with the Army Air Forces, who conducted shipping strikes when the targets were numerous and planes could be diverted from their other missions. But nevertheless the main burden of disrupting enemy supply lines by sea fell upon the Navy Patrol Bomber.

Organization

The general organization in the Southwest Pacific area was complex and at times confusing. The Wing for instance being affected directly or indirectly by orders from the Supreme Commander, Commander Far Eastern Air Forces; Commander Allied Air Forces; Commander Seventh Fleet; Commander Aircraft, Seventh Fleet and the Commanding Generals of the Fifth and Thirteenth Air Forces. The chains of command where the Army was concerned were nebulous, but when direct control was attempted confusion usually resulted.

That the organization worked is a tribute to the diplomacy and patience of the various commanders; the trust and latitude-of-action given subordinates; and, the fact that no one forgot for a moment that all hands were engaged in the same mission; that of seeking out and destroying the enemy wherever he might be. The organi-
zation of Aircraft SEVENTH FLEET was flexible and sound. The units of the Wing changed rapidly as they were shifted from Wing to Wing as necessary to meet the ever changing situation. Wing Commanders were Task Group Commanders and exercised operational control over the task units under them, but mainly those in the immediate vicinity. Emphasis was placed on "the man on the spot" and only supervisory control of outlying task units was usually necessary.

The Wing organization was normal and it became the sound practice of land-based the Wing headquarters in the most forward area with direct control of the most important operations.

Navy organization in the area was entirely satisfactory. The only criticism considered appropriate is the occasional failure of the Service Force to realize its responsibilities for the land-based Naval air organizations.

With the complex Army organization, however, constant personal contact was necessary to keep the operations running smoothly. Misunderstandings often resulted when separated from a close liaison with the Army Air Forces, but everything was remarkably smooth when in direct contact with them.

Tactics

The tactics employed in attacking shipping:

Attacks were made at the lowest possible altitude and maximum speed.

Surprise was attempted whenever possible.

Bombs were dropped in a string with a maximum of forty feet spacing.
To obtain the maximum number of hits a run from bow to quarter or quarter to bow was attempted.

Strafing with all guns that could be brought to bear was the rule for day attacks. At night strafing was resorted to only when detected or the targets were lightly defended.

Generally, it was inadvisable to make more than one attack on an armed target. It became generally known among the pilots that "You may get one free pass". After that anything could be expected but usually the worst.

Heavily defended convoys in daytime were usually not attacked unless the escorts could be maneuvered out of position. Escorts were, as a rule, avoided and few successful attacks on them in daylight were experienced.

Teamwork was resorted to whenever possible to divide fire of defended or armed ships.

Cooperation with submarines was introduced by Group One of this Wing operating from Mindoro. It was worked out and began operating successfully just in time for the last big convoys.

Search planes were given daily positions of our submarines and both submarines and planes were briefed on methods, times and ability to communicate on both CW and VHF. When a worthwhile target was sighted by our planes it was immediately transmitted on the submarine frequency or by VHF to the nearest submarine. He in turn would pass the word on and if in favorable position would close in to attack after being coached on by a plane. The cooperation resulted in the sinking of much shipping that otherwise would have escaped.

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On one occasion by coordination between the search planes, submarines and Army aircraft, an entire large convoy and its escorts was totally destroyed.

Weapons and Armament

The armament and weapons of the Black Cats has been discussed elsewhere in the history. No mention was made of torpedoes which were used with no success on one occasion against a convoy in the Bismarck Sea. The torpedo was rejected as a weapon for Black Cats because of its weight and "one shot" feature combined with the difficulty of making a good approach run on a target. The targets would outmaneuver the Cats on an approach with a torpedo. Also, of necessity, the first part of an approach to the target was made on radar, then alterations in course effected when the target was picked up visually. The radar was not directionally accurate enough to ensure a proper position for dropping when visual contact was made.

The great fire power of the PB4Y's was the major factor in the success of that type. It was possible with well directed fire to smother enemy gun positions on ships. The great volume of fire that the Liberators and Privateers could pour out gave the crews confidence that enabled them to attack and destroy.

The substitution of the APS radar in place of the belly turret on the PB4Y-1 was not popular with the pilots at first but they became reconciled to it after experiencing the great advantage of this type radar. The advent of the Privateer left nothing to be desired in the way of fire power.

The fire power on the PBM was good and its bomb-carrying
capacity adequate. Two PBM's on a daylight search could be expected to take care of themselves very well.

The selection of bombs depended upon the size of the targets to be encountered. Four to five second delay fuses were used in all cases. Against large shipping the 500 lb. bomb was preferred due to its greater penetrating and destructive powers. However, a compromise was generally accepted by the PB4Y's by using 250 lb. bombs since a greater number of these could be carried. When the big shipping could no longer be found 100 lb. bombs exclusively or a mixture with 250 lb. and 100 lb. was preferred. Considerable success was achieved against small wooden ships with incendiary clusters.

Napalm was a disappointment against shipping targets. The Venturas used it to very good effect against land targets and were quite enthusiastic about it.

Rockets were not used extensively against shipping because of the limited range of the Ventura (the only plane equipped for use of rockets). The extra drag of the rockets cut down the range of the Ventura just enough to keep them out of the fruitful shipping lanes. It was disappointing that whenever good targets appeared that could have been handled by the rocket carrying Venturas, the Venturas were not immediately available. The few occasions in which rockets were used against shipping were disappointing. Accuracy was not good and the destructive capacity of the 5" rocket was far less than bombs.

When the Venturas were sent against land targets within their range they were devastating. They used a combination of strafing, rockets, napalm and 250 lb. paradesmos. The latter became their
favorite weapon. The strafing accuracy of the fixed guns and their volume of fire was excellent on the Venturas. Remarkable success was achieved against small shipping by strafing alone.

SWOD was never available to this Wing, and was only available for a short time in the Southwest Pacific area. The potentialities of this weapon appear to be enormous. It is considered that SWOD is the ideal weapon for long range search planes and it is extremely regrettable that it was not available in March and early April of 1945, when heavily defended convoys were making their last runs from the south to the Empire.

Communications

As long as the Wing had its own communication personnel and equipment communications were entirely satisfactory. Difficulties arose when the Wing communication department was not able to come forward with the Wing and communications were dependent on the Army.

Particularly bad was the situation wherein the Army controlled the frequencies assigned to the search planes and did not allow transmission to those planes except by their organization. The circuits assigned lacked any semblance of circuit discipline and powerful land stations, in violation of the Army's own instructions, used the circuits to clear any kind of traffic. All transient aircraft were also assigned to the search frequencies.

Numerous letter and verbal protests against this situation were submitted and finally got results. The Navy was allowed two way communication on the alternate search frequency. Except for units such as tenders and bases not in direct landline communication with
the Army, two way communication on the primary frequency was not allowed. The circuits were cleared up and properly monitored also, but all this took place quite late and after the urgency for a clear circuit was at its lowest.

In depending upon the Army communications for other traffic the results were also disappointing. Practically all Army traffic was "Urgent". The lowest priority on the Army circuits was "OP". The Army further complicated things by assigning a new precedence to despatches originated by the various commanding generals. This precedence was higher than "Urgent" and was called "Arrow" with the generals name attached. Assigning a "P" precedence or lower to any despatch filed with the Army was tantamount to sending the message by carabou cart. The same situation of assigning too high a precedence to Navy communications existed, but to a lesser degree and could be kept within the bounds of reason.

Enemy jamming and attempted deception on the primary search frequency was common, but not very effective. The alternate frequency was resorted to when jamming occurred. The Nips never seemed to realize that we could use an alternate frequency. Deception consisted of sending out messages using the call of one of our search planes, usually in plain language or with commonly used code groups from the current issue of CSP 1270. Use of authenticators prevented this method from being effective. On one occasion a Jap station in Mindanao had obtained a CSP 1270 in current use, and sent messages using it until it was superseded. Although the Jap operator used the authenticator table he seemed unable to get the hang of it as he never used it correctly.
Another method of detecting "phony" messages was by comparing the position of a false contact report with the probable position of the plane purported to have originated it. In every case the position of the contact was hundreds of miles from the position of the plane.

It stands as a tribute to the operators that not once were they deceived.

**Training**

At the beginning of operations from Clark Field it was found that the newly arrived squadron and subsequent replacement and relief crews were deficient in the following phases of training:

(a) Cruise control,
(b) Engine operation,
(c) Radar navigation,
(d) Strafing,
(e) Masthead bombing,
(f) Recognition,
(g) Photography,
(h) Contact and amplifying reports.

The above deficiencies were surprising since squadrons and crews arriving prior to February 1945 had been very well trained.

The difficulties encountered and remedial measures will be discussed briefly:

(a) On the first day of operation the new planes (Privateers) returned from patrols extremely short of fuel although they took off with 300 gallons more fuel than the Liberators covering equal dist-
ance. One plane ran out of fuel on final approach (at night) and barely made the strip. Two others had their engines cutting out on final approach and ran their tanks dry while taxiing to the parking area. Other planes of the same squadron were generally dangerously low on fuel. A discussion with the squadron commander and pilots revealed that the majority of pilots had little or no knowledge of the principle of cruise control. They excused their use of high speed on patrol by claiming that the Privateer cruised over 20 knots faster than the Liberator and that the higher weight of the Privateer made it necessary to use exceedingly higher speeds. Both the above contentions were later proved to be mainly false. Examination of the settings used of manifold pressure and revolutions revealed that both were too high for economical cruising and that instead of using progressively lower revolutions with an almost constant manifold pressure the pilots were progressively lowering their manifold pressures and maintaining almost constant high revolutions. Lectures were started immediately, covering the rudimentary principles of cruise control and a rough cruise control chart was drafted and mimeographed for the use of all pilots. This project was handicapped by the lack of accurate cruise control data on the Privateer. Consolidated figures were found but did not help much because the data was obviously collected from tests on a new airplane cleaned up and stripped for the occasion. Furthermore, the highest weight used in the tables was 66,000 pounds which is designated as the maximum gross overload for the airplane. The normal weight for the Privateer necessary to accomplish its mission, was in the neighborhood of 70,000 pounds. (The Bureau of
Aeronautics to this date still refuses to accept any figure above 66,000 pounds although Commander Air Force Pacific Fleet readily admitted that higher weights must be used and issued valuable information in the premises. It was understood that accurate information on performance of the Privateer was gained by flight tests conducted at Patuxent but these figures were not available. Eventually it was found that the Privateer could be cruised as economically as the Liberator.

(B) Numerous engine failures caused by burnt pistons and valves, and valves with stretched necks were experienced at the beginning of the operations with the Privateers. These failures were found to be caused entirely by lack of knowledge on the part of the pilots of engine operation. Excessive power was being drawn from the engine in automatic lean and maximum allowable EMEP was often exceeded. Education of the pilots eliminated these failures entirely. Many cases of broken connecting rods were also encountered. These were found to be caused by the practice of failing to leave the mixture control in idle cut-off after stopping the engines. Subsequent operation of the fuel booster pumps would cause raw fuel to be drawn into the cylinders and hydraulically would result in the broken rods. Education also eliminated this fault. It was further found that none of the pilots ever exercised the engines in high blower. Consequently all the blower motors became inoperative from sludging and were so far gone that they could not be de-sludged. The condition of the blower motor was discovered through attempts to intercept and shoot down enemy aircraft making overnight runs between Shanghai and north-
ern Formosa. Planes were placed on station north of Formosa at
dawn and evening twilight. The Liberators obtained notable success,
shooting down three enemy aircraft within about four days. But the
Privateers failed to catch any plane at 10,000 or over feet even when
they had slight altitude advantage. Needless to say this impressed
the pilots with the necessity to keep their high blower operative and
after routine engine changes little trouble was experienced in that
line thereafter.

(C) Two planes were ditched at night because of failure to
use the radio navigational aids available or refusal to believe the
information obtained. Training in this phase was necessary.

(D) Photographs of strafing enemy ships or targets gave
conclusive proof that the safest place for the enemy was on the tar-
get. This was due to lack of knowledge of the gunners in droop and
trail. They almost consistently aimed directly at or even led sta-
 tionary targets instead of selecting a point of aim behind the target.
Instruction resulted in immediate improvement.

(E) In spite of previous training received in anti-sub-
marine bombing the bombing of enemy shipping targets from masthead
height or higher was not good. Beside the inaccuracy, beam instead
of quartering runs were attempted, attempts were made to hit by
dropping single bombs, and when bombs were dropped in train, the
spacing was too great.

(F) Apparently too much emphasis was placed on recognition
of ships like the HARUNA, ATAGO, SKOKAKU, etc., at the expense of
the JMST system, because the new pilots were very inaccurate in their
recognition of merchant types and small escorts, which, with rare exceptions were all they encountered. It was usually necessary to scale down the sightings one or two sizes when photos were not taken.

(G) No doctrine existed in the new crews regarding photographs. It seemed that the K-20 would be used by someone who happened to think of it at the time, if it happened to be at hand. Many valuable action photos were missed before this situation was rectified. The Privateer pilots complained that it was extremely difficult to take good pictures from the Privateer with the K-20, which was true. But when asked about the K-25 the astounding information was forthcoming that the K-25’s were on hand but not installed. The above situation was rectified.

(H) The new squadrons and crews were woefully lacking in instruction on the elements of a contact report. Inaccurate and incomplete reports were numerous. The pilots felt no responsibility for checking the reports for accuracy, and no system of decoding the encoded report for accuracy existed. A form was made similar to that of the old contact pad where the complete report was constructed by filling in labeled items in windows of a cardboard cover. This remedial measure helped, but the complete solution depended upon indoctrination and instruction.

To improve all the foregoing, courses of instruction and checks were instituted and new crews were not released for patrol until checks in all phases had been passed.

One good quality that all crews seemed to have was their ability and confidence in flying on instruments.
The foregoing criticisms are not intended to detract from the bravery and aggressiveness of the new crews. Those qualities existed in all and good results were eventually attained. Some crews arrived with experience gained on previous tours and left nothing to be desired. Rather it is a criticism of the training they received before arriving in the combat areas. There is no doubt that the training activities had good intentions and an inclusive curriculum; but in the cases of the relief and replacement crews the system is believed to be mainly at fault. (See Commander Aircraft SEVENTH FLEET letter on this subject in the appendix).
FLEET AIR WING SEVENTEEN - COMBAT RECORD
(As Compiled by Intelligence Section of
Commander Aircraft, Seventh Fleet)

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<th>Month</th>
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Fleet Air Wing Seventeen - Combat Record - Continued.

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Totals: 966 -717,025 948 - 451,140 173

* In the months September 1943 through March 1944, 151 barges were also destroyed.
ANNEX B
SQUADRON COMMANDERS

CATALINAS

VPB-11 Lieutenant Commander C. W. CAMPERWALL, U. S. N.
VPB-29 Lieutenant Commander Lauren E. JOHNSON, U. S. N.
VPB-33 Lieutenant Commander Fernald F. ANDERSON, U. S. N.
VPB-34 Lieutenant Commander T. A. CHRISTOPHER, U. S. N.
VPB-44 Lieutenant Commander G. S. BOURG, U. S. N.
VPB-52 Lieutenant Commander H. A. SCHOLL, U. S. N. (relieved September 1944)

Lieutenant Commander Rannx JONES, Jr., U. S. N.

VPB-54 Commander K. J. SANGER, U. S. N.
VPB-71 Commander Norman C. GILLETTE, Jr., U. S. N.

MARTINETS

VPB-17 Lieutenant Commander Kenneth A. KUEHNER, USNR
(relieved June 1945)

Lieutenant Commander Leeds C. CUTLER, USNR.

VPB-20 Lieutenant Commander Robert M. HARPER, USNR
(relieved June 1945)

Lieutenant Commander James M. BRANDT, USNR.

VPB-25 Lieutenant Commander J. C. SCOREZ, USNR.

VPB-28 Lieutenant Commander John L. ELWELL, U. S. N.

VENTURAS

VPB-128 Lieutenant Commander Jay B. YAKALLY, Jr., USNR.

VPB-130 Lieutenant Commander Charles R. DODDS, USNR
(relieved May 1945)

Lieutenant Commander Donald G. WHITE, U. S. N.

VPB-137 Lieutenant Commander John A. PORTER, USNR.

VPB-146 Commander J. P. ROBINSON, USN.

LIBERATORS

VPB-101 Commander Justin A. MILLER, U. S. N.

Lieutenant Commander Marvin T. SMITH, USN
(Latter was acting CO during November, December 1944 when MILLER in MTA status - himself lost January 1945)

VPB-104 Lieutenant Commander Whitney WRIGHT, U. S. N. (relieved July 1945)

Lieutenant Commander William COLE, U. S. N.

VPB-106 Commander John T. Hayward, U. S. N. (squadron released June 1944)
Squadrons Commanders (Continued)

VPB-111 Lieutenant Commander James V. BARRY, U.S.N. (relieved May 1945)
Lieutenant Commander Gordon R. EGBERT, U.S.N.

VPB-115 Commander James R. COMPTON, U.S.N.

VPB-117 Commander E. O. RIGSBEE, U.S.N. (relieved Dec 1944)
Commander H. W. McDOWALD, U.S.N. (relieved Jan 1945)
Lieutenant Commander T. P. LULVHILL, USNR (relieved April 1945)
Lieutenant Commander R. J. CROWLEY, USNR.

PRIVATEERS

VPB-119 Lieutenant Commander R. C. BALES, U.S.N. (MIA April 1945)
Lieutenant Commander Malcolm S. RAGAN, USNR.
From: The Commander Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET.
To: The Commander in Chief United States Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations.
Via: (1). The Commander, SEVENTH FLEET.
(2) The Commander Air Force, United States PACIFIC FLEET.

Subject: Rotation of VPB Squadrons.

1. Until 31 July 1944 VPB Squadrons in the forward areas were relieved as squadrons. On that date relief of squadrons by new squadrons terminated and subsequently the crews of squadrons have been relieved by fresh crews according to a rotation program.

2. Initially an unexpected advantage accrued from the relieving crews, for the reason that within the squadrons there were set up factors and scores to determine which crews should go home first. The resultant intra-squadron competition had a healthy effect. That advantage now has disappeared because the old crews who had been in the combat area the same automatically dictates that the crew on station longest is the first to go home.

3. The plan to relieve individual crews rather than squadrons has been in effect long enough to warrant comment and specific recommendation. It has become very apparent that for a squadron operating in a forward area the disadvantages of the crew relief system far outweigh its advantages.

The disadvantages are:

(a) The squadron never is entirely fresh.

(b) The squadron is in a constant state of flux. The crews do not know each other and squadron spirit largely disappears.
Subject: Rotation of VPB Squadrons.

(c) The squadron commander learns the capabilities of his squadron only from the reports of the actions of the individual crews. He receives the incoming crews in the war zone and is required to send them on war time missions without sufficient opportunity to judge their capabilities.

(d) The squadron commander never becomes the veteran of the squadron until he and his crew are about to leave for home. Actually he commands each crew for an average of three (3) months.

(e) The steady induction of new crews requires that constant effort be placed on instruction in fundamentals. This is undesirable for a squadron in combat areas where the instruction efforts of experienced personnel should be devoted to improving combat techniques or tactics to meet changing conditions or new enemy tactics.

The doubtful advantages of the new system are:

(a) A part of the squadron always is fresh.

(b) A part of the squadron is familiar with the area of operations.

4. Under the old system of relieving the VPB Squadrons with other squadrons, the squadron was formed in the United States. The squadron commander organized his squadron, trained it and brought it into the war zone at the culmination of his training and with intimate knowledge of its strength and weakness. The squadron fought with high morale, with a unified spirit arising from close association, and with high efficiency.
Subject: Rotation of VPB Squadrons.

The squadron then left as a group for home.

5. This entire command has watched the working of the new system and having had complete experience with the old system is unanimous in recommending a return to relief by squadrons at the earliest possible moment. This unanimity of opinion is expressed by Commander Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET, Commander Fleet Air Wing SEVENTEEN, Commander Fleet Air Wing TEN and each squadron commander in the area.

/s/ F. D. WAGNER.
25 July 1945

2nd Endorsement to
ComAir7thFlt secret ser.
00137 dated 25 June 1945.

From: ComAirPac.
To: CominCh and CNO.

Subject: Rotation of VP3 Squadrons.

1. Rehabilitation of multi-engine squadrons by a system of combat aircrew replacement in lieu of returning full squadrons to the continental U.S. for reforming was instituted only after careful deliberation of all the factors involved and with full cognizance and appreciation of advantages and disadvantages of each system.

2. To support the present multi-engine squadron flight crew replacement system, a very extensive training organization was established.

3. The disadvantages of the present system enumerated in the basic correspondence as (b), (c) and (d) are counterbalanced to an extent by the fact that operations of multi-engine squadrons are, in the main, sorties of single aircraft. Squadron tactics are not involved to the same extent as that required for single-engine squadrons.

4. The question of squadron "morale" and "spirit" is irrevocably bound to leadership and loyalty. A resolute leader is irrevocably bound to leadership and loyalty. A resolute leader or combination of leaders will instill "morale" and "squadron spirit" under any system, while the opposite may prevail when leadership is weak.

5. The statement that replacement crews require "instruction in fundamentals" cannot be literally accepted. The initial crew training given by the continental training command plus the specialized training given by fleet commands are geared to produce combat ready flight crews. It is felt that these agencies are doing creditable work. There is no way for these agencies to teach experience, which can only be gained in contact with the enemy.

6. It may be pointed out that the following advantages, in addition to those listed in the basic correspondence, must be considered:

   (a) Combat experienced personnel are returned to the forward area, in-flight crews, in approximately 5 months. The former reforming interval for squadrons totalled 7-8 months.
UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AIR FORCE PACIFIC FLEET

FFL2-5 (M-1(1)
Serial: 001778 25 July 1945

Subject: Rotation of VPB-Squadrons.

(b) Individual combat crews are trained by a single agency to bring them to a uniform level of combat proficiency.

(c) Variations inherent in a system whereby the proficiency of a squadron is a measure of the experience and ability of an individual squadron commander as a training officer are thereby eliminated.

7. A system of rotation by full squadrons requires that there by in commission at all times more squadrons than the number actually deployed for combat operations, the exact number being dependent upon the established rotational policy. Previously, this requirement had been one squadron rehabilitating and reforming for every squadron deployed for combat. Approximately half of the authorized combatant units are consequently deployed in rear rehabilitation and reforming areas. The overhead in aviation billets required for squadrons rotation exceeds by far that necessary to support rotation by combat aircrews. It would be most difficult at this time to revert to a system of rotation by squadrons.

8. ComAirPac recommends against changing the present combat aircrew replacement program for multi-engine squadrons.

Copy to:
ComAir7thFlt
Com7thFlt.

/s/ A. E. MONTGOMERY.
From: The Commander Fleet Air Wing SEVENTEEN.
To: Lieutenant James F. MERRITT, A-VS(1). USNR.
Via: The Commanding Officer, Patrol Bombing Squadron THIRTY THREE.

Subject: Ramming Tactics, Plane versus Surface Ship – Disapproval of.

1. The history of naval warfare is replete with incidents of ramming as an effective method of destroying opposing ships. Students of history will recall such battles as Salamis, Actium, Lepanto and Lissa wherein ramming was the primary method of sinking. Permeable pointed rams were provided by the naval constructors of those days on the underwater part of the bow. Even in modern times, underwater rams were built into the bows of battleships with the expectancy that ramming tactics might be employed. However, except for anti-submarine tactics, ramming has not been effectively employed since the days of our own Civil War. Even in the times of Nelson and J. F. Jones ramming tactics assumed a secondary role in ship to ship contact. The placing of a ship alongside an enemy for the purpose of boarding being preferred.

2. Except for isolated instances by the Japanese, the ramming of ships by aircraft is without precedent. A cursory comparison of the construction of aircraft and surface ships will readily reveal that in a case of contact between the two the plane will come out second best because of its lighter construction. Furthermore, a careful inspection will reveal the complete absence of a ram device on aircraft.

3. In consideration of the foregoing, that part of your action on the night of 16-17 September 1944, wherein you deliberately rammed the ship you were attacking, is disapproved. It is considered that factors contributing to the destruction of the ship can be assessed as follows: bombs, 98%, machine gun fire, 2%, and ramming 0%.

4. The official report covering your action has not yet been received but it is assumed that being so imbued with naval tradition you issued the proper commands to your gallant crew when the decision to ram was made and that your boarding party was properly equipped and indoctrinated.
Subject: Ramming Tactics, Plane Versus Surface Ship - Disapproval of.

5. It is entirely possible, due to shortage of critical materials in the Japanese Empire, that Japanese surface ships may eventually be lightly enough constructed to make ramming tactics by aircraft profitable. At such time your experience may prove invaluable in the indoctrination and training of crews in these revolutionary tactics.

Copy to:
ComAir7thFlt
CPAW-10

C. B. JONES
ANNEX F
Detailed report on rescue of Lieutenant Frank D. MURPHY and other survivors from Luichow Peninsula crash:

On 17 June 1945 Lieutenant F. D. Murphy (157527), USNR, VFB-119, flying Navy Privateer Bu. No. 59427 failed to return from search patrol of sector 16, Search Plan KING. He reported that Fort Bayard was empty at 1055 I.tm, but no further communication was received. At 1700 I.tm ComPAirWing 17 made numerous attempts to contact Lieutenant Murphy without success. At the request of ComPAirWing 17, the 5th Bomber Command joined in the attempt using the facilities of 309 Bomb Wing and 310 Bomb Wing as well as their own. The radio logs of search planes in other sectors were checked to see if any of such planes had been in contact with sector 16 after 1055 I.tm but no contact had been made. ComPAirWing 17 notified ComNavGroup China by urgent secret dispatch at 1912 I.tm that sector 16 had failed to return from Patrol, gave the last message received from him, and asked for all possible assistance. Less than an hour lat or complete information was sent by urgent dispatch to ComAF 5 Air Sea Rescue.

Following is a day by day account of the action taken by ComPAirWing 17 and Commanding Officer, VFB-119 to effectuate the rescue of the five (5) survivors of the crash.

18 June 1945 - Two (2) search planes were assigned to cover sector 16, flown by Lieutenant W. P. Comstock, USNR, and Lieutenant T.R. Alkire, USNR, both of VFB-119. The sector was divided between the two pilots in order to insure complete coverage of the area in which Lieutenant Murphy might have gone down. The two adjoining sectors, Lieutenant(jg) J.H. Wolf in sector 15 and Lieutenant(jg) A.L. Lindsell sector 17, both of VFB-119, were to make thorough searches in their respective sectors and then use any fuel remaining to search in sector 16. All pilots were thoroughly briefed on their missions.

Lieutenant(jg) Wolf was successful in locating the wreckage of a plane on Luichow Peninsula and positively identified it as a Privateer. This identification was later confirmed by photographs taken by Lieutenant Alkire. Lieutenant(jg) Wolfe contacted Lieutenant Alkire and called him over to the scene of the wreckage. They both made several runs over the wreckage at low altitude but found no sign of life. The wreckage appeared to be old and it was thought it might be the wreckage of one of two planes previously lost in the area. Lieutenant(jg) Wolfe proceeded on his search. Shortly thereafter Lieutenant Alkire caught the flash of a signal mirror from a position about one mile east of the wreckage, an examination of the position disclosed at least one survivor. Lieutenant Alkire immediately notified
base radio and gave the position of the wreckage as 20-29N, 110-50E. This position was later revised to 20-26N, 110-50E. ComFairWing 17 advised Lieuten-
ent Alkire to remain in the area as long as possible. He did so until relieved by Lieutenant (jg) Wolfe. Lieutenant (jg) Wolfe dropped emergency rations and medical supplies, then being of the opinion that his presence might attract the enemy, returned to base. The information sent by Lieutenant Alkire was passed to ComAF 5 Air Sea Rescue, ComNavGroup, China, and ComAF 14 for action and to other interested commands for information.

19 June 1945 - After thorough discussion of the information at hand, ComFairWing 17 and Commanding Officer VPB-119 de-
termined that no attempts at rescue should be made until advice had been received from ComNavGroup China, and because of the possibility of attracting enemy attention to the position of the survivors, all search planes were briefed to stay clear of the immediate area and to hunt elsewhere for Lieutenant Murphy as the wreckage might not be his. The same day ComFairWing 17 was advised by ComNavU 14 that a parachute jump was planned to escort Lieutenant Murphy from the area.

20 June 1945 - ComNavGroup China advised ComFairWing 17 that they had contacted Lieutenant Murphy, that all twelve members of the crew were in safe hands, and that four of these were injured. The information as to the number of survivors later proved to be inaccurate as five were eventually rescued. This information was passed to ComAir7thFlt and ComAF 5 Air Sea Rescue.

21 June 1945 - ComFairWing 17 received a dispatch from ComNavGroup China advising that Lieutenant R. C. Scott and an unidentified army officer (2nd Lieutenant Naylor-Foots) had parachuted at 20-50N, 109-50E to assist Lieut-
enant Murphy and would move toward the survivors. The dispatch requested that a patrol plane contact Lieutenant Scott the following day and also arranged for a system of parachute signals.

22 June 1945 - Lieutenant T. R. Alkire was assigned to special search and briefed to contact Lieutenant Scott, while Lieu-
tenant Commander L. S. Ragan was to search sector 16. Lieutenant Alkire had little difficulty in finding the parachute signals. Lieutenant Scott wrote out a message on the ground, using a parachute, request-
ing that a radio be dropped to him the following day. Lieutenant Alkire dropped emergency medical supplies and continued his sector search, advising base radio of the information received.
Lieutenant (jg) Wolfe flew sector 16 this day. The pilots who were most familiar with the area were assigned to this sector daily in order to minimize the possibility of missing contact. Lieutenant (jg) Wolfe dropped a Handy-Talkie radio and within a few minutes was in voice communication with Lieutenant Scott at 20-12N, 109-55E. Lieutenant Scott advised that he had broken his ankle on parachuting in and would be unable to move for a time. He requested various medical supplies, arms and ammunition. At 1300 Ieta Lieutenant (jg) Wolfe made contact with Lieutenant Murphy at 20-12N, 110-25E, his attention be attracted by the flash of a signal mirror and a flare. One of the co-pilots positively identified one of the men as Lieutenant Murphy. Lieutenant (jg) Wolfe dropped a note telling Lieutenant Murphy that Lieutenant Scott had parachuted to the north and would attempt to contact him. Lieutenant (jg) Wolfe reported that there were three or four survivors in addition to Lieutenant Murphy.

In view of the fact that the survivors had worked their way to within a short distance of the coast and of the fact that the search planes pilots reported that the area appeared feasible for seaplane landing, ComF Air Wing 17 and Commanding Officer VFS-119 determined that a rescue attempt should be made the following day. Plans were laid that evening at a meeting of representatives of FAI-17, VFS-119, and ComAF 5 Air Sea Rescue. A PBY-5A was directed to take off from Florida Blanca at daybreak to reach the rendezvous point on the southeastern coast of Luzon Peninsula at 1230 Ieta. Lieutenant W. P. Comstock, VFS-119, was to arrive over Lieutenant Murphy's position at 1100 Ieta, drop a radio and give Lieutenant Murphy instructions. Thereafter he would cover pickup operations and then drop additional supplies to Lieutenant Scott. Lieutenant (jg) Wolfe was to fly in the PBY-5A because of his familiarity with the area. ComNavU 14, 14th Air Force and ComNavGroup China were advised of these plans. Lieutenant Comstock was successful in dropping the Handy-Talkie to Lieutenant Murphy and in establishing voice communications. He instructed the survivors that the PBY-5A would arrive in an hour and a half and that he would zoom their position in the direction he wanted them to proceed. He crashed as he was in his final turn. An eye witness account of this crash is contained in Annexes A through E. The cause of the crash has not and can not be determined. Three of the survivors went to the crash scene and reported that the Privateer had blown up in a mass of flames, that there was nothing left other than charred wreckage, and that there were no survivors.
The PBY-5A proceeded to the rendezvous point, piloted by 1st Lieutenant Honeck, COMAF 5 Air Sea Rescue. Lieutenant Honeck, not being able to contact Lieutenant Comstock called Lieutenant R. N. Atzenweiler, USNR, VPB-119, who was flying sector 15, and asked for cover. Lieutenant Atzenweiler came over and flew cover while Lieutenant Honeck set the PBY down on the water. A rubber life raft was put ashore, manned by Lieutenant (jg) Wolfe and the navigator of the PBY-5A. In two trips the five survivors were safely put aboard the PBY-5A and were flown back to Clark Field. Lieutenant Murphy advised Lieutenant Atzenweiler that Lieutenant Comstock had crashed, so Lieutenant Atzenweiler flew over the wreckage and advised base radio of the events that had transpired. A report of the rescue was contained in FAW-17 Summary that evening.

25 June 1945 - ComFAirWing 17 sent a dispatch to ComNavGroup China and to all interested commands advising them of the information which Lieutenant Murphy had obtained during his week on Luichow Peninsula. This information is summarized in paragraph 4 of this report.

Lieutenant H. L. Gossage, USNR, VPB-119, flew sector 16 and dropped additional supplies to Lieutenant Scott, informing him of the rescue of Lieutenant Murphy and other interested commands were notified that a plane would be sent the following day to arrange for the evacuation.

26 June 1945 - Lieutenant Atzenweiler flew sector 16 but was unable to contact Lieutenant Scott. 1st Lieutenant Hanna, ComAF 5 Air Sea Rescue, accompanied Lieutenant Atzenweiler to examine the area for a feasible landing sight.

27 June 1945 - Lieutenant T. R. Alkire, USNR, VPB-119, flew sector 16 and established voice communications with Lieutenant Scott. Lieutenant Scott requested that arrangements be made to pick him up, together with 2nd Lieutenant Naylor-Foote, on 29 June 1945. He stated that he would proceed to the west coast of Luichow Peninsula and would be in a Chinese junk off shore on 29 June at 1200 Iraan. A rendezvous point and a system of identification signals were agreed upon. All arrangements were to be confirmed by sector 16 the following day. ComAF 5 Air Sea Rescue was again contacted and arrangements made for a PBY-5A to pick up Lieutenant Scott and 2nd Lieutenant Naylor-Foote on 29 June. Lieutenant Hanna accompanied Lieutenant Alkire on this flight. ComNavU 14 and ComNavGroup China were notified that arrangements had been made to evacuate Lieutenant Scott and 2nd Lieutenant Naylor-Foote to the Philippines on 29 June.
28 June 1945 - Lieutenant Gassage flew sector 16, dropping additional supplies to Lieutenant Scott and confirmed the arrangements for the rescue the following day.

29 June 1945 - Lieutenant Atzenweiler again flew sector 16 and located the junk carrying Lieutenant Scott and 2nd Lieutenant Naylor-Foote, establishing voice communications. Lieutenant Scott still was carrying the Handy-Talkie radio which had been dropped to him previously. Playmate 17 (PBK-3A) arrived at the rendezvous point but after examination of the water determined that it was too rough to land. Lieutenant Scott and Lieutenant Atzenweiler then made arrangements for a pickup the following day at the same time and place. Playmate 17 advised Lieutenant Atzenweiler that he would proceed to Nanning, remain overnight and return to the scene the following morning -- then proceed in a northerly direction. Lieutenant Atzenweiler advised base radio of the developments and recommended that arrangements be made for a PBK-30 to make the pick-up the following day. He then continued on patrol.

During the afternoon Playmate 17 sent three dispatches to V BomC Air Ground that he was ditching. The first, at 1725 Itan stated that he was "ditching at rendezvous." The second, 1755 Itan, read "An landing at point of rendezvous forced landing." All rescue facilities were advised including FAW-17 search planes in adjacent sectors. That evening arrangements were made by ComAirWing 17 and Commanding Officer VPB-119 for a PBK-30 of VPB-28 to make the pick-up the following day, and Lieutenant Akires was again assigned to cover the operation.

30 June 1945 - When Lieutenant Akires arrived at the scene he found Playmate 17 riding on the water, out of gasoline with Lieutenant Scott and 2nd Lieutenant Naylor-Foote aboard, and immediately advised base radio. Lieutenant (jg) A. L. Lindsell, USNR, VPB-119, flying sector 15 was also in the area. The PBK-30, piloted by Lieutenant Hermanson, VPB-28, arrived shortly thereafter and landed safely, taking Lieutenant Scott, 2nd Lieutenant Naylor-Foote and the crew of Playmate 17 aboard. The advisability of sinking the PBK was considered, but Lieutenant Scott and the pilot of the PBK left the Chinese guerrillas in charge with instructions to strip the plane of the guns they could use and to sink the plane if it was not picked up within two days. Lieutenant Akires advised base radio that the rescue was successful and the PBK-30 was returning to base. It landed at Lingayen, and on July 1, 1945 Lieutenant Scott and 2nd Lieutenant...
Naylor-Bootes were flown to Clark Field. ComFAirWing 17 advised ComNavU 14 of this fact on 1 July 1945. The PBV-5a was picked up by Army authorities on 2 July 1945, flown to Manning for fuel and returned to base.

During this time that he was on Luichow Peninsula, particularly while spending two days with Dr. Kam Stan, Lieutenant Murphy was given a considerable amount of information concerning guerrilla and enemy activities. This information was forwarded by secret dispatch to ComNavGroup China in 25 June 1945, with ComNavU 14, ComAAF SWPA, CNAF 5, CNAF 14, ComAir 7th Flt, ComAir 7th Flt and ComAirPac as information addressees. On 26 June 1945 the Commanding Officer, VPS-119 and the AGI Officer, VPS-119, passed this information orally to LBS-X, Manila, F. I. The following information was given to Lieutenant Murphy by the guerrillas with whom he was in contact.

The guerrillas, both Chinese and Hainanese, are in control of a substantial portion of southeast Luichow Peninsula. The perimeter of this friendly area is difficult of definition, but generally speaking it includes the area south of 20°-35N, and east of 110°-12E. The outer limits of the area on the west and north are subject to constant change by reason of periodic attacks by enemy forces. In addition, the guerrillas hold the southwest tip of the peninsula to approximately 20°-18N. The guerrilla controlled area in the southeast includes the towns CHINNAOYU, CHUICHLISHILI and CHIENSHANYU. On the north it extends almost to CHUFENGSHILI. On the west it follows an irregular line to the east of the roadway running north from HSUNEN. The Japs have been evacuating troops by junk from HOI HOW BAY across HAINAN STRAIT to the vicinity of HSUNEN and then north by truck. The roadway running north from HSUNEN is constantly patrolled by enemy forces. It was on this roadway that Lieutenant Murphy was striking trucks at the time he crashed landed. The coast line of this southeastern area was included in the area pointed out to Lieutenant Murphy as friendly, and the Chinese are operating motorized junks along the coast. The junks are operated by sail most of the time and only use motors at times of emergency.

The guerrillas are both Chinese and Hainanese and are well organized. Dr. Kam Stan is the number one man and is completely in charge of all guerrilla operations in the area. The name of the town where he makes his headquarters is not known. They maintain constant patrols and in many places have telephone communications. Dr. Kam Stan stated that there are three or four thousand guerrillas in the area and that they are badly in need of arms, ammunition and medical supplies. They carry old rifles and pistols of varying types. They have at least one radio station and appear to be in touch with some point in China. As a rule guerrillas wear the ordinary peasant type of clothing, including a large hat, and can be identified by a red band worn on the left arm. Without question they are extremely friendly.
Dr. Ken Stan estimated that there are 5,000 Jap troops remaining on Hainan Island and stated that Pakhoi is completely friendly. It was to Pakhoi that he intended to evacuate Lieutenant Murphy.

Comment on the recommendations of Lieutenant Murphy and his air crewmen with regard to evasion and escape equipment seems desirable. We again have a case where the survivors escaped with only such gear as they had on their persons, which was very little. The importance of wearing this gear can not be over-emphasized. In most cases, particularly where a plane goes down on land, there is no time to look for gear. All personnel must leave the plane as quickly as possible -- ammunition and bombs are likely to go off at any moment. This raises a problem with turret men as they are cramped for space and any excess gear impedes the operation of their guns, but at least they should carry as much equipment in their pockets as possible. A signal mirror, small compass, blood chits, and the medicinal packets from the E-17 emergency kit will readily fit into the pockets of a flight suit, and they should be so carried where a gun belt is too cumbersome.

One of the most valuable pieces of equipment, in the experience of these men, was the Emergency Signalling Mirror (ESM/1) from the E-17 kit. On at least two separate occasions the attention of the search planes was attracted from considerable distance away. The pilots of these search planes reported that the flash of the mirror was responsible for their locating the survivors.

The use of the Handy-Talkie radio in establishing air to ground communications was highly successful. The first of these radios was dropped to Lieutenant Scott and within a few minutes he was in voice communications with the search plane. From then on there was no difficulty in ascertaining his needs and working out plans for his evacuation. The difficulty of communication without voice contact is apparent. Again, on 24 June 1945, a Handy-Talkie was dropped to Lieutenant Murphy with highly successful results -- within a very few minutes Lieutenant Constock was able to give range of these radios far exceeded expectations, one pilot reporting that he believes he had Lieutenant Scott for a distance of 10 miles, and on several occasions he was contacted by voice before any visual contact was made. An adequate supply of batteries must be provided for they last only a short time. Replacement batteries were dropped to Lieutenant Scott almost daily. It is strongly recommended that a Handy-Talkie radio be carried as standard equipment in every search plane and that it be rigged for parachute drop on first contact with survivors; it is believed that valuable time will be saved.
The lack of medical supplies seriously hampered and endangered Lieutenant Murphy and his men. While each man was provided with a B-17 kit, and standard medical equipment was carried in the plane, the five survivors had only one kit with them when they escaped from the plane. There was a complete lack of medical supplies in the area in which they landed. Again the importance of keeping such essential gear on your person is emphasized. Goodwin, K. A. AMMFlt, points out he was unable to reach his gear even though it was hanging directly over his head. Lieutenant Murphy strongly recommends that all air crewmen wear protective clothing at all times, particularly a flight jacket. His flight jacket was slashed in many places and he believes it saved him from serious flesh wounds.

Finally, the old adage "trust the Chinese" bears repeating. It has been repeated time and time again, but can not be over-emphasized. The Guerrillas on Luichow Peninsula were 100 per-cent friendly and did all in their power to get these men to safety. Their help was invaluable.
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OPERATIONS OF BOMBING SQUADRON 115, JULY, 1944.

VB 115 carried out four long-distance searches on every day of July, with the exception of a single sector on three different days, making a total of one hundred twenty-one searches during the month. For the first sixteen days the searches radiated to distances from five to eight hundred miles from Wake Island and during the remainder of the month to seven-fifty and eight-hundred miles from Oy Island. During the first two weeks bombs were dropped on seven targets consisting of enemy supply and camp areas and machine-gun positions, with damage observed in five cases, but after July 19, owing to a shortage of bombs at Wake, it was forbidden to use them on ground targets. The paragraphs which follow also record the destruction of the top aircraft and the damage brought to a total of fifteen ships in targets on nine separate occasions.

1/7/44 Ensign J. D. GREGORY extended his 500-mile sector to investigate installations on Sonsorol Island. One run over the island was made, gliding from 1500 to 1000 foot. The pilot released three bombs by pick up from the cockpit which were observed to fall on a group of fifteen warehouses with metal roofs in a settlement on the west shore of the island, but no specific results were observed. 1000 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition were expended in strafing. No A/A fire received.

2/7/44 Returning from the far end of an eight hundred mile search from Wake, Lieutenant S. ATWOOD was cruising at 10,000 feet, threading his way through towering cumulus clouds, on a course of 060. The co-pilot, Ensign R. C. SNOBBY, sighted an EMILY coming out of a cloud at a distance of five miles, at 9500 feet, approaching on a 270 course at a speed of approximately 160 knots. Military power of 45 inches of mercury and 3100 RPM was at once applied to the PB4Y which gained a speed of 200 knots. After making a climbing turn, the pilot made a first run over the EMILY from its port quarter. The engine of plane was overrun on this pass, but the bow, top and tail turrets and the starboard waist gun got in good bursts, knocked out the EMILY's top and tail guns, and raked the fuselage. Flame and smoke immediately broke out just above the step in the fuselage, suggesting hits on fuel cells in that area. During the rest of the action the fire spread throughout the fuselage. The port engines also were set ablaze.

A 90-degree turn brought the PB4Y again over the EMILY, which meanwhile went into a straight glide. By cutting throttles, the pilot kept our plane directly on the tail quarter, and all guns and on excellent target at midrange. By this time the EMILY was burning furiously. When it was pulled up to a stall, and fell off again. The second time it plunged into the water from about 2000 foot altitude. During its last dive, the EMILY exploded and its wings and tail assembly fell off. Only an oil fire remained on the water.
OPERATIONS OF BOMBING SQUADRON 115, JULY, 1944 (CONTINUED)

Possible 7.7 mm fire from the EMILY’s starboard gun was the only return fire received. ATWOOD’s plane was not hit.

The EMILY gave every appearance of being completely surprised. Its waist hatches were closed until it had already been crippled by our first pass. Had its pilot been alert, he should certainly have been able to see the PB4Y during its approach.

5/7/44

Enssign T. R. BARKER was flying the cross leg at the end of a 640-mile sector from Wakde Island at 8000 foot altitude when a 300-foot AK(SB) and a 100-foot escort gunboat (the target ships) were sighted one mile off Cape Loloai, Halmahera Island, on a course of 260 degrees true heading into Knoe Bay. Weather conditions were favorable; with scattered 4/10 cumulus clouds in the immediate area, and a front lying 30 miles to the northeast.

Six 100# bombs only were available for an attack, as 2 X 500# bombs had already been expended on gun positions and buildings at Morir Island, with good results. Two of the 100# bombs could not be fused because of dirt in the threads.

On the first of two runs over the ships at 500 feet, three bombs were picked up by the pilot with minimum interval, one hitting amidships and the others falling near. Fire broke out on the bridge after the first strafing burst by the bow turret. On the second run three more 100# bombs (two 500#s) were dropped but fell short. Both ships were strafed on both runs.

A large explosion was seen and felt from the direct hit, and the ship began to bum fiercely. For forty minutes the fire increased, and the crew were seen to abandon ship by boats and by jumping overboard. The escort vessel also left the scene and headed into Knoe Bay.

A/A fire, mostly 20mm, from the escort vessel was intense but inaccurate, falling far short. No A/A was received from the AK, and no guns seen. No hits were received by our aircraft.

On the same day, Lieutenant W. LINDGREN bombed and strafed enemy machine-gun positions and the camp area on Morir Island. 3 X 500# GP bombs, 4-5 second delay fuse, and 2 X 100# GP also 4-5 second delay were dropped from low-level and 4000 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition were expended in four runs. Slight machine-gun A/A was observed.
6/7/44 Lieutenant J. J. COONAN reported one 350-foot Fox Tare Charlie, (probably DE), and one Flotilla Y (probably a Rufo) at 1245K, three miles off Cape Is the entrance to Kneel Bay, Halmahera, course 160 degrees. The PB4Y attempted a low-level attack on the FTC but was driven off by intense A/A from the destroyer. The plane circled, climbed to 12,000 feet and dropped 3 x 500# GP bombs which missed by 300 feet. The Rufo appeared from the direction of Kneel Bay during the climb but did not intercept.

12/7/44 Lieutenant R. L. WHITE dropped 2 x 500# GP bombs on boathouse area at Sonsonol Island from 8000 feet. Hits were observed in the target area but results were not known.

16/7/44 Lieutenant J. R. LITTLE sighted a 300-400-foot freighter transport (Fox Tare Charlie) accompanied by 100-150-foot escort gunboat 15 miles northeast of Morotai Island on course from Halmahera to Palau. After maneuvering the escort out of position, the PB4Y made a low-level attack. Violent change of course by the ship caused the plane to side-slip in order to compensate. For the turn of the ship, 2 x 500# GP, 4-5 second delay bombs were dropped but fell 50 feet astern because of the side-slip. Striking by all turrets (1100 rounds) scored many hits and fires were observed on the after deck of the ship. The ship came to a stop indicating probable damage. Lieutenant R. L. WHITE dropped 2 x 500# GP bombs on Tobi Island from 9000 feet obtaining hits on warehouse area.

18/7/44 Ensign P. R. BARKER sighted a 100-foot lugger and a 100 foot steel coastal vessel at 03-10W, 127-34E, course 250, speed 12 knots. Four bombing runs were made at 150 feet. On the first two runs no bombs were dropped. On the third run a 500# GP bomb fell 100 feet short and damaged the steel ship so that it stopped dead in the water and did not again get underway. The fourth run was made on the lugger. A 500# GP, 4-5 second delay bomb exploded 20 feet off the port quarter and scattered wreckage over a wide area. As 2200 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition were poured into the ships on three more strafing runs, fires were observed.

21/7/44 Lieutenant W. LINDGREN sighted a BETTY at 07-10W, 142-30N at 8000 feet, course 240, 1½ miles distant. The ship was on course 150 degrees and closed distance rapidly with military power was applied. The plane opened fire at 100 yards, at which time evasive action had not been taken by the BETTY. Fire from the belly, bow and top turrets hit the cockpit and starboard engine immediately. 500 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition caused the Jap plane to go out of control in a steep spiral until it crashed into the sea. Evidently the pilot was killed instantly, for at no time did the BETTY burst into flame although the starboard engine was smoking.
OPERATIONS OF BOMBING SQUADRON 115, JULY, 1944 (CONTINUED)

A: Lieutenant LINDGREEN sighted two destroyers of the Tempo class at 0700N, 1300E, course 090 degrees, speed 20 knots. No attack was pressed as the plane was low on gasoline and the anti-aircraft fire from heavy guns was moderate and accurate. On the same day, Lieutenant Commander H. B. ROBINSON sighted a Toss over Talaud Island. An attack was pressed for twenty minutes until the loss of one engine and considerable cloud cover caused the attack to be broken off.

22/7/44 Lieutenant M. WENNER sighted a 100-foot lugger at 0900N, 127-25E at 1230K, course 180 degrees. As no bombs had been carried, the pilot made six low-level strafing runs. Many large fires were started as 1500 rounds of .50 caliber were expended. A heavy cloud of black smoke was observed over the ship and oil was burning on the water alongside. Personnel were noticed jumping overboard and the ship was considered sunk.

23/7/44 Lieutenant P. J. BRUMEAU attacked a 100-foot lugger tied up at a pier in Boo Bay, Talaud Island. Two low-level runs were made and 2 X 500# GP, 4-5 second delay bombs were dropped but missed by 100 feet. 1 X 100# bomb was dropped on the second run but, because of a defective tail vent, fell erratically, skipped and demolished a warehouse near the pier. Seven more strafing runs were made and two explosions were observed rocking the ship badly. Many small fires were started as 2500 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition were expended. The bow gunner was slightly wounded by a machine-gun fire.

24/7/44 Ensign P. R. BARRETT sighted a 100-foot lugger and an 80-foot trawler tied up to the pier in Boo Bay, Talaud Island, and a 50-foot boat in the Harbor. Three low-level bombing and strafing runs were made. On the first run 3 X 300# GP, 4-5 second delay bombs were dropped, falling on the beach 50 feet short of the target. On the second run no bombs were dropped. On the third run 2 X 300# GP, 4-5 second delay bombs were dropped close to the ships. The concussion opened the trawler and fire broke out on the lugger, causing the sides to fall off and a heavy fire to start. 1100 rounds of 50 caliber ammunition were expended in all, damaging seriously the 50-foot boat in the harbor.

25/7/44 Lieutenant M. WENNER attacked the same ships at the pier in Boo Bay, Talaud Island, dropping 5 X 100# and 3 X 500# 4-5 second delay bombs from low altitude. No hits were observed, although strafing runs caused damage.

29/7/44 Lieutenant H. M. DAVES found a 60-foot power boat in Boo Bay, Talaud Island, and after making one bombing and strafing run at low-level, blew it out of the water with a direct hit from 2 X 100# GP bombs with 4-5 second delay fuses.
30/7/44 Lieutenant R. L. White found in Boo Bay, Talcau Isl., a 100-foot steel lugger and a 70-foot wooden vessel tied up to the pier. Six bombing and strafing runs were made at about head height. No bombs were dropped on the first two runs, but on the third run 3 x 500# and 2 x 100# GP bombs were dropped and made direct hits on the wooden vessel, which exploded and was demolished. Two more strafing runs were made on the steel vessel and 1 x 500# GP bomb was dropped, causing damage. 48 holes in the planks were observed when it returned to base, mostly between stations 4.0 and 6.0, but none of the damage was serious.
PATROL SQUADRON FIFTY-TWO OPERATIONS DURING JULY 1944.

1. From 1 July through 16 July Patrol Squadron Fifty-Two was based on the U.S.S. CORA at HUMBOLDT BAY, HOLLANDIA, and later 15 July at WENDI LAGOON, B.I.AK, engaging in night operations. These flights were of three types: scouting on behalf of friendly surface forces, anti-shipping missions, and PT cooperation.

2. Four scouting or Tornad missions were flown, two each on the nights of 1-2 and 2-3 July. By arrangement with the lander Task Force Seventy Five, two sectors covering the approaches to Noonfoor Island were searched the night before the flight after the landing there. The primary mission of the planes was to warn the cruiser task forces of the approach of enemy surface units. However, 4 X 325# depth charges were carried for use against submarines. These missions were all uneventful.

3. Eleven Blackcat missions were flown, on which the planes were armed with 4 X 500# GP bombs, fused, for a 4 1/2 second delay. On these missions the planes operated alone, their primary target being surface vessels of 1000 tons or larger. Nine of these flights searched the VOGELIPOP area, concentrating on the north coast. On 6 July Lieutenant (Junior Grade) H. LEPIKE strafed a barge just after it had sought the shelter of the beach at 00-22S, 113-13E (west of MANOKWARI). The results were unsatisfactory. The next night Lieutenant (Junior Grade) H. S. GRAHAM found a 100-foot barge off CAP SANTA BARBARA and heavily strafed it. It was left down by the bow and dead in the water. The Blackcat missions were otherwise unproductive. A few strafing runs were made on the jetty at MIDDLEBURG ISLAND, with no hits, but these attacks were made largely for practice. The other ten Blackcat missions went to GERMA and HOLLANDIA, with no sightings made on either.

4. Eleven PT cooperation flights were made. On these the planes carried 4 X 500# GP bombs with daisy cutter fuses. The primary mission on these flights was to find targets for the PT boats, illuminating, strafing and bombing them as appeared practicable. On the night of 5 July Lieutenant W. J. PATTISON had left the PTs with which he had been working and proceeded to JOP Island in lower CAMBVINK BAY, where he found a 50-ton lugger just off the southern tip of the island. By the time he climbed to bombing altitude the lugger had reached the edge of KORIA BAY, but he strafed it with his bombs, and then 500# strafing runs on it using his four bow 50's. The lugger was probably left unserviceable. This was the only target located on any of these flights. They all covered the area from a few miles west of MANOKWARI to WANDERLIM BAY, except for one submarine search along the north coast of B.I.AK.
5. Beginning 17 July, the squadron flew air-sea rescue missions from U.S.S. WRIGHT, completing a total of 41. During period, about one-third of the squadron's personnel were for rest camp, so most of these flights were made with only two pilots, four crew members and a pharmacist's mate aboard. They covered strikes in the CERMAK, HOBILNAH and VEMLA, areas, these last missions being used on several occasions to transport personnel and mail between the base and NURASIN and TADAFI. On 29 July Lieutenant (junior grade) R. L. H.2D was orbiting at ROCK ISLAND when he heard that a B-25 was down off the south coast of MIQUELI JALI, at 0248 S. 17° 40'. After getting fighter cover he proceeded to the area, picked up the pilot and two crew members, the only survivors. The landing and take off were without incident. The three survivors were treated by the Pharmacist's Mate while the plane was returning to base. On 30 July, Lieutenant (junior grade) R. McPike picked up a B-17 on the air warning station on LIEHABATI, back of SHI DURVILLE, and brought him back to the WRIGHT for hospitalization. Lieutenant (junior grade) McPike was directed to make the landing while he was orbiting as a rescue plane at NORMARK ISLAND. Lieutenant (junior grade) R. A. Olson radioed a special search for a missing B-24 (coordinating in cooperation with B-24's) just south of MAF ISLAND on 21 July. Several times during the day an unknown station called on voice radio saying it was Carnation 10 (a call used by rescue planes at one time) and that it had picked up the survivors of the crash. The station was obviously TANNAO, float lights which Lieutenant (junior grade) Olson and six B-24's investigated, were believed to have been an enemy decoy. No sign of survivors was ever found. On the night of 21-22 July a special search was made investigating a submarine report north of MIQUELI. This was the only operational flight other than the rescue missions into during the period.
S-E-C-R-E-T

VP 33 OPERATIONS DURING JULY, 1944.

During the first two weeks of July VP 33 aircraft were based at Samarai while crews completed their rest period and at Honshu Bay where 45 air-sea rescue missions were flown. On 16 July the squadron moved to Los Negros and flew 35 negative patrols and six more rescue missions.

The rescue missions saved a B-25 crew and two B-20 crews. About 1300K 14 July a Catalina flown by Lieutenant (junior grade) G. U. FAVORITE and co-piloted by Lieutenant (junior grade) C. D. REEVES, II, landed only eight miles from Cape Lili, Halmahera, and picked up all six members of the B-25 crew. On the way back from another rescue mission the same Catalina crew sighted approximately ten Japanese attempting to escape by boat from Cape D'Urville, Dutch New Guinea, strafed the boat and killed 3-4 of the enemy.

Lieutenant (junior grade) J. R. ZUBLER, also flying a rescue mission, spotted two small enemy ships off the west coast of Bismarck. He called in his fighter cover, U. S. army P-38's, who destroyed the vessels by low-altitude strafing.

VP 34 OPERATIONS FOR JULY, 1944.

During the month of July, VP 34's planes flew 81 day searches (all negative) from Soccador Harbor, totaling 705.8 hours, and 26 Blackout patrols from Woendi, totaling 528.3 hours. The first night patrol began 17 July.

Four of the patrols during July engaged the enemy in action:

21/7/44

1. A Catalina, commanded by Lieutenant N. L. BAXTON, was on a search mission in North Halmahera on 21 July 1944. About 0100K it entered Kno Bay from the east side and, after investigating radar indications which proved to be small islands, proceeded along the shore in a northeasterly direction. The night was clear, but there was no moon. As the plane passed Vasili Town (01° 06' N, 127° 53' E), the waist lookouts saw a ship anchored 1/8 mile off shore, facing east. The plane immediately circled toward the target and made a bow-to-stern run, cannoning at an altitude of 600 feet and passing 200 feet over the ship. The intercom failed to function and no barrage was made. A second run of the same character was made from port quarter to starboard bow, dropping four 500-pound bombs by emergency release. The first two fell 150 feet off the port quarter and the second two landed 150 feet off the starboard bow.
No anti-aircraft fire was received from ship or shore installations during these attacks, although lights were observed blinking from Wasile Town nearby. The darkness prevented accurate estimate of the size and class of this ship, but the report states that it appeared to be about 300 feet long. It is believed to have been a medium freighter-transport of about 2,500 tons. No damage was noted.

23/7/44

2. On the night of 23 July Lieutenant (junior grade) R. W. BALL's PBY sent in a contact report from Cape Loloa in Kaoe Bay, North Halmahera, indicating that he was attacking a target. Garbled radio transmissions, weak in volume, were picked up from this plane as long as an hour and a quarter later by another Blackburn, then ceased. There has been no further clue as to the fate of this missing plane.

30/7/44

3. Lieutenant (junior grade) J. F. BALL was flying a patrol of the Ambina - Ceram area on the night of 30 July 1944. Entering Piroo Bay from the north at 0200K, the plane sighted and strafed a three-masted schooner, with unobserved results. It then proceeded toward Ambina and took up a southwesterly course five miles off the north coast. A small lugger was sighted at 0250K, in position 03° 30' S, 128° 06' E, and the pilot put the aircraft into a glide preparatory to a strafing attack. At that moment the radar operator reported three indications at two to three miles off the port beam. The attack on the lugger was immediately discontinued, and the pilot circled to approach the ships into the moon, which was setting along the western horizon. At one mile a large ship with a long superstructure could be seen in the moonpath, travelling slowly on course 070 degrees. An escort was seen a mile astern, with two more located 2 mile and one mile off its starboard bow. At the same time the escort closest to the merchantman opened up with a few rounds of inaccurate machine-gun fire which soon ceased.

Commencing its run from an altitude of 600 feet, the plane passed over the large ship from bow to stern and dropped four 500-pound bombs from 200 feet at a speed of 120 knots, with the intervalometer set for 40 feet, 120 knots. The lookouts in the waist clearly observed all four bombs hit the ship on or near the superstructure, followed in a few seconds, by a huge explosion which reached high over the ship. Throughout the attack no fire was directed at the plane.
The pilot made a wide circle and returned to the scene, arriving at the exact spot in which the attack had been made about five minutes ago. The only sign of the ship was frothing circle on the sea, with large bubbles around the surface. The radar operator at this time picked up three small indications located relatively in the previous positions of the three escorts. The plane then left the area, receiving further light inaccurate machine-gun fire from one of the escorts as it departed.

Several crew members, including the pilot and co-pilot, were able to observe the salient features of the target vessel in the moonlight, and positively identify it as a 4000 - 6000 ton transport (Taro Baker Two Stocks). The transport was considered sunk.

31/7/44

4. On the night of July 1944, Lieutenant N. L. Paxton, USNR, was in command of a Catalina searching the north coast of Mokil Island, one of the Sokei Group located in the south Solomons Sea. The night was clear, with a 3/4 moon, no clouds, and visibility in excess of ten miles. At approximately 0200, while proceeding on a westerly course and carefully searching the shoreline, the pilot saw an escort vessel, believed to be of the DD type, lying in a small cove, at position 09° 49' S, 125° 30' E. The pilot made a complete right-hand circle to put the plane into position for a run into the moon-path, the moon at the time being about 40° above the western horizon. While circling, the crew sighted two additional vessels in the cove, a large freighter-transport and a second escort. The ships were spaced at intervals of ½ mile, with the merchantman in the center, approximately ¾ mile off shore.

The plane commenced its run at an altitude of 400 feet, distance 1 ½ miles, gliding to 200 feet and dropping four 500 pound bombs with 4-5 second delay fuses at a speed of 110 knots, with the inter-compass set for 40 feet, 100 knots. The run was perpendicular to the port beam. All three vessels opened fire a few seconds prior to the drop with machine guns and 20 or 40mm cannon - an estimated ten guns in all. This fire continued as the plane retired over a mile or two to the west, and ceased at a distance of one mile.

The bomb drops were plainly observed by members of the crew in the waist tower. One hit about 30-40 feet short of the port beam; two bombs struck the superstructure and exploded; and the fourth landed a few feet off the starboard beam. As the plane made a wide circle and headed east, two large fires could be seen in the superstructure.
Heavy damage was received from the anti-aircraft fire: A shell exploded in the leading edge of the starboard aileron; the starboard aileron control cable was severed; the starboard propeller, and both wing panels were holed; and the hull was dented by shrapnel. Because the condition of the aircraft it was not deemed advisable to remain in the area to observe further effects of the attack. The state of the fires which were blazing amidships when the plane left the scene indicates, however, that the ship probably sank.

The bright moonlight provided an excellent opportunity for estimating the class and size of the vessel attacked. It is believed to have been a 7000-8500-ton freighter or transport (Fox Taro Able), having the characteristics of that class: Large superstructure and four sets of gun-
OPERATIONS OF VB-115 FOR AUGUST, 1944

Bombing Squadron 115's PB4Ys flew 136 patrols from Owi Island during the month of August. On 19 August Southwest Pacific Search Plan "Easy" was put into operation. The old plan "Charlie" had called for four PB4Y searches out of Owi each day; two sectors for a distance of 750 miles from Owi and two for 800 miles; and a special Sector Love, included in the search made by the plane assigned to Sector 1 and covering the area to the northwest of Halmahera. Plan "Easy" increased the number of PB4Y searches to ten, all originating from Owi. To search this expanded area, VB-101 was shifted to Owi and shared the new search sectors with VB-115.

The bomb load on the 750 and 800 mile sectors was three 300-pound and five 100-pound GP 4-to-5 second delay bombs. On the 1000 mile sector, the search plane loaded only the five 100-pound bombs. For the shorter sectors, 2800 gallons of gasoline were carried; for the 1000-mile searches, 3290 gallons.

VB-115 planes reported sightings on 18 of the 31 days covered in this summary.

1/8/44  ENsign P.R. BARKER, USN, and his PB4Y crew sighted three unidentified single-engine planes off Davao Gulf, Mindanao, at 06-00N and 126-50E at 1205/K on a course of 150 degrees true. Later, at 1245/K, the airmen sighted another unidentified plane at 05-10N and 128-00E on a course of 090 degrees true.

2/8/44  Lieutenant R.L. WHITE, USNR, attacked two small coastal vessels at Tobi Island at 1245/K. The bombing was from 9000 feet, as a power-supply failure made the turrets inoperative and thus prevented an attack from lower altitude. On the second of eight runs two 100-pound bombs missed only 10 to 15 feet. During the seventh run one 300-pound bomb and two 100-pound bombs were released and a direct hit blasted a probable warehouse on the beach about 50 feet from the vessels. A 300-pound bomb dropped on the first run and a 300-pound bomb and a 100-pound bomb dropped on the eighth run were all misses.

4/8/44  Ensign P.R. BARKER, USN, flying a scheduled 800-mile search from Owi Island, sighted an enemy convoy at 1032/K at 07-10N, 131-40E, moving on a course of 070 degrees true at an estimated speed of 15 knots. The convoy consisted of one 5000-ton freighter (Fox Baker), two 80-foot stack-aft vessels (Sugar Charlie), and three gunboats, two about 125 feet long, and one about 175 feet long. The PB4Y made one bombing and strafing run on the freighter from 400 feet and dumped the entire load of five 100-pound bombs and three 300-pound bombs at the target. The bombs picked by the pilot at
minimum spacing, fell into the water just aft of the freighter's stern. No damage was seen.

Under operational instructions from the 308th Bomb Wing, Fifth Air Force, to shadow the convoy as long as fuel would permit, the PB4Y circled the enemy ships until 1215/K, then made five more strafing runs. The first two attacks were on the Fox Baker and third and fourth on the two Sugar Charlies and the fifth on both the Fox Baker and the Sugar Charlies. Two Sugar Charlies were fired and one of them blazed fiercely. They were still burning when the plane left the area at 1235/K.

A total of 2700 rounds of .50 caliber machine-gun fire was expended in strafing. Light and medium anti-aircraft fire was intense and fairly accurate, mostly from the escorting gunboats. Shrapnel from a class 40mm burst hit the port horizontal stabilizer just aft of the forward main spar and damaged seven ribs, but one hole in the leading edge of the stabilizer, and another hole in the cowling of the Number 4 engine. The Patsu Unit, however, was able to repair all damage.

8/8/44 LIEUTENANT H.M. DINES, USNR, searching a 1000-mile sector from Owi Island, sighted at 1132/K an enemy destroyer at 08-00N, 129-05E, sailing on a course of 060 degrees true at an estimated 15 knots. Intense heavy antiaircraft fire prevented the plane from attacking the warship.

9/8/44 At 1345/K from 8000 feet a PB4Y piloted by LIEUTENANT W. LINDGREN, USNR, spotted a 150-foot freighter transport tied up at a small pier in Boo Bay, Talaud Islands, during the return leg of a 750-mile search from Owi Island.

The bomber made two horizontal runs at 7000 feet with the Norden sight. On the first run a 100-pound bomb and a 300-pound bomb overshot without damage. In the second attack one of the three 100-pound bombs dropped was a near miss. Then the PB4Y let down to 200 feet and made two bombing and strafing runs, using the Gail sight. The two 300-pound bombs released on the first of these runs and the 100-pound bomb released on the second run all fell long, did no damage. Strafing during the two low-level attacks used up 2000 rounds of .50 caliber machine-gun ammunition.

The plane drew moderate light machine-gun fire from the ship during the first of the low-level runs, but this fire was silenced by the time the second run was made. There was no damage to the aircraft.
11/8/44  LIEUTENANT J. J. COONN, USNR, in command of a PB4Y on a 1000-mile search, sighted a 100-foot armed steel trawler at 1220/K at 08-00N, 129-40E, heading on a course of 120 degrees true. The trawler was believed to be on anti-submarine patrol, as it carried several depth charges aft on the deck. A shielded gun on the bow, two more at the bridge amidships, and fourth on the stern also were noted. Eight bombs were dropped in six low-level attacks but all missed. Strafing damage, however, caused the trawler to lose speed and trail oil. Light anti-aircraft fire was moderate but inaccurate, and the PB4Y was not hit.

12/8/44  LIEUTENANT (Junior grade) G. M. MONROE, USNR, strafed a 100 foot coastal vessel off Boi Village, Taluda, but the bombs failed to release. The PB4Y drew moderate light anti-aircraft fire from two positions near the pier but was not damaged. Two derelicts were seen north of the Pier.

On a 1000-mile search from Owl Island, LIEUTENANT R.H. HAGERLAND, USNR, and his PB4Y crew sighted a Betty at 1250/K, 15 miles away from the PB4Y and flying toward Daavo from 07-40N, 128-30E, at an altitude of 5000 feet. A 3000-foot altitude advantage enabled the PB4Y to overtake the Betty during a 15 minute chase. When the range was closed to two miles, the enemy plane came about in a tight circle, fired a few inaccurate bursts with its bow 20mm gun, and passed immediately under the PB4Y. The PB4's belly turret, which had been left retracted to gain speed during the pursuit, could not be lowered in time to fire, but the bow, port waist, and tail guns got in short bursts. Many tracers were seen to enter the enemy plane but apparently the Betty was not seriously damaged. After passing under the PB4Y, the Betty entered a cloud in a climbing turn. The PB4Y pursued but was unable to gain, and the action was broken off.

14/8/44  LIEUTENANT (Junior grade) G. M. MONROE, USNR, took off from Owl at 1230/K on a special search of the area west and south of Halmahera Island for a VP-34 Blackcat missing from night patrol. Visibility was good, but a search west to 126-06E along the Equator and around the southern tip of Halmahera at an altitude of 700 feet revealed no sign of the missing plane. Many enemy barges, however, were sighted among the islands west of Halmahera.

15/8/44  A PB4Y commanded by LIEUTENANT J. E. LITTLE, USNR, at 1035/K sighted an unidentified two-engine aircraft 15 miles away at 03-27N, 130-32E, at an altitude of 5200 feet. The plane entered clouds and contact was broken.
17/6/44 At 1415/K during a 750-mile search out of Owl, LIEUTENANT M. WENNER, USNR, and the crew of his PB4Y sighted one Natori Class light cruiser and two modern destroyers at 09-50N, 130-50E, advancing at 25 knots on a course of 060 degrees true. The warships swung at once into violent evasive maneuvers, with the destroyers keeping formation on the cruiser. The PB4Y shadowed the enemy force for 45 minutes at a distance of three to four miles and an altitude of 5000 feet, despite intense heavy anti-aircraft fire, mainly from the light cruiser, which appeared enveloped in flame at each salvo. The shells burst short, below, and behind the PB4Y.

19/8/44 LIEUTENANT R.H. FAGERLAND, USNR, flying at 8000 feet in Sector 9, sighted an unidentified fighter at 1300/K, 3 miles away on opposite course at 07-00N, 133-55E. No attack was pressed.

COMMANDER J.R. COMPTON, USN, squadron commanding officer, searched Sector 1 over Halmahera and Celebes and observed many enemy ships in the area as well as barges concentrated among the islands in the vicinity of Makian Island. After crossing the Molucca Passage, Commander Compton saw a 1000-ton auxiliary schooner in the Belang Bay area of Celebes. In a level run at 8000 feet, one 300-pound bomb and four 100-pound bombs missed the vessel by 150 feet. The PB4Y then flew on to Amorang Bay, Celebes, and made a low level attack on a group of small AKs at the Amorang Pier and in the inner harbor. One of two 300-pound bombs dropped from 150 feet on a beam run, landed close astern of a 3500-ton freighter transport anchored near the pier and damaged the ship. Strafing caused more damage to the freighter transport and started small fires aboard one of two Sugar Charlies nearby. Another freighter transport, not seen before the attack, sent up a hoager, inaccurate 20mm fire. Another 100-pound bomb dropped in a low-level attack on a third Sugar Charlie underway near the mouth of the harbor was a close miss astern, but damage was not observed. This ship was strafed in four more runs, and when the PB4Y pulled away, the Sugar Charlie's gunwales were awash. A moment later the tail gunner reported that the Sugar Charlie had sunk. The PB4Y drew a hoager, inaccurate fire from one machine-gun amidships on the Sugar Charlie.

20/8/44 LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER H.E. ROBINSON, USNR, sighted two 80-foot schooners at the southeast tip of Slaco, Sangihe Islands, at 1140/K and dropped two 100-pound bombs on each schooner. One ship blazed brightly and was beached. An unidentified two-engined aircraft, probably a transport, was seen flying at 3000 feet over Slaco on a northwest course but disappeared in the clouds shortly afterward. Possible shipbuilding ways were observed at Hooloeslake.
21/3/44

LEUTENANT E.F.K. JEANNINGS, USNR, and his crew sighted three 200-foot AKs and 16 smaller vessels in Ameang Bay, Celebes; a 250-foot escort ship at 01-15N, 124-10E on a course of 270 degrees; a 200-foot AK and several smaller vessels in Monado Harbor, Celebes; a 300-foot AK, a 200-foot AK, 3 stack-aft vessels and 3 barges in Lombeh Strait, Celebes; and many small craft scattered along the north coast of Celebes. The men also observed a new 5000-foot airstrip with construction of the runway, taxiways, and dispersal areas nearly complete, at Sidate, Celebes, but saw no aircraft.

ENSIGN P.R. BARKER, USN, spotted three stack-aft vessels -- two 150-foot Sugar Bakers and one Sugar Charlie -- off the southwest end of Siargao Island, Philippine Islands, on a course of 300 degrees. Because the PB4Y's gasoline was running low, no attack was made.

LEUTENANT H.M. DAVES, USNR, sighted two small AKs near the roadstead west of Garraru Island, Palau, and a 3000-ton AK beached on the east side of Ngaruagl Reef, Palau.

22/8/44

Two silver fighters, probably Tojos, attacked the PB4Y flown by LEUTENANT W.B. GARRISON, USNR, at 1000/X 40 miles west of Palau. The two fighters were first sighted at 9000 feet two miles away on a course of 90 degrees true, while the PB4Y was heading 345 degrees true at 8000 feet. The PB4Y made diving turns and headed for cloud cover, but with a 1000-foot altitude advantage the enemy fighters quickly closed on the PB4Y from two o'clock above. The fighters then pressed five attacks, mainly from ten to two o'clock above, passed under the PB4Y to either side, and rolled away without observed firing. The PB4Y's dock turret could fire only a few brief hand-red bursts because the ammunition belting was defective. The belly, tail, and port waist guns appeared to hit one of the fighters as it rolled and passed below. Black smoke streamed briefly from its engine. One of the fighters then stayed at 2500 to 3000 feet at four o'clock while the other made a level attack from six o'clock but fired inaccurately. Both fighters scored a 20mm hit in the after station before the PB4Y reached cloud cover. Elevator and rudder control cables on the side were shot away by the burst, and both pilots had to struggle hard to keep the plane from whipping into an uncontrolled spin until JMM1c A.J. PRYBA, USNR, ingeniously improvised straps and fittings for the cables from emergency stowage fixtures. When the PB4Y emerged from the cloud a few minutes later, the crew glimpsed one of the fighters astern, but no further attacks were made.
LIEUTENANT (Junior grade) G.M. MONROE, USNR, made low-level bombing and strafing runs on three 100-foot schooners anchoring off the west shore of Siace Island, but damage was undetermined despite several near misses. The PB4Y returned to OwI on three engines after the propeller governor of Number 2 engine stuck.

23/8/44

Two nearly black Oscars intercepted the PB4Y under command of LIEUTENANT W. LINDEGEN, USNR, at 1345/K at 06-00E, 135-00E, approximately 90 miles south of Palau. One Oscar remained out of range at four o'clock above, while the other Oscar made two passes out of the sun. The fighter started its attack from twelve o'clock high above, passed on the port quarter, then swung up to make a second overhead run from six o'clock high above. On the first run a 20mm explosion knocked out the Number 1 engine and caused a small fire that burned an 8-inch hole in the lower flap surface. On the second run a 20mm shell burst in the after station and several 7.7mm bullets holed the fuselage at the wing roots. The PB4Y slipped into cloud cover shortly thereafter and the attack was broken off. As the Number 1 engine's propeller could not be feathered, fuel consumption was excessive. Although bombs, ammunition, waist guns, and miscellaneous loose gear were jettisoned, there were only 80 gallons of gasoline left when the plane finally landed at OwI.

On a 1000-mile search across Celebes, LIEUTENANT J.J. COONAN, USNR, and his crew found five stock-acht ships, two freighter transports, and 20 barges in Amorang Harbor. From 8000 feet the PB4Y aimed two 100-pound bombs at the dock freighter transport. The bombs fell 30 feet wide without observed damage. Menger, inaccurate medium antiaircraft fire was received from the ship. In Lembeh Strait the patrol noted one Fox Tare Able, five Fox Tare Charlies, ten Sugar Charlies and many barges, and off Lembeh Island, a Fox Tare Baker escorted on a course of 240 degrees true by a DE and a Zeke. The Zeke did not attack. One large unidentified ship and four smaller ones were reported passing through Bangka Strait. An unidentified plane was seen at Langka Field and considerable activity noted at the Sidahe airstrip. The PB4Y found no convoy in this area.

24/8/44

LIEUTENANT A.P. ANDERSON, USNR, made a special search of Sector 2, from 0305/K to 1347/K; for a convoy reported moving from Zamboanga, Mindanao, to Menado, Celebes.
27/8/44 Returning at 8000 feet from a 1000-mile search to the Solomons Sea, LIEUTENANT R.L. WHITE, USNR, and his PB4Y crew saw from 290 knots Ias from a low-level attack on a 120-foot Sugar Charlie seen entering Amoerang Bay. During the approach the PB4Y drew 40mm fire from the bow of the Sugar Charlie and 12.7mm fire from amidships. Twelve to fifteen 40mm bursts followed the plane by 100-150 feet, but one 12.7mm slug set fire to the ammunition box in the bow turret and another hole the port wing outboard of the Number 1 engine before strafing knocked out the ship's machine guns. Failure of the creep lock on the bomb bay door prevented release of the bombs by the pilot's pickle. After the load had been adjusted, one 100-pound GP bomb was released from 150 feet in a test run on a 60-foot schooner nearby. The bomb overshot 20 feet and did no visible damage. The PB4Y then strafed and riddled the schooner and three 30-foot sailboats in the vicinity.

The attack then shifted to a 150-foot freighter Transport heading into Amoerang Bay at 5 knots. On the first of two beam-on bombing and strafing runs from 150 feet, two 100-pound GP bombs, pickled by the pilot at minimum interval, straddled the ship. On the second run the first 100-pound GP bomb hit amidships at the waterline, and the second 100-pound bomb fell long. The ship was thoroughly strafed on both runs. The freighter's after hatch was covered with canvas and the forward section thatched with palm branches. No antiaircraft fire was received and there was no sign of life on deck. As the PB4Y finally pulled away, the ship was dead in the water and burning.

27/8/44 ENSEIGN J.D. GREGORY, USN, sighted an enemy destroyer speeding at 20 knots at 10-15N, 130-17E, on a course of 285 degrees true. At 8000 feet and three miles away the PB4Y drew fairly accurate heavy antiaircraft fire but was not damaged.

28/8/44 LIEUTENANT H.M. DAVIES, USNR, and his crew observed one destroyer and one small freighter transport aground at Ngauangel Reef, Palau, and one gunboat and one Sugar Baker anchored off the east shore of Kayangel Island, Palau. An Asssociare Class destroyer was seen heading at 20 knots on a course of 160 degrees true in Kossel Passage.

Two olive-brown Oscars approached a PB4Y flown by LIEUTENANT P.J. BRUNEAU, USNR, as it crossed at 8000 feet over the line of the lower Sangihe Islands on the outbound leg of a 1000 mile search sector. As there was no cloud cover, Lieutenant Bruneau pushed his plane into a fast glide, but the Oscars easily overtook the PB4Y at 10-15N, 130-17E. One fighter started a high overhead run from ten o'clock and the other...
began a similar run from one o'clock. Before the fighters had closed to effective range, the PB4Y's top turret fired short bursts and the fighters turned aside. The Oscars stunted out of range for a few minutes, then left.

29/8/44

LIEUTENANT W. LINDGREN, USNR, and his PB4Y crewmen were intercepted at 3000 feet by three dark, olive-brown Oscars west of Lembeh Strait. Celebes, at 100/K. The Oscars, approaching from the direction of Mapangat Airfield with an altitude advantage of 2000 feet, made several half-hearted runs. Lieutenant Lindgren dived the plane toward the water at the first contact to counter possible overhead attacks. Fire from the PB4Y's turrets effectively discouraged the fighters' gunnery runs. Each Oscar, however, apparently carried four phosphorus bombs and the enemy fighters seemed more interested in dropping these bombs than in shooting. The bombs were released from 500- to 1000 feet above, mainly during overtaking runs from astern or from either quarter, though two or three were dropped in runs from ten o'clock to two o'clock. At least two of the dozen bombs would have hit the PB4Y had it not been skidded violently. For the most part, the Oscar pilots seemed inexperienced and lacking in coordinated tactics. After about ten minutes' contact with the PB4Y, one of the Oscars suddenly disappeared. PB4Y crewmen in the after stations reported seeing a large splash and smoke, possibly accounting for the missing Oscar. The other two fighters did not break off from the PB4Y for half an hour. The PB4Y escaped untouched from the combat.

The only ship observed in Lembeh Strait during this search was an Itsukushima Class Minelayer, which threw up a few rounds of inaccurate heavy antiaircraft fire.

29/8/44

Flying North along the eastern coast of Mindanao at 1145/K

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER H.B. ROBINSON, USNR, and his PB4Y crew sighted from 7000 feet 11 small vessels (Sugar Charlies and Sugar Dogs) six miles away at 08-10N, 126-30E, at 1145/K. The convoy was heading south a half-mile off shore at a speed of five knots. Nine ships were in line astern and two maneuvered individually. Two level bombing runs with the Norden sight were made at 7000 feet. Three 100-pound GP bombs, armed in the plane with instantaneous fuses, were salvoed on the lead ship, a Sugar Charlie. All three bombs were near misses at the bow. On the second run, the two remaining 100-pound bombs were aimed in salvo at the fourth and fifth ship in the line. Both bombs straddled the fourth ship but caused no visible damage.
The PBYs flown on the first ship which had lost headway, and strafed in four gun fire broke out, and the ship regained some headway and turned toward the beach. When last seen, it was still burning. Meanwhile, the other ships had changed course and swung in toward the shore.

Fourteen miles farther north, the PBY crew sighted an 80-foot lugger and strafed it six times. Some of the cargo on deck burned readily during the strafing. When the PBY finally broke off the attack, the lugger was burning fiercely and sinking, and bodies of the crew could be seen in the water.

The only antiaircraft fire encountered during the mission were meager light machinegun bursts from the forward side of the lead ship in the convoy.

**VB-101 OPERATIONS DURING AUGUST, 1944**

PBYs from Bombing Squadron 101 covered fully five search sectors of 300 to 1000 miles from Mokerang Airfield, Los Negros, each day from 1 August through 18 August. For the most part the sectors were quiet, but bombing and strafing of Jap installations in the sectors occasionally relieved the monotony of negative searches. Fais Island was bombed seven times and strafed four; Ngulu was attacked twice.

On 19 August, after completing five search missions from Los Negros the day before, VB-101 began operating from Owi Island and sharing the new Plan "Easy" searches with VB-115. During these searches VB-101 planes sighted 22 enemy warships, 1 hospital ship, 38 freighter transports, 67 Sugar Charlies and Sugar Dogs, 8 luggers, and three large sailing vessels. From 19 August to 31 August VB-101 aircraft flew 65 search missions from Owi. Twenty-seven of these searches covered 800-mile sectors, 22 were from1000 miles, 11 for 850 miles, and 5 for 750 miles. Among the 22 enemy warships spotted were nine destroyers or DEs, 1 minelayer, 3 gunboats, 1 Toshima Class minelayer, and 8 armed launches. The hospital ship Fusou Maru was sighted proceeding into Palau on 25 August.

As a result of VB-101 attacks during this Owi period, one Sugar Charlie was sunk and five luggers, one barge, and two large sailing vessels were seriously damaged. Three times enemy fighters intercepted the PBYs. On two occasions the interceptors were two Zekes and on the third occasion, two Zekes plus two Hampes. None of the fighters showed any desire to punch home its attacks. An Emily was chased for 20 minutes before it escaped into cloud cover. Three Vals and six Rufes also were sighted but only at a distance.

Here is the narrative of the squadron action during August:

1/8/44

The PBY flown by LIEUTENANT A.Y. BELLSEY, USNR, unloaded five 100-pound bombs on Angaur Island, Palau, with unreported results. Four Hampes chased the PBY but would not press an attack. This unwillingness to close and kill also marked Jap interception in subsequent strikes. When LIEUTENANT
COMMANDEER R. T. SHERMER, in his five Toradoes, occupied the Porku Atoll and on 16 August when LIEUTENANT E. A. MAC{C}LAREN, OBE, and three Zokes and four Hampes escorting two Whithy out of Palau Island, Palau. The enemy fighters made only a few short-scared runs, all breaking away on 1200 nose.

10/8/44 LIEUTENANT (Junior grade) G. FORBES, USNR, and his PB4Y crew attacked the phosphate plant on Palau Island. Three 250-pound bombs were dropped on the buildings, which also were strafed several times from low level. During these strafing runs seven 40-foot wooden barges were seen under a shed on the beach.

11/8/44 LIEUTENANT R.C. ORTHWEB, USNR, bombed the seven 40-foot wooden barges sighted the day before on the beach at Palau Island with 500-pound bombs, but results were not known.

14/8/44 LIEUTENANT (Junior grade) E.H. LEWIS, JR., USNR, dropped incendiaries on buildings near the barge shed at Palau Island and started several fires.

COMMANDEER J.A. MILLER, USN, squadron commanding officer, made a thorough reconnaissance of the perimeter of Babelthup Island, Palau, and dropped five 100-pound bombs on the bauxite plant near Ngardmau, without reported results. The PB4Y also heavily strafed buildings around the strip at Airai on the southeastern side of Babelthup Island. Heavy and light antiaircraft fire was inaccurate and caused no damage to the plane.

16/8/44 LIEUTENANT (Junior grade) G. FORBES, USNR, and his PB4Y crew returned to the barge shed on the beach at Palau Island and dropped five 250-pound bombs that blow the roof off the target. Four barges were reported destroyed and three badly damaged.

19/8/44 LIEUTENANT (Junior grade) G. FORBES, USNR, and his PB4Y crew, flying out of VS-191's new Owl base, made the first daylight reconnaissance over the inner Davao Gulf and Davao Town but saw no action.

20/8/44 COMMANDEER J.A. MILLER, USN, squadron commanding officer, bombed and strafed two luggers off Pisco Point, Monado Bay, Celebes. The attack drove both luggers ashore.

21/8/44 The PB4Y under command of LIEUTENANT R.E. BOWEN, USNR, made three runs at 8000 feet on a 125-foot Sugar Charlie
After 19 months outside the continental limits of the United States, Patrol Bombing Squadron 11 completed its tour of duty in this area 23 November.

The current phase of this tour got underway 22 July when VPB-11 returned from Western Australia to the New Guinea area, where its PB4Ys were assigned to anti-sub duty. Two weeks later, it was decided by CTG 73.2 that in order adequately to cover the sea lanes and coastlines of the Molucca Passage, Celebes Sea, Banda and Morotai Seas and the approaches to the Philippines, it would be necessary to increase the number of nightly Black Cat missions from three (being conducted by VPB-34) to five.

VPB-11 was ordered to furnish the two planes and crews nightly, in addition to its anti-sub operations, and on 6 August the squadron began Black Cat strikes, operating from Woendi Lagoon. The duty was not new to the squadron or its veteran patrol plane commanders. In ten weeks of operation, extending from 12 September 1943 to 22 November 1943, the squadron had been among the pioneers in changing the primary mission of the night flying Catalinas from reconnaissance to offensive strikes.

The first phase of VPB-11's 1944 tour of Black-Catting kept its planes operating from Woendi until 22 August. Handicapped by little or no moonlight and the distances to be covered before there was any chance of contacting enemy shipping, the Cats found little opportunity to exercise their talents during this period. Then came the move 2 August to Middleburg Island where the crews were based aboard the U.S.S. ORCA and the U.S.S. HALF MOON. From that time to 17 September, with enemy shipping lanes and ports more accessible, VPB-11 poured it on. Operations were suspended 17 September at Middleburg and resumed at Morotai 19 September.

In addition to Black Cat operations, the squadron during August and September assigned three planes and four crews, to anti-sub work and averaged one patrol a day. A total of 1,400 hours of this type of duty was flown in September. Crews not engaged in anti-sub work were assigned to air-sea rescue after the move to Morotai.

7 Sept - Lieutenant Covey seriously damaged a 700/800-ton camouflaged loaded with lumber in Amevanger Bay.

8 Sept - Lieutenant (JG) James D. Dyer, USN, sank a 10,000-ton tanker in Malusan Bay, Basilan Island. Medium anti-aircraft fire was encountered.

10 Sept - Lieutenant (JG) Hand's Cat beached a FOX TARE CHARLIE off Kasa Island, and damaged a large barge and a SUGAR CHARLIE on the south side of Babi Island.
26 Oct - Tawitawi Island was the target as a Japanese cruiser sent by Lieutenant Clark straffed trucks, boats, launchers, personnel and supplies with unobserved results. He went in at 50 feet and was hit with heavy, light automatic fire. The Vega Venture was hit six times by small caliber fire, the oil cooler and rear main gas line being punctured. The gas line hit rendered a 120-gallon tank useless. By conserving fuel, Lieutenant Clark managed to return to Morotai with 70 gallons of gasoline, besides the unused tank.

27 Oct - Lieutenant Bradshaw encountered three PETES 20 miles east of Leyte. His crew made four passes at the enemy aircraft but the guns jammed and results were negative.

28 Oct - Lieutenant William J. Decker, USNR; Lieutenant (jg) Theodore R. Thornburg, USNR; Porter; Hazel; Brockman; Robert G.; Garcia; Ender; and Andrews, John L., failed to return from a 600-mile sector search east of the Philippines in PBY-48810, and subsequently were declared missing in action. Several search planes were flown in this sector for three days following, but no trace was found of the missing crew.

31 Oct - Lieutenant Richard G. Johnston, USNR, and crew dropped two bombs on enemy installations on Tawitawi Island, the Philippines.

The squadron is regularly flying five patrols. "A" and "B" go to 575 miles, "D" to 330 miles and "E" and "F" to 600 miles. The plane load is comprised of 1530 gallons of gas, a crew of six, 2150 rounds of .50 caliber, 2400 rounds of .30 caliber and six 100-pound 4-5 second delay bombs.

VFP-34 OPERATIONS FOR SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER

After its tour of Black Cat duty aboard the U.S.S. ORCA at Middleburg Island in August, Patrol Bombing Squadron 34 was relieved in September by Patrol Bombing Squadron 33. The former outfit reported to Fleet Air Wing 10, based at Los Negros, and its crews were sent on rehabilitation leave, in increments of five crews at a time. Crows remaining at Los Negros were trained in anti-submarine warfare, consisting of lectures by personnel of CTG 70.2 and flights. A few negative searches were flown.

During the first week in October, four crews were sent to Woondi for anti-submarine operation under Fleet Air Wing 17. These operations consisted of one day and one night sector searches to the northwest of Bick. On 15 October, the squadron commenced moving to Woondi, awaiting a call to the Philippines. Meanwhile, anti-submarine flights were continued.
19 Oct - Lieutenant Herbert W. Gange, USNR, destroyed a brig at Mindanao by dropping three 130-pounds bombs dally.

20 Oct - Lieutenant (jg) Gordon L. Pool, USNR; Lieutenant (jg) Benjamin L. Lyford, USNR; Lieutenant (jg) Denson, Carl H.; Stewart, Wayne H.; and Bordani, Joseph B., in plane number 34889 crashed out of control, presumably as a result of anti-aircraft fire at Labo, Mindanao, burning and killing all hands. This plane was with two other PV's piloted by Lieutenant Dudley G. Walton, USNR. Lieutenant (jg) Pool evidently spotted a RUP of the water. He was seen to pull up in a steep turn at 800 feet, fall off one wing, crash, and burn. Lieutenant Bradshaw then torched the RUP with .50 caliber fire.

20 Oct - Lieutenant (jg) William B. Taylor, USNR; Ensign Robert A. Dolop, USNR; Ensign Kenneth R. Ambulo; USNR: Robinson, George V.; Harris, Francis R.; Layton, Earl A.; Kendall, John R.; failed to return from combat area patrol toward North Borneo in plane number 34799, and subsequently were declared missing in action.

20 Oct - Lieutenant William T. Sorensen, USN, and his PV crew struck at Sangi Sanga Island where they blow up a dock, sank two loaded barges and strafed living quarters. Return fire put eight hits in the PV, slightly wounding the radiomen, Augie L. Montgomery.

21 Oct - One SUGAR CHARLIE was fired and another was left dead in the water near Sangi Sanga Island as a result of bombing and strafing attacks by Lieutenant Hadley M. Lewis, USNR, and his crew.

21 Oct - Lieutenant Emil B. Henson, USNR, was the plane commander of a PV which strafed five barges off the northwest tip of Bup, the Philippines, sinking two and blowing up a like number.

22 Oct - Lieutenant Erling G. Olson, USNR, and Lieutenant Charlie Hanley, USNR; dropped eleven 100-pound bombs on warehouses at Gorontalo, Celebes, torching one warehouse and blowing up part of another.

23 Oct - Lieutenant Sorensen scored near misses with three bombs on warehouses at Gorontalo Bay, Celebes.

23 Oct - Three small wooden craft were strafed off north Borneo by the crew of a PV flown by Lieutenant (jg) John P. Barber, USNR.

25 Oct - Lieutenant James E. Clark, USNR, strafed and sank two barges and bombed SUGAR CHARLIE under camouflages at Sangi Sanga Island. Bombing results were not observed.
VFP-146 SWINGS INTO ACTION.

After four months of search duty, operating out of Piti, Guam, and Admiralty Islands, Patrol Bombing Squadron 146, with 16 planes and 16 crews, moved to Morotai 16 October and the next day its PVS began offensive operations in the Philippines-Hormo-Sorhebes area. With Lieutenant Commander Jesse P. Robinson, USN, Commanding Officer, the outfit cut its teeth early. It took some punishment. By the end of the month, one of its PVS had been shot down, burning and killing all hands; two others failed to return from bombing strikes and their crews were subsequently declared missing in action. In addition, four planes were holed by enemy fire. A summary of some of the missions follows:

19 Oct.--- Lieutenant Commander Robinson and the crew of his PVS sighted an airport under construction, a seaplane base and three JAKEs and one PETE on the water at Sanga Sanga Island, Sulu Archipelago, the Philippines. One JAKE was moored alongside a wooden seaplane ramp. On the first run, two 100 pound, 4-9 second delay bombs were dropped on the ramp from an altitude of 30 feet, with the results on the JAKE unobserved. A loaded personnel barge was strafed, hit and run aground on a reef by the second run. Living quarters on the island were strafed heavily with .30 caliber and .50 caliber on the third run. One of the JAKEs was strafed on the next run and on the fifth three 100 pound bombs scored on a fuel dump, causing an explosion and large fire which destroyed the PETE. On the sixth and final run, the third JAKE was strafed and set on fire. The bombing runs were made at extremely low altitude and the strafing done from 1,000 down to 50 feet. On the three final runs, 13.7 anti-aircraft from approximately six guns was encountered, beginning light and inaccurate and becoming intense and accurate on the last run. The cock-sock caught the port engine, cutting the hydraulic line and severing one engine mount at the firewall. Upon his return to Morotai, Lieutenant Commander Robinson found that the wheel emergency extension gear would only allow the port wheel to trip from the up locks. He circled over the base for 45 minutes trying to lower the starboard wheel and then brought his PVS on the port wheel. He made a full stall landing at 75 knots and kept the starboard wing up until he lost aileron control at 58 knots. All switches were cut and the throttles put at idle cut-off as soon as the plane touched the ground. The PVS ground-looped, but no one was injured. (On a visit over the strike area the next day, another pilot of VFP-146 observed the second JAKE turned over near the beach, while the third was burned out.)
29 Sept. -- A 10,000-ton tanker and a 300-ton cargo ship were blockaded in San Rafael Bay, Bataan Island, by a DX conducted by Lieutenant (jg) William H. Noon, Jr., USNR. On the first run, a 500-pound bomb was 300 yards short of the tanker. On the second, a 500-pound bomb landed on the after-deck house. A third run put a 500-pounder just off the port bow. A near miss was observed on the smaller ship. In addition, 1300 rounds of .50 and .50 caliber were used in strafing. Due to the shortage of gasoline supply, the tankers lost six or seven feet by the storm. 

30 Sept. -- Lieutenant (jg) Cummings harassed Guimba airfield. A 500-pound bomb landed in a drop-off just in front of a landing aircraft, probably damaging it; another 500-pounder was dropped alongside the strip. The remaining 500-pound bombs were lost in the L-10 bombarihield. The 20 remaining bombs loaded in two 100-pounders and seven 50-pound fragmentation bombs were dropped on enemy gun positions. Although caught in minor upsurges of strafing, the plane was not hit.
About 0845/1, 9 October, Lieutenant (jg) Hall, pilot of one of the three Catalinas, made radio contact with Lieutenant Gardner, a close friend and squadron mate. He immediately requested Lieutenant Gardner to send MO's on 500 kilocycles so that he could use the downed Cat. The signals, at first, came in weak and intermittent on a bearing of 255° true, but grew stronger steadily as the rescue plane flew along this bearing. After going on the 255° bearing for 80 miles, Lieutenant Hall sighted the stricken Cat a half mile off his port side.

At 0935/1, Lieutenant (jg) Hall made smooth landing in rough sea. After the IFF equipment had been turned out of fuse, and all confidential matter removed, the crew was transferred to a rubber raft to the rescue plane. It headed into the heavy swells and by 0955 had bounced clear of the waves. Lieutenant (jg) Hall circled the downed Cat and had his gunners strafe and sink her. Five hundred rounds of .50 caliber and 300 rounds of .30 caliber ammunition were expended in the strafing. At the take-off, Lieutenant (jg) Hall estimated his arrival time at the USS TANGER to be 1330. One minute ahead of schedule, he set his plane down on the water off the seaplane tender.

Said Lieutenant Gardner: "When I get to Frisco, I'm going to throw a party in honor of my best girl --- that beautiful "Gibson Girl".

VF-29 SWITCHES TO BLOCK-CUTTING

After completing its tour of rescue duty, VF-101 moved to Koror and on 1 October changed its designation to VF-29. Raised aboard the USS H.M.S. HOOD, its PBYs began conducting nightly поиск over the islands against Jap shipping in the Philippines-Sulu-Southern China Sea. Some of these included:

23 Sept. ---Two planes operated -- with Lieutenant (jg) Joseph G. Cullins, USNR, and Lieutenant (jg) Gardner L. Hart, USNR, as patrol plane commanders. The former, on a sweep southwest of Mindanao, strafed a convoy of seven, small, cargo ships off Camalote Bay with 1600 rounds of .30 and .50 caliber. A 300-ton cargo ship was set on fire. The second PBY missed a 1500-ton freighter-transport with five bombs at 03-25 N, 122-00 W, but strafed ships with 900 rounds of .30 and .50 caliber, and secured hits with two 23-pound parafraze, results unobserved.
Five minutes after the forced landing, the "putt-putt," the auxiliary power unit usually so rugged and reliable, failed. All efforts to repair it were in vain. To get enough power to initiate a distress call on the plane's radio, the pilot had to turn the port engine. This, Lieutenant Gardner found, alarmed the whale violently against the hull, opened the seams, threatened to split the hull.

Meanwhile, Lieutenant (jg) William H. Simon, Jr., USNR, who was on a mission to northeast Borneo, received word from the task unit Commander to search for the plane. At about 0115/1, 8 October, Lieutenant Simon located the PB4Y and provided cover until daylight. Three times, Lieutenant (jg) Simon attempted to hit his plane down, but each time hit a wave and burned off. He continued to orbit, waiting for daylight to try again. Dawn, however, brought a frontal storm, forcing him to return to the USS TANGEIR without completing the rescue.

At 0900/1, 8 October, Lieutenant Gardner started his port engine again and sent the following message in code over the reconnaissance frequency: "Request daylight rendezvous tomorrow 05-45 N 123-00 E. Will transmit 40's (on) 500 kilocycles. Continue listening watch on reconnaissance (frequency)." The message was relayed to the USS TANGEIR by the Army Air Force Station at Qalid.

The following morning, Lieutenant Gardner had the "Gibson Girl" brought out. On the wing, but the wind had subsided with the storm, and the kite that was to carry the antenna aloft would not fly. He took the kite and ran from one wing tip to the other several times, but still was unable to make it stay airborne. The balloon that came with the "Gibson Girl" was then inflated with hydrogen and was sent aloft bearing the antenna. The men spelled each other cranking the generator in order to maintain a continuous flow of current for transmission. The morning dragged on, but with improving weather the men's hopes were still high.

In the meantime, two rescue Catalinas in addition to Lieutenant Simon's Black Cat had been sent out from the USS TANGEIR the morning the plane had been forced down. One Catalina ran low on fuel and was forced to return to base before reaching the estimated position of the drowned crew. The other searched the area with negligible results until chased by a Zoko, painted in a red and zigzag brown. A FB4Y had also searched, but found nothing. On the second morning, three rescue Catalinas took off between 0100 and 0325/1, to seek to rendezvous at daybreak with the crew on the crippled plane.
"GIBSON GIRL" AGAIN PROVES NORTH

The rescue experiences of Patrol Bombing Squadron 29 during its tour of duty outlined above stood that outfit in good stead only in October, when a Catalina flown by Lieutenant Joseph T. Gardner, USNR, Executive Officer, was forced down only 30 miles from enemy territory in the Philippines. The squadron sent several planes to the assistance of Lieutenant Gardner and his crew of nine, and the downed plane was finally located by another Catalina flown by Lieutenant (jg) Jack S. Hall, USNR, wh "honored" to radio signals transmitted by a "Gibson Girl". Lieutenant (jg) Hall managed the open-sea landing perfectly, picked up the 10 fellow members of his squadron, and brought them safely back to their base, aboard the USS TANGIER, at Morotai.

Here's a story of the rescue in more detailed form:

At 2215/1, 7 October, during a Black Cat anti-shipping mission in the Sulu archipelago, Lieutenant Gardner, patrol plane commander of a PBY-5 (squadron aircraft number 4 and Bureau of Aeronautics number 08143), and his crew of nine were forced down in enemy waters approximately 30 miles in a bearing of 160° true from Karangante Point, Jolo Island, after failure of the starboard engine.

Lieutenant Gardner's Black Cat was flying toward Jolo Island at an altitude of 1000 feet at 05-25 knots 120-280 when suddenly the plane's starboard engine dropped to 500 R. P. M., then cut out without even a cough. The pilot pushed the manifold pressure on the port engine up to 50 inches of mercury and increased the R.P.M. to 2800, but the Catalina slowed to 65 knots and lost altitude rapidly. He ordered the crew to "get everything off" to lighten the aircraft. The crew began jettisoning bombs, waist guns, ammunition, and loose equipment, which in the rush accidentally included the plane's two sea anchors. The Catalina, however, continued to drop. All the bombs were put on "safe" and released from only 200 feet. Two of those, apparently a 500-pounder and a 100-pounder, exploded when they hit the water, but luckily did not damage the Black Cat as it slipped down for a forced night landing. From an estimated altitude of 100 feet, Lieutenant Gardner could make out whitecaps in the dark below and found he was swinging around to the right and heading downwind. It appeared to be as good an approach to the rough sea as any. Even if he had wished anchor, it was too late.

The plane struck the water without too sharp a blow, bounced high, then dropped hard against the waves. Streams spurted through three holes in the bow and two or three more in the aviation mechanic's compartment where the sudden impact of the sea against the thin Catalina hull had shorn off rivets.
of a violent explosion. Intense, medium anti-aircraft fire blanketed the Cat as it went over Mendac, but did no damage.

30 Aug. -- Lieutenant Paxton flew over Anbon Bay, Anbon Island, 600 feet, just below a 9/10 cloud cover. Inside the entrance to the bay, a surface contact was indicated six miles away on the radar scope, but faded off at four miles. As the Black Cat continued on along the coast, at 1130/K, Lieutenant Paxton saw a medium freighter transport. It was identified as a Fox Trader Charlie and was on a course of 240° true about 200 to 300 yards from shore. The Black Cat started a stern-to-bow attack, but veered off when it became apparent the approach was poor. It swung around, came in on a starboard arc, and released four 500-pound bombs and two parachute fuzed 150-foot. The 500-pounders overshot, but the closest bomb burst was within a few feet of the ship's stern. Then two 100-pound GP, 4-5 second-delay bombs and two more parachute fuzed 150-foot were dropped in a search run along the ship's track. The parachutes fell wide, but the 100-pounders burst close off the freighter transport's port bow. As the Black Cat came low over the ship in several strafing attacks, the plane crew saw that the ship was listing sharply, had a large hole in its stern, and was drifting broadside toward the shore. It ran aground 45 minutes after the first attack and was still there the following night. During the attack, 500 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition and 500 rounds of .30 caliber ammunition were expended. There was no return fire.

31 Aug. -- Over the northern shore of the Ocolobes at 0130/K on a clear, moonlit night, Lieutenant Commander Utgoff sighted a 300-ton stock-cist vessel heading west and hugging the coast at 00-55 ML24-00 E. He dropped six 500-pound GP, 4-5 second-delay bombs off each of the first two runs, one 500-pound GP, 4-5 second-delay bomb off the last run, and on each of the last two runs, two 100-pound GP, 4-5 second-delay bombs. The hilly shoreline impeded a good approach and the closest burst was a near miss aft of the ship in a stern-to-bow run. The vessel listed, lost way and began to settle by the stern.

Several of the eight 23-pound instantaneous perforator rounds dropped from the waist-gun blisters, fell close aboard and possibly increased the damage to the vessel and probably sank. After the attack, 300 rounds each of .50 caliber and .30 caliber ammunition were expended at the vessel at a nearby barge and at six other barges scattered along the coast near Mendac and Mendac. Strafing results were not observed. There was no return fire.
26 Aug. -- Lieutenant (jg) Melvin S. Wassery, USNR, and his plane bombed and sank a 500-ton tanker off Nombre de Dios. A dozen, light anti-aircraft fire from the shore caused no damage.

28 Aug. -- A Black Cat commanded by Lieutenant (jg) Joe F. Bell, USNR, bombed a 5500/6500-ton freighter-transport in Nombre Bay and scored a hit or a very near miss with a 500-pound GP, 4-5 second-delay bomb and a direct hit with a 23-pound instantaneous parachute. When the plane left the area, the ship was listing sharply. The anti-aircraft fire was encountered from shore batteries as well as from the ship.

29 Aug. -- Lieutenant (jg) Garrett, searching the north side of Nombre Bay, Colón, on a moonlit night while flying over a short distance behind the coastline, found a cluster of small craft near the north shore. The Cat dropped a 500-pound GP, 4-5 second-delay bomb and a 23-pound instantaneous parachute on this concentration with unobserved results. The crew then sighted a Sugar Charlie about half a mile off the beach. A wide circle over the shoreline put the Cat in position to make a run into the bay, which was shrouded by a heavy 6/10 cloud cover. Half a mile and a half from the target, the pilot started a glide from 1000 feet and released the 500-pounder and one parachute from 100 feet as the bomb swept over the ship's starboard beam. The 500-pound bomb landed amidships. The Sugar Charlie blew up. Other targets along the Bay's north shore were next. Two 100-pound GP, 4-5 second-delay bombs were dumped in the center of a group of anchored boats; two parachutes hit barracks on Cape Pico, and 100 rounds of .50-caliber ammunition were fired at a two-masted schooner. The Black Cat now began a hunt for bigger game and flew low over the coast toward the heavily defended dock area at Nombre Town, in the near corner of the bay. The crew found another Sugar Charlie at anchor off the docks. The Cat circled inland behind the town and climbed to 1600 feet. Panning down in a steep glide, the plane passed directly over the town and, at 170 knots, approached the bow of a ship 100 yards off shore and dropped the 500-pound bomb burst under the ship's keel. The ship disintegrated into a cloud of debris on the coral shallows.
dropped from 40 feet without causing damage. The 500-pound instantaneous parafangs were dropped from the waist-gun blisters, but failed to explode because of the low altitude at which they were released. The plane then climbed to 600 feet and again aimed two 500-pound bombs, two 100-pound bombs and two parafangs, but all overshot. The nearest miss, a 100-pound bomb, exploded 30 feet from the ship. Both ships appeared to be dead in the water at 11:30. No return fire was encountered.

22 Aug. -- Lieutenant Commander Utgoff and Lieutenant Marte flew the tow Catalinas that were the first to penetrate the Philippine Islands since the evacuation in 1942. As they searched the southern Philippines, they saw many lights and several planes airborne in the Davao area. None of the planes, however, attacked. Several radar runs were made on a dozen ships scattered along the east shore and the entrance to Sarangani Bay and at the north of Davao Gulf, but poor visibility prevented exploitation of the attacks. Moderate, inaccurate, light anti-aircraft fire from one escorting vessel caused no damage. At 0300, a hospital ship was sighted at 09-34N, 125-04E, sailing on a course of 090° true.

26 Aug. -- Lieutenant Commander Utgoff flew into Mondo Bay, Colobo, at 0425, to search for reported enemy shipping and found five small vessels anchored along the north shore. The Black Cat sighted out a 1000/1500-ton freighter-transport anchored a quarter mile from the beach and closed overland to attack from an altitude of 100 feet. The bombardier released two 100-pound and two 500-pound GP, 4-5 second-delay bombs while the Cat was making a steep right turn to correct the heading on the target. The first 100-pound fell short on the stern quarter; the first 500-pound caused a direct hit amidships, and the remaining two bombs overshot. Two 23-pound instantaneous parafangs, dropped from the waist-gun blisters, went short. On two more, similar runs, the racked bombs hung; they did not fall off the wing sections after the bomb release was pressed. Three of the four parafangs missed, but on the fourth run one parafang exploded on the superstructure. A 40-cal. shortage and approaching dusk forced the pilots to leave the area immediately after the third attack; the ship had been severely damaged by the 500-pound bomb hit and probably sank. No anti-aircraft fire from ship or shore installations was noted.
4 Aug. --- Lieutenant (jg) Darwin R. Day, USNR, and his Black Cat crew, searching southern Halmahera, bombed and assisted and sunk a 300 ton cargo vessel in the harbor of Djononga Island. After a 500 pound GP, 4-5 second delay bomb, released in a low-level attack, had struck the vessel, the Cat finished off the sinking ship with several strafing runs.

4 Aug. --- Lieutenant (jg) William L. Garrett, Jr., USNR, and his PBY crew at 0250/K damaged a 75 foot schooner in Boana Strait, Ceram, by parafraugs and strafing. Two hours later at 01-50 S 126-00 E, south of Obi Major Island, they sank another sailing vessel of approximately the same size, with a 500 pound GP, 4-5 second delay bomb.

5 Aug. --- At 0115/K, during a search of the south coast of Ceram, Lieutenant (jg) Lloyd L. Hayes, USNR, bombed and missed a small tanker heading southwest at 03-26 S 127-05 E. No damage was seen and there was no anti-aircraft fire.

10 Aug. --- Lieutenant Paxton and his crew, at 0030/K, dropped four 500 pound GP, 4-5 second delay bombs spaced at 40 feet and two 23 pound instantaneous parafraugs at a 500/1000 ton tanker in Koeo Bay, Halmahera Island, about mid-way between Koeo Town and Lolobata Airdrome. The bombs were released at 200 feet as the Black Cat was making a sharp turn. All missed and caused no observed damage.

11 Aug. --- Lieutenant Commander Uttoff, as hunting in Koeo Bay, Halmahera Island, at 600 feet on a dark moonless night, and circling clockwise around the entire area, when his Black Cat crew began inaccurate, light anti-aircraft fire from one or two unidentified vessels beached near Koeo Town. As the plane headed for the entrance to Koeo Bay, radar showed a surface contact five miles ahead. Guided by radar to within half a mile of the target, the pilot sighted a dark object on the water, then another near by, apparently two medium-sized merchant vessels. The plane circled, made its run from the northeast on one of the ships and went into a steep glide from 600 feet. Darkness caused the heading into the ship to be misjudged, and the Cat passed 50 feet astern of its target. Two 100 pound and two 500 pound GP, 4-5 second delay bombs were
1 Aug. — A Black Cat flown by Lieutenant Commander V. Utgoff, USN, Commanding Officer, sighted a 75/100-ton lugger underway off the northwest coast of Anson at 0130/K. One of the two 23-pound instantaneous-fused parafrijes, dropped in salvo from 100 feet in a gliding run, scored a direct hit. Although the night was clear and moonlit, specific damage could not be determined.

...Continuing on patrol in the Anson-Joran-Biscoe area, Lieutenant Commander Utgoff’s Cat got a radar pips at 0300/K, indicating a vessel seven miles away at 02:54/B, 127-162°, 22 miles north of Joran, 25 miles NE. As the moon was setting, the Cat circled to get from moon. The TBV crew sighted the ship, identified as a 250/300-foot destroyer escort, heading on a course of 150° true at 20 knots, gliding down from 1,000 feet to 100 feet in a run on the warship’s port bow, the Black Cat dropped four 500-pound GP, 4-5 second-delay bombs, spaced at 30 feet from the wing racks, and two 23-pound instantaneous parafrijes out of the waist gun blister. The starboard 500-pound bombs fell astern of the ship, but the first port bomb burst against the port stern of the ship at the waterline, lifted the stern clear of the water and skidded it to starboard. The second port bomb overshot. One of the two parafrijes exploded and blew the warship’s port side, but damage from this explosion was not observed. The destroyer escort exhibited a heavy cloud of black smoke and began circling to port. The ship was still circling slowly, apparently seriously damaged, when the Black Cat left the area. There was no anti-aircraft fire.

4 Aug. — Lieutenant Norman L. Paxton, USNR, and his Black Cat crew were searching off Anson Bay, Anson Island, just below an 800-foot overcast when three 300-ton tankers were sighted at 0230/K about a quarter of a mile off shore, proceeding slowly from 03-45 B, 128-11 B, toward the entrance of Anson Bay. The TBV made a shallow, mile-long glide from 400 feet down to 150 feet and in a low-altitude attack dropped four 500-pound GP, 4-5 second-delay bombs, spaced at 30 feet from the interval, and the 23-pound instantaneous parafrijes at one of the vessels. The first bomb hit and ships and caused an explosion, followed by fires on deck. The ship sank in 10 minutes and left an oil slick about a mile long. All the destruction, apparently, was done by the first bomb. The three other 500-pound bombs overshot and the parafrijes fell without observed results. Lieutenant Paxton then made seven low-altitude runs on the two surviving tankers. Three of five more parafrijes, hurled from the waist gun blister, resulted in near misses. Three hundred rounds of .50-caliber ammunition were fired at
The marksmanship of the gunners was notable. The bow team as usual proved very effective. It was manned by Lieutenant William H. Road, Jr., A-V(3), USNR, squadron gunnery officer, and its performance was exceptional. It was estimated by the squadron that at least 900 of the 1000 rounds which he fired found their target.

**VPB-34 SINKS 28000 TONS**

The squadron operated out of Woendi Bay on, New Guinea, until its tender, the USS ORG-, sailed for Middelburg Island, New Guinea, 21 August 1944. VPB-34 shifted operations to this new location 22 August and continued Black Cat missions from the Middelburg area until the squadron's second tour of duty ended 1 September 1944.

During this six-week period, VPB-34 cost the Japanese 28000 tons of merchant shipping sunk or destroyed and a destroyer escort and 1500 tons of shipping seriously damaged. With the January-February duty included, the squadron's Black Cats have sunk or destroyed a total of 98000 tons of cargo ships, seriously damaged four destroyers and an escort vessel, and destroyed or damaged more than 75 barges and small craft.

The day-to-day sinking of Jap shipping since January, 1944, the decline of convoys, the use of fewer and smaller ships closer along shore under the protection of rugged coasts or anchored at night in well-defended harbors, the greater distance necessary to fly during the second tour to find enemy shipping, and the actual deterioration of both aircraft and equipment, account for the difference in score between the first tour and the second. The hunt has been harder, but once the target has been found the Black Cat has struck with a sureness and a power that refute a statistical comparison of the first tour's 70000-ton total with the second tour's lesser 28000 tons.

The squadron flew 914 hours in the cause of 86 operational flights, 111.8 hours in utility flights, and 59.7 hours in test flights, during the period covered by this report. Radar, instrument or engine trouble prevented completion of, or curtailed, 25 of the 86 operational flights. The only aircraft lost was squadron Black Cat no. 62, Bureau No. 84349, which hit a floating object when it was landing in the dark at Woendi Bay on after returning because of radar failure. Despite efforts to keep the plane afloat until it could be hoisted aboard ship for repair, the aircraft sank, but none of the crew was injured.
"Accurate strafing fire on three Bettys warming up on Wolf Field caused one to explode and the other two to catch fire. A return visit, a few minutes later, caused one already burning to explode and the second to break open and catch fire.

Thus, in an aircraft action report, Naval Combat Squadrons 101 sums up an action by a PBY, piloted by Commander William A. Miller, USN, Commanding Officer.

The PBY, loaded with twenty 250-pound bombs, took off from Owd at 2300, 30 September 1944, on a 1400-mile round trip completing the outward leg of the sector. Five miles north of Cabo de la Vela, a concentration of seaplanes which had been photographed three days before.

Fifteen seaplanes were mobbed off the point. The PBY with a setting of 45 inches and 2500 RPM, indicated 200 knots over the run. All 20 of the AN MK 30 bombs, with MK 112A1 fuses set for four-five second delays, were released with 30 foot spacing, at 0745. Two Bettys were blown up by direct hits. One Betty was straddled by bomb bursts, heavily strafed and lost burning fiercely. At least five other Bettys were damaged by near misses and heavy strafing.

At 0748, a 125-foot lugger was strafed five miles southeast of Cabo de la Vela. Apparently laden with gasoline, she exploded in an inferno of flames. At 0751, three Bettys turning in caught fire. Fifty Japs near the planes were strafed.

At 0753, from 400 feet, Commander Miller’s crew dropped 20,000 incendiaries over Zamboanga. These incendiaries, written in Japanese, gave factual accounts of the progress of the war in the Pacific.

At 0755, on a return visit at Wolf Field, the sound of the three Bettys was soon to explode. More bullets were pumped into the third, until she was gutted by flames. On leaving the target area, the aircraft, Seventh "Hoot, crew noticed that one seaplane, probably a Kutsu, had managed to take off. However, the enemy plane did not close.

Careful planning of the attack, and favorable cloud cover enabled complete surprise to be achieved. The PBY returned to be untouched by enemy fire. Over Zamboanga, the plane encountered some heavy anti-aircraft fire, but the shells were bursting at 5000 feet while the plane was at only 400.
7 Sept. — A PB4Y commanded by Lieutenant (jg) Harold T. USN, encountered three Guppy Charlie's at 06:20 Z., 122°-50'. Five 100-pound bombs were dropped in a low-level attack, but failed to produce hits. Six strafing runs were made and all targets were left burning and listing badly. Two thousand rounds of .50 caliber were expended from the bow, belly, and crown and tail turrets.

19 Sept. — Lieutenant (jg) Neal A. Tyler and his crew sighted an unidentified sub at 06 N., 122°-20' E., five minutes later, at 06-10 N., 122°-20', they saw a ... of 400 feet off the water. The target plane was at 100 feet. Nosing over in a dive indicating 280 knots, the plane attacked from out of the sun, approaching from high over the tail. The nose turret fired one burst of fire at 600 feet - the first burst being aimed and the second slightly over the target forward. The saw fire, but was unable to avoid an apparent hard burst which raked fuselage and engine. Flames burst from the wing roots, the plane exploded, and disintegrated into the sea. The Kale was reddish-brown, with meatballs on the wing tips.

27 Sept. — On routine search of a 1000-mile sector, a PB4Y, commanded by Lieutenant Commander Marvin T. Smith, USN, executive officer, was over Bandoenstraat, northern Celebes, at 12:25 Z. A 600-ton Fuzero Jake Baker was sighted, listing and possibly aground in the centre of the Straits. Fire 100-pound 8p bombs were dropped from 9000 feet, scoring one near miss...... Another vessel was sighted near the west shore - partly covered and thought to be a mine craft which previously had been under attack there. The vessel was underway but slowly. Five 100-pound 8p were dropped from 9000 feet, resulting in one direct hit on the stern.

COMMANDER MILLER DESTOYS SIX PLANES

"Direct hits were scored on two Jake's which were blown to bits, a close straddle was scored on an Ailly. This, plus heavy strafing caused it to catch fire and burn fiercely.

"Strafing fire on a Jigger caused it to catch fire and burn quickly. Apparently laden with gasoline, it was immediately enveloped in flames."
VPB-101 CONTINUES REMARKABLE PERFORMANCE

Patrol Bombing Squadron 101 with Commander Justin A. Miller, USN, Commanding Officer, conducted long range searches from Ulithi, Schouten Islands, during September. The squadron, which flies PB4Y’s, was based with CORN 8 and plane maintenance was furnished by PATSU 1-2.

During the month, VPB-101 flew 139 search missions ranging from 750 miles to 1100 miles. Serious damage was inflicted on nine merchant ships and one warship. In addition, a Kato was shot down.

The squadron lost no personnel or planes during September.

Enemy warships were sighted as follows: 1 September, one destroyer off Palau, one destroyer off Lombok Straits, one destroyer and one gunboat at Paramo Bay; 3 September, one destroyer off Palau; 5 September, convoy of six ships, possibly including one battleship, entering Paramo Bay; 6 September, one destroyer tanker at Zamboanga; 9 September, one destroyer and one destroyer escort at San Rafael. A Jap hospital ship was seen on route to Palau on 3 September and another in Paramo Bay on 9 September.

2 Sept. --- Lieutenant John O. Adams, USNR, sighted a 700/1300-ton freighter at 05-10N 123-00E, and made six strafing runs from masthead level, silencing a .50, on the bridge on the second run. A total of 3000 rounds was fired from the planes’ .50 calibers, and the vessel was left listing and leaking oil.

2 Sept. --- Lieutenant Russell R. Dow, USNR, made three low-level strafing runs on two luggers at 06-20N, 126-25 E. Following the attack, both vessels were run up on the beach.

3 Sept. --- Lieutenant Griswold Forbes, USNR, made three strafing runs on a 70/150-ton cargo vessel in Paramo Bay. Leaking oil and listing, the vessel was run up on the beach.

3 Sept. --- At 09-35N, 136E, Lieutenant (JG) Robert L. Kennamer dropped five 100-pound bombs from 300 feet on a 1500-ton freighter – two landing about 40 feet from target. The crew followed with three strafing runs at masthead level, leaving the vessel burning and list in the water.
enemy's total losses to his total damage is caused by the fact that 13 out of 15 successful attacks were made in harbors, at docks, or close ashore where near misses in shallow water sometimes did more damage by concussion than direct hits. Most of the ships attacked were seen to sink. Among the Blackcats with the sharpest claws were those flown by crews under Commander Utegff, Lieutenant Paxton, and LIEUTENANT (junior grade) J. F. Ball, USNR. Since VP-34's Blackcats started stalking the Japs in the Netherlands Indies six weeks ago, Commander Utegff's crew has blasted a destroyer or destroyer escort, and hit, and probably sunk, a 1000/1500-ton freighter transport. In the same period Lieutenant Paxton and his crew have sunk a 7000-8500-ton freighter transport and a 500/1000-ton tanker, wrecked a small merchant vessel, and damaged two more small tankers. Lieutenant Ball and his men accounted for fewer ships in number but probably more in tonnage: One large freighter transport sunk and another destroyed.

Recent experience has convinced VP-34 of the positive value of parafrags in low-altitude bombing attacks. Where parafrags have been dropped, antiaircraft fire has been noticeably less than normal. For example, when Lieutenant Ball bombed and wrecked a 5500-8500-ton freighter transport in the Monado area on 29 August, the crew dropped parafrags on each of five runs. No fire at all was received on the first four runs and only a small amount of inaccurate machine-gun fire on the last run. This is an unusually meager return of fire from an enemy ship of such size, and parafrags apparently were the main cause for that meagerness.
SECRET

24/8/44 LIEUTENANT (junior grade) M. D. MILLER, USNR, landed off Seroei, a village on the south coast of Japen Island, recovered three Army officers from a scouting mission and returned them to WAVES.

28/8/44 LIEUTENANT (junior grade) H. H. KALSMD, USNR, covering strikes on Utarem, Western New Heinea, and Aboon, Ceram area, strafed a 90-foot Sager launch stranded on a sandbar south of Pandjang Island, Ceram, at 04-015, 151-44E. Tracers penetrated the hull, but no fire started and no life was seen aboard.

VP-34 OPERATIONS, AUGUST, 1944.

Patrol Squadron 34, operating from the Middeburg Island area, Vogelkop, since 22 August when its tender the Orca arrived there from Woendi Lagoon, has added another chapter to its story of "firsts". A PBY from VP-34 was the first Allied aircraft to "land" at Kavieng when a remarkable rescue of 15 Army airmen was effected under the enemy's guns; a VP-34 PBY on another rescue mission was the first to land at Hansa Bay; and a VP-34 PBY on a ferry hop was the first plane to land on Lake Sentani at Hollandia. This past month two of the squadron's planes were the first PBYS to enter the Philippines since the old Paving 10 retreated south at the outset of the war.

The night of 22 August LIEUTENANT COMMANDER V. V. UTGOFF, USN, squadron commanding officer, and LIEUTENANT N. L. FAXTON, USNR, executive officer, commanded the two PBYS that made the initial return sweep into the Philippines. Both planes made antishipping searches in Davao Gulf and around the south end of Mindanao. The crews noted many lights and several planes airborne in the Davao area, but none intercepted. At 0300K a hospital ship was sighted at 05-34N, 125-04E, heading on a course of 090 degrees true. Several radar runs were made on approximately a dozen ships scattered along the east shore and the entrance to Sarangani Bay and at the mouth of Davao Gulf, but poor visibility prevented completion of the attacks. Moderate, inaccurate light antiaircraft fire from one escorting vessel did no damage.

Before initiating the first of what may become for the Japs a long, sad series of Blackcat prows in the Philippines, the crews of both PBYS had an excellent battle record in the Netherlands Indies as well as in the Bismarck Sea, where Commander Utgoff and Lieutenant Paxton won Distinguished Flying Crosses for their attacks.

In the six weeks ending 31 August, VP-34 Blackcats have sunk or destroyed some 28,000 tons of enemy shipping and damaged one destroyer escort and another 1500 tons of shipping. The high ratio of the
attacks the PB4Y drew inaccurate 20mm and 3-inch antiaircraft fire from the minelayer and fairly accurate, moderate heavy fire from the grounded destroyer.

OPERATIONS OF VP-52 DURING AUGUST, 1944

Catalinas of Patrol Squadron 52 picked up personnel on four occasions in August during a total of 95 rescue patrols. All operations were from Woendi Lagoon, but on 3 August VP-52 transferred its tender base from the U.S. Wright to the USS Tangier, the flagship of Commander Aircraft, Seventh Fleet. Usually two to four rescue patrols a day covered strikes on the Halmaheras and Ceram. Toward the end of the month VP-52 rescue planes also supported raids on Celebes and Mindanao as the air war roared into the Philippines. Near the hotter targets Army P-38's provided fighter escort. None of the Catalina crews was lost, and no one was hurt during the month's operations.

The squadron's "rescue of the month" took place on a remote jungle-draped river in Southwest Vogelkop, Dutch New Guinea, and involved not only plane personnel but Javanese women and children black, spear-hurling natives and frenzied, vengeful Japs.

On 13 August, 1944, LIEUTENANT C. J. SCHAUFFLER, USNR, and his crew rescued 13 Javanese women and children, including the wife of the former Dutch Administrator, from Kampenongboroe, an enemy-harassed native village 20 miles inland from the coast northwest of MacCluer Gulf, Vogelkop.

9/8/44 Returning at 1700/K from a Halmahera rescue patrol, LIEUTENANT COMMANDER H. A. SOMLER, USN, squadron commanding officer, strafed and badly riddled a 35-foot wooden barge moored close to shore at Cape Boropen, Vogelkop. There was no return fire and no personnel was noted.

LIEUTENANT (junior grade) H. W. IRWIN, USNR, sighted a man in a raft 3 miles east of the strong Jap base at Manokwari, Vogelkop, landed in the water nearby, and picked him up. The rescued man had crashed without injury when his P-39 engine suddenly failed after a strafing attack on Manokwari. He was brought back to Woendi, then returned to his Army base at Biak.

13/8/44 LIEUTENANT C. J. SCHAUFFLER, USNR, on his way to evacuate the Javanese women and children from Kampenongboroe, answered a distress call from Army P-40 pilots and sighted a crashed P-40 at 01:31S, 135-45E. He landed and searched among the aircraft wreckage, picked up the raft, but found no survivor.
anchored in Tubana Bay, Sangiho Islands. One bomb exploded close alongside and lifted the bow of the Sugar Charlie clear off the water. Two more near-misses contributed to the ship’s trouble. Several hours after the attack when the PB4Y returned to the area, the crew saw a large oil slick and only the masts and the top of the ship’s superstructure projecting above the water.

LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER M.T. SMITH, USNR, squadron executive officer, piloting a PB4Y on a daylight search over Davao, dropped two 300-pound GP bombs from 11,000 feet on seven fighters and two transports parked on the airstrip at Madaun, but results of the bombing were obscured by clouds. Moderate antiaircraft fire from the vicinity of the airfield was inaccurate. The crew also observed 27 fighters parked wing tip to wing tip at Likuan Airfield.

Off Davao Town the PB4Y straddled a Fox Tare Baker with a string of five 100-pound bombs. One bomb burst within twenty feet of the ship’s bow, but no damage was observed. Two Zokes approached to intercept, then turned away when the PB4Y headed toward them.

22/8/44 LIEUTENANT E.S. "BARBER, USNR; and his crewman spotted an eighty-foot lugger at 00-23N, 124-18 E, started a small fire, drove the vessel aground on the beach with three strafing runs.

In another attack on a lugger on the same day, LIEUTENANT (junior grade) G. FORBES, USNR, made a masthead run on a lugger heading west at 10-00N, 125-50W. One of the two 100-pound bombs dropped blew off twenty feet of the lugger’s stern. The plane then made three strafing attacks on the lugger and set it afire. Slugs from a 7.7mm machine gun on the vessel’s superstructure holed the PB4Y twice. One bullet pierced the center of the bombardier’s window. The bombardier AOMIC W.T. VAN METER, was hit in the throat and killed.

Again on the same day LIEUTENANT A.Y. BELLSEY, USNR, attacked a Toshima Class minelayer off Ngauruangl Reef, Palau Island but the plane’s bombs hung. The minelayer was strafed in three low-level passes. When the PB4T returned from the end of its search sector, the crew found the warship dead in the water and leaking oil. This time three 250-pound GP bombs were dropped from 8000 feet and one burst within forty feet of the ship’s beam. A small barge, apparently working at salvage of a destroyer aground on the reef nearby, was strafed, but damage was not observed. During the
13 Sept - Lieutenant Shirn attacked a FOX TARE CHARLIE in Morotai Harbor with unserved results.

15 Sept - Lieutenant Covry and crew damaged and beached a FOX TARE DOG five miles north of Cape Mal, Piroco Bay, Coran.

19 Sept - Operating out of Morotai, a PBY commanded by Lieutenant Wesley B. Van Benschoten, USNR, bombed and strafed a SUGAR CHARLIE southeast of Tugiliran Beach Island. The ship was believed to be seriously damaged.

20 Sept - Lieutenant (jg) Had hit a FOX TARE CHARLIE with two 100-pound bombs, leaving it on a roof near Cash, Leyte Island, the Philippines.

30 Sept - Lieutenant Van Benschoten and his Cat crew were supporting an Army strike on Langcan airstrip when they were attacked by four ZEKEs. The pilot began evasive action which was so successful that, although the Japanese ran for 25 minutes and dropped phosphorus bombs, only slight damage was inflicted on the PBY. The Cat's gunners hit two of the ZEKEs, possibly destroying one.

12 Oct - Squadron moved from U.S.S. TANGER to U.S.S. ORCA, both anchored at Morotai.

12 Oct - Lieutenant Hine landed his PBY-5 off Togian Island, near Celebes Island, and rescued 16 members of an Army B-24, which had been shot up in a strike on Balikpapan, Borneo, and had crash-landed on Togian. The Army pilot had done an extremely skillful job of landing, and none of the 16 was hurt. He had written "10 OK" on a parachute which had drapped over the wing of his downed plane. Lieutenant Hine taxied in as close to land as possible and the survivors came out to the Catalina in native canoes. "The Army boys had been down for two days and had made friends with the natives," said Lieutenant Hine. "The natives insisted on doing all the paddling, they told the Army boys to sit back and take it easy."

12 Oct - Lieutenant Shinn and crew landed a Navy commander and an Army Lieutenant-colonel in Leyte Gulf, the Philippines, to confer with loyal Filipinos on the forthcoming invasion. This flight was made eight days prior to "A" day.

16 Oct - Lieutenant Penfold and his crew rescued an Army P-38 pilot from Cape Bay, near Halahera, The Army Second Lieutenant Lawrence E. Hyde, of the 36th Fighter Squadron, bailed out when his plane was damaged following a bombing run on a Jap barge. He hit the water about a mile from Jap territory and almost drowned when he became entangled in his parachute. He fought free, however, and stayed afloat with the help of his Mae West.
29 Oct - Lieutenant ( ) Dyer was patrol plane commander of a Catalina which landed off Cape Sopi, Morotai, and picked up seven survivors from an Army B-24 which had crashed.

30 Oct - Lieutenant William A. Mason, USNR, and crew, covering a Army strike, picked up four survivors of a B-25 off Zamboanga Town. Two other members of the Mitchell's crew went down with the plane. The Cat made the rescue in the face of accurate anti-aircraft fire from the beach and was hit twice. No one was injured. The survivors were attached to the 323rd Squadron, 308th Bomb Group.

16 Nov - Lieutenant Van Benschoten and crew landed off Hinatuan, Leyte, and picked up three Army P-38 pilots who had crash-landed after they ran out of gas, in bad weather. They were attached to the 9th Fighter Squadron, 49th Group.

18 Nov - Lieutenant Hino landed off Calagnan Island, 11-29 N, 123-12 E, and rescued the three-man crew of a TBD, attached to Torpedo Squadron 7 and stationed aboard the U.S.S. H k N C C K. Several weeks before, the TBD had been hit by a Jap battleship, and the survivors had been royally entertained by Filipinos since 26 October. In fact, they were in a boat, coming from a native dance, when Lieutenant Hino and his crew arrived.

18 Nov - Ensign Edward E. Morris, USN, and crew landed off Cape Borongan, Samar, 11-15 N, 125-38 E, and picked up three Filipino soldiers, two of whom were severely wounded.

VPB-101 CONTINUES REMARKABLE RECORD
Patrol Bombing Squadron 101, which had been based at Owi, Solomon Islands, moved its Liberators to Morotai 18 October. Personnel consisted of 55 pilots, four A-V(S) officers and 18 flight crews.

Commander Justin A. Miller, USN, Commanding Officer, who destroyed an average of a Jap plane a day during the first 19 days of October, crashed on 19 October, and Lieutenant Commander Marvin T. Smith, USNR was ordered to command from 23 October. (See article below for Commander Miller's record).

During the month, 121 PB4Y missions were flown, totaling 1,611 hours, bringing the total for five months of combat to 9,160.

Three enemy planes were destroyed in the air during October, 27 were destroyed on land or sea, and eight were severely damaged. Twenty-two ships and two barges, totaling 52,700 tons, were sunk or destroyed, and 13 ships and four barges, totaling 5,950 tons were damaged. All large buildings at the seaplane base at Elco, northern Colobos, were destroyed.
23 Oct - Lieutenant (jg) Harold H. Lewis, USNR, and crew to return after an attack by fighters.


26 Oct - Lieutenant Seiber attacked a tanker in Balabac Strait, between Palawan and Borneo, making two strafing and bombing runs. Explosions were observed on the tanker. The plane was severely damaged and had to be ditched. (See article below).

26 Oct - Lieutenant Bowen crashed and was rescued by -094B-2-A-J. Lieutenant Commander Vojin V. Ujicoff, USN, Commanding Officer of Patrol Bombing Squadron 34.

29 Oct - Lieutenant Forbes attacked and probably sank a 10,000 ton tanker at 02-40N, 115-45E, Celebes Sea. His Liberator came in at establish level, dropping three bombs which scored direct hits on the ship's after section. Large fires started, and the bridge blew up. A medium tanker was strafed and damaged.

30 Oct - Lieutenant Stanley Ryder, USNR, sighted a concentration of SUGAR DOGS anchored at 10-35N, 122-50E, in Guinans Strait between Negros and Panay. Strafing damaged four of the SD's.

31 Oct - Lieutenant (jg) Tyler destroyed a FOX TARE CHARLIE anchored at 11-58N, 120-05E, off Cullian Island, in the Palawan Group. Four bombs hit the stern, causing it to break away. Ensign Joseph V. Shopard, USNR, second pilot, was mortally wounded by a 12.7 mm hit in the cockpit.

**COMMANDER MILLER AND CREW DESTROY 19 PLANES**

Within a 19-day period in October, Commander Justin A. Miller, USN, Commanding Officer of Patrol Bombing Squadron 101, and his PBY-7 crew chalked up this remarkable score.

**DESTROYED** - Nineteen planes, one oil barge, two gasoline-laden lugger and four small cargo ships.

**DAMAGED** - Ten planes, one 4,000-ton freighter, two lugger and two small cargo ships.

**DISTRIBUTED** - Forty thousand propaganda leaflets, printed in Japanese, giving the Nips the true word on the progress of the war.

The squadron commander and his crew, following a crash, are now in friendly hands.
During the month, five aircraft did not return from patrol. Five officers and 12 men were killed in action; two officers and 40 men are missing, and four officers and three men (commander and crew) are in friendly hands. One officer and five men were rescued, but not returned to base (as of November). Two children, one man, injured in a landing at Nea, were evacuated.

A brief summary of important actions:

1 Oct.- Lieutenant Griswold Forbes, USNR, sighted a 100-foot tanker anchored off the northeastern tip of Basilan Island, north of Basilan Island and made a fast run. Twelve 100-pound AN MK 300 4-5 second delay bombs were released by the pilot at 100 feet. Two direct hits near the stern caused large explosions, flying debris, flame and black smoke rising to 500 feet. Two other bombs burst within 30 feet of the vessel. The ship also was strafed from all gun positions. Because of the proximity of enemy air bases, particularly the seaplane base at Calderon Point and Wolfe Field on Basilan Strait—Lieutenant Forbes and his 1947 crew didn’t remain to watch the tanker sink, but she was burning and settling when they headed for home.

4 Oct.- Commander Miller destroyed a FOX T.F.6 CHARLES and other vessels off Jolo Town. (See article below.)

5 Oct.- Lieutenant Albert R. Seiber, USNR, bombed and strafed a FOX T.Y.2 DOG and a SUGAR CHARLES along the south coast of Celebes Island at 00-30E, 121-40E. The SUGAR CHARLES exploded and the FOX T.Y.2 DOG was completely enveloped in flames and burned on its side.

7 Oct.- Commander Miller returned to Calderon Point Seaplane Base. (See article below.)

7 Oct.- Lieutenant Albert Y. Bolsoy, USNR, damaged a SUGAR DOG by bombing and strafing in Lulusan Bay, Basilan.

11 Oct.- Commander Miller attacked ships in Leyte Gulf. (see article below.)

13 Oct.- Lieutenant Harris returned to Lulusan. (See article below)

15 Oct.- Lieutenant Forbes attacked Lulusan. (see article below.)

19 Oct.- Lieutenant (jg) David H. Carroll and crew scored three direct bomb hits on a 6,000-ton FOX T.Y.6 CHARLES at 11-27 N, 119-10 E. Two strafing runs were also made. Subsequent reconnaissance by Tactical Bombing Squadron 115 found the ship aground on a reef.
19 Oct - Commander Miller crashed near Puerto Princesa, Palawan. (See article below.)

19 Oct - Lieutenant (jg) Neal A. Tyler, USNR, and his crew sighted seven D.V.E.S., one RUF, and two SUGAR CHARLIEs anchored in Mangarin Bay, Mindoro, 12-20 N, 121-06 E. A strafing attack from 50 feet left two D.V.E.S. burning and sinking. A five-bomb straddle caused a SUGAR CHARLIE to break in two and sink.

20 Oct - Lieutenant Bellsey shot down a BETTY southeast of Luzon, at 13-36 N, 124-15 E, with two passes. He also attacked two SUGAR DOGs at Bukid, east of Panay in the Visayan Sea, leaving one burning fiercely and the other on a reef and smoking, as a result of near misses and strafing.

21 Oct - Lieutenant Forbes and Ensign Robert W. Allen, USN, each made a strafing run on a SUGAR DOG and a SUGAR CHARLIE at 09-30 N, 118-40 E, on the east coast of Palawan, damaging both vessels.

22 Oct - Lieutenant Morris strafed four SUGAR CHARLIEs at 01-20 N, 119-10 E, in Makassar Strait, destroying one and damaging the others.

22 Oct - Lieutenant Bellsey attacked a SUGAR DOG and a tug at 07-25 N, 117-10 E, north of Borneo. After six strafing runs the SUGAR DOG was left dead in the water and sinking, with its personnel over the side and swimming. The tug, severely damaged, was sinking.

22 Oct - Lieutenant (jg) Kenneth H. Dunn, USNR, and crew shot down a TESS 30 miles west of Puerto Princesa, Palawan. The JAP plane exploded in midair.

22 Oct - Lieutenant Russell E. Bowan, USNR, made a strafing run on La Carlotta airstrip, Negros, torching a KITE on the runway. He also sighted a SUGAR CHARLIE and a 50-foot power boat anchored off Mistro Do Campo Island. On the second run the SUGAR CHARLIE, which was loaded with gasoline, caught fire and exploded, causing the power boat to explode also. Later, the PBAY made a strafing run on two luggers west of Verde Island, between Mindoro and Luzon. One burned to the waterline and the other was destroyed.

23 Oct - Lieutenant Forbes sank a lugger by bombing and strafing off Donso Town, Luzon, 12-54 N, 123-35 E. He then sank a SUGAR DOG at 06-55 N, 126-13 E, southern Mindoro, by a direct bomb hit and strafing.

23 Oct - Ensign John B. Copeland, USN, shot down a BETTY at 11-10 N, 114-50 E, South China Sea.
23 Oct. --- Lieutenant (jg) Harold H. Lewis, USNR, and crew failed to return after an attack by fighters.


26 Oct. --- Lieutenant Seiber attacked a tanker in Balabac Straits; between Palawan and Borneo, making two strafing and bombing runs. Explosions were observed on the tanker. The plane was severely damaged and had to be ditched.

26 Oct. --- Lieutenant Dowen crashed and was rescued by a PBY-5 piloted by Lieutenant Commander Valdy N. Utgoff, USN, Commanding Officer of Patrol Bombing Squadron 34.

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COD: DR. MILLER AND CREW DESTROY 19 PLANES.

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DAMAGED - Ten planes, one 4,000 ton freighter; two luggers and two small cargo ships.

DISTRIBUTED - Forty thousand propaganda leaflets printed in Japanese, giving the Nips the true word on the progress of the war.

The squadron commander and his crew, following a crash, are now in friendly hands.
Commander Miller’s first offensive strike of this 19-day period was 1 October when he took off from Owi, Schouten Islands, and on surprise visits to the seaplane base at Caldonia Point, Mindanao, to nearby Wolfe Field and to adjacent waters. His bag for this mission was six planes destroyed on the land and water, five others heavily damaged and a gasoline-laden lugger sunk. Before returning home, he dropped 20,000 propaganda leaflets over Zamboanga.

On 4 October, again taking off from Owi, he and his crew flew what started to be a routine search of a 1,000-mile sector. The plane was armed with twenty 100-pound MK 30 bombs, with MK 112 MK 4-5 second delay fuses. At the outer limits of the sector, at 1145/1, Commander Miller made a low-level run on Zettie Field, Jolo Island, Sulu Archipelago. His crew heavily strafed a ZEKE in a revetment, gun emplacements and personnel.

A FOX TUBE CHARLIE, with an oiler moored alongside, was observed in the harbor. Two 100-pound bombs were dropped on them from 400 feet, with 50-foot spacing. Three direct hits were scored and the vessels also were strafed heavily. The oiler was set on fire and the FTC emitted smoke. Meager, light, inaccurate AA was encountered from the FTC.

Ten more centaries were dropped on the second run, scoring four direct hits, and four additional strafing runs were made. The oiler was destroyed and the FTC seriously damaged. Four strafing runs were made on a SUGAR CHARLIE, which burst into flames and was left aching. A return strafing run was made on Zettie Field, with the same targets receiving attention. Meager, light, inaccurate AA was encountered. The PB4Y then completed the base leg of its sector.

After landing, the crew discovered a small hole - 7.7 - in the leading edge of the wing. The squadron’s damage assessment was that the ZEKE, AA emplacements and 4,000-ton FTC had been seriously damaged and the oil barge and 150-foot SUGAR CHARLIE had been sunk.

At 2330/1, 6 October, the Commanding Officer and his crew again took off from Owi to search a 1,000-mile sector, with a secondary mission of releasing 20,000 more leaflets over Zamboanga. At 0620/1, 7 October, the leaflets were dropped from 100 feet over the center of the city and Wolfe Field. About 300 rounds of .50 caliber were fired on buildings, a hangar and a BERTY at Wolfe Field. Light, inaccurate AA fire was encountered.

Then Commander Miller returned to the Caldonia Point seaplane base, where he strafed and destroyed two D.VES, one PATE and one J.K.E. All four planes burned completely. A total of six strafing runs were made at low altitude from 0630 to 0700. The hangar and AA emplacements were strafed. The EMILY which had been attacked on 1 October was observed to be a mass of wreckage. Light, inaccurate AA fire was encountered. The squadron assessment of damage was four planes destroyed, one damaged.

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On 11 October, Commander Miller and his crew again took off from Wl on a search of a 1,000-mile sector. The PB4Y was armed with five 100-pound bombs. Just beyond the limits of the sector, a concentration of small ships was observed in Leyte Gulf. At 1315, a masthead attack was made on a SUGAR DOG and all five bombs (with 4-5 second delay fuses) were dropped. Straddled by the bombs, the SUGAR DOG capsized and sunk. A strafing run was continued on two luggers and on a SUGAR CHARLIE anchored nearby, and the same run was continued over Tacloban Air Strip, with the Navy Liberator indicating 180 knots.

Two badly damaged, single-seat fighters on the strip were strafed. No other planes were seen on the field and the strip was bomb-pocked and appeared unserviceable. A second, similar run was made on the luggers and SUGAR CHARLIE and on over the field. Light, extremely accurate AA was sent up from the 30, the airdrome and a ridge over-looking the harbor. The plane was holed 14 times, but no one was injured.

The squadron assessment of damaged was a SUGAR DOG sunk and one SUGAR CHARLIE and two luggers seriously damaged. (Since the single seat fighters were already damaged prior to Commander Miller’s attack, they are not included in the totals listed above).

On 19 October, Commander Miller and his crew made a low-level attack on the harbor and strip at Puerto Princesa, Palawan. Full details are not yet available, but it is known that six planes were destroyed and three damaged on the strip; three seaplanes destroyed; a SUGAR CHARLIE and a SUGAR DOG destroyed, and a SUGAR DOG damaged.

The Liberator crashed 12 miles from the strip. At first, it was thought that all hands were missing, but is is now known that Commander Miller, three other officers and three men are safe.

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**JAP SEAPLANE BASE DESTROYED**

A PB4Y crew from Patrol Bombing Squadron 101 totally erased a Jap seaplane base at Iloilo, Goloobos, and most of its planes in two raids - the first, 11 October; the second, 13 October.

At 1200/I, 11 October, Lieutenant Fred H. Morris, USNR, operating from Wl, Schouten Islands, had completed the outward leg of a 1,000-mile search when he observed the base at 01-08 N, 120-50 E. Six PETES were hoared near the beach and a seventh was attempting to take off.

The PB4Y came in on a low-level strafing run, setting fire to a plane on the beach and to the one attempting to take off. Five other PETES quickly took to the air and chased the Navy Liberator, but none closed within gun range. Instead, they remained overhead, dropping phosphorous bombs. Seven bombs were dropped during an hour-long chase, but all missed the PETES.
At 1400Z, Lieutenant Morris and his crew sighted a 150-foot SUGAR CHARLIE at 00-55, N 123-35 E and strafed it with 2,500 rounds of .50 caliber. The ship burned fiercely and probably sunk.

After careful planning, Lieutenant Morris returned to the same base two days later, carrying five 100-pound incendiaries and five 100-pound AN MK 30 GP's, with 4-5 second delay fuses. At 0700Z, with the sun rising behind the hills, he made an overland approach, streaking in at 1,000 feet and dropping to 500 feet over the base, where the incendiaries were released. Meanwhile, his crew was pouring lead into four PETES along the beach and another which was taxing.

A second run was made at 600 feet and the five 4-5 second delay centuries were released on the buildings. Again the planes were strafed heavily. The plane which had been taxiing burned for a while and then sank.

Two more strafing runs were made; two more PETES caught fire; buildings and AA emplacements were hit. The base was now a mass of flames, with smoke mounting a mile into the sky. Lieutenant Morris and his crew continued on the base leg of their 1,000-mile "routine" search. A lone PETE finally got into the air and made a half-hearted attempt to chase the PB4Y, but he never came closer than three miles.

Twenty-four hours later, a plane from Patrol Bombing Squadron 115 flew near the base and found it still burning and buildings gutted and leveled. (See article on VPB-115). Estimate of damage: All buildings wrecked; Three PETES destroyed.

LIEUTENANT FORBES FINISHES JOB

Lieutenant Morris kept his eyes open throughout the action described above and spotted some seaplanes hidden under foliage in a caves south of the base. Lieutenant Criswell Forbes, USNR, on the regular 1,000-mile sector from Owi 15 October, flew over the base for reconnaissance (the buildings were still smouldering) and found three PB4Y's, well hidden and close together. A reflection of sunlight on the windshields gave the hiding-place away.

Lieutenant Forbes's PB4Y was carrying 12 MK 30 centuries, with 4-5 second delay fuses, in double suspension. He released two of those bombs over the PETES, scoring a direct hit. One plane blew up, a second caught fire, and the third was riddled with bomb fragments. The squadron's assessment was that all three were destroyed.

Total score for the three missions of 11, 13 and 15 October: One seaplane base destroyed; one SUGAR CHARLIE probably sunk; eight PETES destroyed.
Lieutenant Albert R. Seiber, USNR, and his Patrol Bombing Squadron 101 crew were forced to ditch their PB4Y 26 October, after a successful attack on a tanker. The Liberator made its first strafing run on the 5,000-ton tanker at 1400/I, 08-10 N, 116-59 E. Heavy, black smoke poured from the ship. On a second strafing run, large explosions sent balls of fire soaring into the air. However, intense and accurate 20 mm. anti-aircraft set fire to the plane's No. 4 engine and severed the fuel line from the No. 4 tank.

Here are Lieutenant Seiber's comments:

"At about 1600 on 26 October we had definitely determined that we would have to ditch our Liberator. The armor plate and guns had all been taken out previously; all other loose gear was thrown out now. Our belly turret had been jettisoned before we knew that we would have to ditch. Otherwise, I think it would have been better to have left it in.

"We wanted to ditch with enough daylight remaining so all hands could be in the life rafts before dark. The earliest we could manage and still be far enough from the Japs was 1830. This would leave us approximately 30 minutes of daylight. A suggestion here; if at all possible, give yourself an hour of daylight. That much time is needed to assemble all your men and rafts and to dress wounds.

"By assuming a particular time of ditching we were enabled to send a message to base giving them our exact position. This message was sent at 1810. As soon as it was received, our radioman went aft. Our positions and preparations were as follows:

"Pilots' cockpit: Myself and co-pilot were strapped in with shoulder harness. In the pockets of our flight suits and jackets we had first aid kits, candy, gum, flashlight, morphine, knives, etc. Our side windows were cut out and the escape hatch open. All ready here.

"Flight deck cleared and all loose gear cut. Command deck: Here five men were sitting, braced against and padded with parachutes (none of these men were injured). Just aft of the command deck the other two men and the navigator were braced against the bulkhead. (All three of these men were injured). The navigator reported that all were ready and we turned into the very light wind at 1825.

"Since our No. 4 was cut, we reduced the power on No. 1 to fifteen inches, then retrimmed the plane using No. 2 and No. 3, only. We lowered the flaps and used a normal glide approach. At about 10 feet off the water, we slowed our speed to 100 knots. Then we increased our power and slowly let down to within a foot or two of the surface. Holding it here, we increased our power until our speed had slowed to 75 knots. Here we felt the rear section touch so we cut power and crash bar simultaneously. The plane skidded on for about one or two seconds and then stopped quite suddenly. The nose went
under and buckled to the right. My co-pilot and I both escaped from the side windows. When we got out we saw the plane had broken right at the belly turret aft of the wing, forming an inverted V in the water. One of the men from the command dock climbed out of the break and released the wing rafts.

"The plane had also broken at the waist hatch. Here, one of the men had become entangled and had to be cut loose. Also, the tail turret had broken loose, so two of the men went out this hole. It took about 10 minutes for us to get all of the men in life rafts and paddle away from the plane. The plane sank in 15 minutes. In about 20 minutes it was so dark that we had to dress our wounds by flashlight. Our emergency rations had become entangled in the plane, so they had to be cut loose and were lost. But the "Gibson Girl" was tied on the raft and was saved.

"Here is a must: Check all hands out in the use of mirrors. Two P-61's flying at 15,000 feet were attracted by our mirrors and sent a P-Boat to pick us up. The PBY was also attracted by the mirrors rather than by the dye marker or the "Gibson Girl".

"We were picked up at 1030 following the day of our crash-landing.

"Suggestions: Take out all oxygen bottles; take out Radar partition, hang curtains in place, and have all hands at all times carry a dozen or two condoms to wrap matches, cigarettes, watches, etc., prior to ditching.

"Just before ditching; throw out all guns, ammunition, armor plate, radio gear, radar gear and table, and then put all the men in the command dock. Also, take the waist hatchets completely off, because they slammed shut on impact."

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**OCTOBER OPERATIONS OF VPB-29**

Patrol Bombing Squadron 29, with Lieutenant Commander Lauren B. Johnson, USN, in command, was based aboard the U.S.S. **TANZANIA** (AV-8) at Morotai during October, and flew mostly Black Cat missions and armed night patrols. The squadron had 12 PBY-5 planes and 12 flight crews. A log of the more important missions follows:

1 Oct -- A Black Cat commanded by Lieutenant Commander Johnson strafed a lugger south of Boeroe Island, with unobserved results. Later, this plane was subjected to intense, and accurate anti-aircraft fire from Ambon Town, Ichau and Halong, on Ambonic Island. The fire was returned at Ambon and one gun position was silenced. The plane was not hit.

1 Oct -- A Black Cat commanded by Lieutenant (jg) John P. Schneck, USNR, failed to return from a mission to Kendari, Celebes Island. At 0115/1 the following message was received: "One man wounded; control cable shot. I am returning to base from Tur (Kendari)". No other messages were received and all searches were negative. In addition to Lieutenant (jg) Schneck, there were two officers and eight men aboard.
The bureau number of the plane was 08233. Lieutenant (jg) Schonck and his crew had an outstanding record of successful attacks.

2 Oct -- Lieutenant (jg) Jack S. Hall, USNR, flew his Black Cat over Celobes Island, where he spotted a 2,000-ton freighter-transport five miles south of Mateo, Bootoeng Island. A stick of three 500-pound bombs was dropped across the vessel's stern, with unobserved results. Medium, intense anti-aircraft fire was encountered and the plane was holed once in the hull, the projectile ranging upward between the pilot's seats. The Black Cat also strafed a two-masted schooner off Tikong, Taliboo, Soela Island, leaving the ship on its side.

2 Oct -- Lieutenant Joseph T. Gardner, USNR, Executive Officer, and his crew dropped two 500-pounders and two 100-pounders alongside a 700-ton cargo ship in Monado Bay, Celobes Island. The vessel turned on its side. They also blasted the stern of another 700-ton ship with one 500-pounder in Amorong Bay, Celobes Island, leaving this vessel aground on a reef, with its stern under water. Medium, intense anti-aircraft fire scored four hits on the FBY-5, but no one was injured.

3 Oct -- A Black Cat commanded by Lieutenant (jg) Joseph A. Cummings, USNR, missed three luggers off Sankar Island, Derval Bay, North Borneo, with four 100-pound bombs. The luggers were also strafed, with unobserved results.

7 Oct -- Lieutenant Gardner's Black Cat made a forced landing off Jolo Island, Sulu Archipelago, when the starboard flaps at 1,000 feet. He and his crew were rescued 9 October by a Catalina flown by Lieutenant (jg) Hall.

14 Oct -- On a Black Cat mission to Borneo, Lieutenant (jg) Gardner L. Burt dropped four 500-pound bombs and three 100-pounders on docks and stores at Sandakan, starting a large fire 65 miles away. A small ship, possibly a tanker, was alongside the docks and may have been destroyed.

15 Oct -- Lieutenant (jg) Cummings and crew drove a 1,000-ton cargo ship ashore at Daint Haven, North Borneo, with a near-miss by a 500-pound bomb. Three 500-pounders, dropped alongside another 1,000-ton ship, left it listing. Lieutenant (jg) Cummings' crew also strafed six barge in the vicinity.
22 Oct -- A Catalina on armed night patrol piloted by Lieutenant [jg] Cumnings, found seven small cargo ships of about 300-ton each at Sandakan, North Borneo, and scored two hits with 500-pound bombs on one of the vessels. The plane was driven off by intense and accurate anti-aircraft fire. Later, the Catalina strafed for 45 minutes six small cargo ships at Tanga Bay, North Borneo, but none of them caught fire. A shore-based anti-aircraft battery also was silenced.

25 Oct -- Off Great Santa Cruz Island, southwest Mindanao, a PBY on armed night patrol, piloted by Lieutenant [jg] Cummings, missed a 1,000-ton freighter-transport with a stick of two 500-pound and two 100-pound bombs. The Catalina was driven off by moderate and accurate medium anti-aircraft fire from the beach. Later, the plane also spotted an enemy Ca, MOCALI Class, and a DD at 10-10 N, 120-50 E, and tracked it for half an hour. The enemy warships did not fire. All bombs on the plane had been dropped during the unsuccessful attack on the freighter-transport.

27 Oct -- Lieutenant [jg] Burt and crew, on a Black Cat mission, missed a 7,000-ton enemy transport with three 500-pound and four 100-pound bombs off Usang Point, North Borneo. A 20 mm. shell from the transport exploded in the mechanic's compartment and the port wing also was holed, but no one was hurt. A NATORI Class CL, escorting the transport, did not open fire.

29 Oct -- Lieutenant [jg] Arthur W. Stanwood, USNR, piloted a Catalina on armed night patrol. Four 500-pounders were dropped over a 500-ton cargo ship at Zamboanga, but missed. The plane escaped damage from medium and accurate anti-aircraft from the beach.

31 Oct -- A 7,000-ton tanker, anchored on the south side of Tawitawi Island, Sulu Archipelago, was destroyed by a Catalina on armed night patrol, piloted by Lieutenant [jg] William H. Simon, Jr., USNR. On the first run, the PBY-5 missed the ship with two 500-pounders and two 100-pounders. On the second attack, two more 500's and two more 100's were dropped in salvo and hit the tanker squarely amidships. The ship exploded in a burst of flame, throwing parts 300 feet into the air. When the Catalina turned and headed for home, only smouldering debris remained. The anti-aircraft fire from the beach was light and inaccurate and did not hole the plane.
VPB-52 OPERATIONS FOR SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER

Petrol Bombing Squadron 52, while aboard the U. S. S. T. U.S.S.R. from 1 September through 20 September, flew 56 air-Sea rescue missions covering Fifth Air Force strikes on Dutch New Guinea and the eastern Celebes area.

From 20 September through 31 October, the Catalina squadron was based administratively at Seaplane Repair Base, Manus, with detachments at Treasury, Green, Emirau, Hollandia and Wondoi.

A summary of some of the rescues follows:

29 Sept -- A Catalina commanded by Lieutenant (jg) Martin T. Watts, USNR, landed off the east coast of New Ireland, 02-55 S, 151-16 E, and picked up an F4U pilot from VMF 125 who had made a forced landing on hour before. The Marine fighter pilot, whose plane had been hit by small automatic weapon fire while strafing installations along the east coast of New Ireland, was unharmed and in a life raft. The Catalina took off from Emirau, summoned by other F4U's. Lieutenant (jg) Watts rendezvoused with four of these Corsairs, which provided cover for him. He landed into the wind on rolling ground swells four to five feet high. The plane bounced twice and stopped fifty yards past the survivor, Marine First Lieutenant McIlroy. The plane taxied up to the pilot, took him aboard, and took off, again bouncing twice. While the Cat was on the water, the fighter cover drew neager, light anti-aircraft from the beach.

6 Oct -- In the best Catalina tradition, Lieutenant (jg) Edward R. Stell, USNR, and crew saved two Marines of VMF 321, I. E. 14. Here is how the VPB-52 Intelligence Officer, Lieutenant Nicholas S. McGawin, USNR, tells the story:

"While standing by south of Cape St. George, New Ireland, Lieutenant (jg) Stell was told an SBD crew had been forced down by anti-aircraft fire about two miles north of Cape Gazelle (the northeastern tip of Gazelle Peninsula, New Ireland). With fighter cover of two F4U's, he proceeded to the location, given, where he found the two survivors on a life raft, being circled by a PBJ, which dropped a float light to mark their position. The raft was being carried by the wind toward enemy-held Duke of York Island, and apparently would have reached it before rescue could have been effected by PTs or other surface craft.

"There were eight-foot swells running before a 20-knot wind, and the raft was within range of 4.7" batteries on Cape Gazelle, but Lieutenant (jg) Stell decided to land. Although the F4U's strafed the gun positions, the Catalina was under fire while on the water, the nearest burst, about 20 yards away, shaking the plane violently.
On the landing, the plane bounced once, then stayed on the water. As it taxied up to the raft, waves broke over it, shortening the inter-communication system. One engine was cut, and a line was thrown to the survivors from the blist er as the Catalina taxied past the raft. After the survivors were taken aboard, the Catalina immediately took off, bouncing high into the air twice before gaining air speed. Except for two rivets popped, no damage was done to the plane."

29 Oct -- Lieutenant Robert E. Tallison, USNR, picked up the pilot of an F4U who had flown into the concussion of a bomb dropped by his section leader. The two F4Us were working over the northwest tip of Guadalcanal when the explosion occurred. The damaged plane promptly headed out to sea, landing about four miles off shore, where Lieutenant Tallison landed and made the rescue.

30 Oct -- Lieutenant (jg) Roy M. Young, USNR, was summoned from Emirau to the rescue of a PBJ crew. Its six members had been bombing and strafing along the northwest coast of New Ireland when the PBJ's starboard engine was hit by anti-aircraft fire. The Mitchell landed 10 miles north of New Hanover where Lieutenant (jg) Young landed in eight-foot swells to pick up the survivors.

Other activities of VPB-52 included: Daily searches of sectors north of Manus during the movement of the Philippine invasion fleet through the area, all were negative.... Day and night anti-submarine searches from Hollandia from 8 to 20 October. The detachment of the squadron making this search moved to Woomit 22 October, continuing its work from that base. No sightings were made on any of these missions.

VPB-33 ENDS RECORD BLACK CAT TOUR

157,000 TONS SUNK OR DAMAGED

Undisputed Black Cat Champion of the Pacific, by virtue of 157,000 tons of enemy shipping sunk or damaged within a 33-night period, Patrol Bombing Squadron 33 has completed its tour of midnight duty.

Under the leadership of Lieutenant Commander Fernando P. Anderson, USN, Commanding Officer, VPB-33 began its record-smashing Black Cat run 1 September, operating from the U.S.S. ORCA and the U.S.S. SAR CARLO at Middleton Island, Dutch New Guinea. On 23 September, the Cats proceeded to the U.S.S. HALF MOON at Morotai, the newest and most advanced Allied-operational area in the Southwest Pacific at the time. From there, the squadron's crews pressed attacks on Jap shipping in the previously unexploited hunting-grounds of the western and southern Carolas, northern Borneo, the Sulu Archipelago and the central Philippines.
The new territory brought new dangers, but it brought, too, an impressive tonnage total of enemy ships sunk or damaged which surpasses all previous efforts of any outfit flying PB4Y's. The toll of Jap shipping losses, as assessed by the squadron, included the sinking of a 6,000-ton KATURI Class cruiser, and 10,000-ton CHITOSE Class Seaplane tender, four PF KATURI Class armed escorts, two 8,500-ton freighter-transports, a 10,000-ton transport and a 10,000-ton tanker.

In all, 43 ships totaling 103,500 tons were sunk or completely destroyed and 20 ships amounting to 53,500 tons were heavily damaged, squadron figures show. In addition, 43 miscellaneous small craft, whose tonnage could not be estimated, were destroyed or sunk and 10 were damaged. In computing this tonnage, the lowest figure for the class of vessel concerned was used, except when definite observed features of design justified a higher estimate.

The squadron gives due credit for the success of its missions to the maintenance role played by PBYU units on the U.S.S. ORIOLE, U.S.S. S.S. S.R. CARLOS and U.S.S. HULL 100W. The units worked constantly to provide operational aircraft for the squadron's 1,025.2 hours on 75 combat missions, during which 116 attacks were made on enemy shipping.

An account of some of the most important attacks follows:

1 Sept -- Lieutenant Commander Fernald P. Anderson, USN, Commanding Officer, flying a Black Cat equipped with four fixed .50 caliber M/G in bow, strafed six barges 10 miles north of Monado Bay, Golobat Island, heavily damaging the vessels. Four more barges were rendered unserviceable, as were two sailing vessels in the area. One single-masted lugger was sunk. All attacks were made from an average altitude of 100 feet; . . . About an hour later, four miles south of Monado, a 2,000/4,000-ton FOX TAPA CHARLIE was sighted anchored close inshore. In five attacks, the ship was strafed bow to stern and four 100-pound bombs were dropped in a stick, the latter exploding about 15 feet off the starboard bow. It was the squadron's assessment that the ship was severely damaged.

1 Sept -- Lieutenant Jonas F. Merritt, Jr., U.N.R., Executive Officer and his Cat crew flew their first mission to Mindanao P. I. Ten miles north of Davao Town, a 100-pound bomb was dropped on a large barge, overshooting it by 30 feet. Five miles farther south, an MLIX was sunk at its harbor by strafing with the bow .30's. Two miles still farther south, a strafing run was made on a row of four barges at 50 feet altitude. Halfway through the run, a destroyer was sighted on the starboard side and its deck was raked with the .50's. The DD returned the fire with intense 40 mm. and .40 caliber; shore batteries at Davao opened up; two searchlights were trained on the plane. Lieutenant Merritt dived out of the lights and proceeded down coast until a SULU CHARLIE was sighted. A 500-pound bomb was dropped squarely amidships, resulting in a tremendous explosion. Flame enveloped the ship. When the PB4Y circled
and returned to the scene 45 seconds later, no trace of the SUGAR CHARLIE could be found.

1 Sept -- A Cat commanded by Lieutenant Allan L. Wilcox, USNR, strafed at Jap shipping at Ambon Harbor, Greater. Four strafing runs at 100 feet destroyed a 300/700-ton SUGAR CHARLIE, two 500-pound bombs, released at 1,000 feet height, scored near-misses (one being 15 feet from the hull) on a 2,000/4,500-ton FOX TURK CHARLIE, causing heavy damage; two sail- ing luggers were destroyed by numerous strafing runs.

2 Sept -- Four 500-pound bombs dropped from a plane commanded by Lieutenant (jg) John R. Zuiden, USNR, scored near-misses on eight SUGAR CHARLIES clustered in Dano Gulf, Indonesia. On a second run, two parafregs landed amidships on one of the targets. Five strafing runs followed. Score: two sunk, three probably sunk, two damaged heavily. Later, another SUGAR CHARLIE tied up at a wharf at Banj Bay was destroyed with 200 rounds of .30 caliber and 250 rounds of .50 caliber.

2 Sept -- Lieutenant (jg) Joseph McCabe, USNR, attacked a 300/500-ton SUGAR CHARLIE near Kendas, Celebes Island. Three strafing attacks, made in power dives from 500 feet down to 100 feet, and a near-miss with a 100-pounder demolished the vessel. Three strafing runs opened up the attack on a 2,000/4,500-ton FOX TURK CHARLIE. Then, after gaining 1,000-foot altitude, Lieutenant McCabe’s plane made a power approach to 100 feet and released three 100-pound bombs in train. The first and third straddled the target; the second burst squarely amidships. It sank within a few minutes. On the way back to base, two anchored boats were severely damaged and probably sunk by two strafing runs.

3 Sept -- Lieutenant (jg) Mark R. Gilbert, USNR, and his crew strafed and seriously damaged six 300/700-ton SUGAR CHARLIES in Weisse Bay, Halmahera. Light, accurate anti-aircraft holes the plane’s port aileron, port wing and fuselage. Later, two barges were destroyed.

3 Sept -- A 3,000-ton freighter-transport and a small cargo vessel were destroyed at Tidore Island, near Halmahera; in a four-hour attack by Lieutenant (jg) Maurice Moskaluk, USNR, and his Cat crew. Four 250-pound bombs were dropped, one exploding squarely on the bow of the larger vessel. Ten parafregs were dropped, two being near-misses and eight over-shooting, and 25 to 30 strafing runs, in which 2,500 rounds of .50 caliber and 500 rounds of .30 caliber were expended, were made.
3 Sept. --- Lieutenant (jg) Colin B. Siers, USNR, on a 12-hr. Cat mission to Cera, sighted a 700-ton freighter off the east coast of Ambone. Four 500-pounders and an equal number of 100-pounders were released at 100 feet and eight strafing runs were made. Rather no bomb exploded closer than 40 feet to the target, the ship was down at the stern when the plane left the area. . . . One-half mile up the coast, two barges were strafed and sunk. . . . Four miles still further up the coast, a 30-foot skiff boat was sunk in the strafing runs. . . . Lieutenant Siers returned to Ambon Harbor at 0130 for reconnaissance. He was at 1,000 feet when three or four 40-mm. shore batteries opened up with intense, accurate fire. The target ship was struck in the port wing by a single shell. Incendiary action was taken, three .50 caliber machine guns fired from the opposite side of the harbor, holding the plane six times in the after part of the fuselage. However, the plane made it back to base.

5 Sept. --- Two destroyer escorts of the LST-45 Class were sighted moored side by side three miles east of Zamboanga, Mindanao. By Lieutenant Commander Anderson and his crew, after circling and coming in from the north, two 100-pound bombs were released at masthead height. Each ship was struck squarely amidships and both exploded, sending flames more than 1,000 feet in the air. When the Cat left the area a minute later, both were blazing from bow to stern. The fire was still visible at 40 miles.

6 Sept. --- Lieutenant (jg) John D. Warner, USNR, and his Black Cat crew sank or destroyed three freighters along the south coast of Cera. The first target, a 50-ton SUGAR CANELO, was left in an unserviceable condition after a 100-pound bomb exploded 10 feet off its bow and after it took 350 rounds of .50 caliber. A 3,000-ton freighter-transport was sunk by two 500-pounders, one landing slightly forward of the fantail and the other exploding six feet off the side of the ship. The ship could not be found after the attack. The third target, a 1,500-ton FORMOSA DOG, was hit squarely amidships, with one of the 500-pounders released, as were all other at masthead level. The explosion threw debris 800 feet in the air. The ship was then strafed at will.

9 Sept. --- Despite intense and accurate .50 caliber return fire, which holed the wings and hull of his Cat 15 to 20 times, Lieutenant Horritt dangled the 6,000-ton T.M.E. B.K.N.M.S. near Zamboanga, Mindanao. Coming in on his run at masthead level, Lieutenant Horritt dropped a 100-pound bomb amidships of his first target. As he pulled up to get squared away for another run, the second MTB was sighted and it was decided
to attack the new target. Again AA greeted it this time from an estimated eight guns, but the attack was carried out and a 250-pounder dropped on the vessel, just above the waterline, amidships. AA anti-aircraft still intense and the gasoline supply rapidly diminishing, the crew returned to base before complete results of the attack could be determined.

10 Sept. --- Lieutenant (jg) Warner and crew, on a mission to northern Celebes, sighted a 2,000-ton AD and a 4,500/5,500-ton AK at 124-03 E, 00-55 N. and proceeded the action with an attack on the smaller vessel. Heavy strafing and two near-misses with 100-pound bombs caused the ship to rock. When last seen it was listing and sinking. The larger ship took a 500-pounder amidships, and another bomb scored near-miss. Three 100-pound bombs were dropped, all for near-misses. In addition, 350 rounds of .50 caliber were expended. The target was left dead in the water and sinking.

10 Sept. --- Approaching in a masthead attack, Lieutenant Commander Anderson released two 500-pound bombs and one 100-pounder over a 500-ton freighter off Cape Hil, Corian. One 500-pounder landed amidships and the other two bombs landed beyond the target for near-misses. Two of four paraf frags, released at the same time as the bombs, landed on the deck. After the explosions, the Cat circled back to the scene, but no trace of the SUGAR CHARLIE could be found.

15 Sept. --- A Black Cat commanded by Lieutenant (jg) Columbus D. Reeves, USNR, sank a 2,000-ton freighter—transport five miles south of Bangka Strait, Celebes. A strafing run was made at 250-foot altitude, and then a bombing run in which four 500-pound bombs and three paraf frags were released. Three of the 500-pounders exploded within 20 feet of the bow, while the paraf frags fell short. A second strafing run was made and the pilot circled around to come in for a third. The only target presented his gunners was the stern of the ship protruding from the water.

16 Sept. --- Lieutenant Merritt and his crew destroyed an 8,500-ton freighter in a 17-run attack in Kendari Harbor, Celebes. The target was at anchor one-half mile off shore when the Cat made its first run, during which two 500-pound bombs and one 100-pound bomb were released at masthead height. The two 500's
landed amidships and the one 100-pounder ship hit over the vessel. Several strafing runs followed. Then Lieutenant Harritt came in for a hit too, another bombing run in which a 500-pounder and a 100-pounder were dropped to make sure of the kill. As the plane passed over the ship, the starboard wing struck a forward king-post, hitting it out a one-foot square chunk of the leading edge of the wing. Then, the 500-pound bomb struck the ship, but the 100-pound bomb failed to release. More strafing runs were made and then six parafangs were let go—five scoring misses, the sixth landing in an open after hold, causing a suffocating explosion and fire. As the Cat left the scene, the ship was a raging inferno. Flacks were visible 40 miles out to sea. Upon arrival back at base it was discovered that large pieces of the freighter’s king-post were embedded in the ship’s leading edge, out of which a hole one-foot square had been gouged.

19 Sept. --- After successfully dodging four searchlights probing for his Black Cat from Wale Field and Zanboan, Hindman, Lieutenant Commander Anderson came upon a 2,000-ton FUO THE CHALLIE anchored close to the beach in a cove west of Zanboan. AA attack was made and a stick of four bombs (two 500s and two 100s) was dropped. The bombs were off in deflection, but one 500-pounder hit the bow at the waterline and exploded. Intense, accurate, light and medium AA greeted the PBY as it circled and came back, and Lieutenant Commander Anderson, believing his plane hit, left the area, with a night fight following. Damage to the PBY was assessed as heavy. At the base it was discovered the Cat had not been hit.

20 Sept. --- Lieutenant (jg) Sillers and his crew found four 300/700-ton freighters and a destroyer escort anchored off the northeast coast of Borneo. The 500-pound bombs and one 100-pounder were dropped and one of the 500s was seen to explode against the hull of one of the vessels. At the same time, the destroyer escort opened fire and an explosive bullet entered the cockpit, slightly wounding Lieutenant (jg) Sillers and Lieutenant (jg) Reeves. With AA still intense, (the crew also smelled escaping gasoline) the remaining bombs were jettisoned and the PBY headed for home. The freighter was at least heavily damaged and probably sunk. The Cat’s windshield was holed three times.
20 Sept. --- Lieutenant (jg) William Sumpter, USNR, and his crew sighted a 2500-ton freighter and 700-ton trucker in Halifax Bay, Mindanao. At nightfall, they dropped two 100-pound bombs and one 500-pound bomb and set the vessel afire and sank it in two minutes. The fire and the ship burst into flames and sank in two minutes. The fire and the ship burst into flames and sank in two minutes. Three strafing runs were made on the smaller ship, after which two 500-pounders and two 100-pounders were released. One 500 struck the bow, and the others scored near-misses, causing the vessel to capsize and sink.

23 Sept. --- In one of the best nights chalked up by the squadron's Cats, Lieutenant (jg) Sumpter led two destroyer escorts and sank a 10,000-ton seaplane tender in Daveo Gulf, Mindanao. The tender, of the CINCOSE Class, was at anchor in the process of fueling the two DE's when Lieutenant (jg) Sumpter came in at nightfall level. The 500-pound and the two 100-pound bombs were dropped inaccuracy. The first 100-pounder struck the nearest DE amidsthips; the 500's struck the seaplane tender amidsthips, and the final contury exploded in the second DE. The resultant explosion of the three ships lifted the Cat 250 feet in the air. The destroyer escorts disappeared. Lieutenant (jg) Sumpter came around again and attacked the crippled tender with numerous fleet attacks. His gunners went to work - strafing. This, added to the effect of the two bomb hits, caused a raging fire, and oil and debris littered the water. When the plane left the area, the ship had rolled over on its side and was sinking.

23 Sept. --- In the face of intense, accurate 20 mm. and .50 caliber return fire, Lieutenant (jg) Robert W. Schutz, USNR, and his crew damaged a 10,000-ton TANKER at Toli Toli Bay, Celebes. As the Cat passed over the target on its bombing run, .50-caliber bullets entered the under side of the deck in the after station, fatally wounding the navigator, Ensign LeRoy Fletau, USNR. Earlier, 20 mm. fire hit the starboard engine and wing, went through the firewall of the propeller, blew off the top cylinders, knocked out the prop field control cable, blew off the gauging and sheered the gas vents. Nevertheless, the run was completed and four 500-pound bombs were dropped over the vessel - two about 30 feet away and two against the hull. With the starboard engine flashing and the whole plane vibrating badly, Lieutenant (jg)
Schuetz climbed to 2,000 feet, the crew jettisoned all guns and ammunition, and the return home was made despite mechanical difficulties. The starboard prop had to be feathered and the 550 mile trip was on one engine.

23 Sept. — Lieutenant Commander Anderson and his crew destroyed a 10,500-ton tanker in Colono Bay, Colobos. A fleet light was dropped to mark the target, revealing not only the tanker but a small, escort vessel, both on the southern side of the entrance to the Bay. As the run was begun, both ships and shore batteries opened up with intense, accurate, light and 6-inch fire, holing the port wing. Two 10-pound bombs and two 500-pounders were released over the tanker, one of the circumstances and a 500 hit amidships; the other 500 struck close aboard the starboard side. The ship exploded, all cock-a-hoop ceased, and flames rose several thousand feet in the air and spread across the surrounding water. The ship rolled over and sank. The fire was visible for 40 miles.

23 Sept. — Lieutenant (jg) William R. Pope, USNR, continued to make the date a bad one for Japan shipping when he and his crew sank a 2,000-ton FAX TAE YAW 15 miles west of Ancon Bay, Colobos. After an accurate strafing run, three bomb runs were made, and four 500-pound bombs and a century were dropped. One 50-pounder hit under the stern at the waterline; all others were near-misses. The crippled ship headed in toward shore and when last seen that night was aground on a reef. Return accurate, short anti-aircraft slightly wounded a waist gunner, H. N. Mt. Mills. (A week later the ship was observed to have slid off the reef and was lying on its side, awash in shallow water.)

24 Sept. — A 4,500-ton FAX TAE YAW was destroyed by a Cat commanded by Lieutenant (jg) Gilbert, at 01-03 E., 122-22 E., Colobos Island. Two of four 500-pound bombs dropped scored direct hits. Debris and flame shot high in the air. Turbulent weather delayed a second run until an hour later when the target, beached by the bow by this time, was treated by four 100-pounders, all of which exploded near-fire, and a score of strafing runs. Numerous explosions spread the fire and when the Cat headed for base the glare of the flames could be seen for 60 miles.
24 Sept. --- At Darvel Bay, Borneo, a Cat commanded by Lieutenant (jg) Robert F. Hendrie, USNR, sank a 4,500-ton FOX TARE CLARA, and heavily damaged and probably destroyed a 1,500-ton FOX TARE DOG. The larger vessel came first. Two 500-pound bombs and one century exploded 30 feet from the target. Two 500-pounders and two 100-pounders were let go, one of each scoring hits on the stern. The gunners then poured 2,800 rounds at the other ship. Then the plane left the area, only the bow of the FTC was out of the water and the FTD was settling slightly by the stern.

26 Sept. --- A 10,500-ton transport was sunk and a 7,000-ton transport was probably damaged in an attack made by Lieutenant Commander Merritt's PBY off shore of Sulu Island, Sulu Archipelago, in the face of intense fire from both vessels and five escorts. Four 100-pound bombs and four 500-pound bombs and eight paratroops were dropped during the attack, which was made an hour and a half after the first sighting, under the assumption that the enemy had been aware of the presence of the Cat in the area. The first run was made at 100 feet, approaching up wind from behind a high point of land, and was not by ooh-ack shortly before reaching the target. The bomb mechanism failed to function. A circle to the right was made in order to avoid the barrage and then the port bombs were released in salvo by using the emergency-release handle. The two 100-pounders and the two 500-pounders exploded under the stern of the 7,000-ton ship. Lieutenant Commander Merritt then headed for the larger vessel, again used the emergency-release handle, and dropped two 500-pound and one 300-pound bombs from the starboard wing. The three burst midships, sending debris and flames 500 feet into the air. The AA had been on all the time and continued as the Cat pulled away about four miles, and remained in the vicinity for three hours. Meanwhile, the ship had been engulfed in flames, the stern had sunk, and the ship was slowly sliding under water.

28 Sept. --- Lieutenant (jg) Ian L. Hutchieson, USNR, while searching Polloc Harbor, Mindanao, sighted four 500-ton SUGAR DOGS, two 700-ton SUGAR CLARITIES, two luggers and two barges. The plane was subjected to intense .50 caliber fire, but succeeded in reaching home repeated bombing and strafing attacks from 1,000 feet altitude. One 500-pound bomb hit on the forecastle and sank on SC, while near-misses with on 500’s in one century left the second SC listing and sunk by the stern. Strafing runs (3,000 rounds) sank two 500-ton SUGAR DOGS, seriously damaged two more, sank the barges and inflicted heavy damage on the luggers.
three fell short, but the third hit the ship's side and exploded inside. On the second run, another bomb dropped within 15 feet of the tanker. As the plane passed over the vessel, two 20 mm's and a 12.7 mm bullet hit the prop of the No. 4 engine. However, Ensign Barker managed to climb to 8,000 feet and returned to Morotai. The ship was observed to be capsized the next day and was on the bottom 2 November. Photographs show it to be probably of the ABEO-B 1020 Class, 10,200 G.T. loaded. The figure 0049 was painted prominently on deck.

31 Oct.--- Lieutenant Little and crew sighted a 5,000-ton JNAF TAKU-class off-shore near Punday Island, The Philippines. A surprise attack was made from behind a hill, with five 250-pound GP, 4-5 second delay bombs being picked. The first bomb fell short. The second was a direct hit, and the last three passed over the ship. As the KD4Y pulled away, the ship was burning from bridge to stern and settling.
1 Doc. --- Lieutenant Stanley A. Wood, USNR, found a 200-ton lug or anchored along the north coast of Cebu Island, at 00-55N, 123-03E, and destroyed it by bombing and strafing.

1 Doc. --- SUGAR CHARLIE was set afire and left sinking by a Liberator piloted by Lieutenant (jg) Gerald L. Didier, USNR. The ship, sighted off the west coast of Mindoro, was bombed and strafed.

1 Doc. --- Lieutenant John H. Burton, USNR, sighted a 1,200-ton FXX TARE CHARLIE in a cove at 11-40N, 122-27E, and dropped five centuries which exploded about 1,500 ft. off the storm. On the next run he dropped one 50-pounder which hit alongside the port bow and blew off the forecastle. Approximately 100 persons were seen abandoning ship; they jumped over the side and swam to safety on their backs. Another bombing run was made, and this time a 500-pounder dropped under the storm. Strafing by 2,000 rounds of 50-caliber caused a fire, and the FOLY continued on its patrol. Lieutenant Burton returned to the scene four hours later, just in time to see the ship explode, with debris and flame rising 1,000 feet into the air. All that was left of the Torpedo vessel was a ring of flame on the water, and some floating planks.

1 Doc. --- Lieutenant Paul F. Stevens, USN, set fire to a 50-ton lugger by strafing off the northwestern coast of Dorneo; and then sank a 200-ton SUGAR DOG and slightly damaged two 100-ton luggers in Rabat Harbor, Dorneo.

2 Doc. --- Lieutenant Raymond L. Ettinger, USNR, picked up a convoy of one DD, three FG’s, one FT, and one 40 west of Cullian Island, north of Palawan. This convoy had been traced from Dorneo and presumably was headed for Palawan. Three USCGS pressed an organized attack and then climbed up above the FOLY and dropped phosphorous bombs, but did no damage.

3 Doc. --- Lieutenant Commanding Whitney Wright, skipper of the squadron, had a good day's hunting off Balingayan Harbor. A 400-ton SUGAR DOG was bombed from 1,000 ft. with three centuries, one of which exploded under the stern of the vessel, sinking her almost immediately. Fifteen minutes later a 1,500-ton SUGAR DOG, at midships by a 500-pounder, burst into flames with smoke reaching up to 10,000 feet. Light damage then was inflicted on a patrol craft, which returned the fire.
and hit the Liberator in the bomb bay with a 20 mm. shell. No one was wounded, however. On the log, two one-gallon JERRYS made a couple of internal attacks and then left the scene quickly alike to either side.

5 Dec. --- Lieutenant William H. Goodwin, USNR, sank a SUG.R CHARLES and a lugger which were tied up together at a dock off Talpue Island, an hour and half later, out of Davy, he dropped two 500-pounders on the deck of a SUG.R LAKER, which sank immediately. On this run he made his approach at 60 feet, and had it all up to 100 feet to clear the ship after his bombs were released. While passing over Dalal Island, the lugger was trailed by an USS.R, which apparently decided that discretion was the better part of valor.

5 Dec. --- Lieutenant (jr) Didier, USNR, was jumped by four T0M.Ys south of Capiz, Panay. A 20-minute fight resulted, with the Japs taking 12 runs starting ver- head from 3, 6, and 9 o'clock. No damage was inflicted on the Liberator.

5 Dec. --- Lieutenant Good sunk a SUG.R CHARLES with one century, just north of Jesselton, North Borneo. He also slight- ly damaged a 2,500-ton SUG.R LAKER.

6 Dec. --- Lieutenant (jr) Joseph D. Shos, USNR, seriously dam- aged a 100-ton SUG.R DOG and a lugger, off the west- ern coast of North Borneo.

6 Dec. --- Lieutenant (jr) Jeff D. Harphill was stalked by tragedy on this FBAY patrol. He sank two SUG.R S. . LBS at Zarfango, which lived up to its reputation as a hot spot for flak. The Liberator was badly damaged and the pilot steeled a course for Leyte, not wanting to risk the long pull back to Hortas. No one was injured, and all hands breathed a sigh of relief as Lieutenant (jr) Harphill made a safe landing with the crippled craft. Then the tragedy occurred. A HATY, attacking the Tauloben strip, crashed into three JU’s parked near the FBAY. Ensign Norman P. Lidner, USN, copilot of the Liberator, and D.K. Holton, MC, were killed and four other members of the plane crew were injured.

6 Dec. --- Lieutenant Burton picked up three destroyers escorted by three fighters and one FZTE, near Bulikpapan. The ships opened up with three-inch and five-inch ack-ack at 6 miles, the nearest burst coming one-half mile from the plane at 3 o’clock.
7 Dec.-- Lieutenant (jg) Woodford J. Sutherland, USNR, flew over brush with a V.L. off the west coast of Baracut, though tracers appeared to be going to the Jap plane showed no sign of damage.

8 Dec.-- Lieutenant Goodman sank a SUGAR DOG and damaged another in Sandakan Harbor, and destroyed a 750-ton SUGAR CHARLIE north of Kudat Harbor.

8 Dec.-- Lieutenant Stevens flew over the Jap seaplane base at Toli Toli and attacked four HEHE's on the water. One of these was definitely destroyed by bombing and another was probably destroyed. During his flight on those planes, two other HEHE's, airborne, dropped phosphorous bombs on the Liberator, and then came in on high side passes. Both the top turret and tail turret guns of the PBY jammed, so Lieutenant Stevens retired momentarily for a little repair work. Then he came back to the scene and quickly got his guns on one HEHE, which retired smoking into a cloud. The other stayed around long enough to absorb a full burst from the bow turret, and then he, too, retired in haste.

9 Dec.-- Lieutenant (jg) Schaf strafed and damaged five luggers off southwest Bohol.

9 Dec.-- Lieutenant Commander Wright be bold and strafed a radar station near Tawi Tawi, causing some damage, and probably sank a 100-foot river boat at Sandakan.

10 Dec.-- Lieutenant (jg) Earl Bittonbender, USNR, made two bombs run on a 5,200-ton tanker underway off Josselin. However, the closest bomb exploded 25 feet from the ship. The Liberator crew also pumped 965 rounds of .50 caliber into the ship, causing some damage. The tanker send an escorting gunboat answered with 20 mm. but failed to hit the plane.

10 Dec.-- Lieutenant Henry S. Moon, USNR, picked up three destroyers off Balikpapan but kept out of their way and went in toward the harbor to see whether a convoy was forming. Before he could get a good view, he ran into eight or ten fighters, some of which were already on his tail. He put on full power and dived for the water, maintaining an average altitude of about 50 feet during the 45-minute battle which followed. The fighters - two T025s and the rest mostly ZEKES tried the familiar box formation with 3-4 cropping
phosphorous bombs, but to no avail. Then low passes were made. Lieutenant Noonan shot those off by pulling up the nose of his F4Y, forcing the Japs to dive under or break away. Even at this low altitude, several did dive under and managed to pull up in time. Then the Japs finally broke off the battle about 200 miles north of Delikopen, the final count was one ZKE definitely destroyed and two probably, with the best score going to the top turret gunner. The F4Y received numerous hits, all 7.7 caliber, and one member of the crew was wounded slightly. Just as was the case when Lieutenant Albert C. Alberts, USNR, Liberator pilot of VSB-101, battled successfully with 11 Jap planes on 2 December 1944 (see BULLETIN No.5), superb flying by the F4Y, coupled with disciplined teamwork by all hands, saved the day.

11 Dec. --- Lieutenant Wood and his F4Y crew shot down a 2,500-ton SUGAR BLEEcher damaged 26 November 1944. By Lieutenant (jg) Edward H. Benson, in a bay at Delahere Island, he also damaged a Jap tied up to a pier. Moderate, medium and light anti-aircraft was encountered.

11 Dec. --- Lieutenant Stevens continued the story attrition of Jap planes at Puerto Princesa when he flew low over the seaplane base and airstrip, destroying two JNMs and two ZKMs, and damaging one JNP, one JNE and two JNMs, all on the water or ground.

12 Dec. --- Lieutenant (jg) Schoe's crew again demonstrated its aggressiveness during a tense half hour over Borneo. First he strafed an airstrip under construction near Brunei Town, destroying a steamroller and damaging a truck. Ten miles south of there, he dived on three trucks loaded with troops and strafed them. The trucks pulled up under some trees, and Lieutenant (jg) Schoe then strafed the trees, with unobserved results. In the harbor near Brunei Town he strafed a 1,500-ton AK and then strafed it, leaving it afire. Six Japs were wounded on deck and the smoke went over the side. Nearby a river boat was steaming away, with someone on deck waving a white flag. The pilot commander ordered his gunners to hold their fire while he let down to look over the boat. He was immediately met by light ack-ack from the boat. That decided its fate - a strafing run loft it on fire and sinking. Lieutenant (jg) Schoe then gave his attention to eight large junks, sinking two and damaging the others.
by strafing. He also set fire to a large warehouse from which anti-aircraft fire had been aimed at this time, almost everything for miles around pouring lead in the general direction of the 741, and the plane was hit by six 7.7 mm and three 12.7 mm. Heavy gas fumes swept through the plane, making it necessary to open the bomb bay doors and to secure all electrical equipment, including the intercom system. The pilots had to lean out of the side windows to get enough fresh air to keep from losing consciousness. Three crewmen - Billieh M. Abbott, 11130; Otto J. Adams, 11130; and Gordon D. Martin, 11129, climbed down to the bomb bays to check the damage. They found gasoline pouring from a severed hose connection between the No. 2 tank and No. 2 selector valve. Abbott held the hose together in his hands as he transferred gas from the No. 2 to the No. 3 tank. Martin was overcome by fumes, but managed to snake back into the after section. Finally, after Abbott and Adams had transferred 100 gallons, the former lost consciousness and slipped off the catwalk. Adams propped him up and tried to pull him back, but lost consciousness himself and fell on the catwalk, from which he was dragged to safety. Abbott plummeted to his death through the bomb bay doors. Finally the fumes cleared. The plane landed with 90 gallons of fuel in its tanks. The courageous actions of Abbott and Adams undoubtedly were responsible for the Liberator's returning to base.

12 Dec. --- Lieutenant Burton set fire to and probably sank a luggor off Manado, strafed a nearby airstrip, re- hited one damaged SUG.R, and probably sank a lugger at 31-10N, 124-25E, and damaged another lugger at 30-15N, 120-20E.

12 Dec. --- Lieutenant Ettinger sank a 400-ton SUG.R DOG off the north coast of Negros Island.

13 Dec. --- Lieutenant George Walock, U.S.N.R., bopped and strafed a SUG.R JIM and a gunboat near Sentani Point, New Guinea. He slightly damaged the 7,000-ton JMN JIM, but no damage was observed on the gunboat. The plane was hit by four 20 mm. shells, and Lieutenant Dor Vartanian, 11130, USA, was wounded by shell hits.

14 Dec. --- Lieutenant Goodman bopped, strafed and sunk a SUG.R JULIETTE and two SUG.R DOGS in Devon Gulf.

14 Dec. --- Lieutenant (jg) Sittenhorder was unsuccessfully intercepted by three J.MES and one KITE.
15 Dec. --- Lieutenant Burton, while cruising at 7,500 feet off the southeast tip of Falcman, sighted a S.L.Y. two miles ahead and at the same altitude. Lieutenant Burton swung to port and maintained his altitude, while the S.L.Y. swung to starboard, made a 180 degree turn, and dived to sea level. The S.L.Y., still maintaining altitude, gave chase. The S.L.Y., seeing it was unable to shake the Liberator, made for land and headed up a ravine at the base of a mountain. The Liberator then pushed over, lowered its belly turret, and closed the range to 300 feet before opening fire. The S.L.Y.'s starboard engine was knocked out, gun turrets were set afire, and the pilots apparently were killed. The enemy plane crashed in flames. At Balsam Island, Lieutenant Burton boarded and destroyed a 1,500-ton F.W. BOM. DOG.

15 Dec. --- Lieutenant Wood sank a 300-ton lugger off the north tip of Falcman.

15 Dec. --- Lieutenant (jg) Edward K. Lagen, U.S.N.R., spotted three D.D's and a F.W. BOM. DOG off Jolo on a 90 degree course. No attack was made. Off Tizard Bank in the China Sea, an 100' class C's was sighted circling.

16 Dec. --- Lieutenant Vance W. Miller, U.S.N.R., boarded, strafed and damaged two SUGAR DOGS in Dewar Gulf. Two runs were made, dropping five 200-gal. bombs in the first and two on the second.

16 Dec. --- Lieutenant Commander Virtue came in low over Liri and spotted two fast tankers, far out to sea. He started for the prey, but on closer inspection discovered an escort of four D.D's. This altered the picture completely, especially when the D.D.'s opened up at five miles with some stuff that was far too close for comfort. The squadron skipper noticed the D.D.'s were camouflaged a brown color which was very effective.

18 Dec. --- Lieutenant Wood, boarded, strafed and damaged two SUGAR CHARLIES, two SUGAR DOGS and four luggers near Josselton. Later, in Palomas Strait, he boarded an SUGAR BOM. but since had lost all his guns, his attack was confined to strafing, which did slight damage.

18 Dec. --- Lieutenant (jg) Hagen made three bombing and strafing runs on a SUGAR CHARLIE at the mouth of Dewar Gulf, inflicting heavy damage. Further north, near Butun, Mandurao, he strafed and damaged a SUGAR DOG.
19 Dec. - Lieutenant Burton dropped in on five 70-foot launchers at Butuan Bay, Mindanao, destroying two and damaging others.

20 Dec. - Lieutenant Adler attacked a SUGAR DOG off Northwest Mindanao, with 100-pound bombs and strafing. The ship managed to survive this treatment, but when hit amidships by a 500-pounder she went all to pieces. Six luggers were strafed off Josselson with unobserved results.

21 Dec. - Lieutenant (jc) Regan swept down on a SUGAR DOG in Davao Gulf, plastering it with two centuries and scoring near misses with two 500-pounders. The ship was left in Flames and was considered destroyed.

22 Dec. - Lieutenant Goodfellow got the going hot as usual off Diliwapan. He sank a 2,000-ton SUGAR LAKER with two direct hits and a near miss with a 500-pounder, set fire to two 50s apparently loaded with oil, and strafed and damaged a riverboat. Shortly thereafter he was jumped by two ZEKEs and a KAMP. A short but fierce fight developed, with Lieutenant Goodfellow getting in a good burst on the KAMP, which retired definitely damaged. The ZEKEs also left the scene after one more unsuccessful pass, while homeward bound, near Dolaangitan, Celebes, the Navy pilot knocked a motor truck off the road.

22 Dec. - Lieutenant Burton sank a 600-ton SUGAR CHARLIE near Mindanao.

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ACTION HIGHLIGHTS OF VPB-104 SEARCHES FROM TACLOBAN:

10 Dec. - Lieutenant Walter H. Heidt, USNR, while flying formation with a PBYC piloted by Lieutenant (jc) Honor D. Heidt, USNR, of VPB-117, had a brush with an OSCAR near the northern tip of Negros Island. The OSCAR was damaged, and it is not known whether it was able to return to base.

13 Dec. - Lieutenant (jc) Didier, flying in company with a PBYC of VPB-117, also had a run-in with an OSCAR over the central Philippines. Although traces seemed to enter the OSCAR, the Navy plane showed no signs of damage.

15 Dec. - Lieutenant (jc) Woodford W. Sutherland, USNR, sighted a convoy in two elements, position 15-10N, 110-10E, near Scarborough Shoals. The first element was composed of 3 DDs, 2 PAs and 2 DEs, while the second was made up of 2 FTs, 1 PA and 2 DEs. The Navy pilot later encountered two
United States submarines, and vectored them in for an attack, directing them around the shoals and finally leaving them 30 miles from the convoy and making 17 knots. Two days later word was relayed to Lieutenant (jg) Sutherland from the captain of one of the ships stating in effect: "Sink one destroyer Matsu class. Probably one more. Attack on other ships in convoy unsuccessful."

15 Dec. --- Demonstrating the effectiveness of incendiaries on wooden ships, Lieutenant Stevens dropped a 100-pound cluster on each of two SUGAR DOGS in the central Philippines, 11-5 N, 123-12E. Both were destroyed.

26 Dec. --- Lieutenant Stevens, whose previous flights already had singled him out as a remarkable skillful and aggressive pilot, spotted and bombed a Jap task force approaching Mindoro.

26 Dec. --- Another job of expert piloting, this time by Lieutenant Etinger, saved a Liberator and its crew from destruction. The FB4Y first sighted an enemy convoy at 17-30N, 119-45E escorted by nine TONYs and a BETTY. The TONYs attacked and the FB4Y pushed over from its altitude of 8,000 feet and dived in and cut of stratus clouds at 1,500 feet. At 16-30N, 120-17E, another convoy, covered by four ZEKES, was seen. The ZEKES joined the TONYs and tried unsuccessfully to box the Liberator. The fire from the Liberator was so intense that the Japs broke off their runs at a safe distance. One TONY was probably damaged and retired. The flight lasted for 40 minutes. When the FB4Y finally broke from its thin cloud cover, all of the enemy planes were returning to their convoys.

23 Dec. --- Lieutenant (jg) Hagen shot down a MAVIS in an action which lasted only six minutes from the time of sighting to the final crash.

17 Dec. --- Lieutenant (jg) Sutherland seriously damaged one lugger and slightly damaged another off the coast of Hainan. A few miles further on he was jumped by a ZEK, which was hit many times and finally skidded off to starboard, losing altitude. However, the ZEK was not seen to crash so no kill was claimed.

31 Dec. --- The ever-present Lieutenant Stevens and his aggressive crew set fire to a SUGAR DOG at 24-25N, 123-00E, shot down a VAL a half hour later, and damaged three more SUGAR DOGS at 24-22N, 123-45E.
20 Dec. -- Lieutenant (jg) Didier damaged a SUGAR DOG and a SUGAR CHARLIE in the central Philippines, one at 12-00W, 121-27E and the other at 12-32N, 122-15E.

19 Dec. -- In a daring daylight attack, Lieutenant Stevens and Lieutenant (jg) Sutherland teamed up and sank a 5,500-ton FOX TARE BAKER, 310 miles west of Mindoro. The ship, in company with a FOX TARE DOG and escorted by a DD and a TG, was first sighted by Lieutenant (jg) Sutherland, who scored hits with two 500-pounders in a stem-to-stern run at 100-foot altitude. Lieutenant (jg) Sutherland then contacted Lieutenant Stevens, who was searching an adjoining sector, and the latter finished the job by bombing the crippled ship. The escorting vessels put up plenty of anti-aircraft but, perhaps because of the roughness of the sea, it was inaccurate.

22 Dec. -- Lieutenant Holder, returning from a routine patrol in poor visibility, was flying at 100 feet when he saw bullets hitting the water in front of his plane. He immediately applied full military power. A ZEKE, which was making a run from seven o'clock, rolled over and exposed its belly. The PBY took advantage of the opportunity to load the Nip plane so full of lead that it exploded in the air. The action was at 12-02N, 123-40E.

23 Dec. -- Lieutenant Ettinger engaged and probably destroyed a BETTY. When last seen, the Jap plane was streaming smoke from its port engine, the prop was windmilling and not feathered, and the plane was weeping from side to side and losing altitude.

24 Dec. -- Lieutenant Goodman crippled a JAKE near Camranh Bay, Indo-China. The Jap plane made a very hard water-landing and was strafed until its floats were under water. The Nip pilot did not attempt to get out of the plane and the canopy was still closed when the Liberator left the scene.

25 Dec. -- Lieutenant Burton shot down a TABBY while patrolling off Luzon, at 16-55N, 118-54E.

25 Dec. -- Lieutenant (jg) Hemphill knocked out the engines of a 50-ton lugger off the northeastern coast of Formosa.
VFP-71 CONTINUES BLACK-CATTING

Patrol Bombing Squadron 71, which began Black Cat operations 8
with its PBY-5As at Morotai 25 November 1944, continued its multi-
search-attack missions through 19 December, when it was placed
in a maintenance and rest status. During the Black Cat tour of duty,
the squadron sank or destroyed a FOX-TREE CHARLIE, two SUGAR
CHARLIES and four luggers, totaling 4.300 tons. Damaged were a
SUGAR LUKER, a large oiler, a small tanker, three luggers and four
barges. Also, considerable damage was done to docks, warehouses and
barracks in enemy ports. Black Cat operations through 19 December
were listed in Bulletin No. 5. Action highlight for the commander
of the night four follows:

15 Dec.—Lieutenant (jg) R. F. Feist, USNR, dropped six 250-pound
GP bombs and made six strafing runs on an enemy freighter off the
northeastern tip of Borneo, 05-13H, 119-13.1. The
following day, a Navy Liberator reported that a SUGAR
CHARLIE was beached on its side at 05-13N, 119-14.1.
There had been no previous report of a beached ship at
this position.

17 Dec.—Lieutenant (jg) A. E. Lehman, USNR, bombed and strafed
a 100-foot barge north of Davao, Mindanao. Only slight
damage was claimed since no fires were observed and re-
sults could not be accurately judged.

Starting 24 December, the squadron assigned a plane each
night to operate with PT boats in an anti-large patrol of waters
between Morotai and the northern tip of Halmahera. On the first
night of joint operations, Lieutenant Commander W.L. Kauber, USN,
made a visual sighting at 0115/I 25 December of two 75-foot barges.
A string of four 120-pound bombs was dropped and two direct hits
were scored, destroying the barges.

Between 4 January 1945 and 7 January 1945, the major part
of the squadron moved to Leyte, where it based aboard the USS MUSKRAT.
The outfit was assigned to task of providing Ton Cat coverage for
the huge convoys which were beginning to nose through the Philip-
ippines for the assault in Lingayen Gulf. The highlight of this
coverage occurred 7 January when Commander Norman C. Gillette, Jr.,
USN, squadron commanding officer, picked up a radar blip near
Manila, at 2230/I. He investigated and found that it was a Ja-
panese destroyer of the K/TUNAJARU class. Three United States de-
stroyers, summoned by Commander Gillette, intercepted the enemy
ship, hit her repeatedly with salvos, and finally sank her. At 0300/I
the Ton Cats were released by Commander Task Force 78 with the
"Well Done".
On 10 January, Commander Gillette led 12 planes to Lingayen Gulf, where operations were inaugurated 12 January. Lieutenant Richard J. Kirkins, USNR, observed a survivor in life raft 1 mile off the Luzon coast 13 January and made a landing in a Catalina. The survivor was dragged badly and sank, but all members of the crew, together with the Army pilot when they had attempted to rescue, were subsequently picked up by a destroyer, the USNS TIMES.

VTR-146 LISTS OPERATIONS FOR NOVEMBER

Petrol-Dropping Squadron 146, with Lieutenant Commander Jesse P. Robinson, USN, commanding, continued to fly its Ventura to Morotai in November 1944. At the end of the month the squadron was moved to Morkang Field, Los Negros.

Action highlights:

3 Nov. - Lieutenant Commander Hadley M. Lewis, USNR, made two runs on an AK off North Borneo, dropping six 100-pound bombs and leaving the ship sinking an hour later. A destroyer, escorting the AK, was strafed by the turret gunner during the second run. The warship returned the fire, but halted the Ventura only once.

5 Nov. - Lieutenant (jg) William C. Anderson, USNR, sank a barge off North Celebes by strafing.

14 Nov. - Lieutenant Kenneth D. Bradshaw, USNR, strafed a barge near the Celebes, and return fire scored three hits - two on the PT's prop and one on the right outboard. The crew later, the barge was observed to be beached.

15 Nov. - Lieutenant Erving C. Olson, USNR, fired 1,200 rounds of 50 caliber and dropped four 100-pound bombs on a 5,000-ton tanker off North Borneo. The ship was burned and beached.

20 Nov. - Lieutenant Richard B. Hart, USNR, successfully ditched his plane 200 miles southeast of Morotai. None of the crew was injured and all emergency gear was taken from the plane. Two days later, a PBM from VPB-20, also based at Morotai,

22 Nov. - A Ventura piloted by Lieutenant (jg) John J. Dorrin was shot down by friendly carrier aircraft off Morotai, although the plane was a fire when ditched, there were no injuries to personnel, and the entire crew was picked up by a friendly destroyer after an hour and a half in the water.

26 Nov. - Lieutenant Clifton E. Jackson, USNR, was attacked by three
On 10 January, Commander Gillette led 12 planes to Lingayen Gulf, where operations were inaugurated 12 January. Lieutenant Richard J. Hurkins, USNR, observed a survivor in life Rafts off the Luzon coast 13 January and made a landing in 50 minutes. The Catalina was damaged badly and sank, but all members of the crew, together with the Army pilot whom they had attempted to rescue, were subsequently picked up by a destroyer, the USS TIPPEE.

VBD-146 LISTS OPERATIONS FOR NOVEMBER

Patrol-Denior Squadron 146, with Lieutenant Commander Jesse P. Robinson, USN, commanding, continued to fly its Ventura from Morotai in November 1944. At the end of the month the squadron was moved to Nukorang Field, Los Negros.

Action highlights:

3 Nov.- Lieutenant Commander Hadley M. Lewis, USNR, made two runs on an AK off North Borneo, dropping six 100-pound bombs and leaving the ship smoking an anchor in the water. A destroyer, escorting the AK, was strafed by the turret gunner during the second run. The warship returned the fire, but holed the Ventura only once.

5 Nov.- Lieutenant (jg) William C. Anderson, USNR, sank a barge off North Celebes by strafing.

14 Nov.- Lieutenant Kenneth D. Bradshaw, USNR, strafed a barge near the Celebes, and returned fire scored three hits - two on the IV's prop and one on the right cabin tank. Two days later, the barge was observed to be beached.

15 Nov.- Lieutenant Erling C. Olson, USNR, fired 1,200 rounds of 50-caliber and dropped four 100-pound bombs on a 5,000-ton tanker off North Borneo. The ship was burned out and beached.

20 Nov.- Lieutenant Richard H. Hart, USNR, successfully ditched his plane 200 miles southeast of Morotai. None of the crew was injured and all emergency gear was taken from the plane. Two days later, a PBM from VPB-20, also based at Morotai.

22 Nov.- A Ventura piloted by Lieutenant (jg) John P. Detrich was shot down by friendly carrier aircraft off Morotai. Although the plane was on fire when ditched, there were no injuries to personnel, and the entire crew was picked up by a friendly destroyer after an hour and a half in the water.

26 Nov.- Lieutenant Clifton E. Jackson, USNR, was attacked by three
P-40's near Halmahera. His plane was badly nicked and was surveyed after a crash landing at Morotai. No members were injured.

28 Nov. Lieutenant Commander Lewis and Lieutenants Herbert W. George, USNR, and James C. Clark, Jr., USNR, hit Tobu Island with 22 five-inch high-explosive rockets and 12 500 pound GP bombs. Five buildings, a radio tower and a 100-foot boat on a marine railway were damaged. Lieutenant Commander Lewis' plane was holed twice, but in general the ack-ack was light and inaccurate.

At Mokorong in December, half the squadron flew 300-mile sector searches while the other half was on rehabilitation leave in Australia. Total flight time for December was 550 hours. No service ammunition was expended.

VPB-25 OPERATES FROM MINDORO

Patrol Bombing Squadron 25 moved from Leyte Gulf to Hangarin Bay, Mindoro, on 28 December, 1944, basing on the USS HALF MOON and the USS S/N PADLO. Following are same notes, covering the period from the date of moving to 24 January, 1945, which were submitted by the squadron for the BULLETIN:

The improvement in weather on this side of the Philippines was counterbalanced by the much too frequent appearance of Jap aircraft that harassed us almost continually for the first week. So occupied with one strafing, and one very near miss of a 500 pound bomb, a P-38 tender and an ammunition ship close by were not so lucky.

The tactical job at hand is the flying of four 12 degree, 70-mile, daylight searches west at the French Indo-China coast and a 600-mile night search down the west coast of Borneo to Brunei Bay. Numerous Jap merchantmen have been spotted as well as three Jap cruisers and three Jap destroyers.

One Dumbo mission to Cuyo Island was successfully completed with the rescue of two survivors from an LST.

Lieutenant (jg) Donald A. Riedl, USNR, and Henry R. Glaeser, Jr., HM3c, USN, were killed in a crook-up on a reef and subsequent burning during an early morning take-off.

Two successful single engine returns from well out in the sectors have been made by Lieutenant (jg) Edward D. Crocker, USNR, and Lieutenant Bowen S. Larkins, USNR, the former of whom returned from a distance of over 600 miles on single engine.
The third single engine operation had a more spectacular conclusion. Lieutenant J. L. Stevenson, USNR, was flying a miles west of Lingayen Gulf, with a 40-knot wind and 20-30° swell adding to the many other hazards. The landing was a remarkably successful one - they rode the sea for over seven hours, when the destroyer USS HOPEWELL effected the rescue of a well won but happy crew.

On a night Dornoo search, Lieutenant Commander Frank H. Sorrows, USN, and his crew were chased for one and a half hours by five R4M planes that seemed to be getting some excellent fighter director control. Apparent lack of radar control in the planes, plus only fair visibility, prevented their closing. The chase was near Brunei Bay.

VFB-137 DLTSTS TOSH ISLAND

Patrol Bombing Squadron 137, operating from Korotaki, made a series of raids during December 1944. The squadron, which flies PV-1s, is commanded by Lieutenant Commander John H. Porter.

On 1 December, Lieutenant Commander Porter, flying a search sector, was jumped by a HEW, which dropped a stick of four 550s, spaced at 150 feet, from 6,000 feet. The closest bomb missed the Ventura, which was flying at 200 feet, by about 500 feet. Lieutenant Commander Porter chased the HEW, but the Jay plane ducked into a cloud and made its getaway.

Principal actions were:

3 Dec. - Army Intelligence reported that the radio station on Tosi Island was still broadcasting periodically and was visibly honing Jay night raiders to Korotaki. Six Venturas, led by Lieutenant Commander Porter, made a daylight raid on the installations, dropping bombs, firing six-inch rockets, and strafing. Possibly because the high velocity rockets were piercing the light buildings without explosion, the damage to the structures did not appear to be substantial. The turret dye and astro sights of a plane piloted by Lieutenant L. A. Enslow was shattered by enemy fire. The gunner, J. S. Sabrowski, AMDc, and the navigator, R. E. Carney, AMDc, were cut around the face and legs. The anti-aircraft was light.

6 Dec. - Lieutenant R. F. Bridston led six more PVs to Tosi Island, and this time nose fuses were used on the rockets. Damage to buildings was serious.
7 Dec. - The Venturas were loaded with 500-pound and 150-pound incendiary clusters. Four planes got the target, flown by Lieutenant R.M.R. Beck. A direct hit on the radio station and destroyed it completely by fire. The other planes set large fires in two other areas. "Incendiary belts proved to be ideal for the night on buildings and thatched huts," the squadron action report stated.

8 Dec. - Lieutenant Bridston and three other pilots dropped 500-pound demolition bombs and paraffin. Photographs showed that every installation on the island, including living quarters and a boat shop, was demolished.

10 Dec. - Recent intelligence had indicated that some 3,000 Japs at Kolomb, Kolobes, virtually ceased by Lieutenant C.S. Harris, USNR, of VB-101 on 13 October 1944. (see Bulletin No. 4), also had served as an aircraft assembly plant. Moreover, photographs indicated that there was still some activity in the few buildings left standing. Consequently, four Venturas piloted by Lieutenant C. Beck, Carlson, and Ray and Lieutenant (jg) R. Lee dropped the remaining buildings. All but two bombs landed on the target area.

14 Dec. - Lieutenant Hesvold spied a HETE over Tawitawi and knocked the Nip down on the water. The HETE managed to take a landing, but was strafed twice on the water and left burning.

16 Dec. - Three Venturas dropped more bombs and fired more rockets over the wrecked seaplane base at Kolobes, Kolobes.

17 Dec. - Lieutenant W. V. lace made two bombing runs on a newly built official ship in Bangao Anchorage, Tawitawi. Results were observed. The plane was hit by 20-millimeter antiaircraft fire. The following day an Army F-36, attacking a Japanese B-24 believed to be the same ship, was shot down.

19 Dec. - Lieutenant (jg) R. V. Hincken spotted the same F6F HEL DCG in Bangao Anchorage. He made one bomb run without success, when he was dive bombed by three F4F-3s from the 13th Air Force. The Ventura turret gunner opened fire on the lead plane, slightly wounding the pilot. Aeny of the Thunderbolts bared in. Before the last F4F got away, the F6F had been hit 12 times. One rifleman was shot out, which caused the F6F to ground-loop and crash. Fortunately, no one was injured.

21 Dec. - Two planes piloted by Lieutenant J. C. Kossen and Lieutenant (jg) R. V. Marhaim bombed a HRS TUE DCG at Tawitawi with unobserved results. (The report did not indicate whether this was the same ship which was attacked 19 December and 17 December.) One plane was hit by medium.
anti-aircraft fire.

23 Dec. - Lieutenant Commander Porter led a six plane strike on Manado, with a SUGAR BAKER, a SUGAR CHARLIE and many luggers, sighted the previous day, designated as the primary targets. The town and waterfront were partially obscured by low clouds, and a FOX T.R.E. DUG, tied up on the south bank of the Tondano River, was the only ship to be seen. Lieutenant Commander Porter fired his rockets at the ship, but they fell short into the warehouse area. On his next run he dropped six centurions, which overshot onto four barges. Three of these sank. Lieutenant (jg) was unloaded all rockets and bombs in the warehouse area. Lieutenant Kach now hit at the base of a wharf spanning the river. The delayed fuse missile was soon to explode, causing certain damage. Another bomb went through the bridge, exploding in the water, and four rockets landed into the warehouses at the north end of the bridge. Lieutenant (jg) J. L. Loekle shot a string of rockets into the south end of the bridge and plowed six 100-pound bombs into the warehouses on the other side of the river. Lieutenant (jg) C. J. Yazel and Lieutenant (jg) R. L. Shaffer pocketed the warehouse area, and Lieutenant (jg) Yazel scored hits on the officer's quarters, two miles south of the river. Large fires were started. Intense light and medium anti-aircraft met them and, to quote one pilot, "It look-ed as if Christmas had come a bit early at Manado."

VBP-101 OPERATIONS FOR DECEMBER:

Patrol Bombing Squadron 101 continued to operate its B-24s from Morotai during December 1944. Five enemy aircraft were destroyed in flight during the month and four others were destroyed on the ground or water. Five planes were damaged. Eight ships totaling 4,150 tons were sunk and five others, totaling 3,750 tons, were damaged.

"Of significance during the period was the almost complete disappearance of enemy shipping from the search area," the squadron's War Diary says. "Puerto Princesa in Palawan, Pauilol Bay, Marudu Bay and Sandakan in Borneo, which had been important ports of call, were usually empty."

Action highlights:

1 Dec. - Lieutenant Robert L. Hershberger, USNR, bombed and strafed a SUGAR BAKER and two escorts in Marudu Bay, North Borneo, sinking the SUGAR BAKER and an escort and damaging the second escort.
2 Dec. - Lieutenant Albert C. Lubberts, USNR, shot down three ZEKs and one JOL and damaged one FIES and one ZEKs. (See WTH No. 5.)

2 Dec. - Lieutenant Hershberger spotted a BNTY through the clouds off the southeast coast of Devoa Gulf. The ship was at 2,000 feet, while the FBY was at 8,500 feet. The Liberator never gave the BNTY a chance to wake up, diving in her tail, skimming her port engine and causing the hydrogen to crash and explode in the water.

4 Dec. - Lieutenant David J. Carroll, USNR, searching to the end of Saraguni Bay, raised a lugger which he believed, which made for the beach in a seriously damaged condition. Nearby, a gasoline barge was bombed and exploded.

5 Dec. - Lieutenant Commander Marvin T. Smith, USNR, blew up an oil tank and pump house north of Miri, Borneo.

6 Dec. - Lieutenant Everett E. Buhler, USNR, scored three near misses on a 6,000-ton AK at 06-37W, 117-32.5.

7 Dec. - Lieutenant Carroll dropped in on the oil center of Tarakan and, discovering two BETTIES on the water, bombed and strafed them until they burned and were destroyed.

8 Dec. - Lieutenant Commander Smith made three strafing runs on Kukuy strip, North Borneo, damaging one BNTY, one FIES, and two NICKs. Fairly accurate medium ack-ack was one scored from a crest just west of the strip. At Banidimag the BNTY was sunk of six SUKAR DOCS with a direct hit from a 100-lb. bomb.

8 Dec. - Lieutenant (jg) Maurice D. Neiman, USNR, ran into a convoy of six SUKAR CLIMATEs and three luggers on the southwest coast of Bohol, sinking one with a direct hit from a 100-pounder.

13 Dec. - Lieutenant Fred H. Harris, USNR, encountered intense 20 mm anti-aircraft from a hill southeast of the entrance to Dabouan Harbor, Balibo Island, and shot 12,734 from a projectile in the southwest corner. The tail gunner was slightly wounded. Lieutenant Harris strafed the gun positions, with no apparent results.

15 Dec. - Lieutenant Lubberts engaged a FITE near Tolitoli, scoring hits, but no damage was observed.
16 Doc.- Lieutenant Carroll, while flying over Jolo at 2,000 ft. was hocked for 20 minutes by three TONS and a chow. Only one pressed home a good overhead run, but no hits were received. Phosphorous bombs went wide.

17 Doc.- Lieutenant Commander Smith made six low strafing runs over Cagayan strip, Mindanao, destroying a BETTY and a TOSU and damaging a TONY. No anti-aircraft was encountered.

18 Doc.- Lieutenant David G. Twitchell, U.S.N., was attacked hairbreadly by four TONS 10 miles east of Zambales, no damage.

23 Doc.- Lieutenant Hershberger made three strafing runs over Salt Creek, damaging a BETTY. He also scored several hits on a large, red motor car RAE off Lacon, Brunei Bay.

24 Doc.- Lieutenant Commander Smith bombed and strafed shipping and harbor areas at Sandakan, destroying no lugers on the ways and damaging another. Two warehouses were also destroyed.

25 Doc.- Lieutenant Twitchell damaged a luger, in Brunei Bay.

26 Doc.- Lieutenant Harris ran into three very eager SECMES at 6,000 feet, over Miri. Firing high overhead, pressure, their attacks were definitely ambushed, but their machine gun was on, and no hits were sustained by the Japs in a 20-minute battle. The gunners of the Liberators were sure they scored a hit on the Japs. Lieutenant Harris' tactics were to turn into the enemy in each attack.

27 Doc.- Lieutenant Lubberts scored a direct hit with a century on a beached 500.R B.L.A. at Kudat. He then discovered a row of barracks in a coconut grove, which he attacked. It will be remembered that the old barracks were heavily damaged 19 November by Lieutenant Commander Smith. (See BULLETIN No. 5.) Lieutenant Lubberts also knocked a truck and an automobile off a road.

TAIL WINDS TO A FIGHTING OUTFIT:

On 17 January 1945, CTF-73 sent the following dispatch to Patrol Bombing Squadron 101, which has received orders to return to the United States:

"Tail winds, happy landings and a joyous rehabilitation to one of the fightingest outfits to leave the SOMEBETTER."
VF-117 SCORES 22 SURE KILLS

Patrol Bombing squadron 117, flying its F4Y's from a
shut down 22 Japanese planes during December. In addition, the
squadron probably shot down five others, and damaged one. A total
of 14,750 tons of ships were destroyed, 4,100 probably destroyed,
and 6,400 damaged.

On 10 December, Lieutenant Bradford M. Brooks, USNR, and crew
ditched their Liberator off Negros, following an attack by two
aggressive ZEKEs. The pilot and four others are missing; seven mem-
bers of the crew were rescued. On 31 December, Lieutenant L. D.
Stang, USN, crashed into Leyte Gulf, 300 yards off the mouth of
Taclaban strl, when his F4Y ran out of gasoline. The 3-flap
liberator (jt) William T. Benn, USNR, was killed. Three of 12 of
other crew died as a result of wounds received in enemy action.

Outstanding missions included:

2 Dec. - Lieutenant J. S. Nore and his F4Y crew, on a search flight
from Taclaban, were attacked by a ZEKE at 0930 I over Lubang
Island. After turning toward the Jap, Lieutenant Nore got on his tail, and the gunners scored hits. The ZEKE finally crashed on Lubang Island, and burned. Later the Liberator inflicted slight damage by strafing a JA-64 KEN and a lugger off Tablas Island.

3 Dec. - Lieutenant (jt) Edward F. Kittrell, USNR, strafed and prob-
ably sank a 500-ton patrol craft off Calmian Point, Luzon.

3 Dec. - Lieutenant W. F. Rhodes, USNR, sighted a JIK off the east
coast of Mindoro, and shot him down after a chase in which the
Liberator proved faster than the Jap plane.

5 Dec. - Lieutenant Commander Harold A. McLaughley, USN, attacked a
SUGAR CHARLIE off Mindoro Island with three clusters of
incendiary bombs. The vessel burned to destruction. Later he sighted a 4,000-ton SUGAR CHARLIE, anchored and at
anchor off the southwest tip of Mindoro. The ship ap-
ply was loaded with explosives, because it had a thin
tire to riffling violence after the strafing run. The explosion
occurred just as the F4Y was in position for a low-level
bomb drop and flying fabric did considerable damage to the
plane. However, no one was hurt.

5 Dec. - Lieutenant (jt) S. L. Sutton, USNR, combined incendiary and
500-pound GP bombs to destroy a 700-ton SUGAR CHARLIE at
14-48N, 120-05E and a SUGAR DOG at 12-11N, 121-14W.
6 Dec. — Lieutenant (jg) Jan B. Carter, USNR, strafed and destroyed a lugger off the northern tip of Mindoro.

6 Dec. — Lieutenant Hoare shot down another Jap plane — this time a J.ME — after closing a gap of 15 miles. The J.ME caught fire, crashed and burned.

7 Dec. — Lieutenant Commander T. P. Kelvihill, USNR, dropped incendiaries on and destroyed three SUG. R CHARLES in a cove on the northwestern coast of Romblon Island. The plane was halted once by machine gun fire. On the way home, three more SUG. R CHARLES, sighted at Busuanga Island, were destroyed by strafing.

7 Dec. — Lieutenant Commander Mcgaughy, using incendiaries, set fire to a SUG. R CHARLES and a lugger off In Aparta Island. Both vessels were destroyed. Off the northwestern tip of Mindoro, he surprised a J.ME, closing range to 75 feet before opening fire. The plane caught fire and crashed. Later, two SUG. R CHARLES and two SUG. R DOGS were found in Calapan Harbor, on the northern tip of Mindoro. These were sunk by bombing and strafing.

8 Dec. — Lieutenant Carter opened fire from a distance of 1,500 feet on an IRVING, sighted over the Visayan Sea. The J.ME, although damaged, managed to escape toward Luzon. Later, the PBY destroyed three SUG. R DOGS off the southwestern tip of Mindoro with incendiaries and strafing.

9 Dec. — Lieutenant Robert G. Garlick, USNR, op reached undetected and shot down a J.ME.

10 Dec. — Lieutenant (jg) Carter shot down a JUDY over Capiz, a tiny island. When last seen by Lieutenant (jg) Carter, the enemy plane was plummeting toward the earth, streaming smoke. An army P-36 pilot, who saw the JUDY crash and burn, confirmed the kill. Later, the Liberator was attacked by two J.MES. One of these was shot down. The other disappeared in the clouds. At 13-30, 120-252, the PBY dropped ten 100-pound incendiary clusters on a SUG. R DOG, which was consumed by flames.

11 Dec. — Lieutenant (jg) Honor B. Hearne, USNR, was attacked by an SUG. R off the northern coast of Horpina. The Liberator, without taking any hits itself, set fire to the SUG. R, which probably crashed. Later, while flying a LINDO, Lieutenant (jg) Hearne and crew saw a TOSBY and a ZEPHYR. The ZEPHYR fled hastily, leaving the transport without escort. The PBY crew promptly shot down the TOSBY, which crashed into the sea. Three-quarters of an
hour later, Lieutenant (jg) Hoard teamed up with Lt. (jg) Kittrell to bomb a 3,500-ton SUGAR DOG, at 121-59E. When last observed the ship was burning and sinking in the storm.

12 Dec. - Lieutenant (jg) Sutton, while attacking a SUGAR DOG off the west coast of Mindoro, sighted a TBM, gave chase, and shot it down. Results of the attack on the SUGAR DOG were not observed.

12 Dec. - Lieutenant Commander McGough, at 11-23H, 121-40E, sighted a TESS, definitely identifying it as enemy by the footcarts on the wings. His gunners opened fire from a range of 150 feet, and the Nip plane crashed in flames. Ten bodies were observed.

13 Dec. - Lieutenant (jg) Carter strafed a 100-ton SUGAR DOG, which was destroyed by fires.

13 Dec. - Lieutenant Commander Mullins bomb and dropped incendiaries on a SUGAR CHARLES and dock in Lubang Harbor, destroying the ship and burning the dock. He also dropped incendiaries on a small shipyard at Calayan Point, Mindoro, destroying three SUGAR CHARLES under construction, the building ways, and a large building.


17 Dec. - Lieutenant Hooper was returning from a reconnaissance flight to Carmel Bay, French Indo-China, when he spotted two TESS planes flying at 1,200 feet. The Liberator was at 2,000 feet. Vigilant for enemy fighter cover, Lieutenant Hooper waited until the transports passed, then his plane, then turned right and rudder and fired at them. Both were quickly shot down.

24 Dec. - Lieutenant Commander McGough destroyed a 100-ton lugger in Verde Passage.

24 Dec. - Lieutenant (jg) Sutton shot down a JBD at 21-30H, 120-45E. Two hours later, the TBM encountered a JMM in after its engine caught fire.


30 Dec. - Lieutenant (jg) Carter got his fourth and fifth inshore kills of the month, when he bagged a JNC at 20-40N, 121-47E, and a V.L at 20-47N, 121-42E. Both enemy planes burst into flames and burned on the water.

30 Dec. - Lieutenant Graham B Squires, USNR, searching for Targets, sighted an ENLY at a distance of 16 miles. By diving into clouds, the Liberator approached to within 1000 feet before it was detected by the Jap.

31 Dec. - Lieutenant William J. Quinn, USNR, surprised an enemy biplane at 20-49N, 121-16E, and shot it down in flames. Continuing on patrol from Luzon to Formosa, he encountered a J.NE at 21-06N, 121-05E, and destroyed it at point-blank range. The J.NE had been flying anti-submarine patrol for a TBM TBM 30C, and the ship was also strafed by the TBM before the Liberator resumed its patrol. The Liberator carried no bombs.

31 Dec. - Lieutenant Robert C. Garlick, USNR, found a TBM off the west coast of Luzon and got in its tail before the Jap pilot knew of the Liberator's presence. On fire, the TBM landed in the water. One survivor was seen hanging on to the tail surface of the sinking aircraft.
VP-33 ESTABLISHED BLACK CAT RECORD

The final Black Cat score of Patrol Bombing Squadron 33, which recently returned to the United States, shows that 116,500 tons of Japanese shipping were sunk and 60,500 damaged. These figures do not include 101 small craft, barges and sailing vessels destroyed. The grand total, including the small craft, is more than 230,000 tons sunk or damaged.

A light cruiser, four destroyer escorts and a large seaplane tender were among the 50 ships sunk by VP-33, which has been commanded since 28 May 1944, by Lieutenant Commander F. L. Adams, USN.

The shipping destroyed by this outstanding outfit established an all-time record for Black Cat operations. Here are other noteworthy highlights of the squadron’s Pacific tour:

VP-33 planes either covered the landing or appeared shortly thereafter at Okinawa, Admiralties, Hollandia, Aitape, Wewak, Dick, Morehead, Morotai, Leyte, Mindoro, Lingayen Gulf and Sulu Sea.

The KXY-5s caused extensive damage in night bombings at Koga and Ambon; were the first Allied aircraft to bomb Bockai and Wakde; were the first planes to conduct strikes from Morotai.

The squadron made the first night attacks on Borneo and the Central Philippines since the fall of Corregidor and, with VP-34, was the first Allied squadron based in the Philippines since 1942.

VP-71 FLEW BLACK CAT MISSIONS

Patrol Bombing Squadron 71 moved to Lingayen Gulf in January 1945, and began night reconnaissance flights there 12 January. Two destroyers were among the targets and when enemy shipping was scarce the pilots blasted land targets instead.

Action highlights follow:

17 Jan. - Commander Norman C. Gillette, Jr., USN, commanding officer, on a search from Lingayen Gulf, approached the harbor at Tokao, Formosa, but found it deserted. Consequently, he turned south to investigate a searchlight 15 miles away. On approaching, he found that the light was at Tokao seaplane base. As the Black Cat soared overhead, the searchlight lights were accommodatingly turned on and the KXY-5A was challenged by blinker. Commander Gillette quickly dropped a flare from 1,300 feet, which illuminated the target perfectly, and then made a gliding turn over the hangar and released a 100-pound incendiary cluster. This started
nervous fires, accompanied by explosions. No anti-aircraft was encountered, but when the Cat returned it was later, several guns opened up with moderate fire, 4000 feet over the airfield. The pilot skillfully avoided them and the lights. On leaving the area, the plane crew observed only one large hanger had been gutted by flames.

21 Jan.- Commander Gillette returned to Tokyo and dropped two 250-pound G.P. bombs and two 100-pound incendiaries. All four hit in the congested area of hangars and large shops. Fires and a series of continuing explosions were started, and the flames were still visible when the plane was 50 miles on its homeward course.

21 Jan.- Lieutenant Glen K. Kellner, USNR, strafed and sank approximately 20 hits on a small patrol craft at 23-35N, 150-47W. Extent of the damage was undetermined. The Cat was hit once by machine-gun fire.

22 Jan.- Lieutenant ... O. Trunor, USN, after covering his sector, approached Makin, Keseido, to make a gliding run over Sukoton To and released four 250-pound G.P. bombs and two 100-pound incendiaries on shops, barracks and other buildings. His drop, which started large fires and explosions, was made at an altitude of only 50 feet.

23 Jan.- A large fire on a cargo ship of 8,000 to 10,000 tons was started by Lieutenant Helvin K. Warner, USN, who dropped four 250-pound bombs and scored at least one direct hit. The ship was in Kiirun harbor. In retiring, Lieutenant Warner dropped two 100-pound incendiary clusters on a small island, with unobserved results.

23 Jan.- Lieutenant Richard J. Harkins, USNR, finding no ships, dropped four 250-pound G.P. bombs and two 100-pound incendiaries on wharfs at Kelly, starting a large fire. Light and medium anti-aircraft fire halted the plane four times, but there were no personal casualties.

24 Jan.- Lieutenant (jg) Walter D. Levy, USNR, finding no ships, bombed several large unidentified buildings in the southwestern tip of Formosa, at 21-56N, 120-43W. A large fire was started.

24 Jan.- Lieutenant (jg) ... J. Lehmke, Jr., USNR, landed off the Tami Canal and set fire to a SUGAR CARGO near the mouth of the Tami Canal, Formosa. Light from the blaze caused the PT. to be a derelict. Undetermined damage by strafing was inflicted on a SUGAR DOG and a barracks building.
24 Jan.- Lieutenant (jg) L. T. Wood, USNR, sighted a convoy of four freighters, six freighter-transport and two destroyers at 25-05N, 121-55E, on a course of 000 degrees at a speed of 10 knots. From an altitude of 150 feet, he dropped four 250-pound bombs on the destroyer, with unexplained results. No ack-ak was encountered on the run, but as the Land Cat circled back to observe results of the bomb drop, three ships opened up. No hits were scored on the F.Y.-25.

24 Jan.- Lieutenant Harold P. Allen, Jr., USNR, dropped two SUGAR CLAMMES, six 1000-pound and one 500-pound bombs at 22-26N, 123-32E.

25 Jan.- Lieutenant Robert sighted a cruiser, four destroyers and seven cargo ships in the outer harbor at 1900 hours and dropped four 250-pound bombs, spaced at 70 feet, on one of the destroyers. One of the bombs hit the side of the ship near the bow, and the explosion was followed by a following plane which rose 150 feet in the air. Several AA bursts were fired by the ship under attack, but these ceased when the bomb hit. One 20 mil shell hit and exploded in the mechanical compartment, but caused no injury to personnel. Because of damage to the plane, the pilot did not return to observe whether the DD shell hit.

25 Jan.- Lieutenant (jg) Curtis E. Brayton, USNR, strafed a SUGAR DOG with two bombs, apparently causing little damage, at Taku, Formosa. Later, he dropped two incendiary clusters in the vicinity of an airport at Chiao, Formosa, starting small fires.

25 Jan.- Lieutenant Commander William L. Kehoe, USN, after covering his sector and finding no shipping, dropped three 500-pound G.P. bombs and one 100-pound incendiary cluster on what appeared to be a barracks area in Karaoke, Formosa. All bombs hit in the area and heavy fires were started.

VFP-146 LEAVES FOR HOME

Patrol Bombing Squadron 146 received orders to return to the United States in February and received the following message from CTF 73: "Good luck and goodbye to a fighting outfit which will never be forgotten either by the enemy or ourselves. God speed you on your return home."

VFP-25 SEARCHES FROM HINDORO

Patrol Bombing Squadron 25 continued to fly its PB4 planes on
daylight searches during January 1945. As the month progressed, there was a notable decline in sightings along the French Indochina coast. Principal sightings during the latter part of January were of two light cruisers off Camranh Bay 21 January and three destroyers 60 miles north of Quinhon 31 January.

On 26 January, Lieutenant James L. Stevenson, USNR, and crew were forced down on one engine north of Tanquin, French Indochina. The partially sunk plane was located the next day, 1,000 yards off-shore. On 29 January, another plane sighted a lighthouse on the beach, built with tree branches, spelling VP-25. Investigating, the plane saw one survivor, and directed him by blinker to a little off-shore in a small boat. The survivor, Charles L. Whitely, USN-2/c, did so, and a submarine which was in contact with the VP quickly surfaced and took him aboard. Several attempts to arrange a rendezvous between the submarine and the other 10 survivors were unsuccessful, but word was received 6 February that they were all in safe hands.
VPB-71 FLIES BLACK CAT MISSIONS

Patrol Bombing Squadron 71, based on the USS TARAWA and USS BARATARIA, flew its PBV-5As on long-range Black Cat missions from Lingayen Gulf during February. On 9 February when the TARAWA departed the Gulf, the squadron was officially based on the BARATARIA, with four crews on the USS ORCA.

During most of the month, low visibility and generally poor search conditions prevailed. On 13 and 14 February, planes of the squadron assisted in tracking a substantial U-boat task force proceeding northward in the China Sea. On 28 February, the squadron received orders to have seven planes report to Tacor Air Wing TC at Leyte by 1 March. Patrol Bombing Squadron 28, which flies TBMs, relieved Patrol Bombing Squadron 71 at Lingayen 1 March.

Action summary follows:

1 Feb.---Lieutenant Aiola O. Turner, USN, located a SUGAR CHARLIE near Tainan, Formosa, on his radar, but had to make three approaches before he could establish visual contact. As a result, the ship was alerted and taking evasive action when the first bombing run was made. Two 500-pound bombs were dropped on this run, with one bomb going wide and the second scoring a near-miss which caused the SUGAR CHARLIE to stop dead in the water. A second run was made and this time two 500-pounders straddled the ship, which immediately started to sink.

2 Feb.---Lieutenant (jg) Albert J. Lehmke, USNR, and crew failed to return from a patrol over Formosa. The last contact with the plane was a routine radio check shortly after takeoff. Special searches for the missing plane were conducted for the next three days, but results were negative.

5 Feb.---Lieutenant Allen J. Huttenberg, USNR, saw the phosphorescent wake of a ship entering the bay on the northeastern side of Ishigaki Shima. Closer investigation revealed that the ship was a 1,000-ton SUGAR CHARLIE, running a speed of six knots. Lieutenant Huttenburg's Black Cat dropped a string of two 100-pounders and two 500-pounders on his first run, with the release from 100-foot altitude. The two 500-pounders, which were in the center of the string, straddled the SUGAR CHARLIE, causing serious damage to the ship stopped and began settling at the stern. A second run was made, with a 500-pound bomb and an incendiary bomb, both scoring direct hits. A white substance, believed to remove covered the water in the vicinity of the ship, forming a sort of circle of about 300 feet in diameter. Another direct hit was scored with a 500-pound bomb on the third run, and the SUGAR CHARLIE was left with water covering its deck and the stern sinking.
27 Sept. — An 8,500-ton merchant vessel was sunk near Malpelo, Colombia, by Lieutenant Horrinn and his Cat crew. After getting up on the target, the pilot made a steep turn to the right and loaded his bombs at anasthet height. Intense, accurate, 50-caliber strafed the plane many times as it circled, destroying the starboard oil tank, but the run was carried out and two 500-pound and two 100-pound bombs were dropped on the center line of the ship. It blew up. Due to the severe damage to his plane, Lieutenant Horrinn left the scene immediately. After a short turn, the starboard propeller was feathered, due to lack of oil and the plane flew the 450 miles to land at San Diego.

30 Sept. — Lieutenant McCabe sighted two barges, one 100-foot schooner, one 700-ton and one 1,200-ton merchant vessels, anchored in a small, inaccessible cove on the north coast of Malpelo Island. Surrounding mountains made it necessary to skid the Maryland for attacking position. Ten strafing runs were made, destroying the large schooner. Further down the coast, under way, were the SUGAR CHARLIE and the PAT. TWA D LEG. Two 500-pound and one 100-pound bombs were released and exploded on contact, setting nearby mountains on fire. The concussion from the blast, reverberating off the nearby mountains, almost flipped the plane on its back, but the pilot righted it and returned to the attack. This time he scored a direct hit on each vessel with one 500-pound bomb per ship. Both sank immediately.

2 Oct. — A 700-ton SUGAR CHARLIE was sighted at anchor off Buzo Island, by Lieutenant (jg) Sillers and crew. Glide bombing from 500-foot altitude, four 500-pounders were released by intercom. One set for 400 feet at 100-foot altitude. All missed, the closest being 50 feet away. Six paraffins were lost, but missed. The gunners opened up and none of the plane left the area after the attack. The ship was severely damaged.

3 Oct. — Edward G. Burke, ARN1c, USNR, was killed, and two other crew members were wounded slightly in an attack in which Lieutenant (jg) Zubler's plane was heavily damaged and possibly sank a 3,000-ton merchant transport. The vessel and three shore positions opened up with intense and accurate 50-caliber fire. 20 miles, just prior to the release of two 500-pound and two 100-pound bombs at an altitude of 150 feet. The 500's burst amidships and Lieutenant Zubler made...
a steep turn to the left and fly away with the enemy barrage still seeking him out. The 5000-ton run to home was made without further mishap. The crewmen who suffered minor wounds were Joseph C. Van Geel, LCDR, USNR, and William Stubbs, Able, USNR.

3 Oct. --- A 5,000-ton L. T.O.N. Class cruiser fell to the Black Cat commanded by Lieutenant (jg) Suptner. Two cruisers, one destroyer and one destroyer escort were sighted at anchor, protected by an anti-aircraft net, in Tolitoli Bay, Celebes. Believing the enemy had been alerted, Lieutenant (jg) Suptner took to sea and returned two hours later - 0100/1. Approaching from behind a hill at 1,000-foot altitude, he made his run one and a half miles away from his target. When about a quarter of a mile from the ship, the four 5-inch barrels opened fire with intense, light and medium anti-aircraft. The entire bomb load of four 500-pounders and four 100-pounders was released in 150 feet - the run being wide directly down the center line of the ship. Two 500’s and two 100’s hit and exploded slightly abaft midships on the port side, and the same amount of bombs hit and exploded forward of the starboard side. The entire ship burst into flame and Lieutenant Suptner made tracks. Twenty minutes later, he approached to within a half-mile of the scene and all that remained of the cruiser was a mass of undistinguishable debris.

VFB-115 LISTS OPERATIONS

During September, Patrol Bombing Squadron 115, based on Mid, conducted daily searches ranging from 750 to 1,000 miles. Nine successful attacks were made on small enemy surface craft, sinking or severely damaging all. No personnel casualties or plane damage was suffered.

On 19 October, a detachment of six planes based at, and began conducting searches from, Morotai Island. During the Japanese naval sortie in late October against our forces in Loro, The Philippines, the entire squadron augmented the Navy surface operations from Morotai.

Some of the outstanding missions for October follow:

12 Oct. --- Lieutenant Hamilton M. Dawes, Jr., USNR, and his PBY crew were searching the extremity of a 1,000-mile sector from Owi Island when, at 1200/1, a 150-foot cargo ship, a 75-foot lugger and a 75-foot empty barge were sighted in Balusan Bay, Basilan Island,
The Philippines. The targets were a pile off-shore from the settlement and lumber mill at Malubos. The first run was made at an altitude of 100 feet on a cargo vessel of steel construction, and the barge, although bombs failed to release, strafing started a furious fire between decks of the ship. The Liberator's circle took it over an inlet where the 75-foot lugger was anchored. A 100-pound bomb was dropped, but missed and did no apparent damage. Returning over the larger vessel, the PBY dropped two containers which exploded close to the port side and appeared to blow the ship's side in. On the circle over the lugger again, two 100-pounders were dropped - one scored a direct hit - and the lugger sank. A third strafing run was made over the blazing ship and the barge was strafed without visible effect.

14 Oct. -- Lieutenant John J. Coogan, USNR, flew over the Japanese seaplane base at Lalos, Cotabato, which VPB-101 had blasted the day before. (See article on VPB-101.) The base was still burning. Lieutenant Coogan made two runs on a nearby FOX TAIL DOG, but his bombs failed to release. Next he strafed a PBYE, which was probably destroyed, and also strafed three other PBYE's, with undetermined damage. He then made a third run on the ship, dropping his bombs in salvos with the emergency release. The bombs hit 100 feet from the ship, which headed for the shore and nosed into the beach. The ship was not seriously damaged, however, according to the squadron assessment.

14 Oct. -- A Liberator piloted by Commander James R. Cooper, USN, Squadron Commanding Officer, approached the Malubos area around the southern coast of Basilan Island and saw a 100-foot river steamboat, a lugger, and a barge. A direct hit demolished the steamboat and a near-miss probably sank the lugger. The barge was damaged by strafing.


20 Oct. -- Lieutenant Davies and crew spotted a PBYE taking off from Naval Airfield, Palawan Island, The Philippines, at 1435Z. The PBY was at 2,000 feet, the Liberator at 500. The Liberator fired 350 rounds of .50 caliber, blowing off the plane's engine and, with it, the tail-gunner. The enemy aircraft crashed and burned without scoring a hit with its 7.7 fire.
20 Oct. --- Three 60/70-foot barges were destroyed by Lieutenant E. F. Kahlo Jennings, USNR, and crew, seven miles off the northeastern coast of Dauin Island, 10-30 N., 120-00 E. Three century bombs and 2,000 rounds of .50 caliber were expended.

23 Oct. --- Commander Compton was the pilot of a PBY-4 which attacked a 1,000/1,200-ton auxiliary escorter alongside a pier at Dauinac, Negros Island, The Philippines. A minimum interval string of five mortars, dropped from 100 feet, straddled forward of midships. During the run, a Jap fighter was observed landing at Sibulan Auxiliary Field. During low over this field, the PBY-4 strafed the fighter on its landing run, causing it to scrub. After strafing runs set fire to four planes, including the plane which had just landed, a gasoline truck and a hastily evacuated staff car also were hit. Some strafing run then was made on the ship. While no effects were observed from the straddle, strafing hits undoubtedly caused damage.

23 Oct. --- an entire convoy of six SUGAR CLASSED and one barge was sighted but by a PBY-4 contacted by Lieutenant Davis. The attack was made off Siquijor Island, The Philippines. More than 20 bombing and strafing runs were made from an altitude of 50 feet. Five 7.7 slugs fired by the convoy hit the craft by section, causing minor damage. During the attack, the enemy destroyers or destroyer escorts stood at full speed to get within range of the Liberator. Just as the last vessel in the convoy was destroyed, the war ships opened up and a burst, probably of three-inch anti-aircraft, caused minor shipboard damage to the port wing. Many natives waved at the Liberator during the attack and put out in canoes to salvage the floating cargo.

24 Oct. --- Lieutenant Jennings and crew sighted three SUGAR CLASSED and a large, steel barge in Scouting Bay, Boracay, 01-03 N., 118-52 E. Two bombing and strafing runs and ten additional strafing runs were made.

26 Oct. --- Lieutenant Jennings sighted a CL, probably of the NARVAL Class, at 1130/1, 11-30 N., 120-00 E. A 40-by was a DD which was being bombed by Army B-25s from 12,000 feet. A JUB was attacked at 8,000 feet by Lieutenant Jennings' plane, which got on the convoy's tail and kept from over-running by crisis-crossing and banking. All runs of the PBY got in accurate bursts during four runs on alternate sides.
and the J-22 disintegrated and crashed. Reports are
believed to have crossed the Liberator's star-
board tire, for the plane ground-looped on the
27 Oct. --- A PB4Y commanded by Lieutenant James E. Little, USNR,
found an abandoned 180-foot tanker dead in the water
at 06-30 N., 116-40 E. Although struck by directly
hit by bombs, the ship did not burn and it was
sighted at 06-30 N., 116-40 E. Although struck by directly
hit by bombs, the ship did not burn and it was
assumed that she had been burned out on a previous
attack.

28 Oct. --- Lieutenant John Sonner, USNR, while crossing southern
Luzon at 8,000 feet, sighted a train running north
on the Baguio-Ibanga railway. The PB4Y approached
at over dive speed and made two strafing and one
bombing runs, ... direct enemy hit between the
locomotive and first car blew up both.

29 Oct. --- PB4Y commanded by Lieutenant Commander Kerwill E.
Robinson, USNR, sighted a SUGAR DOG at 1115/1, 06-
45 N., 117-40 E, understory. ... direct hit was scored
with a bomb and the vessel was left smoking and sink-
ing rapidly. ... Twelve miles from the above action
a large SUGAR DOG was strafed and set afire.

29 Oct. --- Lieutenant Robert R. Feigleman, USNR, and crew of six
and strafed a luger at Luzon, 12-41 N., 123-24 E.
She was burning, fiercely when the left the scene.

30 Oct. --- Lieutenant Paul J. Brunett, USNR, sank a medium-
sized freighter-transport which was underway at
1-20 N., 120-00 E. Six bombing and strafing runs were
made across the beam at 100-foot altitude. Bombs
dropped on the first run missed by 50 feet, but on
the second and third runs the bombs hit very close
to the ship's side. Strafing helped knock out the
ship, which settled and disappeared, stern first.

31 Oct. --- Ensau Paul R. Barker, USNR, and crew sank a 7,000/
9,000-ton tanker anchored near the eastern shore
of Maracaibo Bay, north Barinas. The plane was from
the west at 200 feet, with the sun directly over
the tanker's bow. No anti-aircraft was fired on
the ship in the first run, indicating that surprise
was achieved. Three 250-pound, 4-5 second delay
bombs were dropped by Co-pilot Madsen Bobby B.
Froberg, USNR, who had recently joined the squadron
and was making his first bomb release. Two of the
10 Feb.---Despite accurate anti-aircraft, Lieutenant Everly J. USNR, made three bombing runs on a convoy of two T.A.E. BAKERS and an escort vessel. Three hits were believed to have been scored, with two centuries and one 500-pound bomb on the escort, but extremely bad weather prevented observation of damage.

10 Feb.---Lieutenant Glen I. Palmer, USNR, dropped two 500-pound bombs and two centuries on a 5,000-ton ship in the Pesadores area. Two brilliant flashes, which illuminated an area with a radius of approximately two miles, were observed. Again, bad weather hindered observation, but the squadron's evaluation was that the flashes were internal explosions. When the plane circled back over the spot where the bomb had been dropped, no trace of the ship was found.

16 Feb.---Lieutenant Turner, in a tenacious attack which lasted three and a half hours, damaged a T.A.E. BAKER and two SUGAR CHARLIES near Takao, Formosa. He first made radar contact with the ships at 2345 I., at a range of 17 miles. Six radar approaches were made on the T.A.E. BAKER before satisfactory visual contact could be established. The SUGAR CHARLIES were effectively strafed on these attempted approaches on the main target. On the seventh run, made at 75-foot altitude, only one bomb released out of a string of four. This, however, scored a direct hit and started a fire in the forward hold of the ship. Thereafter, four more bombing runs were made, with two near-misses being scored with 500-pound bombs. These near-misses stopped the vessel. Damage was also inflicted by strafing and the ship settled at the stern. The Black Cat broke off the attack only after all of the bombs and ammunition were expended.

22 Feb.---Lieutenant Michael G. Leochr, USNR, attacked a SUGAR CHARLIE near the China Coat, south of Swatow, but his string of bombs fell astern of the target. The pilot's run was hampered by poor visibility.

23 Feb.---Lieutenant (jg) Lamar S. Mackay, USNR, sank a SUGAR CHARLIE and damaged two luggers, by bombing and strafing, 55 miles east of Hong Kong.

24 Feb.---Lieutenant Turner bombed barracks in the Pesadores Islands, demolishing one building with a direct hit.
26 Feb.--Lieutenant Huttenberg sank a 2,500 ton SUGAR BAKER near Hong Kong, scoring a direct hit with a 500-pounder that straddled with two 250-pounders. The ship was seen to be down by the bow and only the stern, which was burning furiously, was visible when the PBY-5A left the scene. Proceeding on patrol, the Black Cat crew sighted a 4,000-ton ship of the FOX BAKER class at 22-12N, 114-15E, and strafed it with 1,700 rounds of machine-gun fire. A 250-pound bomb also scored a near-miss. The extent of damage was not determined.

27 Feb.--Lieutenant Richard J. Harkins, USNR, sighted a TARE BAKER, two FOX BAKERS, a large unidentified ship and three destroyers at anchor off Swatow, China. In a bow to stern run on the TARE BAKER, he scored direct hits with two 21-inch incendiary clusters, which started six separate fires. Two 500-pound bombs, which he had intended to drop, failed to release; farther south along the China Coast, at 22-42N, 115-45E, he sank a SUGAR CHARLIE with a 500-pounder. Two other SUGAR CHARLIES were strafed and one of those was seen to be down at the stern. The attack was broken off when a twin-engine Japanese plane, possibly a NICK, made a run on the PBY-5A, firing a 20mm cannon. The enemy aircraft disappeared after its single pass. This was the first time that an enemy plane had fired at a VPB-71 plane on a Black Cat mission.

27 Feb.--Lieutenant Albin T. Maday, USNR, strafed three motor-launches south of Amoy, China. Fifteen minutes later his crew sighted a FOX TARE ABLE, two FOX TARE BAKERS and two destroyers, anchored at 24-00N, 117-50E. Dropping a string of bombs on the FOX TARE ABLE, Lieutenant Maday scored a direct hit amidships with a 250-pounder and a near-miss with a 500-pounder. The destroyers and five shore batteries opened up with intense anti-aircraft and the attack was broken off. On his return trip to base, the pilot dropped one 500-pounder, two 250-pounders and two 120-pound incendiaries on warehouses and shops at Mako, Pescadores, despite meager, light ack-ack.

28 Feb.--Commander Norman C. Gillette, Jr., USN, commanding officer found a 5,000-ton FOX BAKER and two escorts, 10 miles south of Mako, Pescadores. A direct hit from a 500-pounder caused the FOX BAKER to explode and, subsequently, to sink. Light and medium anti-aircraft from the escorts and shore installations was fairly accurate and, as the scene became illuminated by the blazing ship, became extremely accurate. The plane was hit by a 20mm shell which knocked out the VHF radio equipment. Proceeding to the China Coast, Comdr. Gillette searched Amoy and Swatow, with no sightings. Returning to the Pescadores on his way back to base, the
27 Feb.--pilot confirmed the sinking of the FOX BIKER and dropped (Cont'D) a 250-pounder, for a near-miss, on one of the escorts. He then dropped incendiaries on and heavily strafed a large area on the southwesternmost island of the Pescadores, starting fires which burned furiously.

28 Feb.--Lieutenant Turner found several medium-sized merchant ships and numerous small craft in Makor Harbor, Pescadores. He dropped two 500-pounders, one 250-pounder and one incendiary cluster on a SUGAR BIKER. While making the drop, at 150 feet, he flew through a hall of intense light and medium anti-aircraft, which prevented observation of results. The plane was hit from bow to stern and two men suffered serious leg wounds. Nevertheless, neither the plane nor the controls were damaged, and Lieutenant Turner in the remainder of his bombs on buildings in the Pescadores before setting his course for home. He landed his plane on the water at Lingayen Gulf at 0820/I and immediately beached it on the seaplane ramp. Sixty-five holes were counted in the hull.

28 Feb.--Lieutenant Michel G. Emmanuel, USNR, found no shipping in Hong Kong, but picked up four bogeys, one of which closed to visual range. En route back to base, he dropped his entire bomb load across the main island at Pratts Rock, starting a large fire.

VPB-28 ARRIVES IN PHILIPPINES

Patrol Bombing Squadron 28 arrived in the Southwestern Pacific late in January 1945, with the first section of nine SB2U VZ planes landing at Leyte 25 January. Four days later, the squadron partially relieved Patrol Bombing Squadron 20 aboard the USS SANGAMO flying night barrier patrols out of Lingayen Gulf. On 1 February, the squadron took over all three barrier patrol flights. These were continued through 7 February, and results were all negative. Also on 1 February, Lieutenant Commander John L. Elwell, commanding officer, led a section of five planes to the USS HALF MOON at Mindoro. The following day, the squadron commended flying daylight patrols from Mindoro. No bombs were carried and pilots were ordered not to strafe when there was any possibility of return fire. On 9 February the squadron officially relieved Patrol Bombing Squadron 25. Half of the VPB-28 plane crews were based on the USS HALF MOON and half on the USS SAN FRAN. On 13 February, the squadron assisted in two Jap Japanese task force proceeding north from Singapore. Lieutenant Carlton E. Soderholm strafed a SUGAR CHARLIE at 16-27N, 124-40E on 15 February. The ship was down at the stern and listing to port and sighted. On 27 and 28 February, the squadron returned to Lingayen and boarded the USS B.R.A.T.R.L., preparatory to relieving Patrol Bombing Squadron 71 in night searches.
VPB-117 Bags More Planes

Patrol Bombing Squadron 117, commanded by Lieutenant Commander Thomas F. Mulvihill, USNR, flew its PB4Y-1s from Tacloban during the first week in February, and then moved to McGuire Field, Mindoro, on 6 and 7 February.

During February, the squadron's search planes shot down nine aircraft – seven JAKES, a FAM, and a JACAT. Five other enemy planes probably were destroyed in the air, two planes were destroyed on the ground, and one plane was damaged on the ground. Thus the total of destroyed or damaged aircraft was 17.

Twelve vessels, totaling 10,575 gross tons, were destroyed or sunk. The largest of these was a 4,500-ton RED RABE CARGO. In addition, 22 vessels, totaling 20,025 gross tons, were damaged or probably sunk.

On 17 February, a PB4Y-1 plane piloted by Lieutenant Commander Harold M. McGaughey, USNR, executive officer, failed to return from a search mission. Subsequent information was received to the effect that the plane was shot down over Puerto Princesa, and all hands were lost. Lieutenant Commander McGaughey and crew had established an outstanding record of aggressiveness and had taken an exceedingly heavy toll of enemy aircraft and shipping. Also on 17 February, Lieutenant (jg) Homer B. Heard, USN, on a utility flight to Leyte, was forced to ditch near Biliran Island, P.I., when both port engines failed. One man was pinned in the after section, but he was rescued by Lieutenant (jg) Heard as the plane was sinking. No one was seriously injured. Outstanding actions included:

31 Jan.---Lieutenant R. E. Empey, USNR, encountered a ZEKE near Iligan, Borneo, and hits from the ZEKE caused the Liberator's landing gear to drop down and the left wheel to be carried away. As the ZEKE turned, the PB4Y turned into it. Hits were scored on the Liberator by explosive and armor-piercing 12.7 mm. Although two hits were made on the plating of the bow turret and another against its inner part, the bow gunner, John F. Odenatto, Jr., AB 3c, continued firing. When last seen, the ZEKE was smoking and, because of its damaged landing gear, the appraisal was that it did not have landed safely. The PB4Y, on returning to base, from Tacloban closed in, and made a successful landing.

Since its throttle control of No. 4 engine had been lost, it landed with the No. 1 and No. 4 engines feathered.

7 Feb.---Lieutenant Commander Mulvihill chased a DINAH 30 miles south of Miri, but the DINAH was faster and got away. 20 miles north of Miri, he was jumped by an OSCAR which dropped six phosphorous bombs, but got no hits. The PB4Y
7 Feb. --- gunners scored many hits on the Jap, which was on fire when it broke off. However, since the plane was not set to crash, only a probable was claimed. On Tabuan Island, off Brunei Bay, 12 fighters were seen at an airstrip. Two strafing runs were made through intense, light anti-aircraft and two of the parked planes—probably ZEKES—were destroyed by fire and a third was damaged heavily. Several Japanese at the airport were killed and a gasoline truck and miscellaneous installations were damaged. The PB4Y was hit twice in the port wing, but no personnel injuries were suffered.

7 Feb. --- Lieutenant William J. Quinn, USNR, knocked down JAKF which was escorting a convoy at 12-02N, 109-18E. He opened fire at 2,000 feet, but no damage to the Jap was noted until the range was closed at 1,200 feet. Then, after several hits in the cockpit, the JAKE skidded into the water. There were no survivors. This was Lieutenant Quinn’s third Jap plane.

7 Feb. --- On a patrol to the French Indo-China coast, Lieutenant Commander McGaughey sighted a convoy of tankers, escorted by two DE’s, at 11-15N, 109-00E. A float seaplane, later identified as a PAUL, was circling the ships. Lieutenant Commander McGaughey had no bombs aboard, so there was no point in coming too close to the heavy accurate ack-ack which the ships were tossing in his direction. However, he did want that PAUL, which was circling safely within the range of the ship’s guns. Finally, by various maneuvers, the PB4Y lured the PAUL away from the ships. These maneuvers included simulated bombing runs. Once the PAUL got in the clear, the PB4Y shot it down in flames.

8 Feb. --- Lieutenant (jg) Jan B. Carter, USNR, destroyed a FCM TIN-DOG estimated at 1,000 tons and damaged a SUGAR BAKER and a patrol craft.

10 Feb. --- Lieutenant Commander McGaughey's crew, despite anti-aircraft, made a bombing and strafing run on an APD-type ship at 10-50N, 112-10E. Three 500-pound general-purpose bombs missed, but many hits were scored with .50 caliber fire. On a second run, two more 500s were dropped, which exploded within 10 feet of the starboard side. Again the ship was raked with .50 caliber. The ship lost way, started blankets oil and appeared to be settling. Four hours later, on the return leg of its patrol, the PB4Y could find no trace of the damaged vessel, which may have sunk. At 12-47N, 109-00E, Lieutenant Commander McGaughey found a convoy of one destroyer, one destroyer escort and three tankers guarded by a JAKE. Although in the chase he had to pass within a half mile of the warships, which were filling the skies with flak, Lieutenant Commander McGaughey flew in for the kill and his gunners crippled the JAKE, which crash-landed and burned.
10 Feb.---Lieutenant William J. Quinn, USNR, destroyed a SUGAR CHARLIE at 14-00N, 109-16E. He intended to drop 12 500-pound bombs in a string, but the release gear malfunctioned and all the bombs salvoed, hitting 50 to 100 feet to port of the SUGAR CHARLIE. The blast completely reversed the direction of the ship, which began trailing oil. She was observed two days later, partially under water near the shore.

11 Feb.---Lieutenant F. W. Kimball, USNR, heavily strafed and damaged a 2,000-ton SUGAR BAKER at 13-45N, 109-15E. Three 500-pound bombs were dropped, but all were long. Proceeding on patrol, he sighted a SUGAR DOG at 13-30N, 109-17E and flew eight strafing runs, scoring an estimated 2,000 hits. The SUGAR DOG was down by the bow, trailing oil and burning when the PB4Y left the scene.

11 Feb.---Lieutenant (Jg) Carter, on patrol to Indo-China, sighted a SUGAR CHARLIE LOVE of 2,500 tons, a FOX TAIL DOG of 1,500 tons and an auxiliary patrol craft at 11-20N, 109-05E. Circling the convoy was a JAKE, which immediately headed for adjacent hills on sighting the PB4Y. Lieutenant (Jg) Carter immediately gave chase, closing to 100 feet as his gunners fired 200 rounds. The JAKE struck the top of a tree and crashed in flames. This was Lieutenant(Jg) Carter's 7th plane since 1 December 1944. Returning to the convoy, the PB4Y crew dropped two 500-pound bombs, with 4-5 second delay fuses and 50-foot spacing, from 75-foot altitude on the SCL. The first fell 40 feet short and apparently exploded beneath the vessel. The second hit the side of the ship. The vessel appeared to be lifted and hurled over. A large column of smoke was observed on retiring, and the appraisal was that the SCL was destroyed. During the raid the FTD and the patrol craft were heavily strafed, and intense and accurate light and medium anti-aircraft fire was fired by the ships. The plane was hit and five of its crew were wounded. Hydraulic lines were severed in many places and on return to base it was impossible to obtain nose and half flaps. Although grapewine and tons of tangles were tied to the hydraulic reservoir, it was impossible to maintain brake pressure, and the PB4Y ran off the end of the runway. Because of the damage from ack-ack and the damage to building, it was necessary to survey the plane.

11 Feb.---Lieutenant Empoy sighted a SUGAR DOG at 14-24, 110-19 and immediately started a bombing run, but all bombs were prematurely dropped, as soon as the bomb bay doors were opened. Six strafing runs then left the SUGAR DOG down at the bow and sinking.
12 Feb. -- A PB4Y piloted by Lieutenant Robert G. Garlick, USNR, was at 11-20 N, 109-00 E when Ensign Robert J. Hassey, USNR, co-pilot, who was at the controls, sighted a HAMP. The planes exchanged fire, with the HAMP coming out on the short end of the transaction. Hit repeatedly, the Liberator was smoking heavily and losing altitude when it broke off its attack. The squadron's assessment was that the Japanese plane was damaged too seriously to be able to return to its base. The PB4Y was hit, but no injuries were suffered, except by Lieutenant Garlick, whose left leg was bruised when a hit was scored on the oxygen regulator by his seat. The PB4Y couldn't follow the HAMP because, just as the HAMP broke off its attack, an OSCAR appeared and made three runs. On none of those, however, did the OSCAR come in close, because the Liberator's turrets were putting out steady streams of fire. Finally the Jap dropped two phosphorus sacks from 5,000 feet on the PB4Y, which was at 200 feet. Both missed by half a mile. The OSCAR, still unwilling to trade punches, finally disappeared.

15 Feb. -- Ensign John R. Pachiona, USNR, while tracking an enemy task force through the Borneo Straits, spotted a HARE through an opening in the overcast and immediately shot it down.

16 Feb. -- Lieutenant A. G. Elder, USNR, made a straight run on a 4,500-ton FOX TARE CHARLIE at Cap St. Jacques Harbor, dropping a string of three 500-pounders with 4.5 second delay fuses. The middle bomb of the string was a direct hit, and the ship exploded and was left with gunwales awash. Two ocean-going tugs of 200 tons each were then set afire by strafing. Both turned to destruction. Before leaving the harbor, the PB4Y strafed a launch, inflicting heavy damage and causing many casualties on the more than 50 persons aboard.

16 Feb. -- Lieutenant Thomas J. Hyland, USNR, probably sank a 750-ton FOX TARE DOG at 14-14 N, 109-13 E. He made two bombing runs, dropping two 500-pounders each time. One bomb hit under the stern and almost turned the ship and for end. Strafing did considerable damage and kept the ship's guns from being manned. About 25 to 30 persons jumped overboard. The ship is believed to have sunk.

16 Feb. -- Lieutenant Quinn, patrolling along the northwestern coast of Borneo, found a large barge or landing-craft with a truck aboard, on a shoal at 06-40 N, 116-20 E. A smaller barge was attempting to pull the larger craft off the shoal. Three strafing runs riddled both barges, and the truck burned and exploded. When observed four hours later, the large barge had burned to destruction and the smaller had sunk. Off Miri, at 04-17 N, 113-43 E, the PB4Y was hopped by three OSCARS, which made aggressive runs. One of the Jap planes was damaged. The PB4Y was not hit.
17 Feb. -- This was the final flight for Lieutenant Commander Le and his crew. Two patrol contact reports were received, as follows: "0945/I. First report. Destroyed troop barge loaded with troops. Many dead. Many survivors. 02-55 N, 111-40 E. Course 240, speed five knots. Continuing patrol." "1000/I. First report this force. Bombed and sank one patrol vessel 03-30 N, 113-10 E. Continuing on mission assigned."

17 Feb. -- Lieutenant Empey sighted a SUGAR ABLE off the Indochina coast at 13-35 N, 109-16 E, lying behind an island. As he flew over the island to attack, the pilot discovered two DEs and another SUGAR ABLE, which had been concealed behind the island. These ships all opened up in intense anti-aircraft of various calibers, scoring several shrapnel hits on the PB4Y, but causing only slight damage. However, the ack-ack did cause Lieutenant Empey to make a hasty bomb drop and the three 500-pound G. P. bombs, released with 40-foot spacing, fell just short of lethal range. Many strafing hits were scored on the SUGAR ABLE, however, and its guns were silenced.

18 Feb. -- Lieutenant Commander Halvihill ram into heavy, medium and light anti-aircraft fire from Balabac City, Balabac Island, off the northern tip of Borneo. He strafed these positions in return, and dropped four bombs which were long and landed in the water. However, considerable damage was believed to have been done by the strafing. The PB4Y was holed in several places. One small but very hot fragment came to rest on the co-pilot's chest, causing a slight burn which did not require medical attention.

19 Feb. -- Lieutenant Elder, in the face of heavy but inaccurate anti-aircraft, made two strafing runs on a 4,500-ton FOX TARE CHARLIE and two more on a 2,500-ton SUGAR HALE, both in Camranh Bay. He had intended to bomb the larger ship, but all four 500-pound G. P. bombs released prematurely in salvo when the release switch on the instrument panel was turned on. Later, he strafed a gunboat at 10-55 N, 108-17 E.

20 Feb. -- Lieutenant Hyland, patrolling near Phan Rang Harbor at 11-40 N, 109-10 E, scored more than 25 hits on a JAKE, which finally escaped to the protection of anti-aircraft guns in the harbor. Later, off Camranh Bay, he sighted three JAKES, shooting down one over the water and another on the edge of the beach. The third JAKE escaped into Camranh Bay. Ten minutes later, two OSCARS appeared and scored about 15 hits on the PB4Y, but there were no injuries to personnel aboard.
23 Feb. -- Lieutenant Commander Mulvihill sighted three large fighters and four escorts, guarded by six JAKES, at 11-14, 108-59 E. One of the JAKES was observed at 1500 ft. speed from its seaward position to the cover of the P3-L's 20mm guns. Giving chase, the P3-L opened fire and shot the plane down in flames. The remaining five enemy planes sped up towards the P3-L as it retired. Several phosphorous bombs were dropped from above the SEVENTH FLEET plane, but they exploded harmlessly astern. The top turret, meanwhile, scored damaging hits on a JAKE, which disappeared smoking and streaming gasoline, and probably could not have landed successfully because of a damaged portage. After the other JAKES gave up the chase, the P3-L relayed the data on the convoy to a friendly submarine. Commander F. C. Selby, USN, submarine Thunderbolt, who was aboard the plane as an observer, assisted in relaying this information to the submarine. The squadron's action report added that "The present very successful pro-submarine doctrine now emulated by this squadron is based very largely upon the work of Commander Selby and the practical experience of this and other patrols he flew."

26 Feb. -- Lieutenant Elder scored approximately 150 strafing hits on a 1,000-ton FOX TURE DUG in Guadalcanal Bay. His bombs failed to release because of the crooking of bomb bay doors, and he could not risk another run because shore-based batteries were alerted.

27 Feb. -- Lieutenant Hyland, flying his P3-L at 300 feet, saw two JAKES flying in echelon at 1,500 feet, off Cape St. Jacques. Closing to a range of 200 feet, the Navy Search plane opened fire on the rear JAKE, scoring many hits and apparently killing the rear gunner. When the JAKE started a 180° turn and diving toward the sea, Lieutenant Hyland observed that his adversary was about to crash. Consequently, the VP3-117 pilot turned his attention to the second JAKE. However, the first JAKE pulled out of its dive at the last minute, smoking, and proceeded toward Cape St. Jacques. Some hits were scored on the second JAKE. The Liberator then pursued the first JAKE and shot it down in flames. Proceeding northward up the coast, the P3-L was jumped by a clipped-wing OSCAR which, from 4,000 feet above the search plane, dropped two clusters of high-explosive fragmentation bombs. The first exploded 100 yards away, and the second missed by only 15 yards, jarring the P3-L but doing no damage. This drop was the most intense encountered by the squadron and its noteworthy because of the relative altitude of the OSCAR.
28 Feb. — As Lieutenant Quentin R. Whitacre, USNR, approached the SUGAR CHARLIES under way at 10-10 N., 109° 30’ E., pursued on one of the vessels positively identified themselves by frantically waving a red flag. A string of five 250-pound bombs were dropped on the ship, with the bomb scoring a direct hit and the last two just missing the stern and bow, respectively. The ship sank, striking runs, plus a near-miss with a single bomb. Left the other SUGAR CHARLIES dead in the water. It is hoped that the enemy will continue into positive identification procedures, as the squadron's action report states.

VFP-119 BRINGS PEARL HARBOR TO CLARK FIELD

Arriving from Nacozar, T. P., during the middle of February, Patrol Bombing Squadron 119 went through a brief period of training at Lorkang Field, Los Negros, during the last two weeks of the month. On 28 February, the squadron received immediate orders to report to Clark Field.

The outfit, which flies PBY-2 planes, was commanded by Lieutenant Commander R. G. Barnes, USN, until 1 April. He is now serving in the Pacific, having failed to return from a patrol on that date. The last report received from his Primarius indicated that he was in the vicinity of Shanghai.
VFB-104 BLASTS JAP SEA AND LAND TARGETS

Flying a total of 139 patrol missions during April, aggregating 1,546.1 hours, Patrol Bombing Squadron 104 continued its daily searches with good results. Fifty-one vessels, totaling 5,855 tons, were sunk and 5,795 tons of shipping were damaged. Three Jap planes were destroyed in the air and one was damaged. In addition, a heavy toll was taken of land targets.

Action summary for April:

1 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) Gerald L. Didier, USNR, dropped five centurie alongside a riverboat west of Hong Kong. She keeled over and sank immediately.

2 Apr. - Lieutenant John H. Burton, USNR, destroyed a 700-ton tug above Taichow, a 100-pounder exploding under her stern and subsequent strafing exploding the boilers and firing the superstructure. The tug was beached and abandoned. Above Taichow, Formosa, a SUGAR DOG and two luggers were damaged and lost dead in the water.

4 Apr. - Lieutenant Stanley A. Wood, USNR, caught a SUGAR DOG off the western coast of Formosa, blowing up the vessel with a 250-pounder.

4 Apr. - Lieutenant Commander Whitney Wright, USN, planted a 100-pounder on a VICTOR CILARIE fuel barge near Wenchow. The barge exploded. North of there, he bombed and strafed a 100-ton patrol craft, leaving her a total loss.

5 Apr. - Lieutenant Walter Holder, USNR, scored direct hits with two 250-pounders on a SUGAR DOG southwest of Hong Kong, leaving it dead in the water and trailing oil. Strafing followed but did little damage because of the vessel's steel decks.

6 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) Edward M. Hagen, USNR, knocked off a SUGIR DOG southwest of Shanghai, scoring a direct hit with a century and setting her ablaze by strafing. A seaplane in the same sector received similar treatment but escaped, although badly damaged.

6 Apr. - Lieutenant Raymond L. Ettinger, USNR, destroyed a lugger at 24-15N, 12401E.

6 Apr. - Lieutenant Henry S. Noon, USNR, worked over two SUGAR DOGS in the vicinity of Shanghai, nailing them with six 250-pounders and strafing. Sure kills were registered.

7 Apr. - Lieutenant Paul F. Stevens, USN, and Lieutenant Wood conducted a special search around Hainan Island at the request
of SUG.R DOG. A tug and a barge, sinking one SD and the barge and damaging the other vessels. Lieutenant Stevens' plane was holed by 12.7 fire and one engine cut out. Continuing the search, Lieutenant Wood sank a sea-truck and strafed four SDs, but they seemed to be of steel construction and his bullets bounced off without doing much damage.

8 Apr. - Although poor weather limited operations, Lieutenant Holder knocked off a lugger, planting two torpedoes and a 250-pounder under her stern. The action was at 22-40N, 121-28E.

9 Apr. - Lieutenant Irwin West, USNR, despite poor visibility, found a FOX T.RE DOG northeast of Tainan and scored two direct hits. The ship was set afire and explosions were observed.

10 Apr. - Lieutenant William Fulwider, USNR, started a bombing run on a FOX T.RE CHARLIE north of Wenchow, but was not with a hail of small caliber-40 mm. fire which scored numerous hits on the plane and wounded three non. Lieutenant Fulwider contacted a rescue plane and was escorted safely home.

10 Apr. - Lieutenant Stevens strafed and destroyed a sea-truck off the western coast of Formosa. Later, he damaged a lugger and tried unsuccessfully to explode a few, floating, horn-type mines.

12 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) Jeff Humphill, USNR, and Lieutenant (jg) Didier teamed up in an attack on a SUG.R DOG and a FOX T.RE DOG northeast of Wenchow. Lieutenant Humphill scored two near-misses and blew up the SD. Eleven strafing runs left the FTD burning and out of control. Lieutenant Didier also scored a near-miss under the stern.

13 Apr. - Lieutenant Commander Wright had a field day searching between Hong Kong and Port Bayard. He sank a lugger anchored alongside a small island, and was in turn slightly damaged by ack-ack from the shore. Continuing his search, he strafed and damaged a radar station, then destroyed a large sea-truck, or SD, nearby and scored two direct hits to send another sea-truck to the bottom. A riverboat received the same treatment and was quickly sunk.

14 Apr. - Lieutenant Wood destroyed a SUG.R DOG off Tainan, Formosa, blowing her up with a torpedoes. Off Shingiku, he spotted a BETTY on a course of 200 degrees from the airstrip. Before the BETTY could reach the protection of anti-aircraft batteries, she was streaming smoke from the starboard engine and many of 800 rounds fired were seen to enter her cockpit and fuselage.
15 Apr.- Lieutenant (jg) Hemphill scored a near-miss on a lugger east of Fort Bayard, and the crew of five immediately abandoned her for a life-raft. They abandoned the life-raft hurriedly, too, as a strafing run apparently killed them all. Turning back to the lugger, Lieutenant (jg) Hemphill's crew soon polished her off.

16 Apr.- Lieutenant Burton damaged a SUG.R DOG with two incendiary clusters along the eastern coast of Formosa. Shortly afterward, he made a strafing run on a large junk, causing minor damage. Coming down the western coast, the Liberator jumped a herd of 16 luggers—some on the beach, some anchored just off-shore. Strafing started fires on four of them and the others were also damaged.

17 Apr.- Lieutenant (jg) Hogan started a run on a lugger off Hailing Island, but had to break off when intense ack-ack started spraying around him. The Ma came from gun positions ashore. The lugger was damaged slightly by strafing.

18 Apr.- Eight of his bombs were salvaged by faulty operations of the release mechanism, but Lieutenant Holder scored near-misses on a SUG.R DOG at 25-10N, 119-30E. Then he poured 1,150 rounds into the vessel, which appeared to be carrying oil drums. Huge flames, punctuated by explosions, rose from the ship.

18 Apr.- Lieutenant Stevens dropped four centuries for four direct hits on a SUG.R DOG at 25-02N, 121-55E. She sank in 90 seconds. Later, at Port Taibo, 22-43N, 121-15E, he dropped four bombs on a warehouse. White smoke streamed from the building for about two minutes. Oil storage tanks at the docks were strafed and damaged, but failed to catch fire.

19 Apr.- Lieutenant (jg) Diodar bombed and damaged four stockade-like structures which appeared to be housing troops in the vicinity of Tsinglang, along the coast of Hainan. The buildings, blocked in by fences and huts, looked medieval and were located about five miles apart. Troops were seen drilling in one stockade, but strafing broke up the parade. The PBY-1 also scored a near-miss on a SUG.R DOG and damaged a wharf at 19-35N, 110-51E.

19 Apr.- Lieutenant Burton staged a half-hour raid over Canton, China, without drawing a single enemy shot. He dropped a 500-pounder within 30 feet of a riverboat, damaging her considerably. He sank another with a 500-pounder that landed under the stern. He also strafed a string of five centuries across a railroad and warehouse, destroying an engine, dam-
Going two freight-cars and the warehouse. He also strafed tents and two more warehouses in the vicinity.

20 Apr.- Lieutenant Commander Wright sank a SUGAR DOG and two launchers with two direct hits and three near-misses out of eight bombs dropped at 24-36N, 121-53E. He also strafed and probably destroyed a truck at 23-09N, 121-24E.

21 Apr.- Lieutenant Uettinger scored a direct hit, a straddle and a near-miss on a riverboat at 23-03N, 113-20E., sinking the vessel in less than two minutes. The riverboat was 150 feet long, had four decks and weighed approximately 1,000 tons.

22 Apr.- Lieutenant George Wallock, USNR, shot down a SALLY at 26-30N, 122-00E. He spotted the SALLY about 15 miles distant at 10,000 feet, gave chase and closed to about 500 feet. The top and bow turret gunners opened on it, each using about 200 rounds. The first burst hit the fuselage. The next hit the engines. The SALLY made a slow turn to starboard with Lieutenant Wallock following. Then the Nip aircraft went into a series of snap rolls and finally fell off, disintegrating as it went down.

22 Apr.- Lieutenant Stevens inflicted minor damage on a riverboat headed seaward. He bombed and strafed her, but damage was only slight.

22 Apr.- Lieutenant Wood sank a 100-ton luger anchored at 22-50N, 120-10E. He dropped tow 250-pounders, scoring one direct hit.

22 Apr.- Lieutenant (jg) Didier dumped eight bombs on 12 SUGAR DOGS and quite a few launchers in a boatyard at 24-36N, 121-50E, sinking 2 ships and damaging two others. He also sighted 10 camouflage launchers at 24-19N, 123-42E, and dropped a pair of 250-pounders and strafed with 300 rounds. No damage was observed.

23 Apr.- Lieutenant Commander Wright strafed and damaged a radar station, a radio station, a garage and a barracks around an abandoned airfield at 16-24N, 109-42E. The field had extensive defense installations but only one small gun appeared manned. The Liberator encountered heavy ack-ack at Yulin Bay, Ft. Low airbase and Beili Bay. Cutting over from Hainan Straits to 19-12N, 110-31E, he bombed and strafed seven blockhouses on route, destroying four and damaging three.
23 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) Hemphill sank a small lugger at 22-30N., 113-50E. An air-raid with a century sent the lugger under, stern first.

24 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) Hagen left a 30-foot lugger sinking after four runs. He dropped seven centuries. He also bombed and strafed shore installations on Hna Shima.

24 Apr. - Lieutenant Noon ran into intense ack-ack as he attacked a SUG.R CIRLII and a SUG.R DOG and several luggers at Suo, along the eastern coast of Simeone, dropping three 250-pound bombs, ten 100-pounders and firing 500 rounds. His plane was ripped from bow to stern by the enemy fire, which damaged the bow turret, auxiliary power unit, bomb bay and vertical fins. Fires broke out in the auxiliary power unit and ammunition stores, and James Simpson, AMM3c, literally waded into the exploding caulk to fight out the blaze. Lieutenant Noon said his courage undoubtedly saved the lives of the crew and the plane. Simpson and three other crew members, Clifford E. Weymouth, AMM2c; George Mitchell, AMM2c, and Stewart Swahn, AMM2c, were wounded slightly.

26 Apr. - Lieutenant Ettinger shot down a TOPSY north of Simeone (26-13N., 121-40E.). He sighted the enemy aircraft about 15 miles away and closed to 200 yards astern, then pulled up to the starboard side, slightly aft, and pumped 500 rounds from the top and bow turrets. The TOPSY was hit in the engines, fuselage and gun tanks. The second and third runs left the TOPSY a ball of fire and it hit the water diving at a 45-degree angle.

27 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) Hagen set a truck ablaze and damaged two others in strafing runs over southern Hainan. He also claimed serious damage on an automobile he identified as a "1937 Ford Tudor," but reconnaissance photographs showed it was a four-door. At 16-23N., 109-53E., he strafed and seriously damaged a camouflaged barge, causing her to explode. He also dropped seven centuries on railroad tracks in the southern Hainan area, with unobserved results, and inflicted slight damage on a blockhouse.

26 Apr. - Lieutenant Stevens dropped three 500-pounders and five centuries on a military camp area at Kiirun; but fogged-in conditions prevented observation of results.

26 Apr. - Lieutenant Commander Wright destroyed a blockhouse and damaged another in two 100-foot level bombing runs over southern Hainan, 19-05N., 110-27E. In attacking another blockhouse at 18-50N., 110-23E., he encountered intense, occur-
ate anti-aircraft fire. His plane captain, Robert M.
Thornton, AB1/c USNR, was fatally wounded; three other
crew members were wounded; and the plane was holed 30 times.
The blockhouse was seriously damaged and probably destroyed.

27 Apr. - Lieutenant Fulwider bombed and strafed a lugger off Tainan;
Fornosa, 23-00N, 119-50E, and left her burning from stern
to stern. He scored a direct hit with a 20mm, and the
bomb, although a dud, went through the vessel's hull.

28 Apr. - Lieutenant Adler shot down a BETTY in a 40-minute fight off
the China coast near Foshow, 26-00N, 120-50E. He sighted
the plane eight miles away, flying 3,000 feet below him at
5,500 feet. The BETTY turned north and Lieutenant Adler
followed, closing in astern to 100 yards at an altitude of
4,000 feet. Both planes opened fire; then the BETTY dived
for the water. The Liberator gave chase, its gunners busy
all the while. The BETTY failed to return the fire. At 50
feet, the enemy aircraft began maneuvering radically, but
Lieutenant Adler stayed with it. Finally the Jap pilot
lost control and the BETTY plunged into the water and ex-
ploded.

28 Apr. - Lieutenant Valdock scored three near-misses on a 50-ton
lugger at 24-50N, 121-55E, and poured 1,150 rounds into
the vessel. The lugger stopped dead, trailing oil and smok-
ing. At 24-30N, 121-50E, Lieutenant Valdock spotted an
unidentified, silver-painted, single-engine aircraft, appar-
ently on route to Kiiun. The plane spotted the Liberator;
ducked into the clouds and disappeared.

29 Apr. - Lieutenant Button strafed seven luggers anchored at a small
island west of Fornosa, 23-15N, 119-35E. Damage was neg-
ligible.

29 Apr. - Lieutenant Stevens sank a lugger anchored off Tosaiki, Fornosa
23-29N, 120-02E. A near-miss did the trick. He also sighted
two UO.C.RS over Shinchika and ran into heavy, meager, in-
accurate ack-ack. The UO.C.RS tried to sack the PB4Y over
the airfield, but Lieutenant Stevens didn't swallow their
bait.

30 Apr. - Lieutenant Fulwider sighted seven UO.C.RS flying in forma-
tions of three and four along the eastern coast of Taiwan, 18-45N,
110-15E. He also sighted two riverboats and several derelicts
at 19-09N, 108-36E, and six UO.C.R DOGS, three river-
boats and four trawlers anchored in Yulin Bay. Later, on
one of the Pescel Islands, 15-50N, 112-20E, he dropped five
containers spaced at 50 feet. Two direct hits on a warehouse
caused undetermined damage.
30 Apr. - Lieutenant Commander Wright scored a direct hit with a 250-pound bomb on a new truck in Formosa Strait, 23-45N, 119-51E.

30 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) Hagen caught four SUGAR DOGS off the northern tip of Formosa, 25-16N, 121-33E, and made 10 bombing runs over them, dropping three 250-pound bombs and ten 100-pounder ones. A direct hit and two trains were stranded. Two of the trains landed on the remaining two. One was gutted by fire and the other was beached with her stern resting on rocks.

VFP-119 HITS SHIPping AND LAND TARGETS

Petrol Bombing Squadron 119, flying PB4Y-2 Privateers from Clark Field, sank 48 merchant ships totaling 11,620 tons during April, and damaged 13 merchant ships totaling 2,915 tons. In addition, 18 junks were damaged; two gunboats and one PT boat were sunk and one PT boat was damaged. One enemy plane was shot down; two were destroyed on the ground, and three were damaged on the ground.

Aircraft and aircraft carriers became harder to find, the Privateers began to seek out land targets, with considerable success. During the month two locomotives, 14 railroad cars, one truck, one radar installation, one railroad dockyard and two barracks were destroyed.

Action Summary:

1 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) Walter Vogelsang, USNR, shot down a VAL off Toyohara. The VAL burst into flames and plunged into the water.

1 Apr. - Lieutenant Commander R. C. Bales, USN, failed to return from a search mission in the Hangchow Bay area. He was last heard from by Lieutenant John W. Holt, USN, who said the skipper of Squadron 119 reported he was having engine trouble over Hangchow Bay. Lieutenant Holt previously had sunk two SUGAR DOGS by strafing north of Hangchow and slightly damaged an FTD north of there in a cave.

3 Apr. - Lieutenants Holt and Vogelsang teamed up on an ocean-going tug towing a large barge. The barge was sunk quickly and the tug was left burning from stern to stern, with recurring explosions being observed. Lieutenant Holt had an engine shot out by 7.7 fire but reached Clark Field safely.
3 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) F. D. Murphy, USNR, blow up two SUGAR CHARLIEs off northeast Formosa. Strafing knocked off one of them and direct hit with a 250-pounder finished off the other. The blast from this ship, which apparently was transporting dynamite, hurled debris into the nose causing some damage but injuring no one.

5 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) A. L. Althans, USNR, burned a tug to the waterline in the Shikishima Group and damaged two barges she was towing. A near-miss with a 100-pounder destroyed a lugger.

7 Apr. - Lieutenant Holt destroyed two OSC. RS and damaged three on the ground at Miyako Jima. He started a run on a beached SUGAR CHARLIE which turned out to be a derrick and ran into a hail of 20 mm. and 12.7 fire. The only way out was straight ahead, directly over Sukuru strip where Lieutenant Holt spotted five OSC. RS, and the gunners opened up. Lieutenant Holt’s plane was holed by the ack-ack and the rudder cable was severed. This was repaired but later jammed. Nevertheless, Lieutenant Holt brought his Privateer home safely, negotiating a landing despite a trick cross-wind and no rudder control.

9 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) Murphy strafed and sank a seaplane and two sampans in the Posadoreas. Off Kiriun, he caught a small junk entering the harbor and sent it to the bottom by strafing.

10 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) J. F. Gallagher, USNR, inflicted slight damage on a SUGAR DOG off Hainan, scoring two near-misses. Several strafing runs sent the vessel afire.

15 Apr. - Lieutenant V. P. Constock, USNR, dropped a 250-pounder on a SUGAR BLE SUGAR outside of Iwo and the ship went up in a terrific explosion which rocked the Privateer. Nothing was left of the vessel but a scum of burning oil. Nearby, the Privateer joined up with another PB4Y-2 of the same squadron and went to work on four troop-laden barges, each carrying about 200 soldiers. Strafing sank all the barges and killed most of the personnel.

16 Apr. - Lieutenant F. F. Matthews, USN, dropped two 100-pounders squarely on a SUGAR DOG at 20-16N, 110-18E, sending the vessel to the bottom.

16 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) Vogelsang dropped three 250-pounders on three bridges in eastern Formosa, 23-15N, 121-15E, but the bombs skipped and damage was minor. He scored a direct hit with a century on SUGAR DOG off Yonaguni Shima, sinking her.
His gunners sprayed a NICK and a GEORGE on the beach but failed to ignite them. Off LianShue, the search plane destroyed a sea-truck with bombs and strafed a building on land.

19 Apr. - Lieutenant Holt’s plane again was hailed by ack-ack, but damage was slight and he bagged plenty of guns. Four thousand rounds were poured into a riverboat and two gunboats in the vicinity of Foochow, 26-12N, 119-40E, sinking the riverboat and damaging the other vessels. Returning to the scene two hours later, he sighted only one gunboat and sank it with three 250-pounders. An oil slick on the surface indicated the other gunboat might have sunk also. After his plane was hailed by ack-ack, Lieutenant Holt and his crew strafed machine-gun emplacements ashore.

20 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) William Lyle, USNR, bombed and destroyed radar installations at Bakli Bay, Hainan Island. Two miles inland, he encountered heavy, intense anti-aircraft fire.

21 Apr. - Lieutenant Roger Atzenweiler, USNR, strafed and destroyed at PT boat, a FOX T.E.2D, and what looked like a small tanker, at 24-47N, 118-41E. His bow gunner knocked out a 20 mm. gun on the PT and set her afire. The tanker and FTD also were set ablaze. The Privateer’s No. 3 engine was holed by 12 and 20 mm., and the tail-turret was damaged and the gunner injured slightly. The fire came from the FTD, which was sitting low in the water and appeared to have been damaged before. As the plane left the scene, the FTD exploded.

21 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) Murphy destroyed a riverboat in the Henchow area, at 27-40N, 120-55E. He made eight runs over the vessel, firing 3,000 rounds and setting her afire from bow to stern.

21 Apr. - Lieutenant Constock damaged 20 junks at Kiirun. He fired 1,500 rounds into the vessels, chasing all their personnel over the side. Two of the junks were left burning.

22 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) Vogelsang sighted 14 power launches and lugger at Kiangshan Harbor and damaged three by strafing. He also strafed gun positions and barracks, silencing the guns. Ack-ack was medium and moderately accurate over the harbor and airfield. A lugger was seriously damaged while she was anchored at Waichow Island, 21-01N, 109-06E.

22 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) H. W. Evans, USNR, strafed and damaged a radar station at 16-30N, 110-23E, and scored three hits with five 100-pounders on a radar tower and shack at 16-53N, 112-13E.
22 Apr. - Lieutenant T. R. Alkire, USNR, destroyed a truck in two strafing runs at 19-33N, 119-30E, and scored a direct hit with a century on a blockhouse at 19-10N, 109-30E.

22 Apr. - Lieutenant Holt destroyed two riverboats by strafing at 22-45N, 113-42E, and left another burning and dead in the water at 22-23N, 113-52E. Seven thousand rounds of ammunition were expended in the two actions. Then two OSA-3s were encountered near Shokok, 22-45N, 113-45E. All of the Privateer’s turrets except the tail and port-visor guns were out of ammunition. One OSA-3 made four runs on the Navy plane and the other made two, and each dropped a pair of phosphorous bombs. The Privateer’s two guns returned the fire, scoring hits on one of the Nips. The OSA-3 headed toward land and disappeared smoking badly. The other broke off the action.

23 Apr. - Lieutenant (jc) Lyle sighted a TOPSY at 25-43N, 121-43E. The TOPSY was flying at 11,000 feet; Lieutenant Lyle at 5,000. The Navy flier tried to close for an attack, but the difference in altitude enabled the TOPSY to escape.

24 Apr. - Lieutenant (jc) Enrico Pasenisi, USNR, strafed a series of pill-boxes and blockhouses on Hainan, damaging three pill-boxes and four blockhouses with 4,150 rounds. Ensign George K. Smith, USNR, was wounded by return fire.

24 Apr. - Lieutenant Matthewson destroyed two blockhouses on Hainan and damaged four. He expended two centuries and 4,000 rounds of .50 caliber.

24 Apr. - Lieutenant Constock sank four riverboats, damaged two others and a patrol boat in three bombing runs at 22-30N, 113-16E. He dropped three 250-pounders and his gunners expended 3,000 rounds. Their plane was held by ack-ack which damaged the bomb bay, the No. 2 engine and the starboard wing.

25 Apr. - Lieutenant Holt destroyed two SUG R DOGS and a lugger near Sento Island, 25-47N, 123-27E. He made 16 strafing runs on the lugger and scored four hits with four bombs on one SD. Strafing turned the other SD into a mass of flames.

25 Apr. - Lieutenant (jc) Vogelsang scored direct hits to sink two SUG R DOGS, or luggers, anchored at 24-40N, 124-40E, Minna Shinn.

26 Apr. - Lieutenant Gossage riddled two 50-foot junks with 1,800 rounds, 30 miles off the China coast south of Haco, 20-30N, 113-45E.
28 Apr. - Lieutenant (lg) Vogelsang had a field day off the Canton, China area. He got a lugger afire by strafing near a tiny island in the South China Sea east of Kuchou Peninsula, and forced two small boats to beach, burning badly, at 22-55N, 113-26E. Twenty minutes later he strafed three more riverboats at 22-59N, 113-04E, and left them burning. A fourth riverboat and derrick were also strafed here. The boat failed to ignite, but the derrick was put out of commission. Ten minutes later, he poured 500 rounds into a small locomotive and six freight cars. The engine blew up and the cars caught fire. In this same area, he strafed and damaged a large derrick in a railroad yard-dock. It was a nice bomb target, but inner-plane communications were out and Lieutenant (lg) Vogelsang couldn’t contact his crew. Forty-five minutes later, he sighted a large locomotive, hauling seven passenger-cars and a flat-car. Two 250-pounders dropped in front of the train and halted it. Three direct hits with 250-pound bombs blew everything to bits. Topping off the day, Lieutenant (lg) Vogelsang caught some 50 Jap troops marching along a road. They ducked into the ditches and started firing at the Privateer with rifles. Three strafing runs silenced their fire, killing many of the soldiers.

29 Apr. - Lieutenant Jacob damaged a blockhouse in north central Hainan with two direct bomb hits. He also poured 1,000 rounds into the structure which was located at 19-30N, 109-50E.

29 Apr. - Lieutenant Gossage left four three-masted junks full of holes and sinking off the South China coast. He scored three near-misses with three bombs on a pair of junks at 21-30N, 113-34E, and two more near-misses on another pair at 21-28N, 113-48E.

VPG-28 ENDS LINGAYEN DUTY: SINKS 76,950 TONS OF SHIPPING

Patrol Bombing Squadron 28 completed its tour of Mariner night operations from Lingayen Golf on 23 April with a record since 1 March 1945 of 76, 950 tons of Jap shipping sunk and 43,910 tons damaged. Sweeping the coasts, harbors and sea lanes of Formosa and south China, from Hainan to Foochow, the PBY-3D Nightmares battled the weather as well as the enemy. Although flying conditions were poor, not one flight was cancelled because of weather.

APQ-5 low-level radar bombing gear was used in five attacks (successfully in all) but most of the bomb drops were made visually after the plane was homed to the target by ASG radar.
Nine crews and six planes reported to CTU 73,447 aboard the USS ORCA, 23 April, with Lieutenant C. E. Soderholm, USN, executive officer, in command. One plane proceeded to the USS CURRITUCK for duty, with the remainder proceeding to Jinsanoe for engine overhail, under the commanding officer Lieutenant Commander J. L. Elwell, USN, Prior to 23 April, VBF-28 was based aboard the USS TANGIER.

Action summary follows:

1 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) R. C. Dykins, USNR, sighted a large SUGAR ABLE, towing a three-masted schooner, making for the shelter of an island-enclosed bay northeast of Hong Kong. After two strafing runs, Lieutenant (jg) Dykins dropped five bombs on the SUGAR ABLE, scoring a hit amidships, a hit at the waterline amidships and a near-miss. There was violent explosion; the SA appeared to break in two, and she sank by the stern within ten minutes. The Nightmare then strafed the schooner, causing some damage.

1 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) F. J. Richart, USNR, attacked a destroyer escort 20 miles off shore between the Pessadores and Taihnan. In two runs, the pilot scored a hit amidships with a 500-pounder, a very near-miss by the stern with a 250-pound bomb and with his last bomb, a 500-pounder, a near-miss that lifted the DE’s bow out of the water. The ship was dead in the water after the second run and was assessed as probably sunk.

1 Apr. - Lieutenant W. L. Hormanson, USNR, ran into heavy fog over Hong Kong Harbor. He dropped five bombs through the overcast, with unobserved results, and was tailed out of the harbor by a bogie, which was shaken off in ten minutes.

2 Apr. - Lieutenant W. K. Karter, USNR, dropped five bombs by radar over the Kowloon docks. A 7/10 cloud cover prevented visual sighting. The bombs were observed to have fallen 300 feet east of the docks.

2 Apr. - Lieutenant H. E. Schmidt, USNR, picked up two bogies off Amoy, one following him six miles to the Pessadores, where he dropped five bombs on the main island. Release was made by radar. Results were unobserved.

4 Apr. - Lieutenant H. E. Thayer, USNR, sighted a convoy proceeding northeast, 15 miles off shore at 22-28N, 115-26E. The convoy was comprised of a very large PTa, a PTU half as large, one possible cruiser three DDe or DEs and two unidentified ships. Approaching up on moon and upwind, Lieutenant Thayer achieved complete surprise and chose the largest
ship as his target. Homing by radar, he passed over the FTAs at 200 feet and dropped five bombs. Four of them scored hits, sinking her. Visual sighting after the attack identified the ship as a 10,000 tonner.

5 Apr. - Lieutenant W. B. O'Brien dropped five bombs on three seatrucks. A 100-tonner was sunk by a near-miss and the others were damaged.

6 Apr. - Returning from a negative search, Lieutenant (jg) Richert was required to make a forced landing when his port engine out and the starboard engine throttle stuck. The mishap, luckily, occurred only four miles from the landing area. The shock of landing broke the ankle of Ensign A. E. Scouler, USNR, navigator.

7 Apr. - Lieutenant E. J. Dibble, USNR, was accorded a brotherly reception over Takao, Formosa, where harbor lights were turned on and blinker signals exchanged. Only a too-friendly searchlight prevented an attack on harbor installations.

8 Apr. - Lieutenant C. E. Soderholm, USN, established radar contact with a five-ship convoy, consisting of two DDs, one DE, a possible cruiser and a large merchant ship. Lieutenant Soderholm selected the cargo vessel as his target, but the ship was lost in the radar "sea return" caused by high waves. Proceeding to Formosa, the pilot picked up an unescorted ship north of Takao, headed north. An APQ-5 attack was carried out - the target being virtually invisible under the 600-foot ceiling. Coming in at 350 feet, using APQ-5 for range and ASG for deflection, Lieutenant Soderholm again lost the target on the scope in the "sea return," but observed a light on the ship, and homed on that. APQ-5 triggered the bombs for at least one hit. The ship blew up and sank. In the flash of the explosion, the vessel was identified as a FTD, 1,000 tons. This attack represented the first use of APQ-5 gear by a FBM in an attack on a Jap ship.

9 Apr. - Southeast of the Pescadores, Lieutenant (jg) Dykins detected a five-ship convoy, consisting of two DEs and two large and one medium merchant vessels. After one reconnaissance run under the 600-foot ceiling, Lieutenant (jg) Dykins attacked one of the DEs, dropping three bombs which fell 100 feet astern of the target. As the Navy plane circled for an attack on one of the larger ships, eight Jap planes appeared from the direction of Tokyo. Forming a box, in pairs, 500 feet above the Mariner, they took turns in making bombing runs from different angles, dropping a total of eight bombs. All fell astern or to the side of the Nightmare. After three hours, Lieutenant (jg) Dykins shook off the Nips
with the help of night fighters which rose from Laoag. This action marked the first occasion known to the squadron of night attempts at air-to-air bombing.

14 Apr. - Lieutenant R. D. Brooks, USNR, sighted a SUG.R DOG in the vicinity of Takao and after several strafing runs, left the small tanker burning and dead in the water. Off Taiwan, Lieutenant Brooks sighted four ships by radar and attacked with APQ-5. The ship selected as the target was several miles from the others, moving fast, and was identified as a DE. Two bombs were dropped, both over. The nearest one, a 500-pounder, landed 20 feet abeam, and probably damaged the DE. Then an APQ-5 run was made on the largest ship, dropping the three remaining bombs. One fell on either side of the vessel and the third, a 500-pounder, exploded at the stern. In the light of the explosion, the ship was identified as a SUG.R B.KER LOVE, 6,600 tons. She sank soon after the attack.

15 Apr. - Lieutenant Soderholm sank an unescorted 7,500-ton FTE west and north of Formosa. APQ-5 gear for range and the usual radar for deflection were used. Three direct hits were scored while the other two bombs straddled the ship.

15 Apr. - Lieutenant D. B. Danielson, USNR, picked up a radar target traveling at 20 knots, off Hong Kong. Homing by radar, Lieutenant Danielson dropped three bombs by sonar's eye at 150 feet and damaged the ship with one 500-pounder which exploded beneath the stern and with one near-miss over. The ship was definitely identified as a destroyer.

16 Apr. - Lieutenant O'Brien, flying a course from Swatow to Hainan, contacted by radar a group of 30 or more junks, moving singly and in clusters up to ten. The sighting was similar to many other groups of junks seen nightly by the Nightmares - except for the presence of two larger blips among those made by the junks. In a reconnaissance run over the ships, the largest blip was identified as a SUG.R ABLE, 10,000 tons, headed north at the unusually low speed of five knots. Undoubtedly, the speed of the vessel and the other ship were lowered to permit them to hide out among the junks in the hope that the Mariner wouldn't investigate. This hope was rudely shattered. Lieutenant O'Brien attacked the larger tanker at 200 feet, dropping three 500-pound bombs and two 250-pounders. The result: one hit, two explosions beneath the ship and two near-misses to starboard. The ship sank.

17 Apr. - Lieutenant (jg) Richart attacked a FOX T.RE B.KER, 5,500 tons, south of Amoy. Four bombs were dropped and two hits were secured amidships. Retiring 25 miles after this first
attack, the pilot came back in at 300 feet and dropped his one remaining bomb. While 600 yards from the target, a flare burst behind his plane and the ship opened up with intense and accurate light and medium anti-aircraft fire, coming close to port. Turning to starboard, the Mariner was met again by AA. The turn threw the plane off course for the bombing attack and the fifth bomb was not dropped. However, the ship was seen dead in the water. Several small craft were nearby.

18 Apr. - Lieutenant J. L. A. Alldridge, USNR, sank a three-masted schooner off Toko, Formosa. Three strafing runs were made and a 250-pounder was dropped, resulting in a near-miss. Paraffins were successfully employed on other runs. Four planes from Toko arrived too late to help the Nip schooner.

20 Apr. - Lieutenant-Jones strafed a sea-truck off Toko. A half-hour later, while inspecting several derelicts along the outer shore of the low islands paralleling the coast, Ensign H. T. Jones, USNR, co-pilot, spotted a T.E.R.E.K.BR, apparently in the process of unloading. The ship had not appeared on the radar scope, being masked by land. Proceeding 20 miles up the coast, the pilot reversed course and returned at 50 to 75 feet, pulling up over the target to drop two 500-pounders for three hits. Within five minutes, two-thirds of the ship was engulfed in flames. She was completely destroyed. In the light of the flames, the ship was identified as either the TAKATAMU MARU, 8,150 tons, or the BUENOS AIRES MARU, 9,600 tons.

VI-4 RESCUES B-25 CREW DOWNED ON FORMOSA SHORELINE

Illustrating once again the Navy’s capability of rescuing downed airmen from under the very nose of the enemy, a rescue Mariner of VI-4 on 22 April aided in the saving of the crew of an Army B-25 which had gone down on the shores of the Formosa mainland.

While striking railroad yards at Taichu, on the northwestern coast of Formosa, the 308th Bomb Wing Mitchell was hit by medium ack-ack which damaged the port wing and aileron and started a fire in the port engine. The flames rapidly spread aft, forcing the pilot to attempt a landing before the fire ignited the fuel in the bomb bay tanks. With members of his crew at their ditching stations, the pilot headed down for a wheels-up landing on a huge salt flat lying under approximately a foot of water just off the town of Rokka.

Due to damage inflicted on the hydraulic gear, the port wheel slipped down, and when the landing was made the B-25 bounced heavily and slowed to the left; then hit again and stayed down. Except for
shock and bruises, the crew emerged unhurt. They immediately broke out the Mark 7 life-raft and set off through the surf to sea.

Meanwhile, the rescue PBM, piloted by Lieutenant Forrest Norvell, USN, had been summoned by the Army flight leader. By the time Lieutenant Norvell reached the scene the tide had gone out, leaving the B-25 completely out of water. The crew was struggling through the surf. The pilot set his plane down about a mile away and taxied towards their raft, stopping less than half a mile from the shore, just beyond the rolling breakers.

Almost an hour and a half passed before the survivors were able to paddle to the plane. By that time all of the B-25s and fighters, which had covered the scene of the rescue, were so short of fuel that they were forced to leave the area. Their presence, however, had discouraged the enemy from opening fire with shore batteries and had similarly prevented the approach of Jap fighters. With the survivors aboard, the PBM took off and returned them to the USS ORCA in Lingayen Gulf, for further transportation to their command.

The rescue marked the close of the squadron's tour of duty with Aircraft, SEVENTH FLEET. The next day the outfit was relieved by VMB-28. Lieutenant Norvell is commanding officer of VH-4.
A convoy destroyed by lone mariner

In a long, night attack 16 May, Lieutenant Warren R. Lasser, U.S.N., of VPB-17, sank an entire Jap convoy of five ships 15 miles north of Kiirun, Formosa. The convoy consisted of two FOX TARE BAKERS, one FOX TARE CHARLIE and two SUGAR CHARLIES, totaling 17,000 tons.

Lieutenant Lasser took off from Lingayen Gulf and headed for Formosa in fair weather, with one-quarter moon and good visibility. His patrol was uneventful until two junks were sighted just north of Tessim. In search of bigger game, he left them un molested.

He continued along the western coast and rounded the northern tip past Kiirun, with no sightings. Then he proceeded off-shore about 15 miles, searching the sea lanes to Foochow and the Min River Delta. It was then that a target was picked up on the PPI scope, dead ahead at an approximate distance of 12 miles. The radar operator homed the pilot in, failing to notice four additional ships because he was intent on homing in the first target and was strain ing for a visual sighting. The homing was accurate and Lieutenant Lasser sighted the ship, a FOX TARE BAKER, at one-third of a mile. Believing that there was only one target, he set up to drop all bombs and started his run from the port bow to the starboard quarter.

By the time the pilot realized the presence of the other ships, it was too late to reset his bombs, so he let go with his full string. The first bomb detonated at the bow of the FTB; the others overshot. The course of the Mariner brought it down the starboard side of the second FTB, and the plane’s gunners opened up. After the first few bursts by the bow gunner, the forward part of the deck of the second FOX TARE BAKER exploded. The ship was soon a mass of flames.

As the PBM turned to starboard, light anti-aircraft fire was thrown up from the bow of the third ship, a FOX TARE CHARLIE. The Mariner’s bow gunner silenced the fire and then joined the other gunners in laying a blanket of lead on the enemy vessel. A steady pattern of bursts scored near the waterline, and the ship began to settle almost immediately.

Following this phase of the attack, strafing runs were made first on the northerly SUGAR CHARLIE and then on the other SC. Light anti aircraft from these two ships was silenced. Then the PBM began a series of unopposed strafing runs on targets well-silhouetted by the flames pouring from the second FTB – now a floating holocaust. The first FTB, which had been observed listing to port and down by the bow, sank on the fifth run. On what was estimated to be the tenth run, the second FTB was found to have burned to destruction. Only floating debris remained.
The two SUGAR CHARLIES proved the most durable ships of the lot. On the twelfth and thirteenth runs, the Mariner flew directly over them, firing almost straight down. On the fourteenth run, the northwestern SUGAR CHARLIE gave up the ghost, and on the next run the other S2 finally succumbed to the incessant hammering.

Then, suddenly, three Jap fighter planes appeared; but they were too late and too Avery. Only one Np made a pass as the Navy bomber broke off the attack and continued its patrol. The entire action lasted 80 minutes and exhausted the arms carried by the Mariner.

VPB-17 ON BLACKCAT MISSIONS

The operational activities of Patrol Bombing Squadron 17 during the month of May consisted almost entirely of night shipping search and attack missions. These nightly missions were flown in the Formosa-South China coastal areas.

Under the command of Lieutenant Commander K. A. Kuenor, the squadron flew a total of 179 flights for a total of 1359.8 hours. Throughout the month, VPB-17 was based aboard the USS T.NIGHTER. Damage inflicted on the enemy amounted to one DE and one PT, damaged; ten ships, totalling 20,100 tons, sunk; seven ships, totalling 4,900 tons, badly damaged or probably sunk; one ship of 150 tons, damaged; 34 schooners and junks, 153 junks, three barges and nine motor boats damaged by observed strafing hits.

On 9 May the squadron received a letter of commendation from General Walter Krueger, United States Army, Commanding Sixth Army, for VPB-17's Lingyen Detachment's field work while based aboard the USS ORCA.

VPB-104 SINKS 31 JAP VESSELS.

Patrol Bombing Squadron 104, under the command of Lieutenant Commander Whitney Wright, USN, conducted daily searches and offensive reconnaissance missions from Clark Field during the month of May. A total of 142 patrol missions, aggregating 1482.3 flight hours, inflicted the following damage on the enemy.

SHIPS

- Sunk: 31 vessels, totalling 1,525 tons.
- Damaged: 7 vessels, totalling 410 tons.

PLANES IN AIR

- Damaged: 1 V.L. and 1 BETTY.
PLANE ON GROUND

Destroyed: 1 BERTY.

LAND TARGETS

Destroyed: 1 blockhouse, 5 buildings, 1 highway bridge, 2 automobiles, 1 bus, 23 trucks, 1 motorcycle.

Damaged: 4 barracks, 5 buildings, 6 blockhouses, 1 radio station, 1 mining plant, 2 trains, 1 automobile, 30 trucks.

Action highlights:

2 May - Lieutenant Paul F. Stovons, Jr., USN, dropped 10 centurics and 500 rounds into gun positions on Tagel-Moal-Chow Island, south of Hainan, starting numerous fires.

3 May - Lieutenant (jg) Edward M. Hagen, USNR, patrolling the coast of Hainan, attacked a five-car train at 18-21N, 109-11E, scoring near-misses on each of five bombing runs and obtaining many hits by strafing. Volumes of steam issued from the locomotive, and the train stopped. Damage was undetermined.

4 May - Lieutenant Ira B. West, USNR, inflicted slight damage on a 25-ton lugger off northwest Formosa (22-50N, 120-12E). He poured out 600 rounds in one strafing run. Later, he encountered ack-ack from Midoce airfield, but his plane was undamaged.

5 May - Lieutenant John H. Burton, USNR, scored a possible kill on a V.A.L. over northeastern Formosa (24-35N, 121-50E). He chased the V.A.L. into the mountains, where the Nip apparently holed up. Lieutenant Burton first spotted the V.A.L. flying 200 feet below him at 800 feet and attacked from 6 o'clock about 400 yards astern, but the bow-turret gunner missed. The V.A.L. executed a split "S" and crossed under the Liberator, but Lieutenant Burton burned quickly and stayed with him. The V.A.L. jettisoned his depth charges and high-tailed it into a dead-end canyon walled on either side by 7,000-foot moun-
tains and started circling. Lieutenant Burton could not maneuver his Liberator inside the canyon so he circled around outside waiting. The V.A.L. peeped out twice and each time Lieutenant Burton's gunners got on him, scoring hits on its tail, wing and fuselage. Then the V.A.L. vanished. A cloud overhanging the ravine prevented close investigation, but Lieutenant Burton surmised the V.A.L. might have tried a landing on a sandy river bottom near a village in the ravine.
6 May - Lieutenant Henry S. Noon, Jr., USNR, sighted a destroyer, a destroyer-escort, and a landing craft north of Haitan Island, 25-30N, 119-40E. The landing craft fired medium, meager, inaccurate ack-ack at the Liberator and no attack was attempted.

8 May - Lieutenant Ira B. West, USNR, seriously damaged a SUGAR DOG anchored at Port Bayard. He dropped seven centuries in two runs, scoring a direct hit. The vessel caught fire and its stern was wrecked. He also strafed an 18-foot speedboat and a VICTOR B.KER at Nampeng Island (21-33N, 112-13E.) He dropped six bombs, three 250's and three centuries on a village there, starting fires in the town and grass fires throughout the island. Light, meager, inaccurate ack-ack came up from the Port Bayard area.

8 May - Lieutenant Commander Whitney Wright, USN, destroyed a blockhouse by bombing and strafing and destroyed six trucks by strafing in northern Hainan. Four centuries polished off the blockhouse. He also damaged two blockhouses by bombing and strafing in eastern Hainan.

8 May - Lieutenant (jg) Edward M. Hagen, USNR, destroyed a lugger and damaged another in the Pescadores area. He scored a direct hit with a 250-pounder, dropped in the midst of three luggers, registered the kill. He also scored two near-misses and fired 2,000 rounds of .50 caliber to damage a SUGAR DOG in the same area. Lieutenant (jg) Hagen then spotted a BE, a landing ship, a FOX T.RE DOG, a gunboat, three SUGAR CHARLES and four SUGAR DOGS at Amoy. His approach brought heavy, meager, inaccurate ack-ack from the docks. Medium, meager, inaccurate anti-aircraft fire also was encountered over the northern airfield.

9 May - Lieutenant (jg) Gerald L. Diodor, USNR, scored three direct hits on a trio of 25-ton luggers south of the Pescadores (23-12N, 119-25E), and sank them all. He dropped three 250-pounders and five centuries in three runs from minimum altitude and expended 1,000 rounds on the luggers.

9 May - Lieutenant John H. Burton, USNR, inflicted slight damage on two trucks in southern Hainan (18-25N, 109-45 E), and also claimed "one cow secured." He sighted a FOX T.RE DOG, a SUGAR BAKER, a SUGAR CHARLES, two patrol craft, a riverboat and two luggers in Yulin Bay.

10 May - Lieutenant Tom McAuliff, USNR, scored a near-miss with a century on a lookout building in the Pescadores (23-15N, 119-35 E), causing undetermined damage. He also damaged three unmanned luggers in the same area, firing 1,500 rounds
11 May - Lieutenant Commander Wright destroyed a blockhouse, four trucks, a garage and a radio station in raids throughout southeastern Hainan. In destroying the blockhouse at 18-54N, 110-25E, he scored three direct hits with 250's. He and his crew saw at least 50 Japs and a Gojo Minh go scurrying for fox holes as the blockhouse went up in smoke. In attacking the radio station, the Liberator was hit by ack-ack and Aviation Radioman, first class, Jack Leding, was wounded.

11 May - Lieutenant West scored seven bomb hits on a blockhouse in central Hainan (19-05N, 110-05E), destroying at least two-thirds of the structure. He also made nine strafing runs on two trucks at 18-40N, 110-00E, but they failed to ignite and damage was undetermined. He set three barracks afire by strafing at an abandoned airfield at 18-35N, 110-05E, and bombed and strafed a radio station there, scoring a hit on the corner of the building.

11 May - Lieutenant William E. Fulwider, USNR, sank a 400-ton SUGAR CHARLIE, a 40-ton tug and three barges, and damaged a 120-ton SUGAR DOG and a lugger in the Canton, China, area. He spotted a SUGAR CHARLIE, a SUGAR DOG and a lugger anchored near Sancheu (21-52N, 113-10E) and made four runs on them. He dropped a 250-pounder on the SUGAR CHARLIE and destroyed it. The SUGAR DOG took 1,000 rounds of strafing and was seen trailing oil out its seams. The lugger was slightly damaged by 300 rounds. A tug towing three barges at 22-58N, 113-30E, was the target for four of Lieutenant Fulwider's bombs. Two of them scored direct hits on the barges and the other landed squarely on the tug, sinking them. The other barge was damaged by strafing.

11 May - Lieutenant (jg) Hagen destroyed two trucks and sank a 30-foot motor launch in the Saitow area. A direct hit with a 100-pounder blew the stern off the launch. Strafing destroyed the two trucks. A third was damaged.

11 May - Lieutenant (jg) Jeff D. Kemphill, USNR, scored a near-miss to damage a tug along the southwestern coast of Formosa, 22-40N, 120-15E. The vessel was left dead in the water. Proximity to an airstrip along the coast prevented the pilot from pressing the attack.

12 May - Lieutenant Burton strafed a blockhouse on northeastern Hainan. Damage was unobserved.
13 May - Lieutenant (jg) Didier scored two hits with 20mm cannon on a river-boat at 23-05N 112-36E, destroying it. He also destroyed a 100 x 300 feet, tin-covered warehouse and two smaller, adjoining buildings south of Canton, at 21-51N 113-09E. A direct hit with incendiary clusters set the three buildings flaming furiously.

13 May - Lieutenant Henry S. Noon, USNR, destroyed a bridge, a patrol craft, a 10-ton landing craft, and a BETTY in a series of attacks along the Formosa coast. The landing craft was towed by the BETTY. In addition, Lieutenant Noon dropped five 100-pound incendiary clusters on a 20-cwt train at 24-30N 120-40E, setting at least five cars afire; and damaged a lugger at 23-40N 120-10E, and a tug at 23-10N 120-30E, both by strafing.

13 May - Returning from a search, Lieutenant McAuliff ran out of fuel and was forced to ditch his Liberator off Lingayen. Two crew members were injured slightly in the ditching, but all hands made it ashore.

13 May - Lieutenant (jg) John McAlloy, USNR, also ditched at sea near Lingayen. The PBY-1 was returning from a patrol to Indochina when the plane commander was instructed to search for Lieutenant McAuliff's crew. He, too, reported being low on fuel, but prolonged his search after sighting a rocket in the vicinity. Following the second ditching, Lieutenant (jg) McAlloy and two crew members were reported missing. All others were rescued.

13 May - Lieutenant Wood made a forced landing at Lingayen after the propeller of his No. 2 engine flew off and entered the pilot's compartment. Lieutenant Wood suffered a broken arm and his co-pilot, Lieutenant (jg) Darrel Jay, USNR, was incarcerated about the face.

14 May - Lieutenant Commander Wright destroyed a bus and possibly a truck on Luichau Peninsula, with incendiaries. In another attack, he destroyed an automobile, damaged another and damaged a truck, with incendiaries and tracer rounds. In a third strafing run, another bus was damaged.

14 May - Lieutenant West failed to return from a patrol, but was reported safe in China. The last word received from the pilot was "attacking ship". Later, Chinese sources reported his plane had landed at an airfield there, with all hands safe and only one man wounded, he slightly. Reportedly, the plane was shot up by a heavily-armed lugger.
15 May - Lieutenant (jg) Earl Bittenbender, USNR, sank a 75-foot tug at 20-50N 106-46E, in Tongki Gulf. He scored a direct hit on one run, and the vessel began smoking heavily, keeled over and sank.

16 May - Lieutenant (jg) Jay, USNR, destroyed a truck and damaged three others by strafing at 21-10N 110-20E, in the Fort Bayard area. The plane's gunners expended 1,200 rounds on the vehicles. Light, meager, inaccurate ack-ack was encountered, but the Liberator came through undamaged.

17 May - Lieutenant (jg) Hagen straddled a lugger with half a dozen centuries, bouncing it out of the water and onto the shore. The vessel was damaged seriously. The action took place at 22-24N 113-55E, in the Canton area. The Liberator also damaged seven trucks at 22-45N 114-26E, setting two of them afire with incendiary clusters. At 22-41N 114-35E, his plane ran into light, intense, accurate ack-ack and was holed. It was holed again when it ran into heavy, moderate, accurate anti-aircraft at 23-05N 113-50E.

17 May - A Liberator piloted by Lieutenant (jg) Didier wiped out a rifle nest in the Swatow area, and was holed several times in return. Then the FB4Y-1 made five bombing runs on a riverboat at 23-33N 116-32E, scoring two direct hits with centuries and a near-miss with a 250-pounder. He also destroyed three trucks and a motorcycle by strafing along a five-mile stretch of road in the vicinity of 23-33N 116-41E.

18 May - Lieutenant Commander Wright destroyed a 150-ton SUG.R DOG anchored at 24-25N 118-14E, near Amoy, scoring two direct hits with incendiary clusters. He sank another 150-ton SD with incendiaries and a 250-pounder at 26-08N 119-45E, in the vicinity of Foochow. Light, moderate, accurate ack-ack came up from the west end of an island at 26-08N 119-39E and 12-7 fire went through the No. 3 engine prop and pierced the Liberator's wing.

19 May - Three hours after taking off, Lieutenant (jg) Richard S. Jonesen, USNR, messaged he was ditching at 20-20N 118-30E. Searchers hurried to the scene, but found no survivors. Wreckage strewn about the surface of the water indicated the plane had exploded. The cause of the ditching was not determined.

22 May - Lieutenant Commander Wright destroyed nine of 16 small landing craft he caught beached and at anchor, at 26-40N 129-06E, north of Foochow. He made 15 bombing and strafing runs, dropping five 100-pound incendiary clusters, three 250-pounders and three centuries and expending 4,000 rounds of
The runs were made from altitudes ranging from 50 to 700 feet. The Liberator was holed twice by rifle fire and came in with a flat tire on the starboard landing-wheel.

26 May - Lieutenant Commander Wright destroyed seven trucks and damaged four by strafing and bombing along highways in northeastern Hainan.

27 May - Lieutenant (jg) Hagen scored a direct hit with one of four centuries and sank a 60-foot launch in Chieh-shih Bay, 22-42N 115-36E.

26 May - Lieutenant (jg) Hemphill drew light, meager, inaccurate anti-aircraft fire over Kompang Island, but his plane was not damaged.

29 May - Lieutenant McMullin strafed eight trucks in a half-mile stretch of road along the western Hainan coast, destroying two and inflicting undetermined damage on the others. He made 12 strafing runs over the vehicles at 200-foot altitude, expending 1,800 rounds.

29 May - Lieutenant (jg) Bittenbender damaged a BETTY in a brief aerial engagement, but lost the Jap plane in the clouds. Sighted at 27-00N 121-00E north of Foochow, the BETTY took hits in the port wing and fuselage, before it ducked into the clouds. Later, Lieutenant (jg) Bittenbender observed a SUGAR DOG anchored in a cove at 23-20N 119-15E, but didn't attack because he was low on fuel and had no bombs, having jettisoned them in chasing the BETTY.

29 May - Lieutenant (jg) Waldron inflicted undetermined damage in a railroad repair yard at 24-24N 120-30E, northwestern Formosa. He trailed five centuries, spaced at 30-foot intervals, across the yard, and his gunners expended 1,200 rounds of c'mmo on a locomotive, three freight cars and several buildings in the yard. He also strafed some 20 sampans at 22-20N 120-10E.

30 May - Lieutenant Becker destroyed a truck by strafing at 20-38N 110-03E, on the Luichow Peninsula. He also strafed and damaged three more trucks at 19-40N 110-40E, on Hainan.

30 May - Lieutenant (jg) Hagen sank a motor launch and destroyed a 75-ton SUGAR DOG at the mouth of the Canton River, 22-46N 113-33E. He made two runs on the launch, scoring a direct hit with incendiaries and expending 600 rounds. In four runs on the SD, he scored a direct hit with incendiaries and his gunners poured 70C rounds into her.
VP-119 HITS JAP SHIPPING AND LAND TARGETS

Patrol Bombing Squadron 119, based at Clark Field under the command of Lieutenant Commander M. S. Ragan, USNR, exacted a heavy toll of Jap shipping and land targets during the month of May. The squadron flew 147 sorties, aggregating 1,457 hours. Damage inflicted during the month on the enemy was as follows:

Merchant ships - twenty three destroyed, totalling 4,135 tons; twenty seven damaged, totalling 4,140 tons.

War ships - One subchaser sunk, two damaged.

Planes - One VAL destroyed in the air.

Land targets - Destroyed: thirty five trucks, nine locomotives, eleven railroad cars, three blockhouses, one radio-radar station and two barracks areas. Damaged: thirteen trucks, four locomotives; fifty-one railroad cars, four barracks areas, one smelting plant, one mine installation, two airfield installations, thirteen blockhouses, two warehouses, one power house, two storage tanks, one gun emplacement and one artillery area.

Action highlights included:

1 May - Lieutenant (jg) Walter Vogelsang, USNR, in a profitable mission over southern Hainan, bombed and strafed numerous land targets. He blew up a truck and strafed troops at 18-36N 109-55E; destroyed three trucks, killed many troops and started fires in barracks buildings at 18-30N 109-55E; dropped a pair of 100-pound general purpose bombs on a two-story smelting plant and set fires in another barracks area at 18-12N 109-25E; strafed a locomotive, eight flat cars and some buildings at 18-20N 109-25E; riddled eight more flat cars and a truck at 18-25N 109-00E; bombed the Naw Law airstrip control tower and strafed the administration building and barracks there despite anti-aircraft fire; and damaged two small locomotives and communications and power lines at 18-50N 108-40E. Then he really went to work on a large railroad center at 18-50N 108-40E, where he destroyed three large locomotives by bombing and six more cars by strafing. He then started fires around a mine at 18-50N 109-25E, and ended up the day by chasing an unidentified plane which managed to get away.

1 May - Lieutenant John W. Holt, USN, an outstanding pilot who had left wide paths of destruction across Japan's scalawags, was unreported on a search to Hainan. Commander H. M. Drake, USN, Fleet Air Wing 17 Operations Officer who had accompanied him as an observer, also is missing.
2 May - Lieutenant (jg) Montgomery V. Jacobs, USNR, damaged a blockhouse on northern Keinan, 19-55N 110-15E.

3 May - Lieutenant (jg) F. D. Murphy, USNR, destroyed a sea truck and a land truck by strafing at Waichow Island in the Gulf of Tonkin.

4 May - Lieutenant (jg) H. W. Evans, USNR, destroyed one blockhouse and damaged two others on northern Keinan, 19-50N 110-50E, by bombing and strafing with five centuries and 1,300 rounds.

4 May - Lieutenant (jg) Vogelsang blasted a large locomotive and several cars with two 250-pounders and five centuries at 22-47N 114-06E. He also destroyed two trucks by strafing and damaged a warehouse with a 250-pounder. Later, he destroyed a truck at the Fort Bayard area.

5 May - Lieutenant (jg) W. W. Jacob, USNR, fired 3,000 rounds into five trucks at Fort Bayard. Medium, moderate ack-ack was encountered.

6 May - Lieutenant Roger Atzenweiler, USNR, dropped five bombs and fired 1,500 rounds at a radio-radar station and barracks on the northeastern tip of Formosa, 25-43N 122-05E. The targets were destroyed.

7 May - Lieutenant T. R. Alkire, USNR, destroyed two locomotives and a warehouse and damaged four ore cars and warehouses on the north coast of Keinan. He also destroyed one blockhouse and damaged another. He ran into light but accurate antiaircraft in the vicinity of 19-08N 106-52E, and his tailgunner Lloyd A. Whitten, 3 1/2, USNR, was killed. The Privateer was holed in the starboard wing, horizontal stabilizer and bomb bay.

7 May - Lieutenant (jg) A. L. Lindseth destroyed one and damaged nine blockhouses along the northern Keinan coast. A barracks area and seven trucks were also strafed.

7 May - Lieutenant (jg) Vogelsang, in 15 bombing and strafing runs on shipping in Swatow harbor, sank a SUG.R DOG with centuries and a 500-ton subchaser with three 250-pounders. He damaged tow small subchasers, three SUG.R DOGS, a truck and a water tower. Ack-ack holed his plane in 10 places, damaging the bomb bay, tail, wing and starboard waist turret.

7 May - Lieutenant Commander Hartsol D. Allen, USN, damaged a barracks area at Hoku Island with 500 rounds of .50 caliber.
He also strafed two trucks, one at 25-00N 121-55E and the other at 24-20N 12145E. No enemy ack-ack was encountered at 23-50N 121-35E, but the plane was not hit.

8 May - Lieutenant (jg) Jacob destroyed one SUGAR DOG and probably destroyed another south of Sanshui, China. Light, meager anti-aircraft fire from the shore hit the top of the Privateer's pilot hatch and the bomb bay.

9 May - Lieutenant F. F. Matthewson, USNR, closed 10 miles to overtake a VAL over Swatow. His bow, forward, after-deck, and starboard waist gunsners opened fire at 500 yards, and the VAL burst into flames and spun in, with all gunners in the Privateer pouring the lead into her.

9 May - Lieutenant (jg) John H. Fette, USNR, poured 500 rounds into three trucks in the Fort Bayard area. All were destroyed.

10 May - Lieutenant Atzenweiler sank two luggers with 100-pounders in the Gulf of Tongki.

10 May - Lieutenant (jg) Vogelsang, the "one-plane airforce," fired 1,500 rounds into 14 trucks mounted on railroad cars south of Canton, China. He sank a riverboat with a direct hit and near-miss with centuries at 22-44N 113-27E. At 23-10 112-52E he blew up a locomotive and one passenger car. Five other passenger cars and 10 freight cars were damaged by strafing. Then, at 22-22E 113-12E, he blew up another locomotive with a 250-pound bomb and damaged seven cars by strafing. Near Sanshui he sank one large river boat and left two others burning. During the attack, ack-ack hit the tail of the Privateer, slightly wounding R. W. Wilson, S 1/c. Four runs were made on warehouses and ships along the Canton River. A direct hit with a 250-pounder sank a FOX TARE DOG tied up at a dock, and other ships and buildings were damaged by strafing.

10 May - Lieutenant (jg) Evans destroyed a FOX TARE DOG at 23-32N 120-00E and probably destroyed another at 23-45N 120-09E, by bombing and strafing.

11 May - Lieutenant (jg) W. H. Schodler, USNR, destroyed one truck and damaged five others by bombing, east of Fort Bayard, 21-05N 110-10E.

12 May - Lieutenant Matthewson strafed the air strip and buildings at Fat Law, China, with 2,400 rounds.

12 May - Lieutenant W. F. Comstock, USNR, strafed and damaged two river boats in the Swatow area.
15 May - Lieutenant (jg) Vogelsang again ran into anti-aircraft fire, this time while strafing a locomotive on Hainan. Camel Swift, AM 1/c, USNR, was wounded in the arm and stomach. The plane's wing, two engines, tail, bomb bay and fuselage were holed by the ack-ack, which seemed to come from trenches and buildings in the vicinity.

13 May - Lieutenant Commander Allen strafed a 60-foot tug outside Kiungshan and left it listing. His plane was damaged by heavy, intense ack-ack, apparently radar controlled.

13 May - Lieutenant (jg) Lindaell destroyed a SUC.R.DOG with three near-misses in the vicinity of Anoy, and damaged a pair of river boats at 26-08N 119-36E, also with near-misses.

14 May - Lieutenant (jg) Schedler polished off a 60-foot river boat with a short burst of strafing, near Canton.

15 May - Lieutenant (jg) Murphy sank a river boat and a power barge, by bombing and strafing, respectively, in the Canton River. Heavy ack-ack from a building on a hill overlooking the railroad wounded Harold H. Fair, 1/c, USNR, in the leg and forearm.

16 May - Lieutenant (jg) Vogelsang damaged a 120-foot, ocean-going tug by bombing off the western coast of Formosa. Nearby he damaged a truck and a factory building by strafing, setting both afire.

17 May - Lieutenant (jg) Jacob sank a river boat and seriously damaged three coal barges near Dalong Bay in the Gulf of Tongki. He scored two direct hits and three near-misses with 100-pounders. Although heavy and medium ack-ack was encountered, his plane was not damaged. Later, he made 12 strafing runs, damaging an unidentified ship at 20-56N 107-40E.

18 May - Lieutenant (jg) Fetto damaged a FOX TIRE DOG just outside Kiirun Harbor.

19 May - Lieutenant (jg) Vogelsang and his crew, the "one plane air-force", failed to return from a search over the Hainan Island sector. This crew, from the moment it started flying, in the southwest Pacific, showed outstanding ability and aggressiveness in whittling down the Japanese forces. The Vogelsang actions listed above are just a sample.

21 May - Lieutenant Atzenweiler damaged four large junks by strafing and bombing in the South China Sea, 35 miles from Hainan. The junks, heavily loaded, were the largest seen by the squadron in this area.
22 May - Lieutenant Commander Allen sank a 100-foot ocean-going tug at the mouth of the Canton River with a direct hit and a near-miss by 250-pounders.

27 May - Lieutenant (jg) Murphy destroyed three barges by bombing and strafing just south of Swatow. The barges, each about 75 feet in length, were loaded with oil and other cargo. Ack-ack held the Privateer in the tail and waist.

28 May - Lieutenant Alkire damaged a large junk at 23-26N 120-02E, near the Pescadores.

31 May - Lieutenant (jg) John Wolf strafed and damaged a motor-driven junk near Hong Kong. Later, he ran into medium, moderate anti-aircraft fire, which hit his port wing and No. 4 Engine.

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SEA TARGETS DECREASE: VPB-117 TURNS GUNS ON LAND QUARRY

Operating from McGuire Field, Mindoro, Patrol Bombing Squadron 117 placed the emphasis of its April-May attacks on land targets in the area of the Saigon-Toucane Railroad. Bridges, railyards, station-houses, radio and radar installations and ship yards suffered under the hammering of the outfit's aircraft.

Lieutenant Commander Thomas P. McVickers, USNR, was relieved as commanding officer of the squadron on 8 April by Lieutenant Commander Roger J. Crowley, Jr., USNR.

During April and May a total of 299 armed search missions were flown for a total flight time of 3,429 hours. Twenty-eight enemy ships were sunk, aggregating 7,075 tons. Thirty-nine vessels totaling 8,500 tons were damaged. One TOPSY and one SONJA were destroyed in the air; three 012ARs were probably destroyed in the air; one KITE and one ZEBE were destroyed on the ground, and one 091AR was damaged on the ground.

Enemy ground installations destroyed and damaged included locomotives, freight cars, motor vehicles, bridges, shipyards, barracks, railroad installations. These became prime targets as ship sightings continued to decrease.

Action summary:

1 May - Lieutenant (jg) Walter L. Greene, USNR, strafed six boxcars on a siding 10 miles south of Bong Son at 14-20N 109-05E. They were left smoking.

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2 May - Lieutenant Ralph H. Castleton, USNR, bomb ed two R/R bridges and strafed three R/R stations, a locomotive and a banker within a 10-mile span in the vicinity of 15-25N 106-30E. One bomb blew the supports from under the first track. Damage to the second was undetermined. Strafing explored the locomotive.

4 May - Lieutenant Raymond L. Klassy, USN, strafed an abandoned Sugar Dog, beached below Cape Ft. Jacques. Damage was undetermined.

4 May - Lieutenant Edgar E. Miller, USNR, dropped three 250-pounders at each end of a R/R tunnel at 14-25N 109-02E. Results were not observed.

5 May - Lieutenant Alice E. Westcott, USNR, bombed and strafed one railroad suspension bridge, strafed one locomotive and several boxcars at 11-15N 103-15E. Direct hit with a 250-pound bomb damaged the tracks on the second span of the bridge. The locomotive was left standing.

5 May - Lieutenant Robert E. Durrey, USNR, bombed and strafed a R/R yard at Dinh Dinh, 13-4W 109-37E. Two direct hits were scored with 250-pounders on the roundhouse, two on repair shed, and two in the marshalling area. Several large fires were started among the boxcars and adjacent buildings.

5 May - Lieutenant Ralph H. Castleton, USNR, bombed and strafed R/R installations along the Saigon-Tourane R/R between 11-15N 105-15E and 11-15N 103-40E. One locomotive and five cars were bombed and strafed, leaving two cars destroyed and the locomotive damaged. A similar attack at 10-15N 108-25E set a railroad station on fire, destroyed a locomotive, and left several more locomotives and many boxcars in flames.

6 May - Lieutenant Commander Roger J. Crowley, USNR, strafed and damaged a Sugar Dog at Camranh Bay despite light and heavy automatic ack-ack. The Liberator was holed in the starboard wing, starboard flap and aileron section. Next the search plane bombed and strafed radar installations at Cape Padawan, but the bombs fell long. Then several camouflage railroad cars were strafed at 10-30N 108-00E.

7 May - Lieutenant Raymond L. Klassy, USN, strafed an airfield at Nha Trang and pill boxes on the seaward side of the spit at Camranh Bay; bombed one round house which contained three or four locomotives, and machine-gunned another locomotive in the yard at Phan Rang. Several enemy personnel were killed in the vicinity of the airfield. Three direct hits with 250-pounders blew up the roundhouse and damaged the locomotive inside.
8 May - Lieutenant Miller bombed a railroad bridge at 11-12N 108-31E and strafed a locomotive and tracks alongside at 11-12N 108-37E. Two 250-pounders were dropped on the tracks at the end of the bridge. One exploded on the tracks, causing moderate damage, while the other bomb, hitting tall first, bounced back up but finally exploded about 20 feet to the right of the tracks. Further south, a locomotive was holed at least 50 time; two bombs caused moderate damage to the tracks.

8 May - Lieutenant John Bell, USNR, bombed a freightyard at Tuyhoc. The amount of damage was undetermined.

9 May - Lieutenant (jg) Jerry P. Douglas, USNR, bombed and strafed an airstrip south of Tourane at 16-03N 108-11E. Direct hits were made on one hanger, and either a hit or a near-miss was tallied on the second hanger. The attack was made in the face of intense anti-aircraft fire from gun emplacements along the strip and from camouflaged buildings near the hangars. The Navy gunners accurately strafed two of the emplacements, causing explosions in the pits. When the PB4Y-1 pulled up to continue its patrol, large fires were visible in both hangars.

9 May - Lieutenant Edward O. Jensen, USNR, left a SUGAR DOG burning furiously at 09-31N 106-25E.

10 May - Lieutenant Bentvelt, USNR, made runs on a railroad bridge, several flatcars, a R/R yard, a roundhouse and radio station. All targets were in the vicinity of Tuyhoc.

11 May - Lieutenant Commander Crowley attacked two SUGAR CHARITIES and a SUGAR DOG at Tourane, sinking one of the SCS and damaging the other vessels. Further south, several luggers were strafed and damaged. The pilot then flew inland and strafed a hanger and damaged a transport plane parked nearby. Next, a radio direction-finder station was strafed and damaged. Working south and inland, the Liberator strafed a radio station. Incoherent A/A was observed. Still working south, the crew strafed another radio station, a bus, and two R/R stations. To finish off the day's work, a strafing run was made on four locomotives and several boxcars at a depot at 15-00N 108-35E. The locomotives and two boxcars were damaged.

11 May - Lieutenant Miller and his crew sighted a number of SUGAR DOGS, luggers and sea-trucks on the Tourane River at 16-03N 108-13E. A series of strafing runs was made in which six 250-pounders, two 100-pound incendiary clusters were dropped and 2,700 rounds of ammunition were expended. Three sea-trucks were sunk and two were damaged.
11 May - Lieutenant Greene bombed a railroad bridge at 11-37N 108-23E. Two hits damaged the tracks, but damage to the structure was undetermined.

11 May - Lieutenant Klassy attacked several SUGAR DOGS and barges at Tourane, destroying three SDs and damaging two barges. Resulting fires sent smoke at a height of 2,000 feet as the plane left the area.

12 May - Three Liberators piloted by Lieutenant Edward O. Jensen, USNR, Lieutenant John Bell, USNR, and Ensign John R. Bourcheir, USN, made a combined strike on a FOX TARE UNGLE, a SUGAR CARGO, two SUGAR DOGS and several sea-trucks and many other smaller craft in the Tourane River. On the first bombing and strafing run, Lieutenant Bell's plane was damaged by light, intense and accurate ack-ack, but before breaking away from the formation, Lieutenant Bell's gunners strafed a river boat and left it on fire. The two remaining planes continued the attack, damaging a lugger on several sea-trucks and barges, until the A/A damaged the hydraulic system of Lieutenant Jensen's FB4Y-1. The pilot broke off and headed out to sea. Ensign Bourcheir continued the fight, dropping four 250-pounders over and scoring near-misses on the FOX TARE UNGLE. At the same time, fires were observed on the two SDs, a barge and a sea-truck. Then Ensign Bourcheir made a final run on which water-front facilities took numerous direct hits with incendiary clusters and were subjected to heavy machine-gun fire. Several large fires broke out throughout the area. Fires were also started in two railroad cars by strafing.

14 May - Lieutenant Klassy and his crew damaged a radio station at Cape Tourane.

14 May - Lieutenant (jg) Paul J. Sullivan, USNR, and his crew inflicted damage on seven boxers and the roadbed in a railroad yard along the Saigon-Tourane line. Further south, the Liberator bombed and destroyed a locomotive.

15 May - Lieutenant Bell's gunners strafed several warehouses at Tuyhoa, damage was undetermined.

16 May - Lieutenant Castleton bombed and strafed a Saigon-Tourane R/R bridge in Indo-China at 12-55N 109-22E. At 12-48N 109-20E, he dropped two 250-pounders alongside a R/R station, and damaged the tracks.

15 May - A Liberator piloted by Lieutenant Miller bombed and strafed a large sailing junk at 17-44N 107-37E, leaving it seriously damaged. The junk later sank.
16 May - Lieutenant (jg) Dougan strafed a SUGAR DOG anchored in an inlet of Tourane Bay, damaging her. The vessel appeared to be abandoned. Bombing and strafing runs were then made on two Saigon-Tourane railroad bridges at 15-35N 108-32E and on several boxcars and a locomotive on a siding at 15-33N 108-29E. Northwest of Tourane Bay, a camouflaged railroad bay was bombed, strafed and damaged. Anti-aircraft was encountered from the south end of the bridge, but did no damage.

17 May - A SUGAR DOG anchored at 09-32N 106-34E, south of Cape St. Jacques, was heavily damaged by a Liberator piloted by Lieutenant Klassy.

18 May - Lieutenant Jonsen scored direct bomb hits on a FOX TARE DOG at 16-20N 108-00E.

18 May - Lieutenant Greene bombed three bridges at 15-52N 108-10E, 15-17N 108-42E, and 15-43N 108-18E. Also his gunners strafed four boxcars at the last location.


19 May - Lieutenant Bell strafed and damaged a locomotive at 11-15N 108-18E and another, pulling several cars, at 11-08N 108-12E.

19 May - Lieutenant Hyland demolished one boxcar and damaged two others at 15-50N 108-20E. A few miles farther south, the Liberator attacked another train, blowing up the locomotive and damaging at least 15 passenger cars.

20 May - Lieutenant Castleton made a bombing and strafing run on several boxcars and a locomotive in a marshalling area at 15-35N 108-30E. Smoke was seen rising from the area, but the extent of damage was not determined. A small station at 15-25N 108-32E was strafed. Two 250-pounders and 2,800 rounds of ammo were used in an attack on a larger marshalling area farther south. One engine house was destroyed; another was seriously damaged, and numerous boxcars and the station were riddled with machine-gun fire.

21 May - Lieutenant Commander Grawley's gunners strafed and damaged several flatters and buildings at Binh Dinh. Light A/A was encountered. At 13-02N 109-16E, two direct hits and strafing heavily damaged the buildings at a radio station. Then, at 13-02N 109-16E, the search plane bombed
and strafed airfield installations, damaging the buildings and runway. Radar installations were strafed at 12-36N 109-26E, Cape Varelle.

21 May - Lieutenant Vastveit bombed and strafed a locomotive and several boxcars on the Saigon-Tourane R/R at 11-16N 108-20E, leaving the targets burning. A camouflaged highway bridge was attacked at Long Phuoc. Amount of damage was undetermined.

22 May - Lieutenant Klassy attacked numerous boxcars and a locomotive along the Saigon-Tourane railroad. The locomotive was knocked over by a direct hit, and burst into flames. Three other attacks were made on rolling rail-stock, with another locomotive being exploded. Then came a strafing attack on the airfield at Nha, and finally a visit to Camrang Bay, where his gunners peppered SUGAR DOGS, barges and luggers, as well as the dock area.

22 May - Lieutenant (jg) Conrad J. Leonard, USNR, bombed a R/R bridge at 12-15N 109-11E.


23 May - Four direct bomb hits and strafing destroyed three boxcars and a section of track and left 10 other cars burning at 10-58N 107-23E. The plane commander was Lieutenant Empey.

23 May - Lieutenant Hyland strafed a truck and a steamroller at 13-50N 109-00E; bombed and strafed several railroad cars at 13-52N 109-07E, and made similar attack on cars at 13-49N 109-10E. A/A was encountered during the last attack.

24 May - A direct hit with a 500-pound bomb on a railroad bridge at 13-55N 109-10E, damaged one span, bent and broke the superstructure and ripped up a section of the tracks.

24 May - Lieutenant Kinball bombed and damaged a railroad bridge at 15-58N 108-12E, and strafed several boxcars at Quang Hai.

25 May - Lieutenant Vastveit sighted six locomotives, about 65 freight-cars and 10 flatcars, loaded with trucks, at Huong Man. A bombing and strafing run destroyed the locomotive and two flatcars, and left others in flames.

25 May - Lieutenant Miller strafed and slightly damaged one camouflaged locomotive at 10-46N 107-28E. At 11-15N 108-20E, five
boxcars were damaged by strafing, and at 11-17N 108-45E, a locomotive was administered similar treatment. Twenty boxcars were subjected to two strafing runs at 11-22N 105-54E, with at least a dozen of them being left damaged.

25 May - Lieutenant Commander Crowley strafed a R/R station and a boxcar at 12-21N 102-21W, with the amount of damage being undetermined. Then bombs damaged the building and destroyed a smaller building at the radar station at Cape Varella. At an airstrip at 13-02N 109-17E, radio installations were set afire and damaged by the direct hits with incendiary clusters. Several other buildings were strafed. Still looking for targets, Lieutenant Commander Crowley made a bombing and strafing run on the marshalling yards at Ty Hoa. One 105-millimeter destroyed several boxcars and Platofor, and strafing damaged the roundhouse. At Binh Dinh, bombs were dropped for near-misses. Strafing damaged several boxcars, set one oil tank-car afire and damaged R/R installations. Light, inaccurate ack-ack was encountered in the last attack.

25 May - Lieutenant Klassey bombed and strafed the yards at Ty Hoa, with undetermined damage. Five miles south a radio station was strafed, and at Binh Dinh the marshalling yards were bombed and strafed. Similar attacks were made at Phu My and Tan My.

25 May - Lieutenant (JG) Leonardi strafed and sank a large three-master junk at 15-25N 109-46E. At 16-30N 107-32E, he spotted a large canopy-covered truck hidden under some trees, and damaged it by strafing.

26 May - Lieutenant (JG) Harold A. Willard, USN, and Lieutenant McPeck attacked railroad marshalling yards at Muong Hn, leaving large fires in their wake. Three locomotives and numerous boxcars were also damaged and set afire.

26 May - Lieutenant (JG) Lorin L. Moench, USNR, bombed and strafed a R/R bridge at 13-50N 103-11E. Strafing attacks were also made on yards at Tan Ky, Vuong Nhai and Binh Dinh.

26 May - Lieutenant Hyland bombed and strafed a railroad station, several cars and a bridge along the Saigon-Tourane railroad.

27 May - Lieutenant Jenson attacked a roundhouse and a number of boxcars at 14-32N 109-02E, causing extensive damage.

27 May - Lieutenant Marvin B. Beroof, USNR, bombed and strafed several boxcars at 14-20N 109-03E and blew up a section of tracks.
27 May - Lieutenant (jg) William D. Crawford, USNR, strafed four boxcars and blew up a locomotive at Phan Rang. Seven miles west of Thanh Son, he fired a shed housing another locomotive, and strafed and slightly damaged 15 boxcars.

28 May - Lieutenant (jg) Greene bombed a radar station at Cape Padaran, demolishing one building and leaving a larger building burning.

28 May - Lieutenant Miller and his crew attacked a number of flatcars and boxcars at Binh Dinh, inflicting heavy damage. Three miles south, they went to work on two groups of a dozen railroad cars each, damaging most of them. Nine other cars were damaged by direct bomb hits and strafing farther along the line.

28 May - Lieutenant (jg) Leonard damaged a R/R yard 25 miles south of Tourane, and later sank two barges and damaged a third in an attack on shipping in the Tourane River.

28 May - Lieutenant Klassy fired a camouflaged high-speed vehicle, which appeared to be an armored car or tank, north of Quang Tri. At 16-13N 108-05E, he spotted a locomotive pulling a 10-car train; destroyed the locomotive with a direct bomb hit and damaged the cars by strafing. At Cape Tourane, a radio station was attacked. A direct hit blew out one entire side of the main building, and strafing set fire to several smaller buildings.

29 May - Lieutenant Bell bombed and strafed a locomotive in a camouflaged shed at Long Binh, 11-16N 108-37E.

29 May - A Liberator piloted by Lieutenant Doughen set a Jap lugger afire in Quinton Harbor, and damaged several boxcars at Tuy Hoa.

29 May - Lieutenant Empey damaged several flatcars and a water tower at 14-48N 108-57E, and at Quang Ngai bombed and strafed a R/R yard.

30 May - Despite light, moderate and accurate anti-aircraft fire, Lieutenant Crawford bombed and heavily strafed four locomotives at 15-10N 108-50E.

31 May - Lieutenant Leonard sighted a SUGAR DOG beached at 11-10N 108-36E. The vessel appeared to be in perfect condition but was abandoned. A direct hit with a 500-pound bomb completely destroyed the target.
31 May – Lieutenant Commander Crowley and Lieutenant Klassy teamed up in a strike on two shipyards and a radio station at Vinh. Their first targets were four SUGAR DOGS on the WSN, which were hit with a 500-pound bomb and incendiary clusters. Next a camouflaged SUGAR CHARLIE was sunk and two SUGAR DOGS were heavily strafed. A few seconds later, the port gunners poured several hundred rounds into waves on the north bank of the river. In quick succession, came attacks on a junk and two SUGAR DOGS, after which both shipyards were heavily strafed several times. Raging fires broke out throughout the entire scene of the attack. Lieutenant Commander Crowley then headed down the river and made two strafing runs on a radio station, while Lieutenant Klassy’s gunners poured lead into a lumberyard. The Liberators then left the area, but not until Lieutenant Klassy had made a final run on the radio station, rendering the station inoperative.

VFP-137 MAKES SERIES OF LOW-LEVEL ATTACKS ON FORMOSA

Ventures of Patrol Bombing Squadron 137 carried out a series of nine extremely successful low-level attacks on industrial targets on Formosa during May, making highly effective use of napalm drop-tanks and rockets.

In addition to these strikes from Clark Field, a daily search sector was flown from Guisan Field, Samar. On 27 May, that section of the squadron based at Clark rejoined the remainder of the outfit at Samar, preparatory to returning to the United States.

Summary of important actions follows:

8 May – Lieutenant James C. Kench, USNR, sank a patrol craft anchored in Makung Bay, 22°47'N 115°14'E, scoring two direct hits with 105mm. His gunners strafed another patrol craft and a junk, but results were unobserved.

10 May – Four Ventures, on the first of a new program of strikes against selected targets, hit a Butanol plant covering several acres at Huto, Formosa. Twenty-three direct rocket hits were scored on the plant. The Ventures, striking in pairs, also destroyed a nearby house, an army barracks and strafed a railroad station, trucks and flatcars. Pilots participating in the strike were Lieutenant Commander John A. Porter, USNR; Lieutenant J. B. Lackey, USNR; Lieutenant (jg) R. W. Markham, USNR; and Lieutenant (jg) H. B. Lee, USNR.

11 May – Four Ventures scored 31 direct hits on a Butanol plant at Kagi, Formosa, seriously damaging the factory. They also
damaged a cement bridge, hitting it squarely with a 250-pounder. Three 250-pound bombs scored direct hits on the town hall believed to be in Nassic, but damage was unsatisfactory because of 10-second fuses employed. The Ventura gunners fired 10,000 rounds of ammunition at buildings and towns on route to their target, and encountered moderate, heavy; inaccurate ack-ack from Kagai airfield and meager, inaccurate A/A from Kagai Town. Participating pilots were Lieutenant Keach; Lieutenant Robert V. Hancock, USNR; Lieutenant Carl Borgquist, USNR, and Lieutenant C. W. McAlhany, USNR.

13 May - Four Venturas led by Lieutenant I. A. Enevold, USNR, and piloted by him and Lieutenants C. J. Yazel, USNR, F. Y. Ames, USNR, and R. A. Ray, USNR, attacked miscellaneous targets in the upper Cagayan Valley on northern Luzon in an effort to give indirect ground support to the Army and native guerrillas. Five 165-gallon tanks of napalm were dropped into a wooded grove just outside of Piggatan, reportedly used as cover for 300 well-armed and well-supplied Japs. Large fires were started but assessment of damage was impossible. All assigned areas were heavily bombad and strafed and several small buildings were destroyed. As he was flying over a large church in Magapit, Lieutenant Yazel was met by meager, light, inaccurate ack-ack fire from the windows of the church. Two rockets scored direct hits on the church, blowing out the windows on all sides and putting holes in the roof. The remaining bombs, rockets and ammo of all four planes were expended in towns and villages along the upper eastern Jap-held bank of the Cagayan River.

14 May - Four Venturas attacked selected targets near Shoko, Formosa. They put 10 rockets into a sugar plant at Umitsu and dropped three 250-pound bombs on barracks in the same area. Another 250-pounder scored a direct hit on a railroad warehouse. Further south, they scored three bomb hits on barracks and put six rockets into another sugar plant. One plane was holed by ack-ack but returned safely. The plane commanders were Lieutenant Commander Porter, Lieutenant Locker, Lieutenant R. P. Pyszynski, USNR, and Lieutenant (Je) R. W. Markham, USNR.

16 May - Four more PVs hit selected targets at Shindo, Formosa, damaging what was thought to be an alcohol factory and several small buildings, as well as a railroad yard and several houses in the nearby village. Their bombs and rockets loft fires that could be seen from 10 miles at sea. The pilots were Lieutenant Enevold, Lieutenant Yazel, Lieutenant Ray and Lieutenant Ames.
17 May - Four Venturas destroyed an assembly plant at Shaka, Formosa, 24-05N 120-34E, and seriously damaged another factory in the town of Irin, 23-56N 120-32E. Three direct rocket hits damaged a small building in Irin. Moderate, light, inaccurate ack-ack came from the village. Pilots on the strike were Lieutenant Commander Porter, Lieutenant Locker, Lieutenant Pyszynski and Lieutenant (jg) Markham.

18 May - Four Venturas dropped eight 250-pounders squarely on a large factory at Taito, Formosa, damaging it seriously. In a valley between Taito and Tama, they strafed and rocket-bombed a variety of targets, destroying a freight car and a truck and damaging a bridge, three buildings, and a small railroad yard. Intense, medium, accurate ack-ack from a hill on the western corner of Taito holed the gun turret on one Ventura, wounding the gunner, W. G. Danow, AO3c, USNR, in the arms and chest. Pilots on the strike were Lieutenant 'Inzol, Lieutenant Bridstone, Lieutenant Carlson and Lieutenant (jg) Loc.

19 May - Two Venturas damaged buildings at Honho, Formosa, 24-24N 120-52E, and Waoi, 24-07N 120-29E, and a sugar refinery at Shaka, 24-07N 120-33E. Pilots were Lieutenant Roy and Lieutenant Mack.

22 May - Four Venturas bombed and seriously damaged a butanol plant northeast of Shindo, Formosa, 23-20N 120-22E. Their bombs set off a terrific explosion. Two small buildings near Shindo were destroyed with rockets and a seawall northwest of the town was damaged by strafing. At the controls of the Venturas were Lieutenant Pyszynski, Lieutenant Hancock, Lieutenant Enevold and Lieutenant (jg) Markham.

26 May - Four Venturas attacked selected targets near Byoritsu, Formosa, 24-33N 120-50E. They scored a direct hit with a rocket on the mouth of a railroad tunnel along the coast, damaging it seriously. Three 250-pound bombs and four rockets damaged freight cars and railroad tracks five miles south of Koryu. Three direct hits with rockets seriously damaged some buildings near Byoritsu. Pilots participating were Lieutenant Bridstone, Lieutenant Deck, Lieutenant Carlson and Lieutenant (jg) Hancock.

NAVY AIRMEN SAFE AFTER OVER FIVE MONTHS IN BORNEO

On 13 January, 1945, while on a search over northern Borneo, a PBY of VFS-101 was attacked by four enemy fighters and subsequently forced to land. Over five months later four of the original crew of ten reached safety after a display of fortitude and endurance it would be difficult to overpraise.
The patrol, starting from Morotai, had been uneventful. As a part of their mission they had dropped propaganda leaflets over Kiri and at 1220 were headed up the West Baro coast toward Ponape Island. Lieutenant Commander Marvin T. Smith, USNR, acting commanding officer of VPB-101, was at the controls, flying at 7000 feet between two layers of clouds. The co-pilot and navigator, Lieutenant (jg) Robert J. Graham, USNR, had just taken a bite out of a ham sandwich. Suddenly four Jap fighters, two Hamps and two Tojos, swept out of the clouds, attacking in pairs from eleven and one o’clock. Almost before the crew of the Liberator was aware that the enemy was engaging them, the Nips had knocked out two engines and had so badly wounded the nose gunner that he subsequently died. Destroyed also was the artificial horizon, and when the plane emerged from the clouds it was in a sharp glide after having lost four thousand feet of altitude. Lt. Cmdr. Smith leveled the plane off, but with only two engines it was impossible to gain altitude. Realizing that a ditching was inevitable, he headed the plane east, striving to get as far away as possible from such concentrations of the enemy as were at Brunei and Miri. Suddenly the enemy planes reappeared, and in the subsequent engagement Chief Robbins, the top turret gunner, and Fischler, a waist gunner, shot down one of the Hamps; the other planes then turned off toward the battle. So much altitude had been lost meanwhile, that it was necessary to land immediately before they ran into a mountain. Using the auxiliary hydraulic gear, Lieutenant Graham had managed to put down the flaps. Lt. Cmdr. Smith made a perfect wheels-up landing, the plane skidding along for about 150 yards before coming to a gentle stop in the waist-deep mud. The crew immediately set about destroying whatever classified documents and gear they could find, in the process discovering the condition of the gunner. They broke out a rubber life raft, on which to drag him over the mud, and abandoned the plane, heading for a clump of trees on the side of the paddy. With them they carried a Gibson Girl radio, five pistols, the sail from the rubber raft, a glossary of Malay terms, a cloth survival map of Borneo, and two first aid kits, each of the latter containing iodine, gauze, eye lotion, and adhesive tape. The first aid kit proved to be virtually useless, and in a few hours the radio set had become such a burden it was thrown away.

At the clump of trees adjacent to the rice paddy the men paused to try to do something for the nose gunner. Even as they stopped, however, he died. while they were gathered around the body some natives came out of the bush carrying rice. These natives were of a Malay tribe, and by use of the glossary the Americans got them to agree to bury the body of the dead gunner. Despite the willingness of the natives to provide food, it rapidly became apparent that they were deathly afraid of the Japanese and might under pressure of this fear report the presence of the Americans. So the two officers and seven men decided not only to leave immediately but to go alone.

They headed for a high range of mountains lying to the East.
Progress was extremely slow, the jungle being almost impenetrably dense and the heat extreme. Worst of all was the malaria of the area, especially the mosquitoes and the leeches, the latter not merely making their way in through the apertures of the men's shoes but becoming capable of penetrating the khaki cloth of their uniforms. As they walked they discussed plans, the one finally agreed on being to go to Kadat, on the North tip of Borneo, where they had heard (falseely) that Australian guerrilla forces had set up headquarters. Although this trip would require at least two months of walking, they immediately set out to find a guide. Lieutenant Graham cautiously made his way into the first village they came to and located the chief. Using the glossary, he explained what he wanted. At first the chief was adamant in his refusal to permit a member of his tribe to undertake such a mission, not through lack of friendliness but because of reprisals the Japs would certainly take if they learned what he had done. Finally, however, he agreed to provide a guide as far as the next village; at subsequent villages the reaction was the same, and thus the party changed guides every three or four hours.

Making their way over the mountains and pushing on despite the condition of their feet, which were badly swollen from infected leech bites, they walked twelve hours a day for thirteen straight days. During this time their food consisted solely of rice and their beds of the dirt floor inside native huts. In a few days each of them was suffering from malaria and dysentery, and every day they grew weaker. In two weeks they reached the village of Pomatam, on the Long Pasir River, where their condition was such that they could travel no more. At Pomatam their glossary was of no help, the people being Dyaks. Planning for the future, Lieutenant Graham began to compile a dictionary, and before he emerged from Borneo he had mastered several of the local tongues.

Though they were extremely reluctant to take care of the Americans (Locomis, a Jap headquarters, was less than thirty miles away, and Nip patrols frequently visited Pomatam), the Dyaks finally agreed that the white men could stay until they were strong enough to travel again. Arrangements were made to put three men in each house, so as to reduce the food problem for their native hosts. At this point the party was split; Lieutenant Graham and two crews, Harus and Robbins, being put up at a house some six hours' journey up the river.

For two weeks Lt. Cdr. Smith and the five men with him rested and tried to regain their health. They had no medicine—the native cure for malaria, consisting of a mixture of hot water and wood ashes, proved no help whatsoever—and their health consequently became worse every day. On 12 February Lt. Cdr. Smith got word that a party of thirty Japs was headed for Pomatam; he and the men quickly prepared to leave for Kompong, a village on the route to Kadat. Shepherd, the assistant crew chief, was at this time so ill
from malaria he could not walk, and it was decided to drag him into the jungle and leave him in a native sulap, a kind of coracle, after arranging for one of the local natives to bring him rice. As Cdr. Smith and four members of the crew set off, the Jap patrol reached Pomtan and occupied the same house that Cdr. Smith had just left. Shepherd could hear the Japanese from his sulap, and chose a party of them passed within 300 yards of him. As he lay there, he says, his chief emotion was a desire to walk to the house and kill these Japs. As it turned out, he got a way kind of revenge, for one of the Nips came down with malaria also; he died on the sixth day the patrol had been at Pomtan. The rest of the patrol then went left, and Shepherd was carried back to the house. There he remained for eight more days, fed by a Dyak native and his wife and crawling out of the house to relieve himself.

On 26 February Shepherd stood on his feet for the first time in 25 days, and he immediately decided to have the natives row him to the house where Lieutenant Graham, Harris, and Robbins were living. He had gotten out of the boat at the end of the journey and was sitting near the shore when Harris came up. Neither recognized the other. As they made their way to the house, Harris told Shepherd that Lieutenant Graham had gone to a village named Lang Naut, where he had heard there were two downed army airmen. Before leaving he had turned over to the man the sole weapon the party had, a .38 pistol and seventeen rounds of ammunition. Neither Robbins nor Harris, who were too ill to make the four-day trip to Lang Naut, had heard that Lt. Cdr. Smith and the others had departed, nor, of course, had Lieutenant Graham.

With a native guide the latter started out on 13 February, a date he had circled on the calendar he had manufactured on the first of February. Following the main trail, he and the native struck up a lively pace, despite his weakness from one of many bouts with malaria. On the second day, however, their pace increased a hundred per cent, for a friendly native brought word that they had been informed upon and were being chased by seven Japs. The Nips had, in fact, spotted in the very camp Lieutenant Graham had vacated that morning. He and the guide left the main trail and struggled through the jungle. When they finally regained the trail Lieutenant Graham discovered that he was now following the Japs. Once he pushed on too fast; at one place he stopped the native owner vehemently requested that he leave, pointing for his reason to the floor, where the still-wet imprints of Jap boots could be seen.

Again leaving the main trail but heading this time in the right direction, Lieutenant Graham hiked for two more days before he reached Lang Naut. There he found S/Sgt Francis E. Harrington and Cpl. John R. Nelson, gunners off an Army B-24 which had gone down some three months previous in the same area. Their plane had been hit by .50-caliber fire during an attack on Brunei, a high-caliber shell explod-
ing in the cockpit and killing both the pilot and the co-pilot. The other seven members of the crew were thrown out, becoming separated during their fall. Harrington and Nelson, having made contact with each other, had decided not to move until they discovered the whereabouts of the others. Still convinced that Australian guerrillas were at Kadat, and in any event anxious to keep contact with Lt. Cmdr. Smith and the rest of the crew, Lieutenant Graham resolved to return to Pompton and persuaded the Army to accompany him. When they arrived back at the house, Shepherd was able to be on his feet most of the time, though he was still extremely weak. Robbins and Humes, however, were in pitiful condition.

Humes had begun to have attacks of dysentery shortly after the party had arrived at Pompton, that is during the following 68 days he had an average of 22 bowel movements a day. In many cases he passed nothing more than blood, but the urge to defecate remained constant.

If such a thing is possible, Robbins was in even worse shape. There had developed at the base of his spine a huge tropical ulcer about four inches in diameter and hollowed out to the extent that the bone was exposed. The odor of this ulcer was easily detectable for a hundred yards. The extreme pain of the sore caused him to sleep, and he lay crying and moaning for several days. Finally he became delirious, and on two occasions deliberately rolled himself into the fire, from which Shepherd dragged him and then had to hold him to keep him from rolling in again. Following this stage he became apathetic, apparently lifeless, and once Shepherd regretfully dug him a grave, believing him dead. Even when he discovered that a faint heartbeat remained, he knew the end was near. A major complication in the case was the fact that Robbins had had no nourishment for several days, having developed such a revulsion for the unvaried diet of dry rice that he vomited every time he tried to eat it. Shepherd explained the situation to the native who cared for them. He brought his wife, who employed the following repulsive but nevertheless effective method of feeding Robbins: she would take a mouthful of rice, chew it thoroughly, and then open his mouth and transfer the rice from her mouth to his. Constant feeding by this method over a period of 48 hours brought strength and finally consciousness back to Robbins. Then it was discovered that he could retain the native dish of rice fried in wild boar lard, and though this was productive of dysentery he ate it rather than starve. His strength rapidly returned and soon he could move about, though the excruciating pain from the ulcer remained constant.

It was this debilitated crew that Lieutenant Graham found on his return with the Army men, and his pity was mitigated by what he describes as a kind of unreasonable anger, for he had hoped to set out immediately after Lt. Cmdr. Smith. Two days later, however, on 3 March, a native brought word that Lt. Cmdr. Smith and the four men with him had been led into an ambush, where they had been cap-
tured and killed. Immediately it became obvious that danger lay on the road to Kampong, and so it was decided that they all return to Long Naut, food and living conditions there being much superior. It was agreed that the strongest men—Lieutenant Graham, the two Army men and Shepherd—would go first, carrying a large cooking pot and preparing the way. Harris and Robbins were to follow along, carrying rice.

Shepherd, who was still extremely weak, tired rapidly. On the second day of the four-day journey he was swaying as he walked, before long he was stumbling. Finally he fell. He declared he could go no further. Lieutenant Graham, who could no more carry him than he could leave him there to die, hit upon a solution for the problem typical of the resourcefulness and skill he showed throughout their long ordeal. He had read a short story, he said, involving a doctor and a diabetic patient who took a trip together. Their car broke down several miles from the nearest town, and before they could get back to civilization the diabetic became desperate for his daily injection of insulin. The doctor had no insulin with him, but he knew that stimulation to the patient’s glands would provide a temporary cure. He therefore “confessed” that he had been his wife’s lover and that this was a plot to get rid of him. The cure worked, and the men got back to civilization safely. Graham used the same method. He deliberately called Shepherd a yellow, coward, a quitter, a son of a bitch—every term of opprobrium he could think of. Shepherd reacted as expected; he rose from the ground intent on murder, and he lasted for the journey to Long Naut for the sole purpose of getting revenge on Graham, who spurred him on with a steady stream of revilement. As Lieutenant Graham recalls the short story, the diabetic therefrom hated the doctor who had saved his life. Not so Shepherd. "I would never have got there if Mr. Graham hadn’t done what he did," he said. "None of us would have got out at all" and Robbins echoes his statement.

Harris and Robbins, following the first party, had meanwhile run into a heavy rainstorm. In a few hours they were so chilled they felt attacks of malaria coming on; so they instructed the guide to lead them to the nearest shelter. They had no sooner arrived than Robbins began to have malaria chills, and Harris and the native boy lay on him to keep him warm. No sooner had Robbins passed into

1 Major Tom Harrisson, commanding officer of the Australian guerrillas in Borneo at the time, later showed Lieutenant Graham a flight jacket which had been removed from a dead Jap. It was it. Commander Smith's. No trace was ever found of the other crewman. According to a native story, the man had been led into a trap by collaborating natives who subsequently helped the Japanese kill the Americans.
The fever stage then "arms started having malarial chills, and Robbins and the native boys had to lay on him. They remained there for the night, literally taking turns having attacks of malaria. In the morning they started again and travelled for three more days, one day walking for thirteen hours. The trip was, however, worth the anguish, for at Lang Naut they not only were among definitely friendly natives but their diet was vastly improved, consisting of pineapples, hog meat, papayas, and a kind of potato. The attitude of the natives was the result of the sacrifice made by an American missionary named John Willfinger, who two years earlier had deliberately presented himself to the Japanese when they had threatened to take reprisals on natives who failed to disclose the whereabouts of their white friends.

On 16 March the men received word that the five other crewmen of the Army B-24 were staying at a village some four or five days away; Graham, Shepherd, and the two Army men decided to go to meet them, leaving Robbins and Harms, who were again seriously suffering from dysentery and malaria. On the journey, however, they met a Mr. William Makanmap, a Dyak official in the Dutch government. This man had not only been making arrangements for the hiding of the airmen but had organized an army of some 500 Dyaks, equipped with blow guns, who were harrying the Japs and keeping them free of the area. The Americans were, he said, to proceed immediately to the new hiding place, where they would be joined by the other five Army men.

This new hiding place proved to be a house situated in a small, deep valley at Pa Silau, the mountains surrounding it being so precipitous that the sun shone in the valley only four hours a day. They had to crawl down the mountainside, hanging themselves down by roots and bushes. At the house they found Mrs. Makanmap, who later nursed them through their recurrent attacks of malaria. On 24 March, four days after their arrival, the five Army men joined them. They were: 2nd Lt. Philip R. Corin, Cpl. Edward J. Haviland, Cpl. James F. Knack, Cpl. Dan C. Tillick, and Cpl. Thomas Capin; all attached to the Thirtieth Air Force. Though they had been in Borneo two months longer than the Navy men, they were in far better condition, chiefly because they had not attempted to do much walking and also because they had received food and aid from Mr. Makanmap.

The nine men remained at Pa Silau until 12 May, passing the dull days principally in resting. On 8 April they received their first communication from the outside world, to the effect that Australian guerrillas would attempt to take them out in six weeks. On 29 April they actually saw a white man, Major Tom Harrison, of the Australian army, who brought them medical supplies, a package of cigarettes and word that preparations for their evacuation were well underway.

From Pa Silau on 12 May, the group went to Lang Barang, from where they were to be guided to their place of evacuation. They remained at Lang Barang until 10 June, living in the home of a missionary.
By this time they had received supplies of medicine from the Australians, and the combination of medicine and good food was rapidly bring them back to normal health.

Harms and Robbins, meanwhile, who had remained at Long Nauj, were regaining their strength after a series of difficult times. For the first several weeks of their stay, they had been ill with malaria. Then an infection from leech bites developed on Harms' left foot, swelling it to twice its normal size. The natives treated it by piercing his toes in hundreds of places with sharply pointed bamboo sticks, letting the fluid drain out. On his right foot, meanwhile, an ugly purple-colored knot had risen, from which drained a disgusting purple pus. Between the two infections, Harms was unable to walk for nine weeks. Though they originally had had ample supplies of good food, heavy floods had washed out the gardens, and they were back to an unvaried diet of rice. On 9 April, however, an Army sergeant named Sanderson was parachuted into the area with medical supplies, and under treatment Robbins rapidly became well and Harms was on the road to recovery. The latter, however, still could not walk when they received word on April 31 that Shepherd was the projected evacuation. The following day another message, this from the Australians, informed them evacuation headquarters had been set up at Balawit. Since this village was closer to them than was Long Bering, where Lieutenant Graham, Shepherd and the seven Army men were, it was decided that Robbins would go to Long Bering to meet the other two while Harms was being carried to Balawit. Robbins left that day. Harms remained until 28 May, and on 9 June was evacuated and sent to a Navy hospital at Morotai.

On 10 June Lieutenant Graham, Robbins and Shepherd received word to proceed to Balawit, the Army men having left several days previously. They returned until the last week of the month, at which time they were evacuated in L-5s flown in by Australian pilots. The planes landed on "Harrisson Field," an airstrip consisting of mats made from lengths of bamboo spread out over a rice paddy.
Special arrangements were made in the early part of July between FAW-17 and General Group China for search planes of VPB-119 and VPB-104 to contact a Naval Coast-watcher when flying in the area. The purpose of this contact was to enable the Coast-watcher to give the search planes any information he had obtained concerning enemy forces and movements and to point out any targets of opportunity which might be attacked. As the Japs started their evacuation of troops overland from Amoy to Swatow, the first dividends of this inter-theatre co-operation resulted.

On 12 July 1945, Lieutenant A. L. Lindsell of VPB-119 contacted the Coastwatcher according to plan. He was told to proceed to Chang Pu, 24-09N, 117-38E and to look for panels and markers put out by the Chinese to point the way to a concentration of Jap troops. He proceeded to the designated position and after circling the town six times discovered the panels pointing in a southwest direction. After proceeding approximately five miles in this direction another panel was seen changing Lieutenant Lindsell's heading slightly and leading him to a mountain trail. Almost instantly he came upon a concentration of Jap troops spread over three miles of the trail. It is estimated that they numbered about one thousand and their position was 24-06N, 117-29E. The troops were wearing green uniforms and had backpacks, pack horses and horses pulling mobile guns. Feeling that there was a possibility that these troops might be friendly, Lieutenant Lindsell again contacted the Coastwatcher who advised him that if the troops had horses they were enemy. Lieutenant Lindsell attacked immediately from an altitude of three hundred feet, strafing the entire disposition. Five strafing runs were made, killing and wounding an undetermined number of men and horses. Lieutenant Lindsell also attempted to release his bomb load on the concentration but on his first run his hydraulic system was shot out and he was unable to open his bomb bay doors except manually, which method, under the circumstances, was too slow due to the fact that the troops dispersed immediately.

Breaking off the attack, Lieutenant Lindsell flew to the side of the mountain which the enemy troops were climbing and waited there for about one half hour to give the enemy time to reform its ranks. This strategy worked to perfection; he came up over the mountain and down upon the enemy which had reformed along the trail, again strafing the entire concentration and inflicting a great deal of damage.

The following day the Coastwatcher reported to another search plane that these attacks resulted in the killing and wounding large numbers of men and horses and that a "Jap General had been wounded in the legs and had his horse shot out from under him.
On 15 July 1945, Lieutenant T. R. Alkire of VPB-119 contacted the Coaxwatcher and was given the position of additional troops. He proceeded to the area but had difficulty in finding the identifying panels. He sighted a small number of troops scattered over the area and made two strafing runs, but not being positive of their identity, broke off the attack. It is not known whether any damage was inflicted.

On 18 July 1945, Lieutenant (jg) H. M. Waldron of VPB-104 was directed to an enemy troop position by the Coaxwatcher. He discovered a concentration of about fifty men at 23°-50N, 117°-18E and thoroughly strafed them with approximately 500 rounds. It is estimated that at least twenty of the troops were hit.

On 20 July 1945, Lieutenant W. G. Bloxham of VPB-104 accounted for many more of these enemy troops and their equipment. He found a concentration of about 400 men at 23°-42N, 117°-06E with about 100 pack horses, proceeding along a country road. He pressed home his attacks immediately. On his first run he dropped three paraffrags, which he was carrying for this specific purpose, scoring hits along the road the enemy was traveling. He then made several strafing runs, pouring 6500 rounds into the concentration. Twenty to thirty horses were seen to fall. An undetermined number of men were hit, but as the entire area was thoroughly strafed a large number of men were unquestionably killed.

On 21 July 1945, Lieutenant T. G. McAluff of VPB-104 strafed an estimated 100 Jap troops at 23°-37N, 116°-49E. These troops were disguised as Chinese and were crossing a small bridge near a town. After one run Lieutenant McAluff broke off his attack for lack of positive identification.

Following these attacks PAV-17 received a congratulatory dispatch from ComNavGroup China which also stated that approximately 750 Jap troops were killed in this series of attacks.

On 15 August VPB-20 concluded a total of nine and a half months of combat operations. It was the first Mariner squadron to operate in the Southwest Pacific area and was the first squadron to fly PBMs on Blackcat missions.

Action Summaries:

2 July - Lieutenant (jg) J. S. White, USNR, was forced down at sea in the Balabac Straits when an electrical shortage caused a fire in the port wing. Lieutenant V. L. Flint, USNR, despatched to the scene to locate the plane, did so and then vectored a PT boat to the downed PBM. Heavy weather prevented towing the Mariner back to base, and it was sunk,
5 July - Lieutenant (jg) E. E. Culp, USNR, succeeded in rescuing twelve survivors of a ditched PB4Y of VPB-117 at Triton Island in the Carolol Island group.

8 July - Lieutenant (jg) F. A. C. Eisele, USNR, sighted approximately 20 twin-masted schooners in Manda Gulf, off western Celebes. Two were attacked and sunk. In Paloe Bay, south of Manda Gulf, Lieutenant (jg) Eisele attacked and destroyed a 40-foot motor launch.

12 July - Lieutenant J. D. Rossell, USNR, as OTC, and Lieutenant (jg) S. F. Cadman, USNR, directed the rescue by a Lifeguard submarine of seven survivors of a damaged Army B-24 off the southern tip of Formosa.

15 July - Lieutenant Commander James M. Brandt, USNR, sighted a destroyer and two destroyer escorts at 06-30S, 118-10E and tracked the three ships for forty minutes. Moderate, medium and heavy accurate A/A prevented approaching close enough for an attack.

VPB-104 CONTINUES CLARK FIELD SEARCHES

Patrol Bombing Squadron 104, under the command of Lieutenant Commander William Cole, USN, continued its operations from Clark Field during July and August, attacking and destroying enemy shipping and land targets on the China, Indo-China Coasts. The squadron operated in conjunction with VPB-119 under operational control of F.W-17.

Action summaries:

4 July - Lieutenant Commander William Cole, USN; on patrol over the Pescadores, sighted a lugger at 23-22N, 119-30E. Two bombing and three strafing runs were made. A near-miss damaged the lugger seriously, and it was left listing 20 degrees. At 23-22N 119-32E another lugger was sighted and in the subsequent attack destroyed. Continuing his patrol, Lieutenant Commander Cole found two luggers on a beach at 23-11N 119-25E; one century was dropped between them, blowing off the bow of one and the stern of the other.

5 July - Four strafing runs on a lugger at 19-35N 110-46E by Lieutenant Ira B. West, USNR, succeeded in sinking the vessel and probably killing two of seven men aboard it.

6 July - Lieutenant (jg) R. M. Williams, Jr., USNR, found a truck on northern Hainan at 19-54N 110-09E. He made four low-level strafing runs, scoring many hits and leaving the truck smoking.
6 July - Lieutenant (jg) E. W. Cardiff, USNR, attacked two junks in the Formosa Strait. The first, at 23-45N 119-45E, was sunk with a single 100-pound GP after hits by incendiaries in three previous runs had failed to set the vessel afire. The second junk was found anchored at 24-03N 120-17E. Heavy moderate, accurate A/A forced the PPC to break off the attack after two runs had been made; the junk was slightly damaged.

8 July - Lieutenant J. H. McGhee, USNR, found a large SUGAR DOG and a motor launch anchored at 19-53N 109-30E. Strafing caused the SUGAR DOG to blaze fiercely. Four similar attacks on the motor launch failed to set it afire though its hull was pierced and it settled low in the water.

9 July - Two bombing and strafing runs made by Lieutenant K. A. Burton, USNR, on a two-masted junk anchored at 20-05N 110-35E inflicted serious damage but failed to destroy the junk.

10 July - Lieutenant (jg) Harvey M. Waldron, USN, made two bombing and strafing runs on a heavily loaded two-masted junk at 23-43N 119-40E. Numerous tracers were observed hitting the target and two near misses with 100-pound GP's were scored. Serious damage was caused but the junk failed to sink.

11 July - It took ten runs, but Lieutenant McGhee finally destroyed two launches and two barges he found tied up to a pier at 22-25N 113-03E. Near misses with bombs set the launches and one barge adrift, the barge and one launch immediately catching fire. A series of strafing runs subsequently set the other launch afire and sank the remaining barge at the pier.

12 July - Lieutenant Burton attacked a three-masted junk at 22-23N 119-20E, knocking off one mast. A U.S. submarine surfaced before a second run could be made, threw a shell into the junk, and sent out a boarding party. Two Mip POW's were taken by the sub. Continuing his patrol, Lieutenant Burton attacked and blew the stern off a junk located at 23-03N 119-30E.

14 July - Lieutenant (jg) William G. Bloxham, patrolling the southeastern portion of Hainin Island, bombed and strafed two blockhouses and a group of barracks along a five-mile stretch starting at 18-48N 110-23E. Two blockhouses and two of the barracks were hit and damaged by 100-pounders and strafing.

14 July - A truck proceeding along a Formosa highway at 22-25N 120-55E was set afire by Lieutenant McGhee. An hour later at
Taikangko harbor, incendiaries exploded a gasoline storage tank. A fishing boat in the harbor was set afire.

17 July - Two camouflaged trucks found along the edge of a small river at 22-57N 114-13E were attacked in six strafing runs by Lieutenant (jg) Bloxham. Many hits were scored and the trucks were left smoking.

18 July - Lieutenant (jg) William G. Shields attacked a ten-car freight train on the southern coast of Hainan Island at 18-19N 109-11E. More than 1200 rounds were expended in three strafing runs; the train stopped and steam was pouring from the locomotive when the plane left. The bombs hung up and could not be released.

18 July - A coast watcher in the Amoy area informed Lieutenant (jg) Waldron that enemy troops were located at 23-50N 117-18E. Lieutenant Waldron proceeded to the area and found approximately 50 Japs. About ten of the Nips were killed on the first strafing run, but by the time the PPC had circled for another attack the troops had dispersed into the underbrush and could not be found.

20 July - Lieutenant (jg) Bloxham also contacted the coast watcher at Amoy and was directed to a column of Jap troops at 23-43N 117-06E, proceeding towards Swatow. The Nips were taken completely by surprise, apparently having relied on the low ceiling and rain for protection. On the first pass Lieutenant (jg) Bloxham dropped paratrogs; these fell in a string along the edge of the road; a number of horses were seen to fall and the whole column scattered wildly. The PPC then circled the area for half an hour, making between ten and fifteen strafing runs at any visible movement. It was estimated that the party contained between three and four hundred men and 100 heavily laden pack horses. Poor visibility prevented estimation of the casualties (see report for 21 July).

20 July - Lieutenant McGhee had a busy day. At 23-16N 119-40E he heavily strafed and damaged a beached lugger, at 23-15N 119-35E he bombed and destroyed another beached lugger, and at 23-38N 119-35E he strafed and damaged two anchored junks. Turning to land targets, in the course of the next half hour he heavily strafed and left smoking three locomotives. While attacking the last, at 24-17N 120-33E, medium, intense accurate 40mm from three positions knocked out the number 1 engine. The port waist gunner silenced one of the three batteries, and the plane then proceeded to Laoag; on northern Luzon, where a safe emergency landing was made.
20 July - Lieutenant (jg) Cardiff made three bombing and strafing runs on a two-masted junk at 25-20N 121-35E and left it burning and listing.

21 July - Lieutenant Thomas G. McAuliff, USNR, on direction from the coastwatcher in the Amony area, found several small boats crossing a river at 23-47N 116-49E. Being unable to determine whether they were manned by Chinese or Japanese, Lieutenant McAuliff did not attack until he saw an arrow-shaped panel on the beach pointing to the boats. A run was made on them and two of the boats were destroyed, casualties not being determined. The coastwatcher reported, however, that in attacks made on 18, 20, 21 July 120 casualties were inflicted and a Jap general killed.

22 July - Thirteen luggers were destroyed or damaged by Lieutenant Commander Cole in a series of attacks. At 23-55N 120-20E, he heavily strafed and damaged two luggers. Southeast of this attack in the Pesondoras at 23-22N 119-30E he heavily damaged two additional luggers. Then on Ryuku Sho, at 22-20N 120-23E, he bombed and strafed 16 beached luggers, destroying four and heavily damaging five of them.

25 July - While on patrol over Hainan Island Lieutenant (jg) Bloxham, found a group of luggers pulled up on the beach at 19-54N 109-32E. Six runs were made on the target, in which one lugger was destroyed and another seriously damaged. The PPC then attacked a barracks area about a quarter of a mile inland, setting three buildings afire with incendiary clusters. Subsequently, while flying low over Hainan at 20-32N 110-03E a rifle slug from the ground penetrated the radio man's compartment, hit the drift motor, and slightly wounded the radioman.

25 July - Five strafing runs made by Lieutenant McAuliff on four luggers beached at 23-12N 119-25E resulted in many hits but apparently slight damage. At 23-21N 120-17E the PPC dropped ten centuries on a group of twelve luggers. One was destroyed and two more left burning.

25 July - Lieutenant Burton found four luggers and ten small fishing boats in a harbor at 22-21N 120-22E, at Ryukyu Island. Three bombing and strafing runs were made with the result that one lugger was blown to pieces and two of the fishing boats were badly damaged.

26 July - Lieutenant (jg) C. R. Peffer, USNR, attacked a blockhouse on Hainan Island at 19-44N 110-37E. Four of the five bombs hung up, the one successfully released scoring a near miss and causing slight damage. On a nearby road he saw two trucks, both were strafed and left smoking.
26 July - Two junks were attacked at 23-28N 119-58E by Lieutenant (jg) Shields. When an incendiary cluster failed to blow one of the junks he dropped a single ton on it, blowing the craft out of the water. The second junk was heavily strafed. Six camouflaged luggers on Ryukyu Sho were bombed and strafed with unsatisfactory results.

27 July - Lieutenant Commander Cole sighted a large motor launch headed for Hong Kong harbor. After low level bombing attack, Lieutenant Commander Cole made four strafing runs, expending 2000 rounds, and sank it. Nearby he found a landing craft also trying to make Hong Kong. Five strafing runs resulted in wrecking and sinking the craft. At 22-50N 113-38E he found a river boat tied to a pier. When two bombing runs failed to inflict any damage, he made five strafing runs, sinking the boat at the pier.

27 July - Lieutenant (jg) G. T. Fischer, USNR, made eight strafing runs on four trucks and a bus on a highway near Swatow. Though all were hit and damaged, none burned.

30 July - Lieutenant Commander Cole scored many hits with .50 caliber slugs on a small lugger tied up to a derelict at 25-04N 121-56E.

2 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) Conkoy, on patrol over Hainan, attacked 2 barracks at 19-40N 109-35E. One was burned and the other was destroyed by a direct bomb hit. He then damaged another barracks at 19-43N 109-13E by bombing and strafing.

2 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) Bloxham, on patrol over China in the Hong Kong-Canton area, strafed and damaged 1 bus at 23-01N 113-20E. Then he made two strafing runs along the Si Kiang river and damaged by strafing, 3 river boats, 2 tugs, 3 barges and four trucks.

3 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) Fischer, on patrol over Hainan, destroyed 2 barracks buildings by bombing and strafing at 19-00N 110-20E.

3 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) Waldron destroyed 2 luggers and damaged 5 with bombing and strafing on Ryukyu Island, 22-20N 129-23E.

3 Aug. - Commander W. B. Sampson, flying with Lieutenant Howe's crew, damaged 1 junk SE of Quemoy. Chiang Chow coast watch reported 6 Japs killed and junk heavily laden with supplies. He then destroyed 1 lugger and damaged 3 more by bombing and strafing at 26-10N 119-04E.

3 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) Williams bombed, strafed and seriously damaged 8 luggers at 23-07N 121-23E.
4 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) Shields, on patrol over the China coast, attacked and damaged with a near bomb hit and 1 heavy strafing run 1 well camouflaged truck at 23-03N 115-25E.

5 Aug. - Lieutenant Commander Cole over the Indo-China coast attacked a wharf and coal loading facilities at 20-56N 106-40E. He destroyed 1 barge anchored at the wharf and two coal cars which were on the wharf. In thoroughly strafing the area he damaged 12 coal cars, 1 large water tank which was spouting water from numerous holes, and many buildings.

5 Aug. - Lieutenant Burton bombed, strafed and damaged severely 4 luggers on a beach at 23-12N 119-24E.

6 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) Fischer, on patrol over Hainan, attacked 2 barracks buildings at 19-49N 110-50E. Both were damaged by bomb hits, and many strafing hits were observed. He encountered intense, inaccurate, small arms fire.

7 Aug. - Lieutenant McNamee, over the China Coast, damaged 1 lug- ger at 23-15N 119-35E with near hits from his bombs, and very accurate strafing.

7 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) Peffer destroyed a small landing craft by bombing and strafing at 23-30N 119-46E, and bombed and strafed a radio tower at 23-40N 120-09E.

7 Aug. - Lieutenant McGhee at Taihanka, Formosa, attacked 5 luggers at anchor. His bombs damaged a nearby wharf, and all luggers were heavily strafed.

7 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) Waldron on weather patrol tracking a ty- phoon, flew through to the center where he encountered winds of over 100 knots. He took a remarkable series of pictures of the clouds and waves, which were estimated at over 150! high.

8 Aug. - Lieutenant Burton in the Canton area bombed and destroyed a 70-ton river launch.

8 Aug. - Lieutenant Commander Cole, over the China coast, attacked and damaged 1 bus and 1 truck by strafing at 23-30N 116-37E.

10 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) Peffer, over China, destroyed 1 camouflaged river launch with a direct bomb hit, and damaged a large barge by strafing at 22-45N 113-30E.

10 Aug. - Lieutenant McGhee, over the China coast, attacked at 22-42N 114-33E and destroyed with a direct hit 1 large 100-ton lugger.
10 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) Reichert, dropped a string of bombs from 10,000 feet on a large lugger anchored at the Saigon harbor; cloud cover prevented observation of the attack.

**VPB-117 HITS FRENCH INDO-CHINA, L AND T ARGETS**

Due to the continued reluctance of the Nip merchant ships of venture into the seas lanes, Patrol Bombing Squadron 117 flew aggressive searches into the protected inlets and navigable rivers of Indo-China after them. As a result they were successful in destroying and damaging 174 small cargo vessels and river craft during July and August. The squadron also continued to score heavily against ground installations in the Saigon-Toucance railroad area.

During the months of July and August 1945, pilots of VPB-117 flew 239 armed reconnaissance missions covering the South China Sea, the coast of Indo-China from the Dawkong Delta to the Gulf of Tonkin, and, from 6 to 16 July, the west coast of Borneo and portions of the coast of Malaya.

**Action summaries:**

**2 July** - Lieutenant Raymond I. Klassy, USN, strafed a number of drums at a dock area at 14-30N 109-04E and rendered them useless although no fires were started. At the Toucance airfield, he poured 1100 rounds of .50 caliber ammo into 2 stencillers and 1 small building. The stencillers were damaged and the building destroyed by fire. At 16-10N 109-08E, he scored a knockout on a Jap dual-purpose highway and railroad bridge. Near the bridge, he heavily strafed and damaged a number of partially loaded coal cars.

**3 July** - Lieutenant (jg) Conrad J. Leonard, USNR, heavily strafed 4 boxcars at 11-50N 108-40E. 11-35N 108-55E, he damaged 4 more boxcars. At the same place, he partially destroyed a brick building adjacent to the boxcars. At 11-35N 108-55E, he inflicted some structural damage to a highway bridge.

**5 July** - Lieutenant (jg) William Mustino, USNR, destroyed one span of a railroad bridge at Bonanjo, French Indo-China. At Ho Tien, he damaged another railroad bridge. At Hue, he scored many .50 caliberm hits on 4 boxcars.

**6 July** - Lieutenant (jg) Conrad J. Leonard, USNR, strafed an airstrip at Vinh, French Indo-China. At Bong Ho, he inflicted strafing damage on 3 locomotives and 20 boxcars. At 16-30N 109-35E, he scored a direct hit on a factory-type building and destroyed it. Before leaving the coast, he heavily strafed and damaged three more locomotives, two at Phuoc Trach and one at 16-25N 107-35E.
6 July - Lieutenant (jg) Lorin L. Hoonah, USNR, scored a direct 250-pound bomb hit on a roundhouse at Tien Ho, 15-56N, 108-30E, and left it blazing. Two boxcars in the yard were heavily strafed and damaged. At Bien Hoa, 11-36N, 108-24E, another roundhouse was hit with a 250-pounder and partially destroyed. At Camrang, he bombed and strafed a railroad station, four boxcars, and a truck. The station was damaged and the boxcars and truck destroyed.

6 July - Lieutenant Joseph W. Hellrung, USNR, severely damaged a large concrete railroad bridge at 12-42N 109-14E.

8 July - Lieutenant Commander Roger J. Crowley, USNR, heavily damaged 6 barges in a small confinement and a SUGAR DOG in a slip at 11-20N 106-35E.

8 July - Lieutenant Raymond L. Klasy, USN, bombed, strafed and destroyed a barge and a motor launch at Qui Nhon, 13-46N 109-14E. Just beyond the waterfront area about 12 boxcars were heavily strafed and damaged.

9 July - Lieutenant (jg) John R. Toler, USNR, made 2 tree-top level runs on six boxcars and a locomotive at Tay Duc, 11-00N 108-10E. Direct bomb hits destroyed the locomotive and strafing heavily damaged the boxcars.

9 July - Lieutenant (jg) Conrad J. Leonard, USNR, and Lieutenant (jg) Joseph W. Hoonah, USNR, made a combined strike on a 10-car train at 10-55N 107-55E. As a result of bombing and strafing, they destroyed the locomotive and two of the boxcars. The remaining boxcars were damaged by strafing. At this point the two pilots separated. At an auxiliary airfield at 10-58N 106-45E, Lieutenant (jg) Leonard scored a direct 250-pound bomb hit on a hangar and destroyed it. Continuing on, he heavily strafed another airfield at 11-01N 106-43E.

11 July - Lieutenant Raymond L. Klasy, USN, seriously damaged a camouflaged FOR T.E. B.KIR at anchor in the Han river near Saigen, French Indo-China. Near by, he heavily strafed a SUGAR DOG also camouflaged.

11 July - Lieutenant (jg) William D. Crawford, USNR, seriously damaged a SUGAR DOG at Qui Nhon, French Indo-China.

11 July - Lieutenant (jg) Charles W. Mustine, USNR, silenced enemy gun positions at a railroad bridge at Tien An, 16-58N and one north of Tournon. A strafing run killed two men manning a 7.7 gun position at the Tournon bridge and
destroyed the gun position. At Tien An, north of Vinh Tri, 05-45N 107-11E, two gun positions manned by one man each, were wiped out.

12 July - Lieutenant (jg) Joseph T. Delimong, dropped a 250-pounder on the entrance of a railroad tunnel at 15-17N 107-53E, causing some damage to the tracks and the approach area. Following the railroad north to 16-11N 108-06E, he made three low-level strafing runs and set a warehouse afire and it burned to destruction.

13 July - Lieutenant (jg) Lorin L. Hoensch, USNR, scored two 250-pound bomb hits and damaged a railroad building at Tay Ninh, 12-08N 106-10E. In the yard he destroyed two boxcars. At Phinh Pink, 13-5N 109-06E, he strafed and left six boxcars afire.

14 July - Lieutenant (jg) William Hustine, USNR, completely destroyed a motor launch (20-ton) proceeding up the river to Saigon. At Saigon, he sighted a large SUDR DCO of approximately 300 tons leaving the harbor heavily loaded. Strafing and two direct 250-pound bomb hits sank the ship almost immediately.

14 July - Lieutenant (jg) William D. Crawford, USNR, bombed and destroyed a SUDR DCO at 10-30N 108-43E. Nearby, he sighted a PC boat and destroyed it with strafing and two direct 250-pound bomb hits.

14 July - Lieutenant Raymond L. Klasy, USN, seriously damaged a powered junk (150-ton) at 12-46N 109-13E. He also damaged a locomotive and 6 boxcars a few miles inland. Sighting a Jap lugger, he inflicted additional damage to its already strafed hull. At 12-36N 109-13E he destroyed a power boat.


16 July - Lieutenant (jg) Lorin L. Hoensch, USNR, destroyed 1 span on a highway bridge at Phan Rang, 11-39N 108-59E. Nearby, he destroyed a locomotive and heavily damaged another with bomb and strafing hits.

17 July - Lieutenant Raymond L. Klasy, USN, destroyed a warehouse (50 x 150') at Van Fong Bay, 12-23N, 109-18E, by strafing with 1100 rounds of .50 caliber and a direct hit from one of four 250-pounders. A truck on the highway nearby was strafed and damaged.
20 July - Lieutenant Commander Roger J. Crowley, Jr., USNR, destroyed the railroad installations at Quang Chai, 16-13N 109-12E, and with two incendiary clusters plus strafing destroyed a roundhouse and the locomotive and boxcars damaged inside. At Dong Hoa, 17-31N 106-35E, he strafed the rail yards and dropped three incendiary clusters which resulted in damage to ten boxcars in addition to miscellaneous damaged from strafing.

20 July - Lieutenant Raymond L. Klassy, USN, damaged a sub-chaser (150-ton) at Ha Tien harbor, French Indo-China, 10-23N, 104-29E. At 10-04N 104-27E, he closed on a ship to 400 yards for identification due to darkness. At this range, the ship was identified as a Jap destroyer escort. The same time the DB opened up with intense and accurate light and medium fire. The DB was strafed with 1200 rounds in return and one forward gun apparently silenced. An estimated 500 hits were scored by strafing. The PBY-1 sustained heavy damage to its starboard wing, which had to be replaced upon its return. On the homeward trek, an automobile was spotted at 09-57N 104-44E and was destroyed by strafing.

21 July - Lieutenant Walter L. Groene, USNR, and Lieutenant (jg) Conrad J. Leonard, USN, made a combined strike on Jap shipping in the inner harbor at Ha Tien, French Indo-China. This attack was made after an efficient network of Navy search bombers had tracked a Jap convoy of one destroyer-escort and several medium size merchantmen from off the coast of the Malay Peninsula near Singapore into the harbor of Ha Tien. Their attacks resulted in the sinking of 1 large oil barge, 2 coastal freighters (1100-ton), 1 tug, and 1 SUG-C DOG.

22 July - Lieutenant Robert J. Empey, USNR, destroyed a river boat (150-ton) under way in the Saigon River about 8 miles below Saigon.

23 July - Lieutenant Commander Roger J. Crowley, Jr., USNR, destroyed two barges of 15-ton each at a dock area at 12-35N 109-13E. One incendiary cluster and 1300 rounds of AP trajectories were dropped on the dock area in flames. At Tuy Hoa, 13-05N 109-18E, he bombed and strafed a large double warehouse, the building was left burning and one half destroyed. At Quin Hon, 13-46N 108-14E, he damaged 6 boxcars and a railroad station.

23 July - Lieutenant (jg) Orvis N. Fitts, USNR, damaged 2 locomotives NW of Phan Rang, French Indo-China, 11-34N 106-59E.
25 July - Lieutenant (jg) Lorin L. Moonch, USNR, destroyed 2 cars and heavily damaged a locomotive at Than Long. He also dropped two 250-pounders on a railroad bridge and damaged it.

25 July - Lieutenant (jg) Conrad J. Leonard, USNR, and Lieutenant (jg) John R. Ithson, USNR, made a combined photographic coverage on the inner and outer harbor at Ha Tien, French Indo-China. Finding some barges and a river boat present, they made an attack and damaged 5 barges and the river boat. At Ho Chi Minh, 10-20N 106-23E, they destroyed a small and large river steamer.

26 July - Lieutenant (jg) Millian Mustine, USNR, destroyed a warehouse, 100 x 125, on the outskirts of Saigon at 10-40N 106-45E. Down the river from Saigon, he destroyed a 20-ton barge by strafing and a direct 250-pound bomb hit.

25 July - Lieutenant (jg) John R. Iller, USNR, heavily damaged a power boat (15-tons) and 3 barges (60-tons) at Tourane. He also damaged a lighthouse at Tourane. At Tan Ky, he destroyed 2 boxcars and damaged two others.

27 July - Lieutenant Commander Roger J. Crowley, Jr., USNR, destroyed a power trawler (250-tons) moored against a hillside. In the railway yard, he strafed and damaged 10 boxcars and miscellaneous installations. At Poulo Guam Island, 13-37N 109-20E, he damaged a lighthouse. At the rail yards at Dong Phy, 14-39N 109-03E, he damaged 12 boxcars, an automobile and miscellaneous installations with strafing and one 100-pounder. At Quang Nui, 15-07N 108-46E, he strafed and damaged 7 boxcars. At Tourane, he damaged a radio station and a hanger at the airstrip. In the river, he strafed and damaged 4 barges (400-tons total).

29 July - Lieutenant (jg) Millian Mustine, USNR, destroyed an oil warehouse and a 6-1/2 story building.

30 July - Lieutenant Robert E. Empen, USNR, damaged a hangar and airstrip at Tourane. A truck was also strafed and destroyed. Several gun pits (7.7 x 4) were silenced by strafing.

31 July - Lieutenant Thomas J. Hyland, USNR, returning to base at McGuire field, Mindoro, P.I., from a forced landing made several days previously at Nanning, China, strafed and damaged 15 junks of 100-tons each and killed at least 40 enemy personnel while crossing the Tonkin Gulf.
13 July - Lieutenant Raymond L. Klassy, USN, destroyed a 20,000-gallon oil tank, a small warehouse en pump house, and 9 boxcars at an oil storage area at Phan Thiet. Before Phan Thiet, at 11-13N 100-19E, he destroyed a locomotive and damaged 14 boxcars.

31 July - Lieutenant Commander Roger J. Crowley, USNR, damaged 4 barges (20-tons each) at Qui Nhon. At Van Pong Bay 12-33N 109-18E, he destroyed a 7,000-ton SUNDERLAND derelict under repairs.

6 Aug. - Lieutenant Commander Roger J. Crowley, Jr., USNR, and Lieutenant (jg) Conrad J. Leonard, USNR, made a combined strike at Saigon. Their box score was:

6 junks - 600-tons - Damaged
River Steamer - 500-tons - Destroyed
River Steamer - 400-tons - Destroyed
7 Barges - 750-tons - Destroyed
2 Barges - 300-tons - Damaged
River Oiler - 400-tons - Destroyed
River steamer - 400-tons - Probably destroyed
FOX TARE DOG - 1300-tons - Destroyed
Lugger - 75-tons - Destroyed

1,700-pounds of G.P. and incendiaries and 11,500 rounds of API .50 caliber were expended.

7 Aug. - Lieutenant Robert E. Kynes, USNR, sank one and damaged 2 river boats a short distance below Saigon. A few miles up the river, he silenced a light A/A tower and damaged another. Sighting a patrol craft (400-tons), he made a strafing run and damaged it. At the same time, a warehouse on the bank was strafed and damaged. Following this, he seriously damaged another river boat (150-tons) and 4 junks (100-tons each).

7 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) Orvis N. Pitts, USNR, inflicted an appreciable amount of damage to Jap shipping near the Mekong Delta.

Box score:

1 FID, 1000 T; damaged
1 SCL, 2300 T; damaged
1 SD, 100 T; damaged
1 river steamer, 1800 T; destroyed
1 river steamer, 500 T, heavily damaged
12 barges, 600 T, heavily damaged
6 boats and 1 dredge, 500 T, destroyed.

8 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) Loran L. Moench, USNR, and Lieutenant Raymond H. Murray, USN, made a combined strike in the Saigon area of Indo-China. Sightings a NELI program on the lead at the Bien Hoa strip, both planes opened fire with their top and bow turrets and scored many hits in the fuselage and engines of the NELI. The NELI nosed over, leveled out, and landed with the 2 PB4Y-1's still hitting it. As the PB4Y-1's passed over the NELI, the 20 mm guns of both planes opened up. The starboard landing gear of the NELI gave way and the plane ground looped to the right, still receiving a continuous stream of lead. It then burst into flames with no survivors noted. Two soldiers were observed parked on the hangar, obviously waiting to pick up the NELI's ill-fated passengers. Both automobiles were heavily strafed as well as the 2 hangars and some adjacent barracks-type buildings.

8 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) William Martinez, USNR, discovered a convoy of 12 powered junks of approximately 15 tons each off the coast near 15°20'N 106°42'W. Each barge held about 10 to 20 troops. He made 20 strafing runs, expending 3,000 rounds of AP reflector. All of the barges were damaged and 8 were sunk before the PB4Y-1 left the scene. Others doubtless sank later, adding to the estimated 120 troop casualties.

9 Aug. - Lieutenant Robert E. Hynes, USNR, damaged 7 junks (525 tons) about 5 miles east of Cape St. Jacques.

VFP-119 SEARCHES TO CHINA COAST AND FORMOSA.

Patrol-Flying Squadron 119, flying PB4Y-1's Privateers from Clark Field, continued its offensive search missions during July and August. The squadron was under the command of Lieutenant Commander M. S. Regan, USNR, until he was relieved in August by Lieutenant Commander A. L. Jacobson, USN. Searches covered the sea and coastal area from Keelung Island and the Indo-China coast to 27 degrees north, Formosa and the Pescadores Islands. While targets of opportunity decreased in size and quantity, many ships were added to the already heavy tonnage destroyed by the squadron. The squadron operated in conjunction with VFP-104 under the operational control of FAW-17.

Action Summaries:

1 July - Lieutenant William Lyle, USNR, made two bombing and strafing runs from 50 feet on a lugger underway at 25°27'N 119°40'W. Near misses with the bombs and several hits by strafing left the ship dead in the water and beginning to settle.
1 July - Lieutenant (jg) M. W. Jacob, USNR, damaged two 30mm Bofors at 18-15N 109-25E, headed for Yulin Bay.

5 July - Three bombing attacks were made from an altitude of 30 feet on a lugger at 23-05N 119-23E by Lieutenant Roger Atzenweiler, USNR. Near misses were scored on the first two runs; on the third the bombs hung up. Heavy strafing set the ship afire, however, and the vessel was three quarters under water when Lieutenant Atzenweiler broke off the attack. Lieutenant (jg) Jack Pettip, USNR, attracted to the scene by the smoke some fifteen minutes later, confirmed the destruction of the ship. Lieutenant Atzenweiler, continuing his patrol, made two strafing runs on a three-masted junk at 22-42N 119-55E, causing it to settle in the water. It is considered probably destroyed.

6 July - Lieutenant (jg) A. L. Lindsell, USNR, found two large junks tied together with a platform between them near Taurana; the coincidence of the platform and a truck nearby indicated that the junks were being used as a car ferry. One bombing run from an altitude of 200 feet plus two strafing runs seriously damaged the junks and the nearby truck.

6 July - Lieutenant T. R. Alkire, USNR, attacked a motor launch at 23-28N 116-43E, making five strafing runs. Fires broke out and the launch settled on the bottom in shallow water. At 24-27N 118-00E some 45 minutes later, the FPC made four circular strafing runs on a cargo barge, which was beached.

6 July - A converted petrol craft sighted at 22-40N 114-33E opened up on the Privateer piloted by Lieutenant Commander H. D. Allen, who thereupon decided to attack. His first run, made at 200 feet, inflicted no damage, the bombs being short. On the second run three bombs were dropped and straddles were scored and the ship was left dead in the water. Two one hundred pounders dropped on the third run caused the ship to begin to settle by the bow. Then on his fourth and final run, a direct hit was scored on the stern, which was blown off, whereupon the ship sank. The port waist gunner found his guns jammed but joined the fray with his .38 revolver, expending nine rounds and claiming a fair percentage of hits.

6 July - Lieutenant J. F. Gallagher, USNR, made one bombing and strafing run on a FOXFIRE DOG anchored behind the breakwater at Hoi How Bay, on Hainan Island. Light, moderate A/A fire holed the plane as five one-hundred pounders were dropped. Two scored near misses, but accurate assessment was impossible because the plane had to retire before the 40MM and 20MM gun positions, which were manned, could open up on them.
8 July - While patrolling near Swabue, China, north of Hong Kong, a PB4Y-2 piloted by Lieutenant (jg) C. W. Stone, USNR, was hit approximately 40 times by light, intense machine gun fire. None of the crew was hit and Lieutenant (jg) Stone was able to get his plane back to base safely.

9 July - Lieutenant (jg) A. L. Lindsell, USNR, attacked a 50-ton river boat at 20-50N 106-30E. Three bombing runs followed by five strafing runs resulted in the destruction of the target.

12 July - Three runs from an altitude of 50 feet were made on a motor launch off Hainan Island at 20-03N 120-15E by Lieutenant (jg) H. W. Evans, USNR. Serious damage was inflicted.

12 July - Lieutenant Alkire, USNR, spotted two luggers anchored at 21-42N 112-47E. On his first run he dropped three 250-pounders, a near miss sinking one of them. On the last of four low-level bombing attacks a direct hit sank the remaining lugger.

12 July - Lieutenant (jg) Lindsell, USNR, under the direction of a coastwatcher attacked Japanese troops near Chang Pu, China, 24-09N 117-36E. A series of attacks killed many Japanese troops and their pack horses.

15 July - Lieutenant Commander Allen, USN, made a bombing and strafing run on a small lugger anchored at 19-16N 108-40E, leaving the lugger in a sinking condition.

17 July - Lieutenant Richard Gilman, USNR, expended 300 rounds in a strafing attack on a small fishing craft sighted near Tansui harbor, hitting the vessel in many places. Heavy A/A fire from the shore forced the PBY to retire.

21 July - Lieutenant Alkire, USGNR, missed with three centuries in an attack on three patrol craft tied up at a dock near Haiphong; the bombs fell long and destroyed a building adjacent to the dock. Serious damage was inflicted with 3000 rounds of .50 calibre fire.

24 July - Lieutenant S. S. Michel, USNR, expended 500 rounds on a small fishing craft in the Formosa Strait. When the boat was last seen its bow was under water.

25 July - A large barracks and two or three smaller buildings were destroyed by fire after an attack made at 19-44N 109-56E on Hainan Island by Lieutenant (jg) M. W. Jacob, USNR.
26 July - Lieutenant Gilman, USNR, inflicted serious damage to large junks and ten small junks tied to docks in Kerama Harbor. Three 120mm guns were dropped and 30mm dual-purpose ammunition expended; positive assessment could not be made because of the necessity of withdrawing from the numerous known A/A positions in the area.

27 July - Lieutenant Aldrich, USNR, was just about to make a run on a lugaer at 26-08N 119-08E when two explosive shells hit his seaplane, one entering below the co-pilot's seat and exploding against the starboard plate, the other entering the bomb bay. Ensign T. M. Biller, USNR, was slightly wounded. Lieutenant Aldrich successfully landed his plane at Kerama, on northern Okinawa.

27 July - Lieutenant (jg) E. W. Evans, USNR, attacked with napalm incendiary clusters six junks lined up on the beach at Rukyra Island, 22-20N 120-03E. Two direct hits enveloped four of the junks in flames, the fire spreading to the other two. Just as he had completed his second run, the FFC sighted a SALLY at Tokao at 1500 feet, heading due south. The Privatool was on the reciprocal course. Lieutenant (jg) Evans put on full power and gave chase. The SALLY dropped two wing tanks and started to climb; it then took refuge over known A/A positions and closing on it became impossible. Two hours later Lieutenant (jg) Evans sighted the 50-ton junks outside Iriomote harbor. Strafing attacks left one lugaer in flames and the other dead in the water. Fifteen minutes later a camouflaged 300-ton SUG.R D3 was sighted at 26-07N 121-55E. Having no bombs left, Lieutenant (jg) Evans made ten strafing runs, setting the ship on fire and causing the crew to take to lifeboats. All were subsequently killed. Shortly thereafter the industrious FFC made a run on Suo Harbor, inflicting minor damage on six camouflaged SUG.R DOGs and two small tugboats. The final attack of the day was made on three junks at 26-33N 121-50E. Three strafing runs left two of them in flames and the third dead in the water.

28 July - Lieutenant (jg) J. H. Wolf, USNR, attacked eight trucks along a road on the Luicow Peninsula at 20-35N 119-08E. A strafing run from 100-foot exploded seven of the trucks violently and the eighth caught fire in the engine and was destroyed.

29 July - Lieutenant Gilman, USNR, made two bombing runs and eight strafing runs on a three-masted junk at 21-58N 120-30E, missing with the bombs but scoring several hits out of the 4,200 rounds expended. The junk remained under way.
30 July - Lieutenant (jg) Lindsell, USNR, made five bombing and strafing runs on two luggers at 23-10N 116-37E. A burst hit sent one luger to the bottom and straddled severely damaged the second.

30 July - Lieutenant Commander Allen, USN, made three strafing runs on a launch in the Hong Kong area, inflicting serious damage and leaving the launch dead in the water.

4 Aug. - Lieutenant Richard Gilman, USNR, heavily strafed and damaged a large junk and 7 smaller ones at 23-42N 119-35E. Later at 22-16 119-57E, he strafed and seriously damaged another large junk.

4 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) Jack Fette, USNR, sank a converted petrol craft (250-tons) at 23-34N 122-30E.

5 Aug. - Lieutenant Commander H. D. Allen, USN, inflicted serious damage on a landing craft (20-tons) at 21-35N 112-30E.

7 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) C. W. Stone, USNR, sank a luger at 21-30N 111-29E. Later at 21-23N 111-15E, eight strafing runs caused the crew to abandon ship and small fires were started in two luggers. Both luggers were seriously damaged.

8 Aug. - Lieutenant T. R. Alkire, USNR, destroyed 4 luggers and 3 PC boats on the beach near Arhipong. One cluster was dropped on the adjacent buildings, setting them on fire.

10 Aug. - Lieutenant R. M. Atzenieller, USNR, was intercepted by three enemy fighters near Aponoko, Formosa. He was flying at 2000 feet at 150 knots, when he spotted an OSCAR at 9 o'clock level. He then saw a FRANK and a HAP at 7 o'clock high. He immediately headed for the deck reaching 260 knots indicated, all three enemy fighters staying with him. The three planes pressed home their attacks, making at least 15 runs singly. No coordinated attacks were made. The FRANK made only one attack and was believed to be damaged on that run; bullets were soon to enter the cockpit and wings. Most of the runs by the HAP and OSCAR were made from the quarters, level. Their final two runs were from 12 o'clock high. The HAP was hit in the engine and was smoking badly when last seen. No damage resulted to the privateer and crew. The tail guns jammed on the first run, which handicapped the plane considerably.

13 Aug. - Lieutenant Richard Gilman, USNR, destroyed a tug anchored in the Canton River.
14 Aug. - Lieutenant (jg) S. S. Aichola, USNR, sank a SUGAR DOG at 23-42N 119-36E. Later, two luggers underway between the islands at 26-10N 119-57E were strafed and damaged.

VPB-25 LAST DAYS OF THE BLACKCATS

During July and August VPB-25 was based aboard the USS CURRITUCK in Lingayen Gulf, conducting nightmare operations over the China Coast, Hainan Island, the Formosa Islands and Formosa. The squadron was under the command of Lieutenant Commander James Shorey, USNR, until 21 July 1945, on which day he was relieved by Lieutenant Commander Curtis M. Kohr, USNR. Daytime searches of the China coast were also conducted for a period of one week commencing 23 July 1945.

Action Summaries:

2 July - Lieutenant John Dalen, TPC of crew 21, caused considerable destruction to Japs evacuating Amy Island by strafing numerous barges and junks carrying personnel from Amy to the mainland.

3 July - Lieutenant Charles Petersen and crew 20 played tag with two unescorted twin engine night fighters in Amy Harbor.

8 July - Lieutenant Seymour Goldklang and crew 22 found the same night fighter during a busy evening in Amy strafing junks and barges.

14 July Lieutenant Charles Marzinik and crew 13 sank a motor launch in the Formoso Islands and received accurate W/G fire from a SUGAR CHARLIE in that area which halted the plane in numerous places and knocked out the bombing system.

19 July - Lieutenant Charles Marzinik and crew 13 near misses on a destroyer-escort in Hainan Strait.

16 July - Lieutenant Commander Frank Severs caught five large sea trucks steaming out of Kitchens Bay and in short order had 3 afire from bombs and strafing which shortly thereafter sank; the other two found refuge among the islands of the bay.

20 July - Lieutenant John Dalen and crew 21 found a large sea-going tug east of St. Johns Island and made two bombing runs. A close miss astern caused the tug to stop dead in the water. The second run produced a hit amidship, but the plane received intense machine gun fire from three posit-
ions, the plane being holed in several places causing minor wounds to the navigator Ensign Patrick Doyle and three crew members. The tug was left burning brightly and was assessed as a probable.

20 July - Lieutenant Charles Peters and crew 20 sank a lugger anchored off Manly Island in Tinyo outer harbor.

21 July - Lieutenant Raymond Van Hove and crew 22 found six large barges off Hong Kong, sank one and thoroughly damaged the remainder.

26 July - Lieutenant William Kline and crew 4 did considerable damage by strafing of fifteen small motor launches off the coast on Luichow Peninsula.

31 July - Lieutenant Commander Curtis Kehr and crew 31 attempted to knock out the gun emplacements along the beaches adjacent to enemy shipping on Hai Hau Bay, Taiwan. The bombs were all dropped within the target area and did probable damage. The plane received several hits in the wing from machine gun fire.


14 Aug. - Lieutenant (ig) Maynard Reid and crew 26 sank a SUG. R DOG in the Northern Formosans and shortly thereafter in the same area set fire to a SUG. R CELLIE LOVE with a direct hit by one 250-pounder. During the initial run intense accurate 12-G fire was received from two positions and 25-m. fire from a third position, halting the plane in numerous places but causing neither major damage or any casualties. On the seventh run they had the satisfaction of seeing their target keel over and sink.
Fleet Air Wing 17
WE DESTROYED THEM

ON THE WATER

ON THE LAND

AND

OFF THE LAND
ON THE BUSES.

AND

LOCAL DRIVE-IN - FORMOSA

IN THE BUSHES.

JAP TROOPS WITH SUPPLY TRAIN
NOTHING ESCAPED OUR PILOTS ~

WE FOUND THE JAPS •

• IN THE SKY

• IN COVES

• ON TRUCKS
CHINESE TEMPLES
AND
GUN POSITIONS
THAT WERE - GRAVES
AND GAVE OUR PHOTO INTERPRETERS - A HEADACHE!
THAT WERE - DUMMIES
AND GAVE OUR PILOTS - A HEADACHE!
WE ALSO SAW:

- BRIDGES
- AND PEOPLE
- AND
- THE JAP "SUPPLY LINE"
We Bombed.
We Strafied.

• LARGE SHIPS

Fox Tare Able

• SMALL SHIPS

Sugar Dog

• and other JUNK

Junk 297
PATROLS INCLUDED

- RESCUE OF PILOTS
- LIAISON WORK WITH SUBS
- DROPPING SUPPLIES
CHINESE

- RIVER BOATS

- CATHEDRALS

- HOUSES
ON SEARCHES
WE SAW:

CITIES
DOCKS

HONG KONG

RIVERS

CHINA

HIGHWAYS

CHINA
OUR TASKS WERE MANY — AND VARIED —

• WE
• SEARCHED

HARBORS

KIIRUN — FORMOSA

and —

AIR STRIPS

SWATOW — CHINA
"Patronize " Fleet Air Wing - 17 " We offer...

Deluxe hotel service - Excellent cuisine
Soft beds - valet service - The best liquor
and Casa Service - Gas oil bomb and
ammunition - first aid -
Free aerial excursion to China, Formosa
Ryukus - See the Japanese Empire in
cherry blossom time at our expense
Expert briefing & free daily travel folders

Stand don't like our service we will provide excellent
Alcohol from our inexhaustible supply prepared by experts
So you like it fellow and the highest commands
Warning - Take shower before using swimming pool

The management

OUR HOSPITALITY TOJO
and
OUR CAPTAIN
JAP SAILORS GO ASHORE WITHOUT THEIR LIBERTY PASSES......near MIYAKO JIMA
"DOCK AND CRANE--NO MORE" at HOI HOW BAY, HAINAN
"LOCAL YACHT CLUB"....."way down upon the CANTON RIVER, CHINA
MR. "NATE" -- left holding the torch on KOSHUN STRIP, FORMOSA
THE "PROFESSOR" CHALKED ONE UP THIS TIME, damage inflicted on plane forced pilot to land in China
"CHINESE JUNK" -- after 3 passes the hidden occupants spread out the Chinese flag and then retreated again.
"THREE BLOCKHOUSES BLOCKED OUT" ... TSINGTAO, JAPAN
"CHASE NATIONAL BANK AND SEARS ROEBUCK?" ..........VICTORIA, HONG KONG.
(HOT) SUGAR DOG........no explanation necessary
SA: BOMBS TAKEN A BATH FROM JAP AIRCRAFT FOOGONG CHINA
"BIG SPLASH", made by 2 destroyed SUGAR DOGS.... near SUO, FORMOSA
SHADOW OF PLANE ON SUGAR DOG