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HEADQUARTERS  
20th Fighter Group, Army Air Forces  
AAF Station F-367 APO 637 U.S. Army

(E-4)

319.1

22 January 1944.

SUBJECT: Tactical Commander's Report, Field Order No. 221, Headquarters VIII Fighter Command, dated 21 January 1944.

TO : Commanding General, VIII Fighter Command, APO 637, AAF Station F-341. (thru channels)

In compliance with VIII Fighter Command Memo 55-3, Sec. V, par 12, dated 23 August 1943, the following Tactical report is submitted covering the mission of 21 January 1944 as per Field Order No. 221.

1. Track Flown.

a. All Squadrons started engines at 1215.

b. At 1223 the 77th Squadron, led by Lt. Colonel Russell took off followed by the 79th and 55th. The 55th Squadron took off from RAF Station Wittering and rendezvoused with the rest of the Group in the air.

c. Set course at 1240.

d. Landfall out English coast was made at 1310, and rendezvous with bombers was made at the same time. The mission was then flown as planned.

e. Landfall in at Lepieux was made at 1411 with the Group flying at 22,000 feet.

f. At 1420 the last squadron of the group made landfall out of enemy territory at Point de Barfleur after sweeping the target area to insure that no enemy aircraft were left in the vicinity.

2. Description of Rendezvous. The bombers were first seen over Brighton on course and flying at 90 degrees to the Group. Rendezvous was made by sliding in over them, the 77th taking the port side, the 55th the starboard side, and the 79th giving close support over the bombers. This formation was maintained until bombers started the target run. Assembly with the bombers was made at 21,000 feet.

3&4. Analysis of Strategy and Tactics. One box of 34 bombers flying in a compact unit was escorted. Two of our fighter squadrons free lanced on either side, while the third gave close cover. No enemy aircraft were encountered.

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5. Formation Employed. The formation employed in climb and en-route to the English coast was a close formation with flights in a four ship V. When rendezvous with the bombers was made flights then loosened up in to line astern with two flights on a line working together by weaving as they passed up and down the length of the bomber formation.

6. Analysis of Encounters with the Enemy. No encounters.

7. Tactics Employed Against Anti-Aircraft Fire. When flak began coming up as the bombers reached the target area our fighters moved well out on the right and left flank continuously turning and gaining and losing altitude.

8. Communications. Airplane communication was excellent with the exception of one transmitter which was stuck. C Channel was very good. Contact with the controller was at times excellent, but on other occasions it was very weak.

9. Effect of Materiel Failure Upon the Conduct of the Mission. It is not felt that materiel failure had any significant effect upon the conduct of the mission. Of the four abortives one was pilot error (oxygen regulator was left in auto-mix off position causing oxygen supply to give out). Of the abortives for mechanical reasons one plane turned back after the right propeller went out, throwing a rod in the right engine, another aborted because of supercharger failure and the third because of a rough engine. Since 51 planes were dispatched it is not felt that the effectiveness of the mission was injured by these abortions.

10. Weather. Five-tenths over target 4 to 12,000 feet. Scattered cumulus over channel 12,000 feet, High cirrus far west of course. Visibility was good.

11. Descriptions of Difficulties Encountered. There were no difficulties encountered.

B. M. RUSSELL,  
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps,  
Commanding.

MISSION SUMMARY REPORT

#  
21 JANUARY 1944  
FO #221  
ESCORT FOR BOMBERS -- CHERBOURG  
2 BELLY TANKS  
2 SORTIE CREDITS

- A. 55TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MAJOR CLARK LEADING
- B. 18 P-38'S UP WITTERING 1224 DOWN WITTERING 1530
- C. 4 EARLY RETURNS
  - 1 PILOT ERROR
  - 1 SUPERCHARGER REGULATOR
  - 2 ENGINE TROUBLE
- D. BOMBER ESCORT FIELD ORDER #221
- E. - F. G. H. -- NIL
- I. SQDN MADE R/V WITH BOMBERS IN VICINITY OF BRIGHTON 1310 HOURS ALTITUDE 19/20,000 FT. SQDN ESCORTED BOMBERS TO VICINITY OF ALDERNEY ISLANDS, CLIMBING ENROUTE TO 22,000 FT. THE 55TH SQDN ESCORTED FIRST BOX OF 12/15 BOMBERS INTO CHERBOURG, MAKING LANDFALL IN 1412 HOURS VICINITY OF LES PIEUX. BOMBERS MADE THEIR RUN FROM SW TO NE. IT WAS CONCENTRATED AT CHERBOURG. SQDN GAGGLED WHILE BOMB RUN WAS MADE. THEY PICKED UP BOMBERS AGAIN AND ESCORTED THEM DOWN THE COAST AND PARALLEL TO THE COAST TO PTE. DE LA PERCEE WHERE THEY MADE LANDFALL OUT AT 1412 ALT. 20,000 FT. THEY TOOK BOMBERS ABOUT 30/40 MILES OUT OVER CHANNEL AND RETURNED TO CHERBOURG TO HELP OTHER P-38'S TAKING SECOND AND THIRD BOX OF BOMBERS OUT. LANDFALL OUT PTE DE BARFLEUR 1445 HOURS ALT. 20,000 FT.  
FLAK INTENSE OVER CHERBOURG, MEAGER IN TERRITORY SURROUNDING CHERBOURG. ALL ACCURATE FOR ALT. BUT INACCURATE Laterally.  
WEATHER CLEAR OVER THE CHANNEL. 4/10 INLAND INCREASING TO 10/10.  
R/T GOOD.

## MISSION SUMMARY REPORT

January 21, 1944

- A. 77th Fighter Squadron, 20th Fighter Group, Lt. Col. Russell leading.
- B. 17 up at 1226. 16 down at 1530.
- C. 1 down at 1435. Engine trouble. At Wittering.
- D. Target Support. Field Order No. 221.
- E. Nil.
- F. Nil.
- G. Nil.
- H. Nil.

I. Over Brighton at 1310 at 20,000 feet. R/V with bombers at 1312 just off coast. Escorted bombers around west of Guernsey and then between Guernsey and Jersey islands and over target area. White and Red Flights escorted one box of bombers out over north coast of Cherbourg Peninsula and then turned back and brought another box out. Yellow and blue flight escorted straggler B-17 which was headed southwest from target. This fort was escorted as far as south of Jersey island where these flights left it. This B-17 was marked with a triangle with an A and the numerals were: 479M. We believe this bomber was flown by enemy personnel as his course was southwest and he did not seem to be having any trouble. Flak was heavy and accurate on bombers over target area although no bombers were seen to go down. No enemy aircraft were seen. Bombing not observed. Left target at 1425. Landfall over English coast at 1440. Over Worthing at 4,000 feet. Yellow and blue flights observed what seemed to be two bursts of flak over London and a Hampden stooping around there. No flak seen over Jersey, Guernsey and Alderney islands. No shipping observed.

Weather 2/10 over channel and 6/10 to 7/10 between 5,000 to 10,000 feet over target area.

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MISSION SUMMARY REPORT

21 January 1944

A. 79th F. Sq. 20th F. Gp. Maj. R. L. Ott leading.

B. 16 P 38s; Up 1230; Down 1530. 2 at Ringway.

C. 3 P -38s; 1-engine; 1 belly tank; 1-oil system;

*(Should not be  
entered  
over and over)*

D. Bomber support - Ramrod: 8 FC F. O. 221.

E. None

F. None

G. None

H. 0-0-0-

I. Weather: Clear over channel; 4/10 high cumulus over continent.

No E/A seen. Squadron flew at 21,000 ft.

Heavy inaccurate flak in vicinity of Cherbourg.

No bombers seen under attack or in distress. On single bomber seen low and heading South was called by fighters. Four P38s believed to be from 77th Sq. went after bomber to investigate. This squadron furnished close cover for the bombers. White flight was with the last box of eight one of which was far behind coming in and then apparently turned back and did not enter enemy territory. This last box of bombers made a run over the target and then made a 360 deg. turn and made a second run.

One airfield seen near C. Levy that had apparently been bombed heavily. Flames could be seen and black and white smoke.

Course was flown as planned. R/V with bombers near Brighton about 1307. Landfall in north of Guernsey Isle. 1406. Landfall out NE corner of peninsula, at 1430. Left bombers in mid channel at 1440. Landfall in Selsey Bill 1451.

DECLASSIFIED  
NND 745805  
Authority  
By CEC NARA Date 9/28/10

EDWARD J. STEINER  
1st Lt., A. C.  
S-2 Officer

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TELEPHONE FLASH REPORT

F.O. 221

DATE 21 JANUARY 1944.

(Not to be teletyped)

(Not to be teletyped)

a. Designation of Unit	20TH FIGHTER GROUP.
b. Time of Landing	1530
c. Aircraft NYR (State if believed Lost)	
d. Estimated Claims	Destroyed 0 Probable 0 Damaged 0
e. Brief description of Mission	Flew mission as planned. R/V Brighton 20,000 Feet 1310. Landfall in Le Pieux, 22,000 feet at 1411. Escorted bombers and patrolled area until all bombers were clear. Out Barfleur 1430, at 22,000 feet. Left bombers mid-channel 1440, at 22,000 feet. No E/A seen.
f. Weather - Battle damage	5/10ths. over target. Occasional overcast. Few cumulus over channel at 12,000 feet. Some high cirrus west of course. Clear Visibility good. R/T Excellent.

# TELEPHONE FLASH REPORT

F.O. 221

DATE 21 JANUARY 1944.

(Not to be teletyped)	(Not to be teletyped)
a. Designation of Unit	55th Fighter Squadron
b. Time of Landing	1530
c. Aircraft NYR (State if believed Lost)	NIL.
d. Estimated Claims	Destroyed <input type="checkbox"/> Probable <input type="checkbox"/> Damaged <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Brief description of Mission	As planned 1320. Landfall in 1410 at 22,000 feet. Vicinity of Le Pieux. Big sweep peninsula. Flak over Cherbourg and accurate. Rest meager.
f. Weather - Battle damage	Clear channel. 4/5- 10ths.

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TELEPHONE FLASH REPORT

F.O. 221

DATE 21 JANUARY 1944.

(Not to be teletyped)	(Not to be teletyped)
a. Designation of Unit	77th FIGHTER SQUADRON
b. Time of Landing	1530
c. Aircraft NYR (State if believed Lost)	
d. Estimated Claims	Destroyed 0    Probable 0    Damaged 0
e. Brief description of Mission	As planned. Landfall out 1440.
f. Weather - Battle damage	2/10ths over channel. 6/7th's over target. 5,000 to 10,000 feet. High cumulus. Clear over channel, Eastern tip..

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# TELEPHONE FLASH REPORT

F.O. 221

DATE 21 JANUARY 1944

(Not to be teletyped)	(Not to be teletyped)
a. Designation of Unit	79th FIGHTER SQUADRON.
b. Time of Landing	1530
c. Aircraft NYR (State if believed Lost)	2 NYR - in area- WELLS AND ORR. (Landed at Ringwald)
d. Estimated Claims	Destroyed <input type="checkbox"/> Probable <input type="checkbox"/> Damaged <input type="checkbox"/>
e. Brief description of Mission	R/V three minutes early. Flew course as briefed. Squadron escorted box of bombers. Stayed with them mid-channel. Left 1440. No E/A. Heavy accurate flak Cherbourg, 21,000. No bombers in trouble. Saw a single bomber low alone at 1430 heading southward. 4 - P-38's investigated. Two minutes. Field near Cape Levy heavily bombed.
f. Weather - Battle damage	

