

RESTRICTED

SECRET

Classification changed to

By Authority of the  
Commanding General  
Army Air Forces:

BY:

WILFRED J. PAUL

Colonel, Air Corps

Chief, AAF Historical Office

INTRODUCTION

- 6 April — 5 B-25 Mitchell Bombers led by Lt. Col. John H. Davies bombed the Japanese airdrome at Gasmata, New Britain Island dropping 300 lb. instantaneous demolition bombs. Strikes were made on parked aircraft and buildings along the runway from an altitude of 4,500 feet. This was the first mission by B-25 aircraft against the Japanese and initiated a powerful weapon in the defensive war now being fought. (1) (2)

Air crews participating in this mission were: (3)

Capt. Lowery (P)	Lt. Rulism (P)	Lt. Peterson (P)
Lt. Walker (CP)	Lt. Clark (CP)	Lt. Mangan (CP)
T/Sgt. Wherry (B)	M/Sgt. Oliver (B)	S/Sgt. Butler (B)
Sgt. Runager (G)	Sgt. Clanton (G)	Cpl. Whimsett (G)
Pvt. Fresquez (G)	Cpl. Fawe (G)	Cpl. Cooper (G)

Lt. Maull (P)	Lt. Col. Davies (P)	Group C. O.
Lt. West (CP)	Lt. Smith (CP)	
Sgt. O. C. Cook (B)	T/Sgt. Pillard (B)	
Pfc. F. M. Pryor (G)	Sgt. Hayes (G)	
Pfc. Fowler (G)	Pvt. Newman (G)	
S/Sgt. Moore (E)	T/Sgt. Young (E)	

PHILIPPINES MISSION

One of the permanent memories of the Third Group will be the mission to the Philippines flown during the month of April. Early in the month Lt. Col. Davies departed for Melbourne, for a conference with General George. On the 8th of April, nine B-25s left for Brisbane to have extra tanks installed and on the 10th all planes with pilots and crews returned to their home station. There was something in the wind and untold interest and enthusiasm was aroused among the personnel of the Group.

- (1) Where mission number or fragmentary Field Orders No. are available they will follow the date.
- (2) Information from the RAAF Form A-14 Group Operation Files.
- (3) Information from 13th Squadron Diary. Prepared by Capt. Neville D. Blakemore, 13th Sq. Intelligence Officer.

RESTRICTED



## RESTRICTED

- 12 April -- Eleven B-25 aircraft of the Third Bomb Group were being fitted with fuel, supplies, and equipment necessary for a long trip during the late hours of April 11th. At 1:00 A. M. of the 12th, all planes and crews with Colonel Davies, Capt. Lowery, and Lt. Strickland as flight leaders took off on this eventful mission. Seven hours after take off, all planes landed at Darwin to refuel. One plane was discovered to have a badly cut tire and was prohibited from completing the mission. The remaining ten B-25s which continued on over the water to the Philippines landed at Del Monte on the Island of Mindanao.

The following compilation of reports were brought out of the Philippines. They should convey a vivid picture of the task accomplished on this outstanding mission into territory which was partially occupied by the Japanese forces.

- 12 April -- Mission number one on April 12th was led by Capt. Lowery with Lieutenants Heiss and Wilson. Colonel Davies was unable to take off due to mechanical failure of bomb bay. Three passes were made at shipping in Cebu Harbor, with near misses on the first pass. On the second pass, one direct hit was made on the stern of a 7000 ton transport which sank. During the third pass bombs were all misses except for hits on docks.

Four seaplanes, single engine, attacked the flight on the third pass and one each was shot down by Sgt. Young and Sgt. Morris, gunners on Lts. Heiss and Wilson's aircraft respectively. Ack-ack was fairly heavy and accurate coming from the dock area and a cruiser at the docks but all planes returned undamaged. During this mission 50 miles north and south of Toledo was reconnoitered where no shipping was observed.

Five planes took off at 1330 with a bomb load of 5 x 500 lb. bombs to hit an aircraft carrier at Jetane, north end of Bohol and enemy transports in the Cebu area. All five aircraft were attacked shortly after take off by two Jap seaplanes but no damage was done to our ships.



## RESTRICTED

Machine gun hits were observed on at least one of the seaplanes. Fifteen miles out Southeast of Cebu City three ships dropped one bomb each on one transport weighing 16,000 tons and heading south. All bombs hit just off the port side stern. The transport was left heading north and listing to the left. All planes bombed shipping and docks at Cebu Harbor. Accurate observation and bombing was obscured due to the smoke rising from the burning docks, warehouses and vessels in the target area. The bombing run was made from 10,000 feet with light ack ack coming from the dock area and surface craft. No damage was done to our aircraft and all returned safely.

- 13 April -- Six planes equipped with 12 x 100 lb. inst. fused bombs. The third mission was carried out on the following day, referring to the previous missions on the 12th, April 13th to attack Davao area. They flew up the road from Digos to Davao at 2000 feet with three planes dropping bombs on targets as they appeared. Two bombs hit just off a bridge at Daliao. Bombs were on boats at Davao, but accurate observation was not made. Colonel Davies attacked a single engine bi-plane taking off and gunners knocked off pieces of its wings and the plane crashed. Seaplanes anchored off the shore at the right of the dock area were observed and all planes bombed individually. One string of bombs went down the runway at Davao. Another string hit just off the stern of a transport. The mission was flown at an altitude of 5000 feet with light ack ack from a destroyer. No damage was done to our planes except for one B-25 piloted by Lt. Wilson. His plane was attacked by three Jap single engine bi-planes who made hits, but without much luck. His turrets were out but he received no damage.

In a three ship formation loaded with 5 x 500 lb. bombs each, planes of the Third Group took off to hit the docks and shipping at Davao City. Three minutes from the target area one of two float planes, single-engine, type 95, attacked the formation and made one beautifully executed pass at Colonel Davies's ship, but failed to score a hit. Nor did our gunners hit the Jap aircraft.



# RESTRICTED

Bombs were released in a hail at Docks and one transport just off the docks. Two of the bombs plastered at the docks hit a warehouse with direct hits. (4)

Eight of the above listed 11 aircraft were B-25s from the 13th Squadron. Airplane crews who participated in the widely acclaimed mission were as follows: (5)

Capt. Lowery (P)	Lt. Heiss (P)
Lt. Walker (CP)	Lt. Townsend (CP)
Cpl. Rigdon (E)	Lt. Clapp (N)
Sgt. Runager (G)	T/Sgt. Simpers (E)
Cpl. Fresquez (G)	Cpl. L. G. Young (G)
T/Sgt. Wherry (B)	Sgt. J. W. Miller (G)
	Sgt. M. K. Smith (B)
Lt. Col. Davies (P) Gp. C. O.	
Lt. McAfee (CP) Gp. Op. Off.	Lt. J. R. Smith (P)
T/Sgt. Young (E)	Lt. Talley (CP)
Sgt. Hayes (G)	T/Sgt. Simmons (E)
Pvt. Newman (G)	M/Sgt. Oliver (B)
Capt. Hubbard (B)	Sgt. Clanton (G)
	Cpl. Fawe (G)
Lt. Maull (P)	
Lt. West (CP)	Lt. Peterson (P)
S/Sgt. Moore (E)	Lt. Mangan (CP)
Lt. Culp (N)	Sgt. Salles (E)
Sgt. Cook (B)	Cpl. Whimsett (G)
Pfc. Fowler (G)	Cpl. Cooper (G)
Pfc. Pryor (G)	S/Sgt. Butler (B)
Lt. Felthan (P)	Lt. Strickland (P)
Lt. Linn (CP)	Maj. Hipps (CP)
Lt. Heyman (N)	S/Sgt. Crutchfield (E)
T/Sgt. Cates (E)	Sgt. K. Cooper (G)
Cpl. Nelson (G)	Pfc. White (G)
Cpl. Hatcher (G)	T/Sgt. Bengel (B)
T/Sgt. Owens (B)	

M/Sgt. F. S. Adams, participated in the mission as line chief for all the planes involved.

(4) Information taken from Group Operations Files.

(5) Information taken from 13th Squadron Diary prepared by Capt. Neville D. Blakemore, 13th Squadron Intelligence Officer.



**RESTRICTED**

On returning from the raids over the Philippines, our planes brought back with them four Officers who were still holding out against the Japanese four months after the first attack on the Islands. These Officers; Lt. T. P. Gerrity, Lt. E. D. Benham, and Lt. L. H. Keys, joined the ranks of the 13th Bombardment Squadron.

Upon completion of the Philippine mission, Colonel John Davies, with General Ralph Royce went to Melbourne where the Distinguished Service Cross was awarded to both Officers for their gallant work.

20 April -- 5 B-25s, piloted and crewed by the 13th Bomb Sq., struck the Japanese held airdrome at Salamaua, New Guinea. Direct hits were scored on three buildings including red roofed headquarters building where fires were observed. Some damage was estimated on Kulu where bombs fell close to buildings. On an attack on Malir Mal hangar, direct hits were scored to completely wreck the hangar. The fuel dump at the rear end of the hangar was directly hit and set afire. Black smoke was observed for 20 miles away. After releasing three bombs on houses at the east side of the drome, the remainder of the bombs were jettisoned. One direct hit was scored on a green roofed house. Four flying boats and one small launch were observed moored in the harbor between Kela Point and the town. All planes returned safely. (6)

26 April -- Six B-25s of the 13th Bomb Squadron were scheduled to fly a mission on Lae but two of the planes were unavailable for combat. One of the planes which departed from Coen turned back because of bad weather. The remaining three Mitchells departed Port Moresby and proceeded up the mountain range at medium altitude of 6,000 feet to a point about thirty miles north of Lae. Then they made their attack from land to sea to the southeast.

(6) Information taken from Group Operations Files RAAF Form A-14.

**RESTRICTED**