

WWII U.S. GLIDER PILOT'S BRIEFING

NATIONAL WWII GLIDER PILOTS ASSOCIATION
OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE



Eighty years ago southern France was liberated from air fields in Italy not far from Rome. Glider pilots frequented the trattoria called Broadway Bill.

[Photo description](#)

ALSO INSIDE:

You Should Have Seen It In Color!
Glider Tactics of WWII
Letters Home

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You are receiving this quarterly briefing as a valued member of the National World War II Glider Pilot Association. Our association operates as an independent 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization with the primary mission of supporting the education and preservation of the history of World War II glider pilots and their remarkable contributions. The content within this briefing is diligently curated by our dedicated members, all of whom contribute their time and expertise voluntarily without financial compensation. Our aim is to provide you with exclusive insights into glider operations and other troop carrier narratives, accompanied by a wealth of information, captivating images, and historical accounts sourced directly from U.S. Military archives and other rare repositories not typically accessible to the public. If you wish to discontinue receiving these publications, please feel free to reach out to Claudia Coggin at claudia.coggin@gmail.com. Your preferences are important to us, and we are here to assist you in any way we can. Thank you for your ongoing support and membership in our association.

Editor's Note

I hope that wherever you're reading from you are able to escape some of this summer heat! My thanks to all of our fantastic authors for their contributions to this edition. Hans' contributions as our international director provide a truly unique piece of subject matter expertise.

Reading Zach Cromley's exposé on his friend Roger Smith's photo-journalism during the war made me feel as if I'd been sitting right there in Roger's living room with him. What an invaluable resource, and what a good friend Roger has in Zach. The Association has benefitted many times from the photographs shared from Roger's collection, and this piece lends a great behind-the-scenes perspective.

Remember to register for the reunion, I hope to see many of you there!

If you have thoughts about a particular article or event that you've seen in our past issues, please send those thoughts to: briefingeditor.nwwiigpc@gmail.com

We look forward to hearing your feedback!

Best,

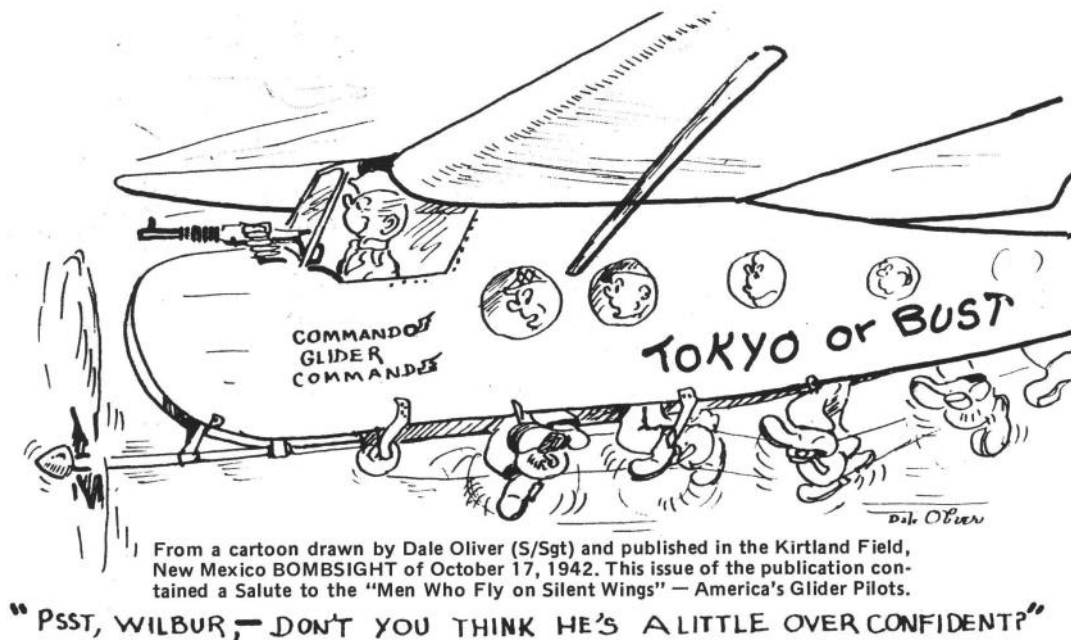
Trevor Shimulunas

"OMG I have to say I love what you did for our unit, this edition [NORMANDY] is FANTASTIC. I am so happy we have the WWIIGPA as a resource for our airmen's histories. I've been through many of the official documents now but getting their own words, their stories, their memoirs and their histories is really really cool from a brother/sister in arms standpoint. We fly these campaign ribbons on our squadron Guidon and it is really cool to "meet" the men who did that for our organization."

-- Courtney Werth

"I continue to be impressed with the quality of the briefings and information provided. I am kicking myself to have missed the 2023 CO reunion. It's my pleasure to support the mission!"

--Gayle Harris



Chaplain

Dear Friends,

Wow, in early Spring in North Texas the roses, red tip photinias and beauty berries are all sending out new growth! And my canna lilies sent up new shoots galore! I spread 35 bags of mulch in the front garden! Thank goodness that only needs to get done every other year or so. It brings me much joy to work outside and see nature waking up in the spring time.

As you come to late Summer time wherever you may be, remember to include in your plans for this year our reunion in Dayton, Ohio in October 3rd—5th. Your executive council's work has come to fruition on a comfortable, affordable hotel and excursions to interesting museums. This will be a special reunion for me as I was born in Dayton and lived there as a child. I am planning to take a drive by the house I lived in to see how it looks now. Also, Waco is where my Grandfather was chief engineer and

vice president for many years. I also want to visit my Grandfather and Grandmother's graves in Tipp City, Ohio.

I received the fabric and I have been working through the Spring and Summer on the quilt and will be finished soon.

This will be my 15th quilt for donation to the World War II Glider Pilots Association.

Be sure to take time during the end of Summer to be outside and enjoy God's creation. If you are able, grow something, even it is only one plant in a pot. Caring for that plant is participating in caring for our world.

Please join me in praying for peace in the war-torn areas of our world. So many people are displaced, homeless, hungry, and frightened. Blessings for an abundant Spring,

Susan Pinter, Chaplain
National WWII Glider Pilot Assoc.



52ND REUNION / SYMPOSIUM

in Dayton, OH

October 3rd - 5th, 2024



REGISTER TODAY! We are only one month away from the reunion and a couple days from the hotel deadline to receive the discount! If you have not registered or secured your hotel room please do so as soon as possible.

This is going to be a fabulous reunion! Located right in the heart of WWII Glider History and we will be visiting the *WACO Museum* and the *National Museum of the Air Force*. We will have great presentations every evening with lots of social time in our hospitality room. The itinerary is up on the website covering each day.

<https://ww2gp.org/reunion/>

If you have not done so book your hotel reservation as soon as possible, the deadline for discount rooms is **September 10th!** Breakfast is included in our rate of \$129/night. Go to this link to get the Glider Pilot event rate.

<https://group.doubletree.com/dpojtl>

Please keep the group code available when you book. This code guarantee our hotel requirement block of rooms. Registering using some other service may not count towards our block total.

Items being sold exclusively to our attendees are the reunion t-shirt, challenge coin (while supplies last) and cap (The G is for Guts wing is nicely embroidered onto the front of the cap with the letters NWWIIGPA). You must reserve the t-shirt and cap ahead of time by **September 12th**. Reserve today at <https://www.ww2gp.org/reunion/teeOrders.php> You will pay when you pickup items at the reunion.

Please contact me if you have any questions:

Mary Roemer, Reunion Chair

/336-655-6607

roemermmary@gmail.com



It's hard for me to believe that I have had the privilege to serve as the Chair of the National WWII Glider Pilots Association (NWWIGPA) for three years. Three consecutive one-year terms is the limit for the Chair and Vice Chair positions per our By-Laws. In the days of the Glider Pilots, the Chair position was usually for one year. This was true for several of the other Executive Council (EC) positions as well. I am very proud of our EC members and our Research Team. All volunteers giving their time to continue the legacy of the Association.

On a personal note, Beth and I will not be attending the 52nd Reunion this year due to her health. Since the end of January, she has had major surgery and is now more than halfway through her chemotherapy treatment plan. We are blessed with family, friends, neighbors, nurses, doctors, and even new acquaintances who are dealing with cancer in their lives.

As you know, the NWWIGPA 52nd Reunion is rapidly approaching. Our previous past Chair, Bruce Overman, has graciously agreed to be the acting Chair at the reunion in my place. If you have not done so already please support the Association by attending the Reunion. It is held in honor of all those glider pilots and dedicated members who came before us. Help us keep their stories and traditions alive

Bless Them All

Gary Stripling

Chair, National WWII Glider Pilots Association

Every year we continue to surpass our requests for research. I believe the 80th anniversary was a catalyst for this year's requests.

We so enjoy the photos of the men the families give us. These photos make the person behind the record real. It becomes personal. I get to know the men through the diaries. Then the next month you read the casualty section and that officer, the one I enjoy reading about, is listed as killed. When we get the photos I am so glad to put a face to these men. Thank you to all the families who have been able to send us photos. Bless Them All

Patricia Overman, written on behalf of Gary Stripling, Project manager, LBS Research Team

PAST CHAIR

ELECTIONS will be held during the Saturday General Membership meeting for the following positions:

Executive Council Chair
Executive Council Vice-Chair
National Wing Commander
Secretary
Treasurer
Members at Large (5)

Note that the number of "at large" positions has been increased from three to five. These positions are designed to allow members to participate in the decision making process of the EC and evaluate running for other positions on the Council.

If you would like to run for any of these positions, would like to nominate anyone for these positions, or just have questions, please contact the Immediate Past Chair, Bruce Overman at

r.bruce.overman@gmail.com



94TH FLYING TRAINING SQUADRON BRIEFING

Greetings from Colorado!

Photo left to right: Brodie and Colin Henderson, Joan and Bob Abrahamsen, Patricia and Bruce Overman, Susan Pinter, and Jeremy Lushnat.

Members of the NWWIIGPA Executive Council were privileged to attend the 94th Flying Training Squadron's 2024 G- Wings ceremony at the USAFA on May 21. The ceremony was held in the glider hangar and it was turned into a special night with white table clothes and flowers on the table. A missing soldier table was also a reminder of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice. The National WWII Glider Pilots Association had seven representatives;

Joan and Bob Abrahamsen, Colin and Brodie Henderson, Jeremy Lushnat, Susan Pinter, and Patricia and Bruce Overman.

The National WWII Glider Pilots Association has been involved on and off over the years with the 94th Flying Training Squadron since its inception. The Association was on an off time when in 2017 Commander, Lt. Col Jeremy Lushnat and Lt. Col. Paul Roberts established contact with Glider Pilot George Theis who had been to a few of the G-Wing Cere-

monies and even had a glider named after him. George decided we needed to establish a solid continuing connection with the 94th. George asked National Wing Commander, Patricia Overman, to be the liaison to the 94th and do whatever was possible to establish a continuing relationship. This was also the goal of Cols. Lushnat and Roberts. Together we established a Memo of Understanding.

Over the years we have worked on having WWII Veterans, local and Council members attend the G-Wings ceremony. This is where Cadets receive their G Wings and become an instructor pilot. In turn the 94th began sending Officers and Cadets to our reunions. To further solidify the relationship the Council decided to present an award to a deserving instructor pilot. This award was titled the "G" is for Guts award and is awarded for innovation in motivating the squadron to complete successful missions.



This year we were proud, as we have been for the [last seven years](#), to present the National WWII Glider Pilots' "G is for Guts" award to **Cadet First Class (C1C) Ezra PAUL** who is now 2nd Lt. Paul. Congratulations 2nd Lt. Paul!

In another effort to continue this established connection with the Officers and Cadets of the 94th well after graduation and through

their career we offer a free one year membership and the tee-shirt with their legacy in the form of their WWII squadron code D8 on the back.

This year the 94th had a change of Command Ceremony before the G Wings Ceremony. We all bid farewell to Squadron Commander, Colonel Chad Davies and hello to LtCol Collin O'Bryant.



Commander, Col. Chad Davies, and hello to Lt. Col. Collin O'Bryant.

Lt. Col. O'Bryant talked to the cadets and he gave a summary of the 94th Troop Carrier Squadrons, 439th Troop Carrier Group WWII history. His comments to the cadets were inspiring and uplifting. We had a great time!

SUMMER:

Lt. Rachel Eberhardt is our Point of Contact (POC) who will be helping with getting cadets and Officers to the reunion and keeping us informed with activities at the 94th. She is attending our monthly Council meetings:

This summer the cadets have not been idle. Summer Operations Sorties Flown:

Summer 1: 817

Summer 2: 942

Summer 3: 894

Total Sorties: 2,653

Number of Students: +240

They have received a new plane in the fleet: TG-17 "FOX" —Lt. Rachel

Congratulations to all those graduating instructor pilots and good luck in your careers!



GLIDER TACTICS IN WORLD WAR II

BY HANS DEN BROK

Many historical accounts of World War II delve into the development and utilization of gliders, often highlighting key operations such as the German attack on the Belgian fort Eben Emael, Operation Merkur in Crete, and the Allied assault on Pegasus Bridge. These pivotal moments not only shaped military strategies but also underscored the stealth capabilities of gliders, earning them the moniker "silent wings," as evidenced by the museum at Lubbock named after this feature. This article examines the evolution of airborne operations and various tactics employed, with a focus on early German assaults and subsequent Allied advancements, particularly those of the American forces from Normandy onwards.

KEY DEFINITIONS:

To contextualize discussions on glider tactics, it's essential to clarify certain terms:

- "**Airborne operation**" refers to the deployment of airborne units. This is the entire lift of airborne units, without a difference between the parachute serials and glider serials and encompassing various drop zones and landing zones
- "**Glider operation**" specifically pertains to the use of gliders within airborne operations, sometimes termed as "glider assault," often targeting specific objectives and using only designated landing zones.

- "**Airlanding**" denotes the delivery of troops and equipment by aircraft, excluding parachute or glider deployment.

These three definitions are important when looking at tactics and development of gliders.

1940-1941–

GERMAN AIRBORNE OPERATIONS

It was during the Blitzkrieg in the west that the world did see its first big airborne operation. As well as the first glider assaults. Let's start about the later ones, the glider assault. The well-known assault on Fort Eben Emael was a big surprise for the Belgium defenders, as well as the countries who had been in war with Germany since September 1939. A few important things with this assault are the release altitude, which was at 2600 feet. From the release point the gliders glided approximately 16 miles to their objectives. This glide took approximately 20 minutes.

The assault at Eben Emael was part of a larger glider assault. Four targets were attacked by glider troops. Beside the fort there were three bridges over the Albert Canal that were attacked by glider troops. That same morning, the Dutch neutrality was violated when German airborne forces executed a wide-ranging operation around The Hague, Rotterdam and Dordrecht. When looking at it, this is reminiscent of the Allied endeavors during Market Garden.

The Germans put their airborne troops about 80 miles behind the lines. And ground forces, with a panzer spearhead, needed to race to the airborne forces who held bridges, enabling the ground army to race to their main target (The Hague). During Market Garden the airborne were dropped 57 miles behind the front. And along the route airborne forces were to capture and hold bridges enabling the British armor to reach Arnhem.

The German airborne operation can be split in two. One had the objectives to capture bridges that would allow the German ground forces to enter the heart of the Netherlands. The other was to capture the political heart, the city of The Hague including the royal family and politicians. The German tactic at The Hague was to drop paratroopers at airfields, which would quickly be followed by airlanding troops and larger equipment by Ju-52 type of aircraft¹. At Rotterdam one airfield was the objective for the paratroopers as well. The Ju-52 could carry 17 passengers.

Although the Dutch military was considered to be weak, they managed to give the airlanding troops a bloody nose. During the landings of Ju-52 aircraft at the Dutch airfields, many of these planes were hit by the defensive fire. Further operations, with artillery, air force and the attacks to retake the airfields from German hands resulted in the loss of more airplanes that had been stranded on these airfields. Other airplanes landed on the beach, on the highway . and in pastures. The Dutch Verliesregister² shows that 237 Ju-52's ended their operational

life in Holland on that first day of the invasion. When we look at this tactic, we see that in Holland the airfields were a main objective, and that more troops (with a bit heavier equipment) was flown in, thus airlanded, on these airfields.

Why didn't they use gliders, which would have omitted the need for an airfield? That is because of the type of gliders used by the German at that time. The standard glider used by the Germans was the DFS 230. This was a small glider, piloted by one pilot, and it could carry nine passengers, or the equivalent in cargo. The cargo compartment was 13.2' in length, and 3.6' in width. Looking at these figures, it becomes clear why the Germans did not use gliders in Holland, but planned to airland troops on the captured airfields. The Ju-52 could haul more men or heavier equipment. And, after unloading they could take off for another sortie (that was the idea). General Graf von Sponneck, who's 22nd Infantry Division was airlanded, reported that the Holland operation showed that airborne operations on airfields could only be successful with heavy losses, if it was successful at all.

With the lessons learned (or not) we can take a closer look at the invasion of Crete. There were several objectives. The main objective was the city of Maleme. This is because it was the largest airfield and big enough for heavy transport aircraft and it was near the north coast, so sea-borne reinforcements could be brought up quickly. Other objectives were Rhethymnon and Heraklion, two other cities on the island north coast. At all places, except for Heraklion,



Airlanding at the Waalhaven airfield, Rotterdam, May 1940. The field is littered with wrecks. Similar scenes could be seen at the airfields surrounding The Hague, where the Ju-52 pilots were forced to improvise their field of landing. (NIMH)

Improvvised field of landing. The highway between The Hague and Delft was used to land. These wrecked Ju-52 aircraft were later salvaged, or even repaired to fly another day. (NIMH)



GROUPE GROEP /GRUPPE GRANIT

POINTS D'ATERRISSAGE
DES PLANEURS DFS 230

LANDINGSPLAATSEN VAN DE
ZWEEFVLIEGTUIGEN DFS 230

LANDUNGSPUNKT DEM
LASTSEGLER DFS 230



Landing locations of
the German gliders at
Eben Emael. Hit right
on the target.

([https://
www.landmarkscout.
com/fort-eben-emael-
belgium/](https://www.landmarkscout.com/fort-eben-emael-belgium/))



*The German DSF-230
was the main glider
used by the German
forces. It was a small
glider and could not
carry artillery or vehi-
cles. (Wikipedia)*

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DFS 230 gliders were used. And just like in Holland, the attack on a city with an airfield proved to be difficult and, as Von Sponneck predicted, only successful with heavy losses. The airlanding part like in Holland was not planned, but at one point the Ju-52 aircraft started to land at Malmeme.

We leave the German tactics for now, but have a look at the 'silent' part of the glider assault later on.

Allied development

With the German successes in using airborne troops, the Allies started working on their gliders as well. This had to be done from scratch. And it seem both had no idea what they were getting into. From what we did see earlier, the Germans had used a small glider, capable of carrying 9 troopers. The British came up with the Horsa glider as their main glider. This cigar like aircraft was mainly made of wood. The first test flight in one was in September 1941. It was 'originally conceived as a paratrooper transport to drop paratroopers. The Horsa was a big glider, able to carry 28 soldiers, or 2 jeeps. But

the Horsa wasn't the first British glider. In November 1940 the Hotspur was the first Allied glider to fly. This was a much smaller glider, able to carry 7 soldiers.

The development in the USA was a bit similar. The Waco CG-4A is well known. Smaller than the British Horsa glider, it was still bigger than the standard German glider in WW2, the DFS 320. But before there was a CG-4A, there was a CG-3A. And just like the Hotspur, the CG-3A was capable of carrying 7 soldiers. There are a number of books that detail the entire development of the American gliders, so I will skip that part of the development. The point is that both the British and Americans started off with a smaller glider, somewhat comparable with the German glider, and ended up with a larger glider. The benefits of gliders are usually mentioned in books as well. The main thing was that it could deliver a fighting force that was complete when landing, whereas paratroopers needed to assemble a stick to get combat ready. Another benefit is that larger equipment could be flown in, and made even the airborne division a mechanized unit. One needs to add that this can be done without overtaking an enemy airfield (which are usually heavily

The British Hotspur glider. (Wikipedia)



defended), and thus avoiding costly airlandings as done by the Germans in Holland

Tactics (how 'silent' were the wings on combat operations in Europe)

Now I would like to come back to the term 'Silent' as used so many times. As we have seen the German attack on Eben Emael and the three bridges are a textbook of a 'silent wings' operation. Cut at 2600 feet, 16 miles from target, and gliding to that target. The landings were as good as they can be, right on target. With an eye on the ill-fated Market Garden operation, one can say that a coup de main worked very well. Wikipedia says about Coup de Main definition: The United States Department of Defense defines it as "An offensive operation that capitalizes on surprise and simultaneous execution of supporting operations to achieve success in one swift stroke."

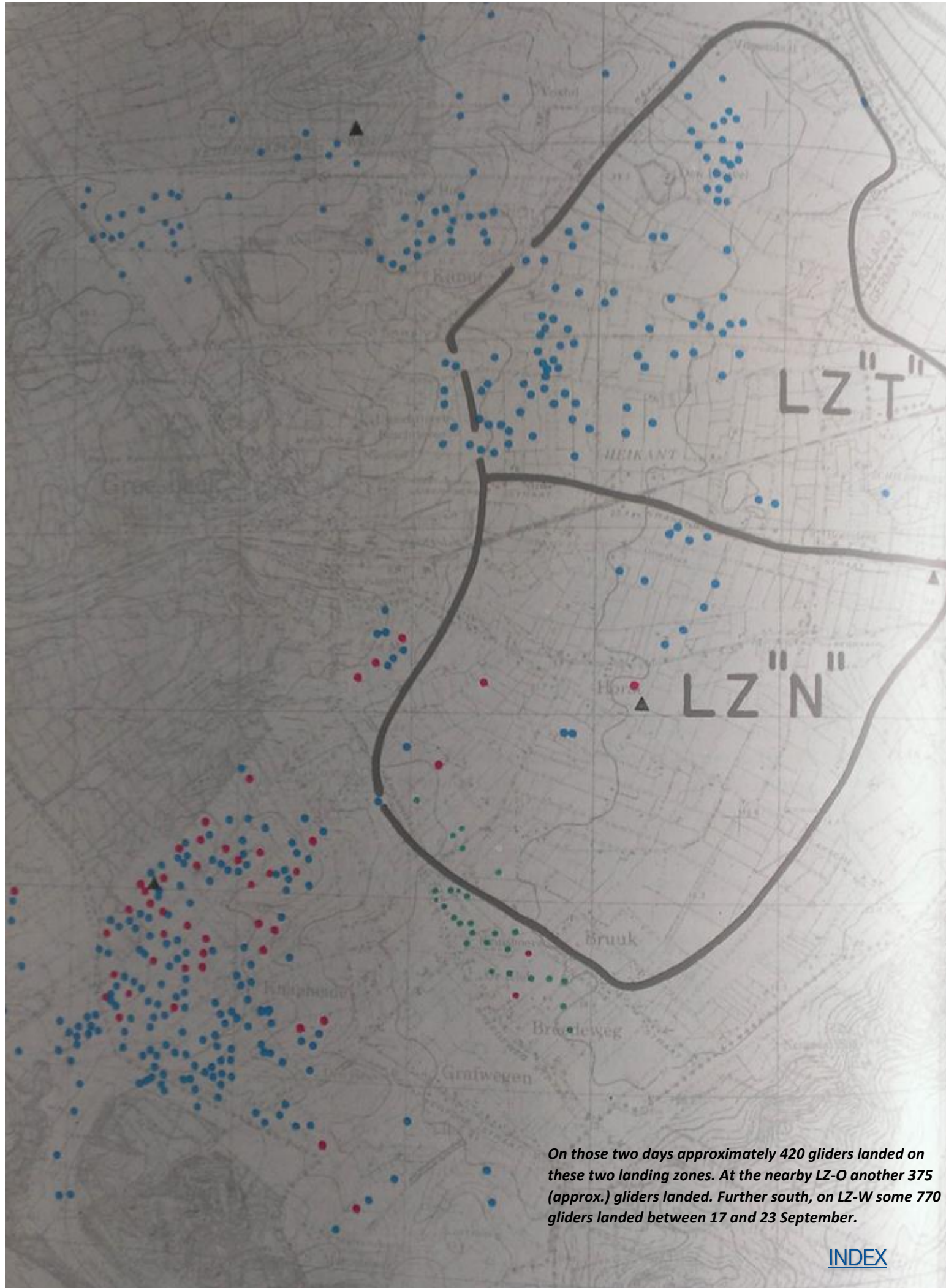
The same page refers to the British assault on the Pegasus bridge (the nearby Horsa bridge was an objective for the same assault group). The British cut off at an altitude of 6000 feet, glided for nearly 8 miles before landing on their objective.

German gliders landed in difficult terrain near a hotel to free Mussolini. In other late war operation the German glider pilots could show their skills by landing right on target. Studies of the actions against the Maquis in the Vercor and the attempt to capture General Tito in Yugoslavia provide images as proof. Without doubt American pilot could do similar landings, but their tactics were different.

The Allies used the tactics of numbers more often. At the time of Operation Market Garden, the German airborne general Kurt Student wished he had such a force at his disposal.



Gliders arriving at Groesbeek, Holland. Pictured on 17 or 18 September 1944 by Mr. Jaap Beijnes.



On those two days approximately 420 gliders landed on these two landing zones. At the nearby LZ-O another 375 (approx.) gliders landed. Further south, on LZ-W some 770 gliders landed between 17 and 23 September.



An aerial view at gliders that have landed near Groesbeek.



German DFS-230 glider that participated in the liberation of Mussolini. Landing in mountains is difficult, but the German pilots managed to get their gliders right on target.

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16/412:6JUN44:20//K18.

The use of 'Silent Wings' by the British. The three gliders landed very close to their target, the Pegasus Bridge (as it is known today).

Article Notes:

¹ The German equivalent of the C-47, coming from the civilian airfleet.

² Database of aircraft losses in Holland

³ Fighting Gliders of WWII - James E. Mrazek



YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN IT IN COLOR!

BY ZACH CROMELY



Perhaps they aren't worth a thousand words anymore. But to us, they continue to be the heart of our research into the Glider missions during the most important conflict in world history. 398 – That's the number of photos I processed of what I believe to be Roger W Smith's complete WWII collection. Beginning with a

photo the day he left Stanton Station, NJ in September of 1942. Ending sometime shortly before boarding a coal collier in Livorno, Italy bound for the United States in September of 1945. About two thirds of them have a date on the back, another invaluable piece of the puzzle.

Growing up, Roger's mother was a photography enthusiast. She made many photo albums that Roger still has to this day. There is just something profound about looking through original 100-year-old photograph albums. She had an eye for framing a shot long before that was ever a mainstream idea. I've never taken a minute I spend with Roger for granted, but some days are more special than others. Some of my favorite times together are when he shares with me about his childhood. Many times, those days lead us into his basement where he stores those black and white treasures. The evolution of her hobby and the transition to Roger taking his own photos becomes apparent in the albums. Albeit many less photos exist from the depression years and the reason why seems too obvious to ask about.

Photography was different back in those days though, cameras commonly sold for about \$2.50. The equivalent of nearly forty dollars to us made it an inexpensive hobby. The challenging part back then was processing the film.

Either by oneself, which could take up to 20 minutes per photo, or by taking rolls into a developer. It wasn't too common in those days to have your own developing equipment and according to Roger getting the film back could take quite some time. I imagine this being a hassle enough for me to throw in the white towel. Fortunately for us, hassle and all, she loved it and her love rubbed off on Roger.

I'll never forget the first photo Roger showed me that he had taken in southern France. We were close friends at that point and I had done enough research to know about the glider missions. But between the story he was telling me and seeing the proof in my hand I can clearly remember my disbelief. That moment, that photo, began my fascination with the Glider story. Roger began pulling more and more shoeboxes from his closet filled with photos, orders, training records, and more photos. Days later I had contacted the Leon B Spencer Research Team and my journey was under way.



Imagine my surprise when several years later I opened a relatively rare book titled "Forgotten Wings," by our esteemed friend and Author Philippe Esvelin.¹ Mr. Esvelin is an Author and researcher who resides in France and has written several wonderful books highlighting the Airborne Campaigns in France. In this book, published in 2006, there are several of the very photos that Roger had shown me that day. Like all authors, credits are given to the best of their abilities and Mr. Esvelin's work is no different. But in these specific photos, that Roger undoubtedly took, the credit is given to none other than Roger's Copilot for the Southern France mission Dragoon - Erling Severson. I was surprised but hardly shocked. In several of the photos the credit is given to Erling via the Silent Wings Museum leading me to believe that his collection of wartime photos was donated to the museum at some point. 2

Several times over the years Roger has made mention of the photo sharing that used to go on during the early reunions of the National WWII Glider Pilots Association. Surely if Roger shared any of his photos it would have been with his Copilot and dear friend Erling Severson. Also of the 8th Squadron, Erling was much older than Roger although Roger never knew it. Erling died in 2013 and several years ago I made a number of attempts to contact his living family. Like my other searches for living family members of Rogers squadron, my goal is always to share Roger's photos with them. In a weird sort of way, I was relieved at the fact that the book proved that his family probably had the opportunity to see the photos that

Erling was in and certainly many more.

As I scoured the pages of Forgotten Wings, more and more of Rogers pictures appeared. Roger took every picture on one set of pages. On another page is a picture of Roger's Glider taken on D+1 shortly after they helped the airborne unload the water purification unit him and Erling carried to LZ-O. You might be asking yourself how can I be so sure that Roger took the photos. That is a good question and I am happy to explain.

Not only do I believe my dear friend and hero when he tells me that he took those pictures. But I also curated his collection of original negatives. It's hard to argue with the fact that he has the negatives. A photography enthusiast myself since my high school days I dabbled in film photography for several years and was even a photographer for my college newspaper where I developed my own film. I understand how film works and especially in those days how dark rooms and the developing process used to work. My point being, it's hard to get a second set of negatives and surely those were not shared amongst the crowds at reunions.

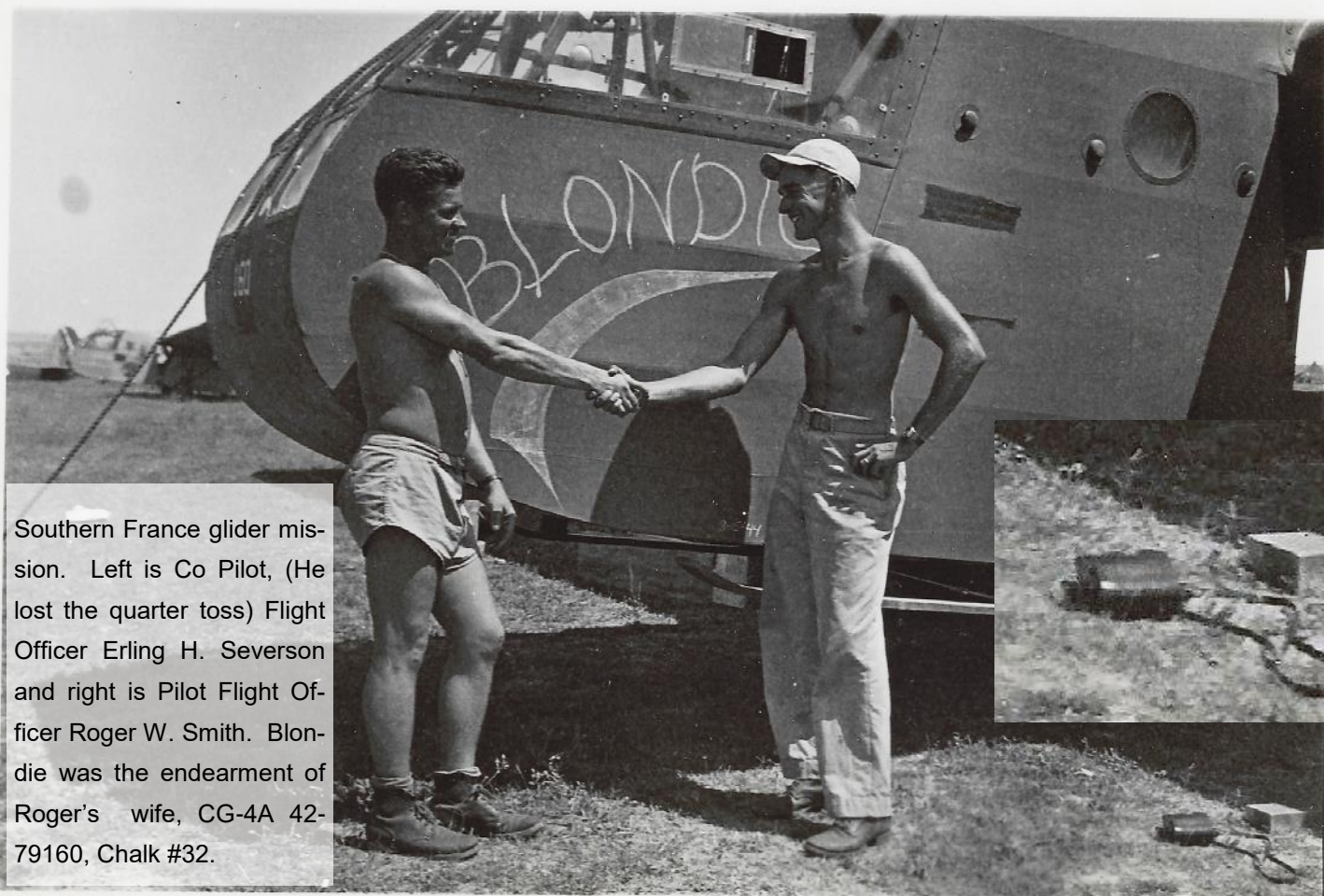
I've spoken to several historians and researchers over the years about the fact that Roger has his negatives and the general consensus is a bit of surprise. From what I understand, usually these film rolls would have been turned over to the censors and they decided which photos would have been processed and developed for Roger. But that obviously was not the case here. Roger and I have had some

discussions before about his photography and negatives but it was again time to delve into the nitty gritty of some of Rogers wartime antics.

When asked one day about the origination of these photos and how he came to be in possession of his negatives Roger could only give me that big grin I am so used to seeing these days. He referenced our many conversations about him "getting these photos developed" and my assumptions I carried all along were proven wrong when he said, "well we didn't exactly use the official methods of that process." It all then made sense, especially considering the fact that Roger has also mentioned numerous times that he wasn't supposed to have that

camera tucked away in his gear bag. A secret carry-on and possibly even a secret dark room? Without his direct admission, we're only left to speculate but him possessing the negatives speaks for itself. The resourcefulness of the soldiers in that war has never ceased to amaze me.³ Those damned Glider Pilots.

If that's not enough proof, the final evidence to consider is one of Rogers most treasured photos, taken August 14th. Roger and Erling stand shaking hands in front of Glider number 42-79160. The glider that Roger had dubbed Blondie after his late wife Glenna. On the ground near the edge of the frame you can clearly see the empty leather Kodak case from the camera being used to snap the picture.



Southern France glider mission. Left is Co Pilot, (He lost the quarter toss) Flight Officer Erling H. Severson and right is Pilot Flight Officer Roger W. Smith. Blondie was the endearment of Roger's wife, CG-4A 42-79160, Chalk #32.



The same camera case that Roger showed me stored with his photo albums in his basement. More impressive is the fact that Roger's son still has the camera, and, it still works. When questioned about Erling Roger says, "I never saw a camera in his hands."

I expected more of a reaction from him when Roger opened *Forgotten Wings* and saw his photos on the pages. More than anything, he was happy. He was happy that it meant that Erlings family had probably seen the photos and were quite possibly involved in them making their way to the Silent Wings Museum. The last time that Roger had any communication with Erling was sometime in the 2000's when Erling wrote to show Roger photos of the C-47 he was helping to Restore with the 8th squadron logo on the side. The book was already in print at this point but Erling never made comment of it, leading me to believe he never even knew about it.

Seeing Roger's reaction that day completely changed my perspective. Where I thought Roger would be angry about the lack of credit he most certainly de-

deserves, he was nothing but smiles.

He was so happy that his photos made their way into the hands of the right author so that he could share those wonderful treasures with the people of France. He was happy that Erling's family had that memory to last forever and he was happy that I found the book so that he could share it with his family and others. To put it in perspective even more, my intentions initially were to write Mr. Esvelin and demand credit to Roger. When I brought this up to him, he literally laughed at me. "Who cares," he said. "Isn't the point of what you're doing to bring credit to all of the glider pilots, and not just me?" It wasn't a literal slap in the face, but it sure felt like it. 101 years wise and humble as ever. Before I



hugged him goodbye that day I had a realization. The man standing in front of me, had a life that was defined by the moments captured on that film. Some of them must have been

terrifying especially considering the fact that he was just a few weeks past his twenty first birthday. And yet 80 years later he lives a life of humility and concern for others. A lesson we could all use these days.

I'll never forget these days I get to spend with Roger and the lessons he continues to teach me. It all started with that first photo for me and knowing what questions to ask. For those of you still so fortunate enough to be related to or friends with a living World War II veteran I urge you to document their stories. Learn enough about what they did to ask the right questions. If they still don't want to answer that's fine but I can promise you that you will regret it if you don't. On that same note I urge you to please share your relatives' photos and whatever surviving orders, memorabilia or other items that might be pertinent to our research with the Leon B Spencer Research team. I can't explain to you how invaluable some of those things are to what we are doing. And I hope that you all know that's to preserve their legacy. For the families of those who have gone before us. Please, please, please get that dusty old shoe box out of the closet and see if it's something we might be interested in. We are here to facilitate that process of figuring out what you have. If you have any questions, please reach out to myself or another research team member and we will be happy to assist.

I felt this article was a fitting way to express my gratitude to Roger for the invaluable legacy he has left us, allowing us to reflect on those days from 80 years ago. They say a picture is worth a thousand words, and Roger has given us a narrative of hundreds of thousands. I hope you enjoyed my perspective on Roger's photo collection and how these images are the heart of our research. Please share your pictures with us, and remember to be kind to yourself and others.

¹Philippe Esvilen has been a continuing member of our organization for over 25 years and for those 25 years he has been talking to countless troop carrier personnel and documenting our legacy. He has a new book out on the WWII glider program and missions titled *Wing Commandos*. He also represented us in key 80th anniversary celebrations in Normandy and southern France.

²Further investigation could be done to resolve this mystery with the museum, but I didn't feel it would add significant narrative value to the article. Regarding ownership, photos taken by U.S. military personnel while on duty are public domain, meaning the Army Air Forces or other branches hold no exclusive rights—these photos belong to the public. However, in modern copyright law, the person who frames the shot and presses the shutter typically holds the copyright, not the person possessing the negatives. It's the creator's photographic vision that gives them ownership.

³I spent 5 years working in a war zone during OEF. I can certainly relate, but the resourcefulness used by some of the troops during WWII is still legendary in my eyes. It has been revealed by other glider pilot photographers that they had a makeshift darkroom in their tents. This generation was very clever and resourceful!

SOUTHERN FRANCE PICTORIAL

80TH ANNIVERSARY

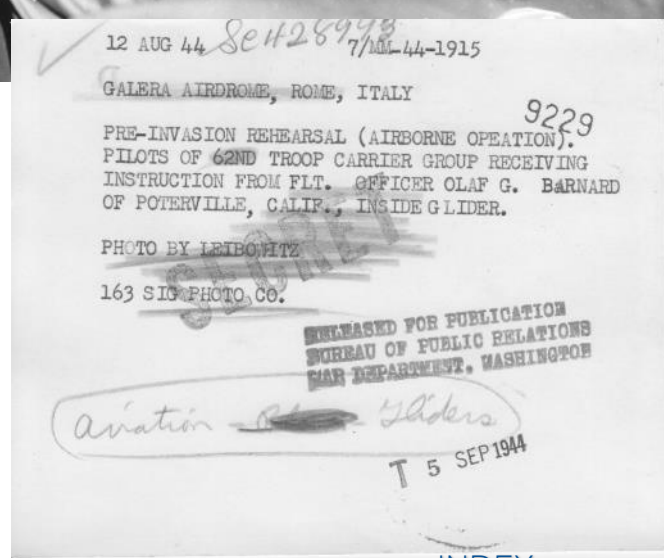
THEODORE M. VIAL

1ST LT. AIR CORPS,
ASS'T OPNS. OFFICER



12 Aug 44 Flight Officer Oalf Barnard is briefing other glider pilots of the 62nd Troop Carrier Group in preparation of operation DOVE. Olaf flew glider Chalk #8, glider number 42-77258. Co pilot was Robert E Riggers.

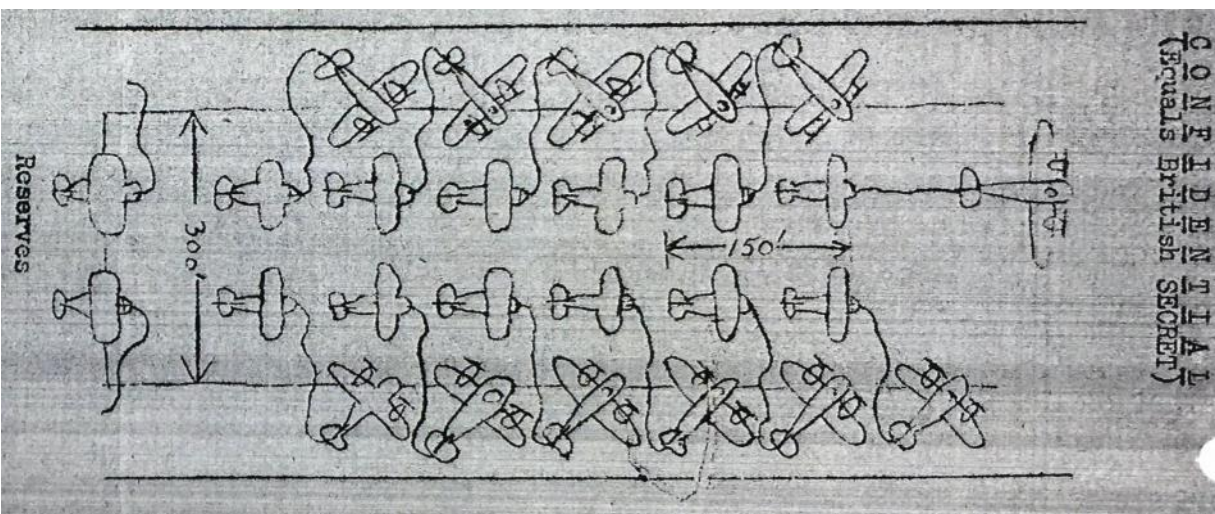
Photographed by Leibowitz, 163rd Signal Photo Company.





Briefing for mission DOVE

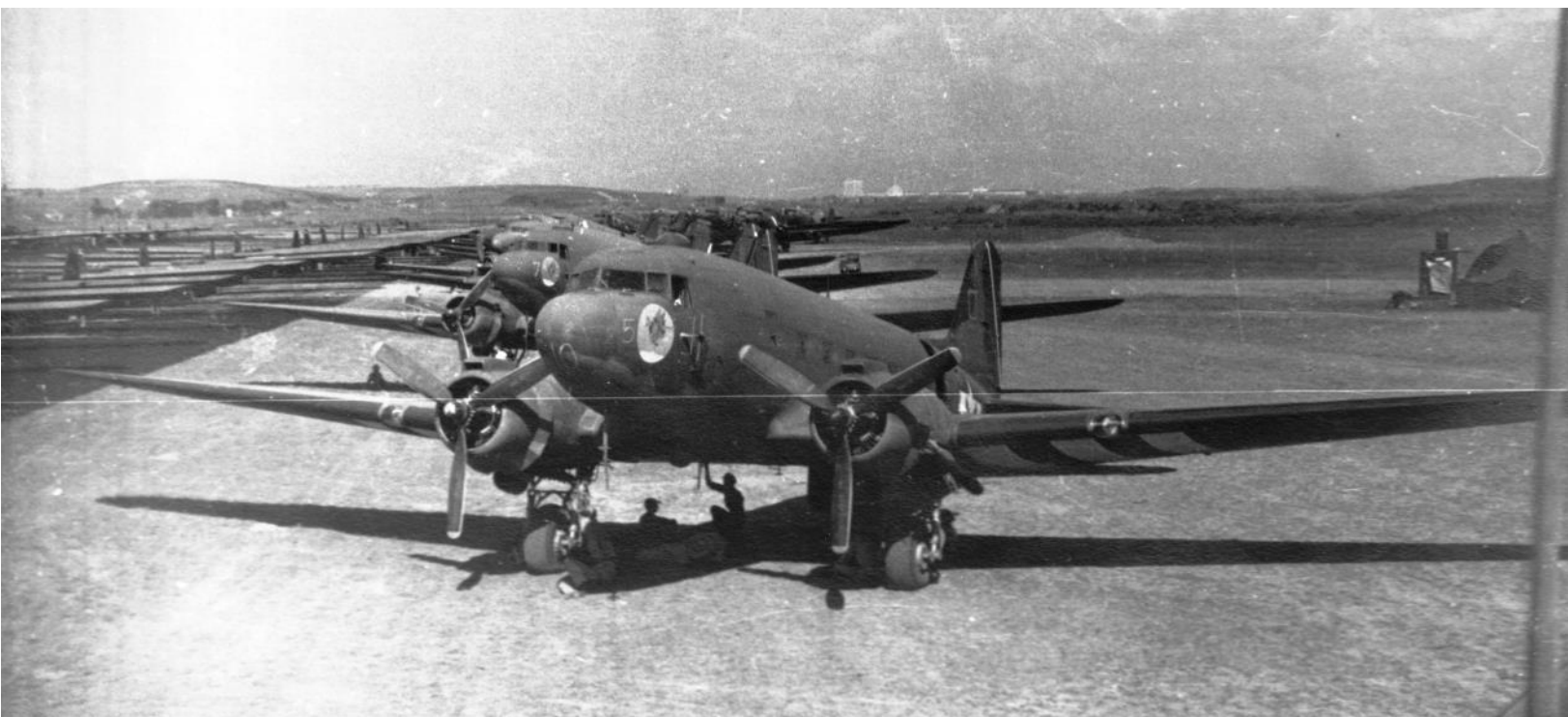




Taking off for southern France.

Marshaling formation.

Photographer:
Roger Smith.



for info
C 02 gm
C/S JAK
A-3
RESTRICTED
SECRET

Reclassified by Auth: CG 51st TC WG

25 Oct 1944

Initials: RR-E

HEADQUARTERS 64TH TROOP CARRIER GROUP
Office of the Operations Officer
APO 650, US Army

21 August 1944

SUBJECT: Report on Glider Mission DOVE

TO : Commanding Officer, 64th TC Group, APO 650, US Army
(Attention: S-2)

1. In accordance with request the following report is submitted. The report is based on interrogation of the glider pilots who returned.

2. NARRATIVE

The gliders and tugs were lined up on the runway with intercommunication ropes connected by one hour before the time of take-off. After that it was a matter of checking and re-checking equipment, re-lashing loads, adjusting, tightening. The take-off began on time. The only incidents were caused by two tow-ropes breaking as the gliders began to move, and one tug taxiing out of the line-up with a bad engine. The hard working ground crew, breathing the heavy dust, towed these three gliders aside, made hasty repairs. After all the others were off the two tugs whose ropes had broken landed and were connected again with new ropes. A spare ship took the place of the one which had gone out of commission. When these three had taken off the whole flight of 47 teams was on its way. They swung back over the field getting into formation, gaining altitude, and were off to the rendez-vous point.

The flight itself was uneventful. Many of the glider pilots said it was the smoothest flight they had ever been on. As they neared the coast dense smoke made them anxious as to what awaited them, but no enemy opposition developed. Over the target, which was obscured by smoke drifting in from the coast until they were almost over it, the scene was one of confusion. Gliders of preceding waves had apparently taken all available landing space. The glider pilots released however, and as they circled down small openings presented themselves. The air was full of gliders, each following its own pattern, trying to lose altitude quickly and get into very restricted spaces. Many were just about to set down in a small clear spot only to have a glider come in from another direction and beat them to it. To add to the confusion, vegetation which they had been told was grape vines turned out to be small trees. Sharpened 4x4 poles 12 to 15 feet high strung with wire appeared, ready to gut and destroy luckless gliders. Most of the casualties occurred on the landing. Several pilots suffered broken legs as the unprotected noses of the gliders plowed into vines or furrows. Some were crushed as the load in the glider, torn loose by the shock of a crash landing, hurtled forward through the plywood noses. At the high altitude of release casualties would have been heavy if the enemy had opposed the landing with fire, but in this respect our men were lucky. The majority landed without injury to the occupants, although most of the gliders were damaged. The airborne troops set



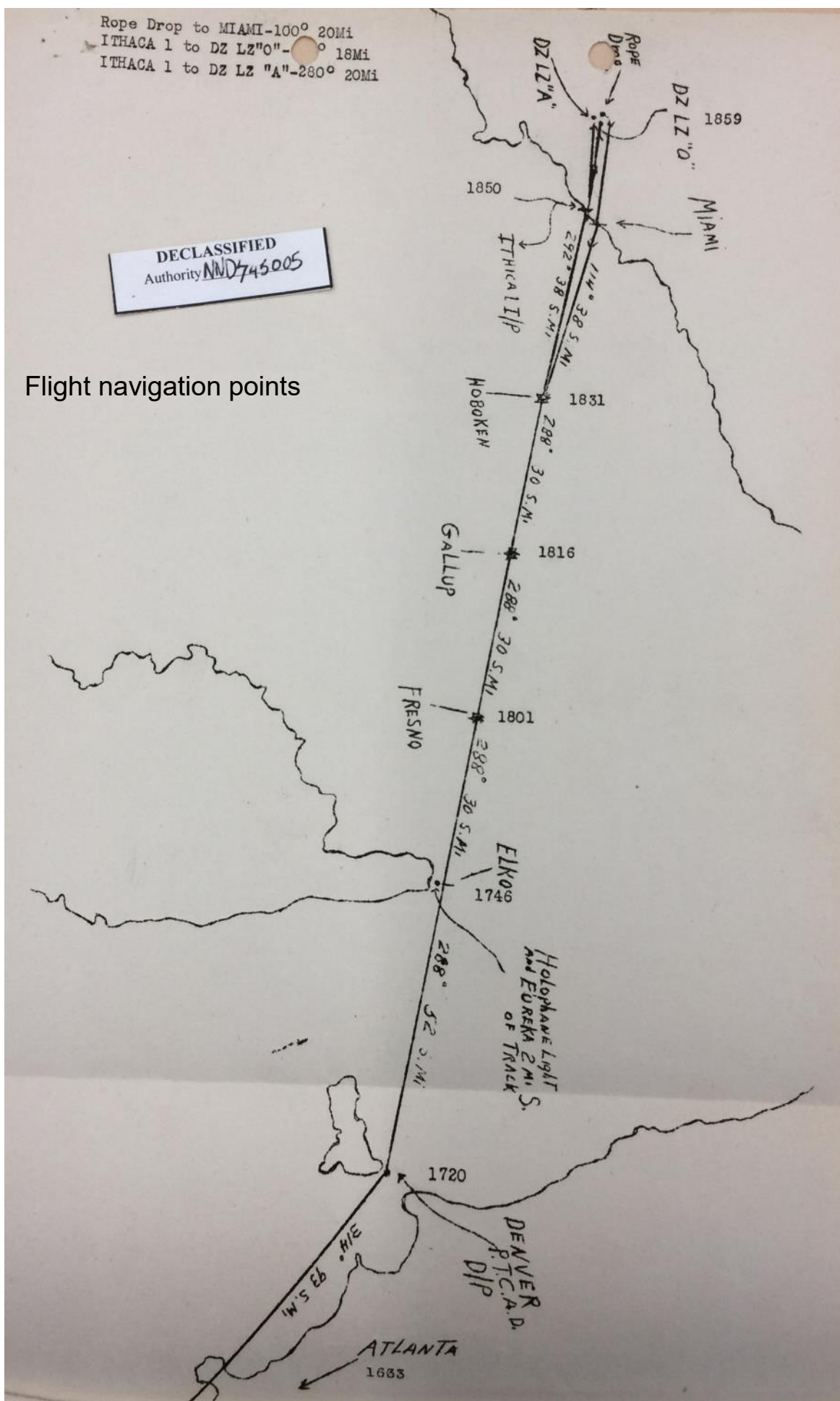
62nd TCG getting ready for mission DOVE Signal Corps Photos AAF



Rope Drop to MIAMI-100° 20Mi
 ITHACA 1 to DZ LZ "O"- 18Mi
 ITHACA 1 to DZ LZ "A"-280° 20Mi

DECLASSIFIED
 Authority ND 745005

Flight navigation points



SECRET

Ltr, Hq 64 TC Gp, Subj; Report on Glider Mission DOVE, dtd 21 Aug 1944 mont'd set

to work unloading the jeeps, mortars, ammunition and other equipment. Later the pilots said that to look at the landing field covered with gliders made one wonder how anyone came out alive.

Most of the glider pilots proceed to Regimental CP as instructed, where they spent the night in fox-holes as the enemy tried to zero in artillery near them. The occupants of one glider, being without maps, went to the wrong town, to find it occupied by Germans. One airbourne man was killed, one glider pilot wounded twice, and the other pilot kept firing until he ran out of ammunition, when he surrendered. He and his teammate, who was hospitalized by the Germans, were freed the next day when the town was taken by the Allies. He said the German captain who captured him told him he was being treated well, in return for which the captain expected good treatment when he was captured.

Some of the glider pilots joined ground troops and went on patrols, or operated in small groups alone. One group was proceeding down a road on captured motorcycles when they were fired on by snipers. They dispersed and stalked the snipers' post, capturing the snipers, a captain and lieutenant. Returning to their motorcycles after turning in the prisoners they found themselves surrounded and under fire from all sides. They took cover in a ditch and made their way to safety unharmed.

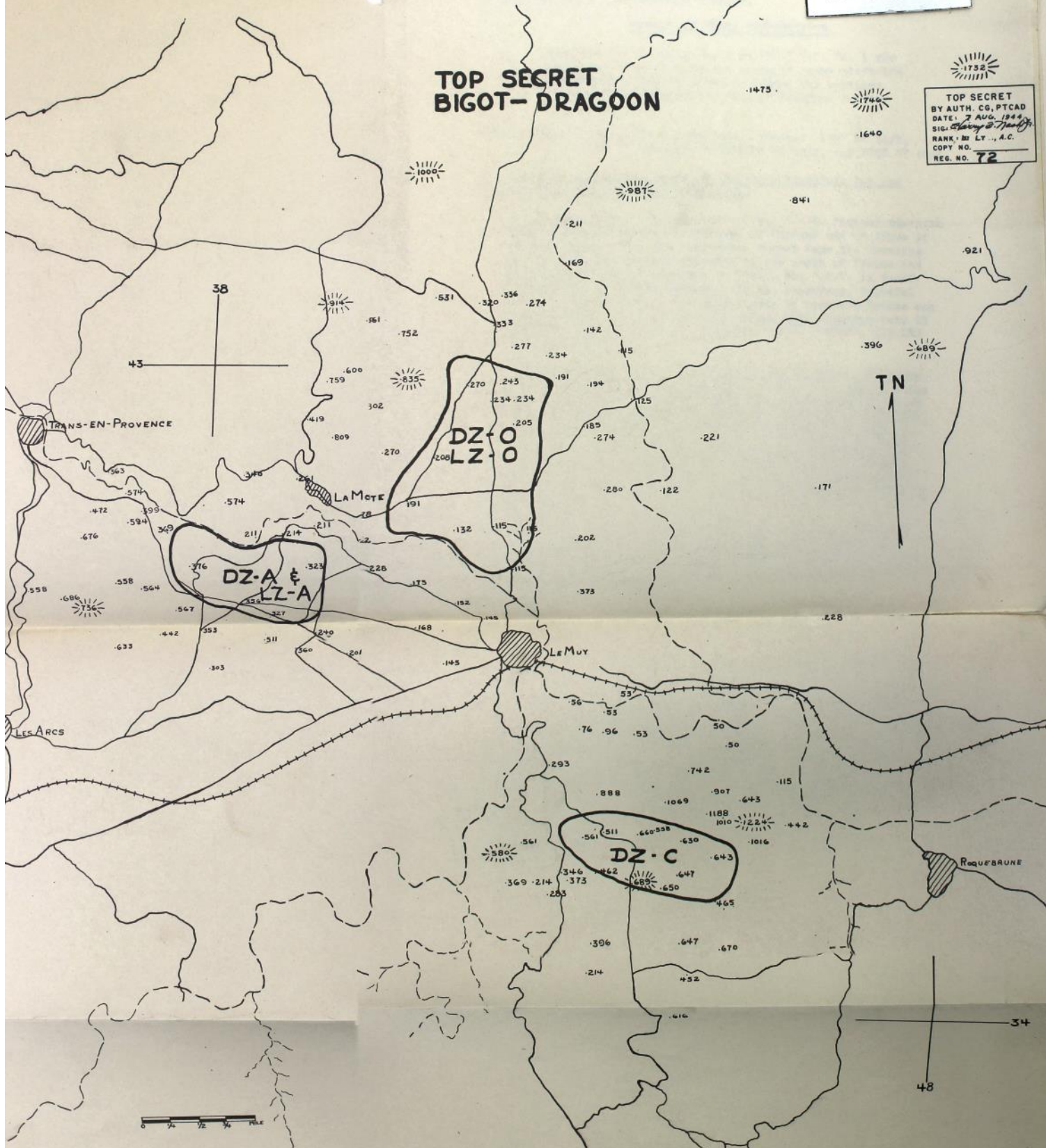
Some glider pilots made their way to the coast alone, unable to locate the collecting points where they should have reported. However, the majority of pilots reported to the Regimental CP and the next morning went to Divisional CP. Here the Provost Marshall, with very few MP's to guard a large number of prisoners, asked them to help. So the pilots, though tired from the action and lack of sleep the night before, did guard duty that afternoon, all night, and the next morning. The stockades were too small to contain all the prisoners so they were kept in open fields, requiring heavy guards. About noon of the second day after the landing they started marching the prisoners to the beach in groups of 50 or 60, guarded by 3 glider pilots per group. Going through towns the glider pilots often had to protect the prisoners from the irated French citizens.

Back at the coast the pilots were taken aboard landing craft and delivered to Corsica. There seemed to be no provision for their evacuation, but they spoke highly of the friendly helpfulness of both British and US naval officers in getting them out. The glider pilots were also unanimous in their praise of the work of the Medical personnel at the LZ. Short-handed they still worked long and cheerfully aiding the injured and wounded.

The glider pilots who returned were well-satisfied with the mission in spite of the few mistakes. All of the gliders of the 64th Group landed in the LZ. We lost 3 glider pilots killed and several seriously wounded. The airbourne troops had practically no serious casualties due to landing.

TOP SECRET
BIGOT- DRAGOON

TOP SECRET
BY AUTH. CG, PTCAD
DATE: 7 AUG. 1944
SIC: *Refugee & Neutral*
RANK: BR LT., A.C.
COPY NO.
REG. NO. 72



APPENDIX A-1
TO ANNEX NO. 1 TO P.T.C.A.D.
F.O. NO. 1 FOR OPERATION
DRAGOON
TERRAIN FEATURES
MAP: GSGS 4411 SHEETS XXXV - 44 1 & 2 - 5 & 6
SCALE 1:25,000

TOP SECRET
BIGOT- DRAGOON

LEGEND
ROADS ———
RAILROADS +++++
RIVERS ———
SPOT HEIGHTS IN FEET 392

OFFICIAL: A-2
ERNST

WILLIAMS
7 AUGUST 1944

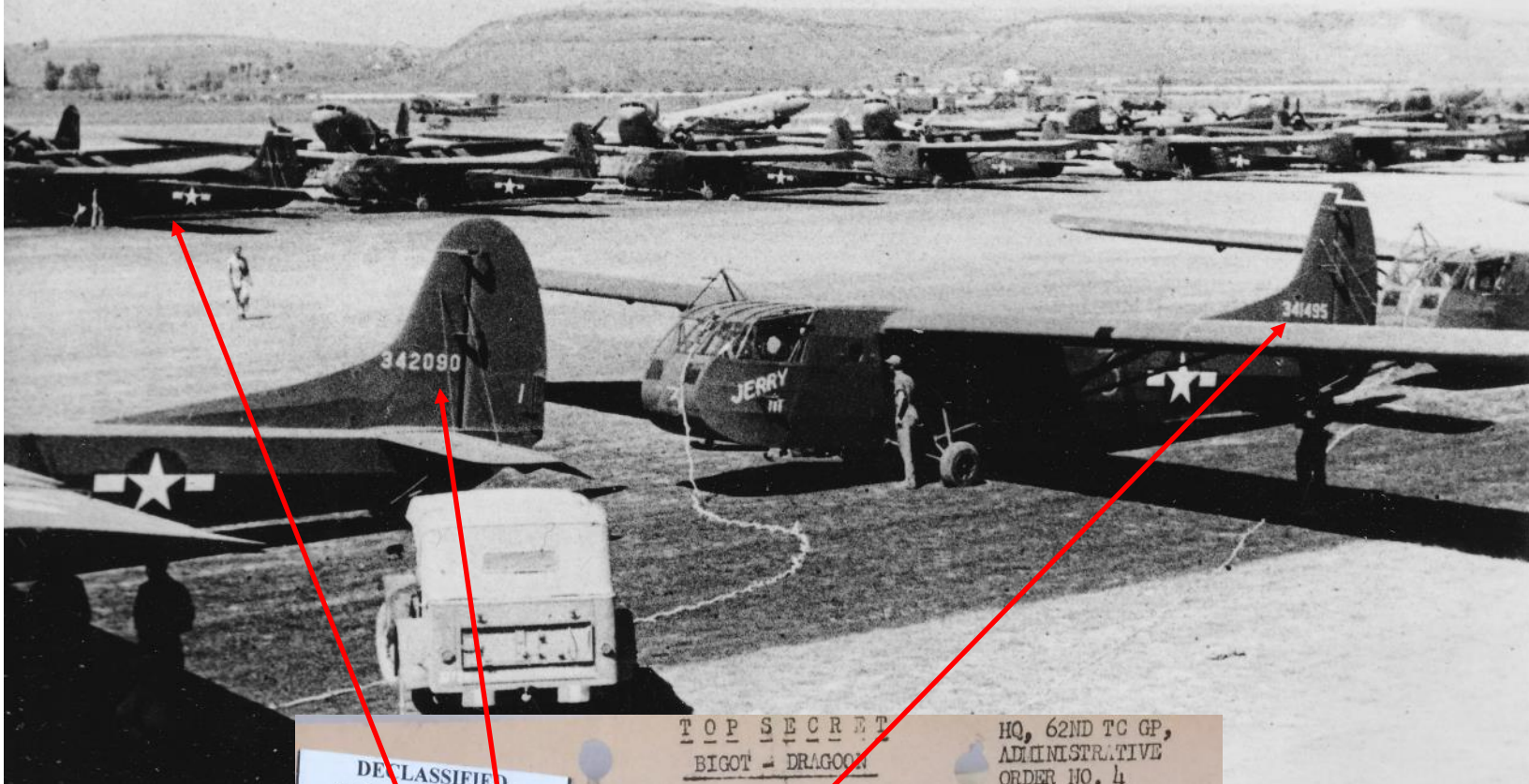


Photographed by Roger Smith flying copilot in C-47 a day after mission DOVE



Photographed by Leibowitz,
Signal Corps, 163rd Signal
Corps Photo company. Glider
landing.

Galara Air Field of the 62nd Troop Carrier Group. Marshaled for take off.



DECLASSIFIED
 Authority: **NND745005**

TOP SECRET
BIGOT - DRAGON

HQ, 62ND TC GP,
 ADMINISTRATIVE
 ORDER NO. 4

following crews of gliders indicated will participate
 in operation "DOVE":

STICK NO.	GLIDER NO.	PILOT & CO-PILOT	RANK	ASN
1	43-42090	Needle, William	Capt.	O-668922
2	43-43121	Winslow, Dean S.	1st Lt.	O-361153
3	43-41495	Hayden, Harold D.	2d Lt.	O-535971
4	43-41527	Dillahunty, James R. Curtis, Douglas C.	F/O F/O	T-123812 T-12310
5.	42-74407	Nugent, Robert O. Thacker, H. D.	F/O F/O	T-122159 T-121697





Aid station. It was mentioned by the GP to evacuate the wounded by glider.





Photographed by Roger Smith Glider Pilots evacuating from LZ "O"



SECRET

Ltr, Hq 64 TC GP, Subj; Report on Glider Mission DOVE, dtd 21 Aug 1944 cont'd

3. In the interest of suggesting improvements for future glider missions the following recommendations and comments are respectfully submitted. These were made by the glider pilots who returned from the mission.

a. Planning

(1) The glider pilots expressed satisfaction with the planning. They suggested the following improvements:

(a) As planned, the gliders released and made a diving turn to the left. This resulted in excessive speed which was difficult to dissipate in the crowded traffic conditions. The formation should be such that the gliders can remain in level flight until they have slowed to normal gliding speed.

(b) A traffic pattern should be planned, briefed on, and adhered to over the LZ. This would minimize confusion and accidents in the air, and by having all gliders landing in the same direction would permit the field to be used better.

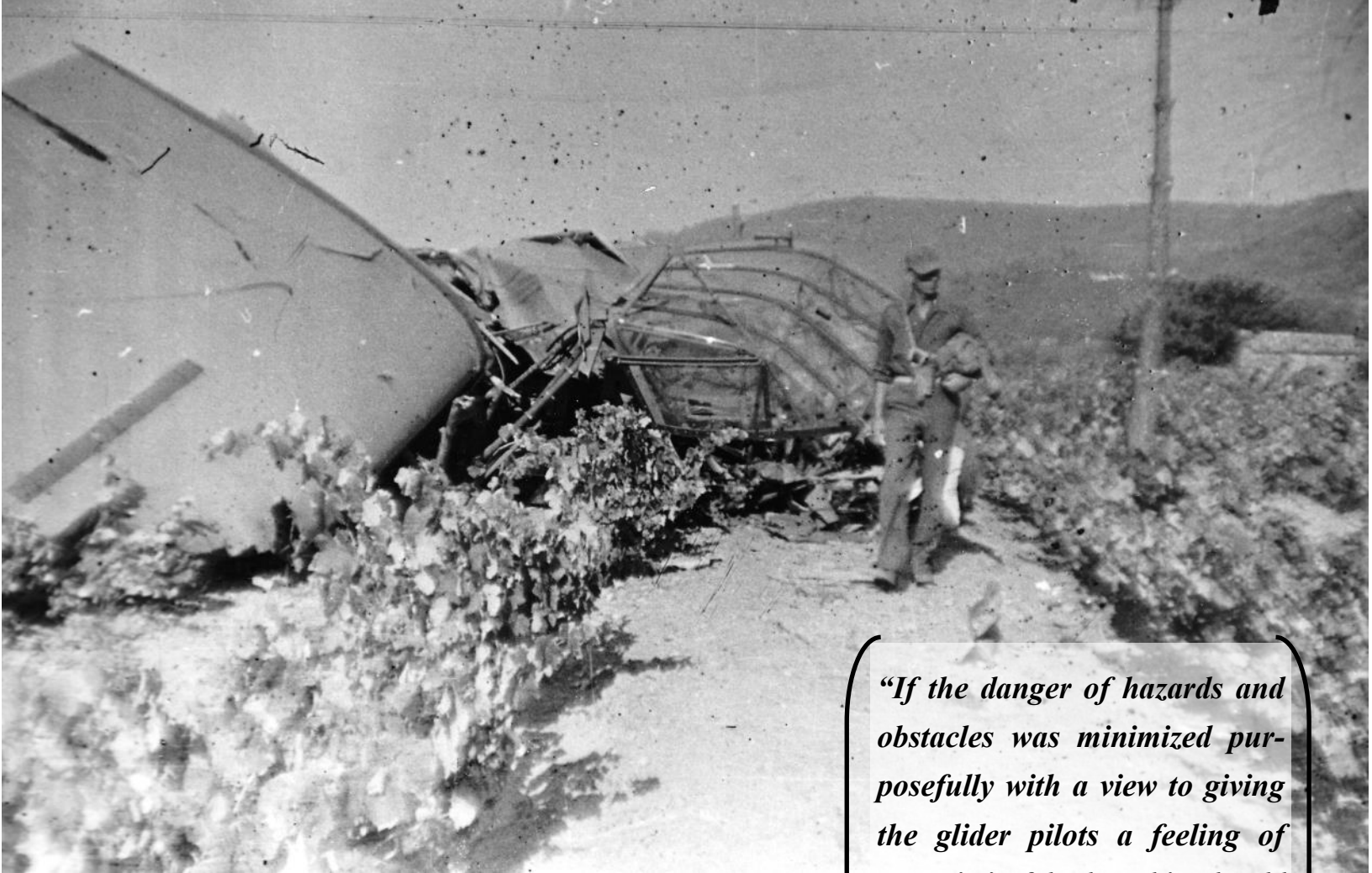
b. Briefing

(1) The briefing for this mission was considered grossly inadequate and all but valueless as regards the landing zone.

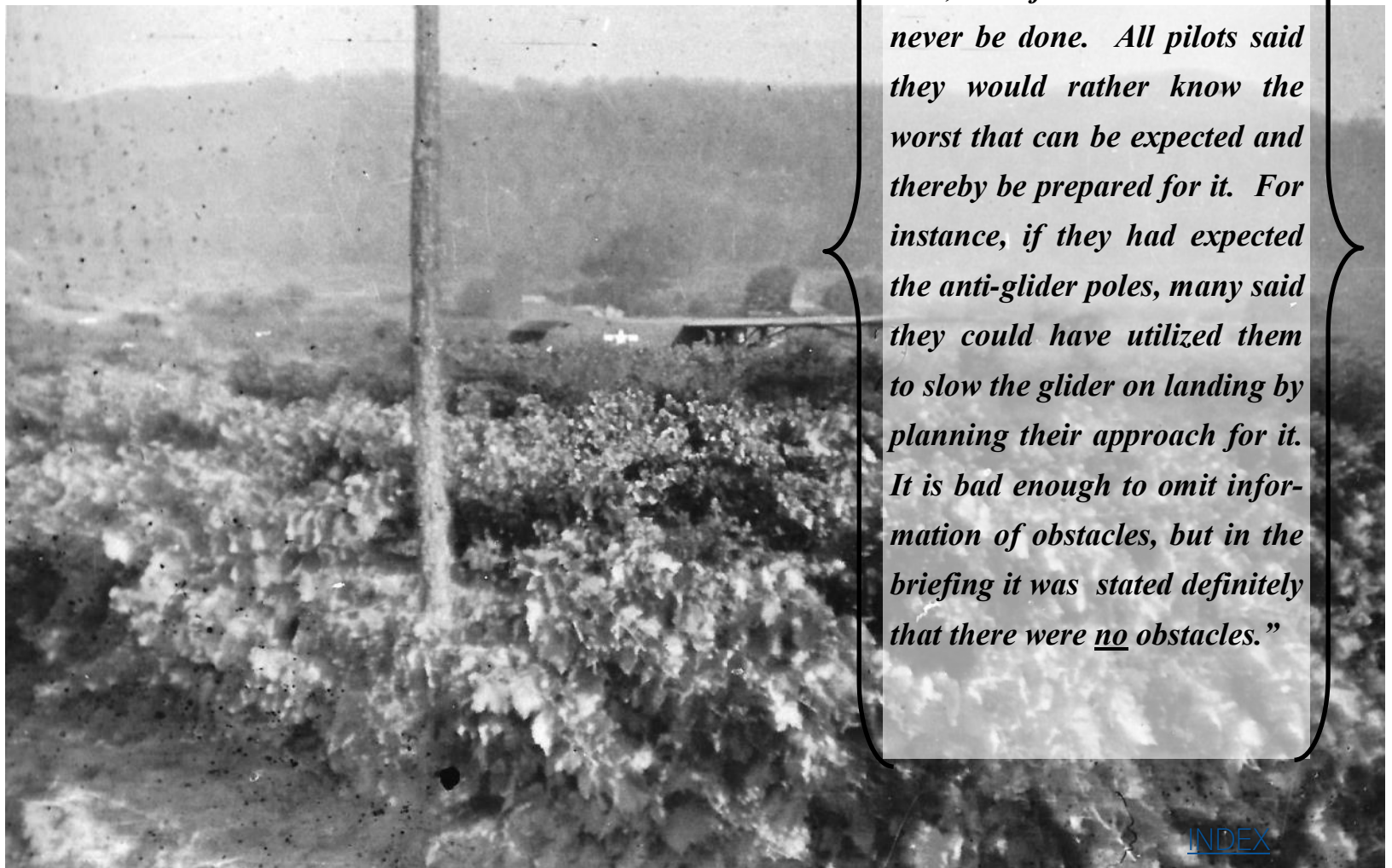
(a) The only photo available was a high altitude vertical. This did not give sufficient detail to familiarize the pilots with the nature of the terrain.

(b) The interpretation of the photograph available was inaccurate. "Grapevines" were actually peach orchards with trees instead of low vines. "Vine poles or stakes" were actually 4x4 anti-glider poles 12 to 15 feet high. "60 foot trees" were correctly reported, but the fact that they were on a 100 foot rise was omitted. A high tension wire was not shown in the photograph. At least one pilot of this group was killed by hitting the wire, and several gliders were damaged. While the necessity for not attracting attention to proposed LZ is realized, all pilots felt that low oblique photos, and if possible, stereoscopic views, are necessary.

(c) If the danger of hazards and obstacles was minimized purposefully with a view to giving the glider pilots a feeling of ease, it is felt that this should never be done. All pilots said they would rather know the worst that can be expected and thereby be prepared for it. For instance, if they had expected the anti-glider poles, many said they could have utilized them to slow the glider on landing by planning their approach for it. It is bad enough to omit information of obstacles, but in the briefing it was stated definitely that there were no obstacles.



"If the danger of hazards and obstacles was minimized purposefully with a view to giving the glider pilots a feeling of ease, it is felt that this should never be done. All pilots said they would rather know the worst that can be expected and thereby be prepared for it. For instance, if they had expected the anti-glider poles, many said they could have utilized them to slow the glider on landing by planning their approach for it. It is bad enough to omit information of obstacles, but in the briefing it was stated definitely that there were no obstacles."



SECRET

Ltr, Hq 64 TC Gp, Subj; Report on Glider Mission DOVE, dtd 21 Aug 1944 cont'd

(d) The glider pilots should know something about the plans and objectives of the airborne troops. Then if they become separated or are unable to locate collecting points, they will know where to expect friendly troops. In this respect it is also recommended that glider pilots be furnished with adequate ground maps.

c. Tow

(1) In general, the glider pilots had nothing but praise for the manner in which they were towed. One complained of excessively varying speeds. Another was cut by the tow plane without warning, although the inter-communication system was working all the time. The rope fouled the landing gear, caught in wires on landing and caused the glider to crash. On the other hand, one tow pilot kept his glider on for several seconds when both engines cut-out over the sea and was finally able to catch them both up and continue. The only general recommendation was that the altitude of flight as planned should be adhered to. Many failed to drop down to the proper release altitude after crossing the coast. At that point they should have ignored prop wash if necessary.

d. Landing

(1) The release altitude varied from 1000 to 3000 feet. The first ship and the last ship were correct, but the others were almost universally high. Under the circumstances of this landing, with the crowded field, the glider pilots were thankful for the added altitude, giving them more time to look for a spot to land. However, if the landing had been opposed by fire of any caliber, casualties would have been great because of the added time in the air. Since it is impossible to foresee the amount of opposing fire, it is recommended that tow pilots adhere rigidly to the planned altitude. Above all, all releases should be at the same altitude.

(2) The different waves of gliders should be spaced farther apart to avoid the confusion caused by so many gliders being in the air at one time over a small field.

(3) Units assigned to land gliders in certain fields should be impressed with the absolute necessity of avoiding fields assigned to other units. This group was the last one in. The field assigned to us was already well filled when we arrived.

(4) It is recommended that provision be made to clear gliders off the field as well as possible between waves. (see par f (4) below)

(5) The opinion of every pilot was that the fields selected were too small for the number of gliders used.

SECRET

Ltr, Hq 64 TC Gp, Subj: Report on Glider Mission DOVE, dtd 21 Aug 1944 cont'd

e. Loading

(1) Great care must be taken to assure that the load is properly secured, with special emphasis on lashings to prevent the load shifting forward in case of a crash landing.

(2) The load, particularly vehicles, should be securely connected to the nose lifting cable, by chain or rope if the cable is not long enough. Then if the load breaks loose in spite of precautions the nose will be lifted, preventing injury to the pilots. If the tie-down cable is used for the front of the jeep it should be released before landing as it prevents the nose from opening.

(3) If personnel are carried with equipment each passenger must be securely safety-belted to the glider (not to the load). If possible the passengers should be in the rear of the glider, behind the load. It may be possible to install a seat crosswise between the doors to accommodate personnel. In several cases on this flight personnel were successfully landed while sitting in a jeep by having the personnel tied into the seats with rope. The driver's seat should not be occupied due to the possibility of injury to the occupant by the wheel.

(4) On a mission of this type every load must be prepared to withstand a crash landing with sudden stop. The troops must be warned not to release themselves or equipment until forward motion has been stopped. The glider may hit an obstacle at the last instant, causing injury if the load is loose. This occurred on this mission. Personal equipment such as weapons should also be secured well.

f. Equipment

(1) The unanimous opinion of the glider pilots interrogated was that the use of reinforced noses, such as the Griswold nose, on all gliders would have prevented a large majority of the casualties to the glider pilots.

(2) All gliders should be equipped with dual controls.

(3) All gliders should be equipped with arrestor chutes. These were used to execute a safe landing in extremely small space by the few who were equipped with them.

(4) It is recommended that the first gliders carry moving equipment such as tugs to aid in clearing the gliders off the field. Jeeps could be used and then turned over to the airborne after the gliders had all landed.

(5) The personal equipment of the glider pilots was satisfactory. Many said that the flak suits prevented a large number of casualties due to crushing when the glider crash-landed.

(6) All commented on the inadequacy of the food supply. They recommended that a full case of rations, preferably "C" type, be in each glider.

SECRET

Ltr. Hq, 64th T C Gp, Subj; Report on Glider Mission DOVE, dtd 21 Aug 1944 cont'd.

G. Medical

- (1) All gliders should be equipped with complete aircraft first-aid kits.
- (2) Ground medical officers at the LZ recommended that one litter be carried in each glider. It could be lashed down aft of the cargo space.
- (3) Some suggested the possibility of using the glider pick-up system for the purpose of early evacuation of wounded.

Letter Headquarters 64th Troop Carrier Group: Subj: Report on glider mission DOVE, 21 Aug 1944, —U.S. Air Force Historical Research Agency

All photos not marked are courtesy Army Signal Corps, Army Air Force courtesy the U.S. National Archives and the Air Force Historical Research Agency.

Theodore M. Vial
THEODORE M. VIAL,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Ass't. Ops. Officer.

Further reading may be found on the Glider Pilots' website including:

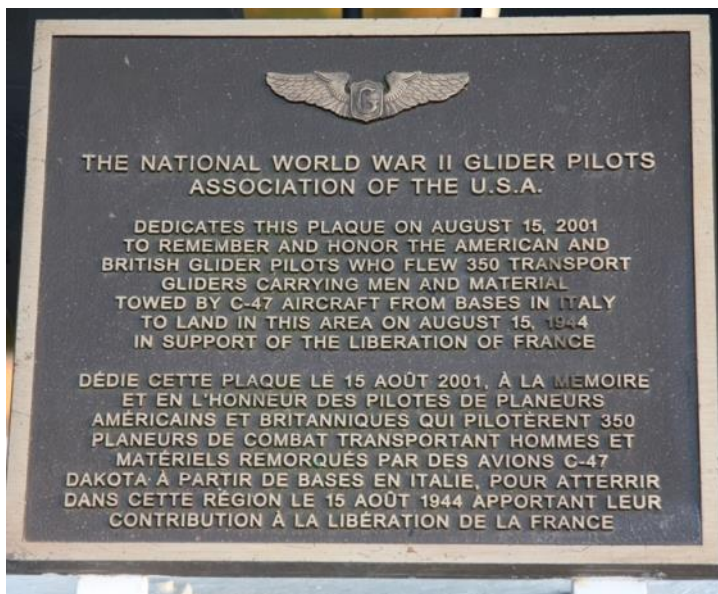
Operation Dragoon

Field Order No. 10 Issued by 62nd TC Group

Instructions to Glider Pilots

Enemy and Friendly Situation

62nd Troop Carrier Group Tug and Glider Crew list 15 August 1944



INDEX

LETTERS HOME BEFORE AND AFTER OPERATION DRAGON OF LT. FRANKLIN B. STICKNEY 87 TCS/ 438TCG

BY CLAUDIA STICKNEY COGGIN

During his time in the ETO, Lt. Franklin B. Stickney was a faithful correspondent with his parents in Midland, Texas. Letters to his sweetheart (my mother), Kay, to be delivered if he didn't return from the Normandy mission and to his parents, A.B. "Slim" and Bess Stickney, describing his D-Day experience were published in the WWII U.S. Glider Pilot's Briefing Special Edition of the 80th Anniversary of Normandy.

Prior to Operation Dragoon in southern France, this excerpt from Franklin's letter dated "Sunday afternoon 2:20 August 13, 1944, somewhere in Italy", informs his parents of his next mission:

Dear Mom and Dad,

Well, I'll take this time to drop you a line because, well, it may be a time before I get a chance to write you again. By the time you get this will know why.

Yeh, I was really a bit optimistic about them not going to use me anymore. Guess that's the way it is in this army, you don't know from one minute till the next what they're going to do with you. This is really a big job and even bigger than the last one. Things are going pretty good for us in France now so maybe it'll be over before too much longer.

Don't worry about me Mom because the Lord is going to look out for me. He did the last time and I can trust him again. Besides I've got a lot of responsibility with Kay and Claudia back home.

The following excerpts are from Franklin's letter to his parents dated "England Sunday afternoon 2:20 August 27, 1944." This letter

describes his experiences in France during Operation Dragoon and his return to England. This letter reports some of the lighter times Franklin and his group experienced.

Dear Mom and Dad,

How are you? Guess by now you have been worried about me since the invasion but I came thru it just like I knew I would-without a scratch. This was really an easy mission as compared to the last one.

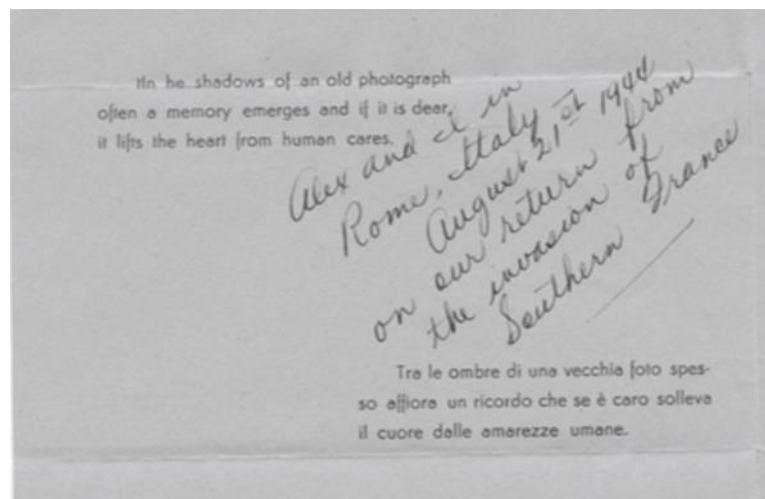
Really had a nice trip while I was gone from England. Saw all of the French Riviera, went for a swim in the blue Mediterranean stopped at Corsica on the back and stayed in 2½ days in Casablanca, North Africa on the way home. Some tour and all on the government.

We landed in France about 4 in the afternoon and went up to the Division Command Post and found a 20 gallon jug of the best wine you ever tasted. It was really good. Then when it started to get dark we had some K-rations for supper and dug us a fox hole and went to sleep. Next morning we got up early and started out looking for something to do. We went down to this small town that had been captured and we got into a German motor pool and got us a little German car to run around in. It was really a snappy job. We were evacuated in about 2 ½ days and brought back to Corsica and flown back to our bases in Italy. Then we got one day in Rome and then were flown back to England by way of Africa.

I'm not going to tell you that I am not going to have any more missions because the way things are going over here now, we don't know when they will use us again. Gen Eisenhower made us a little talk after we came back from France and commended us for our fine work. Said he was proud of us for the work we had done, but not near as proud as he would be for the jobs we are going to do in the future. So you can take that for what it's worth. I sure hope we hurry and get home tho'.



Flight route from Italy to the landing zone in the Draguignan area of Southern France. Drawn by Lt. Stickney.



The Army did use Franklin again in Operation Market Garden and Operation Varsity. Additional letters to his parents in the collection describe his experiences in those two missions and later as a C47 co-pilot carrying supplies where needed. Franklin was one of the lucky glider pilots who did return home to his family.

Author Note: The letters used and pictures accompanying this article are from the Stickney Collection- Accession #2021-20 Silent Wings Museum, Lubbock, TX.

OPERATIONS

What are our members doing?

YOU WERE IN NORMANDY FOR THE 80TH!

Colonel Mark Vlahos, USAF Ret. Mark was in the United Kingdom at Royal Air Force Air Field Saltby home to the 314th Troop Carrier Group while in England. Mark was there to give a [presentation](#) on the 314th Troop Carrier Group. The BBC caught up with him for an interview and he made the National News! Kudos Mark!

Zach Cromley. Represented the National WWII Glider Pilots Association, Zach again this year traveled with the Best Defense Foundation to Normandy for the 80th Normandy commemorations.

Philippe Esvelin. Philippe represented the Association in Normandy at the town of Sebeville presenting a plaque on our behalf. He gave several presentations during the commemorations. He was also at the Museum of Sainte-Mère-Église where he is their historical advisor. He was signing his new book *Wing Commandos: the history of the American gliders in WWII*.

Alana Jolley

Author Alana Jolley, author of the book “*My Father had no Children*” ran into Philippe Esvelin at his book signing at the Museum of Sainte-Mère-Église.



Michael Larkin

Was doing some very special field research in Normandy and will be giving a presentation at the 52nd National WWII Glider Pilot Association's symposium. It is a great story

Other members in Normandy:

Patrick Larkin's family and Brian Stitzinger

I am sure there are others that we have missed. I can only say we were well represented!!

Author Scott Mcgaugh

Brotherhood of the Flying Coffin

Scott's [Brotherhood of the Flying Coffin](#) will be out in paperback on September 24, 2024.

MISSIONS

THANK YOU TO THOSE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS WHO HAVE CONTACTED THE LEON B SPENCER RESEARCH TEAM TO PARTNER ON RESEARCHING WWII TROOP CARRIER HISTORY DURING THIS QUARTER.

John Brunett son of F/O John Wesley Burnett

Ryan Phillips grandson of 2nd Lt Robert Jack Phillips

Anothy Archer grandson of F/O Edgar A Archer

Louis Holt grandson of 2nd Lt Arnold L Holt

Brian Stitzinger son of 2nd Lt Bruce Lester Stitzinger

Meaghan Nelson researching Frank Hugh Whittington

Adrian Webb general research

Timothe Look researching PGP 2nd Lt Edward H Giles

Rob Overman researching F/O Willaim Palmer Ward

Rebecca Palmer daughter of Corporal George Visnic

Richard Homan Jr. son of F/O Richard Dewey Homan

Molly Lukas granddaughter of F/O Alfred E Lukaszski

Cynthia Schweigert Shelton granddaughter of 2nd Lt George E Schweigert

Jasmine Yates granddaughter of Donald Leoy Yates

Clint Mesle nephew of 20th GFAB of the 82nd Abn Division. KIA 2nd Lt Clinton H Gumbrecht

Dominic Calvani grandson of Torello Howard Calvani

Ed Ryman son of Sherman Ryman

Paul Muhamedcani grandson of 2nd Lt Paul E Carney

Greg Randall son of F/O Frances Lowell Randall

Ross Singleton great-great -nephew of British First Airborne Pte Alexander McNeil Jones

Vicente Suarez, Asturians under American Flag Project researching F/O Joseph Raymond Rodriguez

Lara Heintz granddaughter of John E Heintz

Mike Flynn son of F/O Hershel Dale Flynn

Bryan Schuessler grandson of F/O James Harrison Schuessler

Rob Fowler son in law of F/O John Henry Wesley

Angela McCoy niece F/O Steve Adam Najvar

J.E. S Stuart grandson of Ray Edward Meeker

David Skinner researching F/O William Ely Schlichnter

Jonathan Abbott researching F/O George Frazier Cheston

Tim Donovan son of 2nd Lt Daniel F Donovan

Ava Rudnicki daughter of 1st Lt Paul Timothy Rudnicki

Kurt Davis son of 2nd Lt Charles Nelson Davis **

Diane Laird-Ippolito daughter of 1st Lt Wilbert George Laird

Dennis English researching F/O David Vencil Whiten

Troy Adamietz great grandson to F/O Ignatius E. "Buddie" Adamietz

Colin Bal, author, general research

Roger Brown Associate Fellow Royal Historical Society

Caroline Kuhn daughter of 2nd Lt Eston Cameron Kuhn

Brian Stitzinger son of 2nd Lt Bruce Lester Stitzinger

Thierry Vadie researching F/O Frank L McGowan Jr.

Kaitlin Hall granddaughter of F/O George Alverton Rhoads

Sheryl Bergstrom daughter of 2nd Lt Gerald F Lindsey

George DeCarlo researching F/O Eugene Hulett Meyer Jr.

Norene Guilford daughter of 2nd Lt Anthony C Gates

Andrew Alderman grandson of Sgt Carl Schaffer

John Wright son of F/O John E Wright

Laura McCampbell Villarreal daughter of 2nd Lt Willaim Pancoast McCampbell

Steve Hock son of F/O Eugene M Hock

Michael Mitchell nephew of F/O Charles Leon Dodd

Jan Stout step-son of F/O Wallace (Wally) Leroy Hamilton

Etta Davidson researching F/O James A Curran

Ken Craib grandson of CPT John William Lasano

Michael Getty researching 2nd Lt Thomas F McGrath

Joe Frazer grandson of F/O Henry L Lysek

Andrew Hansen son of F/O Arthur James Hansen

Daniel Knox son of 2nd Lt Clinton Samuel Knox

Kaitlin Twardowski daughter of F/O George Alverton Rhoads

Robert Tyler grandson of F/O Earl L Durbin

Mary Flint daughter 2nd Lt Harry Pantreath Thomas Jr.

Miriam Grunert granddaughter of 2nd Lt Webber W Shows

Henry Hay great-nephew of F/O Pierpont Bishop Parrott

Neil Cotter researching F/O Herbert Humphrey

Kayla Garcia granddaughter of 2nd Lt Dale Eugene Edinger

Barbara Bingham researching 2nd Lt Carl Joseph Zett

Karolyn Hambrick Fessler daughter of F/O Frank Eldridge Hambrick

Frédéric Labeque grandson of 2nd Lt Peter Francis Corrigan

Toby Miller grandson, 2nd Lt Ray Coleman Miller

Dennis Metz grandson, researching Paul Arthur Metz

Joe Miller son of 1st Lt James P Miller

Diane Michalec granddaughter of F/O Joseph Lawrence Kulasa

Mathew Paniccia researching S/Sgt Charles J Schonger

Hunter Hill grandson of 2nd Lt John D Hill

David Keeton son of F/O Robert Jake Keeton

Jane Molinari daughter of F/O George Julian Jr

Theresa Lynch daughter of F/O Joseph V Barr

Carol Conner daughter of 2nd Lt Howard Gramm Schultz

Tony Magistro son of F/O John Magistro

Louis Holt grandson of 2nd Lt Arnold Leste Holt



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Getting ready for the invasion of southern France.



Cover photo: Photographer is unknown but was a professional Photographer at Broadway Bill. This photo is part of Roger W. Smith's collection. The Glider Pilot on the far left of the photo is Flight Officer Don Bohdon MARCHEWKA, in 8th Troop Carrier Squadron, 62nd Troop Carrier Group. Flight Officer Marchewaka was on detached service for southern France with the 17th Troop Carrier Squadron, 64th troop Carrier Group. Next to Marchewaka is believe to be Arthur Thomas The photo was taken in Rome at the trattoria is named Broadway Bill. It was frequented by the American glider pilots as proved in Claudia Coggins article.

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