

22d Bomb Group



In February 1944 the 22nd was designated Bombardment Group (Heavy) and was assigned to fly B-24 Liberators, the aircraft selected for use in the Pacific for its excellent long range capabilities. The B-24 could fly farther and deliver a heavier bomb load faster than her sister heavy, the much publicized B-17 Fortress. Dubbed by its detractors a flying coffin, the tally at war's end indicated that the Liberator had had a lower loss rate than the Fortress. The 19th and 33rd Squadrons received their transition training at Charters Tower, Australia. After their return, the 2nd and 408 trained in New Guinea.

While still involved in the transition, the Group's commanding officer, Col. Richard W. Robinson received this message, dated 19 March 1944, from Brig. Gen. Jarred V. Crabb, commander of the Fifth Bomber Command:

I wish to congratulate you, your officers, and men for superior performance today. The manner in which you serviced and reloaded your airplanes for a second strike this date, even though your orders were received just as your planes were landing from the first mission, indicates a high degree of training within your unit. We can all feel justly proud of the organization which can perform as you did.

Please express to your ground personnel my special appreciation for their demonstration of remarkable organization and efficiency of operation. Your air crews also deserve highest commendation for their efficient operation and display of fine discipline which is so necessary when called upon for an emergency mission.

Signed: Crabb COMBOMCOM FIVE

Once the Group was in full operation again, the B-24s were used against Japanese installations, oil refineries, and airfields in Borneo, Ceram, Halmahera and, in September, began neutralizing enemy bases in the Philippines. From the Schouten Islands the outstanding targets for the 22nd were the oil refineries at Balikpapan, a nominal 17 1/2 hour, 2610 mile mission. From December 1944 to August 1945, The **Red Raiders** struck air fields and installations on Luzon, supported Australian ground forces on Borneo, bombed shipping, airfields, railroads and installations in China and Formosa. The 22nd Bomb Group was the only bombardment group in the entire United States Air Force to fly the B-26s, the B-25s and the B-24s successively in combat.



One of the best four-engine heavy bombers, this plane is powered by 1200 hp. Pratt and Whitney radial engines. It mounts guns in turrets in the nose, on top of the fuselage, in the belly, and in the tail, and can carry a bomb load of 7500 lbs. more than 3000 miles. Armament consists of from 8 to 14 .50 calibre machine guns.

- Wings are shoulder-high, slender, and tapered to small round tips.
- Engines are underslung beneath wings, and set in a straight ' line.
- Fuselage is deep and flat-sided. Landing gear is

tricycle type with single retractable wheel forward and main landing wheels retracting into win-9 wells.

- Tail is compound with large oval fins and rudders.

Specifications: Span I 10 ft.; length 66 ft. 4 in.; height 17 ft. II in.; gross weight over 56,000 lb.; maximum speed over 300 m.p.h.; cruising range over 4000L mi.

EXTREMELY LONG SLENDER WINGS. PROTRUDING REAR TURRET. TWIN OVAL FINS AND RUDDERS. STUBBY FUSELAGE. Illustration and specifications from

AERONAUTICS AIRCRAFT SPOTTERS HANDBOOK (1943)

RED RAIDERS in the Battle of Leyte Gulf

The date was 26 October 1944, the place a newly established beach head on Leyte in the Philippines. At 1000 hours, following a tremendous bombardment since day break by Admiral Kinkaid's Seventh Fleet of battleships, cruisers, and destroyers. Admiral Daniel Barbey's VII Amphibious Force had simultaneously landed four United States divisions. General Douglas MacArthur, commander of the southwest Pacific forces, watched the action from the bridge of the cruiser Nashville. At 1300 hours, with fighting still raging, he ruined the sharp crease in his khakis as, sans a protective helmet, he waded ashore, fulfilling a promise he had made to the Philippine people two years, seven months and 28 days earlier.

At sea, the massive fleets of the United States and Japan were preparing to engage each other. Shortly after midnight on 23 October, U.S. submarines Darter and Dace, reported sighting one of the enemy fleets, then promptly torpedoed the heavy cruisers Atigo, Maya and Takao, sinking the first two and damaging the latter. The battle was joined. The Battle of Leyte, acclaimed by historians the greatest naval battle of

all time, ended four days later. Enemy vessels destroyed numbered one large aircraft carrier, three light carriers, three battleships, six heavy cruisers, four light cruisers, and eleven destroyers. U.S. losses were three small carriers, two destroyers, and one destroyer escort.

Omitted from most accounts is mention of the part played by land based aircraft of the Far East Air Forces, notably bombers from the 5th and 13th Air Forces based on Owi, Biak and Noemfoor. At day-break on the 26th, two B-24 s of the 13th AF night-flying Snoopers, reported sighting 15 enemy warships. Waiting for just such a message, Liberators of the 5th and 307th Groups in the 13th AF and the 22nd, 43rd, and 90th Groups in the 5th AF. FEAF reported that attacks were made on two battleships, five carriers and five destroyers west of Panay Island.. Hits were claimed on a battleship and two carriers.

The strike earned each of the bombardiers and pilots of the two Liberators a Distinguished Flying Cross. Rest of the crew were each awarded an Air medal. North of Dalipan, Mindanao, 22nd BG crews spotted what they identified as two cruisers of the Kuna- Natori class and a destroyer of the Shigura class in the target area. All were engaged in vigorous evasive action. It was not exactly a target that heavy bombers were designed for. The 33rd Sqd's flight of three bombers, each carrying 2 x 1000 and 1 x 500 pound demolition bombs, zeroed in on a light cruiser which was identified later as the Abukuma. Two days earlier, at 0325 hours, she had taken a torpedo from a PT boat. After undergoing temporary repairs at Dalipan, she was retiring from battle. At 1012 hours, 1st Lt. Carmine J. Coppola, bombardier in the lead plane, #M366 piloted by 1st Lt. Ulich Bell Jr., released his messages to Tojo. On his left, 1st Lt. Edwin M. Cummings Jr., the bombardier of aircraft #M402 piloted by 1st Lt. Bernard F. Alubowicz, followed suit. Three direct hits and a number of near misses took out the anti aircraft guns and caused the cruiser's four

torpedoes to explode and tear out the midsection. Photos taken a few minutes later by 319th and 400th Sqds of the 90th BG, show the warship exploding and sinking. A Japanese source indicates that the Abukuma sank 37 nautical miles off Dapitan at 1242 hours, taking 250 crewmen down with her. 283 were picked up the Japanese destroyer Shio.

In part, Lt. Bell's citation reads: "Despite the thoroughly alerted anti-aircraft defense and strong evasive action taken by the enemy ships during the attack and in the face of strong enemy firepower which was probable and expected, Lt. Bell exhibited a professional skill and an inspiring leadership which contributed materially to a decisive defeat of the enemy in that engagement. His extraordinary achievement and sound judgement is in keeping with the finest traditions of the service."

15th Air Force, USAAF

Constituted as Fifteenth AF on 30 Oct 1943. Activated in the Mediterranean theater on 1 Nov 1943. Began operations on 2 Nov and engaged primarily in strategic bombardment of targets in Italy, France, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, and the Balkans until the end of the war. Inactivated in Italy on 15 Sep 1945. Activated in the US on 31 Mar 1946. Assigned to Strategic Air Command.

Wings

- 5th Bombardment: 1943-1945.
- 42d Bombardment: 1943.
- 47th Bombardment: 1944-1945.
- 49th Bombardment: 1944-1945.
- 55th Bombardment: 1944-1945.

- 304th Bombardment: 1943-1945.
- 305th Bombardment: 1943-1945.
- 306th Fighter: 1944-1945.
- 307th Bombardment: 1944.

Stations

- Tunis, Tunisia, 1 Nov 1943
- Bari, Italy, 1 Dec 1943-15 Sep 1945
- Colorado Springs, Colo, 31 Mar 1946
- March AFB, Calif, 7 Nov 1949-.

Commanders

- Maj Gen James H Doolittle, 1 Nov 1943
- Maj Gen Nathan F Twining, 3 Jan 1944
- Brig Gen James A Mollison, 26 May 1945
- Brig Gen William L Lee, 3 Aug 1945
- Col Elmer J Rogers Jr, 31 Aug-15 Sep 1945
- Maj Gen Charles F Born, 31 Mar 1946
- Brig Gen Leon W Johnson, 24 Apr 1947
- Maj Gen Emmett O'Donnell Jr, 6 Oct 1948
- Maj Gen Walter C Sweeney Jr, 20 Apr 1953
- Maj Gen Archie J Old Jr, c. 20 Aug 1955

Campaigns

- Air Combat, EAME Theater
- Air Offensive, Europe
- Naples-Foggia
- Anzio
- Rome-Arno
- Normandy
- Northern France
- Southern France
- North Apennines
- Rhineland
- Central Europe
- Po Valley.

Decorations. None

Insigne. On a blue disc a white star charged with a red disc in the center and with golden orange stylized wings below a golden orange Arabic numeral "15", all within a golden orange annulet. (Approved 19 Feb 1944.)

484th Bombardment Group

History		
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Constituted as 484th Bombardment Group (Heavy) on 14 Sep 1943 and activated on 20 Sep. Trained for combat with B-24's.

Moved to Italy, Mar-Apr 1944. Assigned to Fifteenth AF. Redesignated 484th Bombardment Group (Pathfinder) in May 1944 but did not perform pathfinder functions. Redesignated 484th Bombardment Group (Heavy) in Nov 1944. Operated primarily as a strategic bombardment organization, Apr 1944-Apr 1945. Attacked such targets as oil refineries, oil storage plants, aircraft factories, heavy industry, and communications in Italy, France, Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, and Yugoslavia. On 13 Jun 1944 a heavy smoke screen prevented the group from bombing marshalling yards at Munich; however, in spite of severe damage from flak and interceptors, and despite heavy gunfire encountered at the alternate target, the group bombed marshalling yards at Innsbruck and received a DUC for its persistent action. Received second DUC for performance on 21 Aug 1944 when, unescorted, the organization fought its way through intense opposition to attack underground oil storage installations in Vienna. In addition to strategic missions the 484th participated in the drive toward Rome by bombing bridges, supply dumps, viaducts, and marshalling yards, Apr-Jul 1944; ferried gasoline and oil to Allied forces in southern France, Sep 1944; and supported the final advance through northern Italy, Apr 1945. Moved to Casablanca in May 1945. Assigned to Air Transport Command. Inactivated in French Morocco on 25 Jul 1945.



Campaigns

Air Combat, EAME Theater, Air Offensive, Europe, Rome-Arno, Normandy, Northern France, Southern France, North Apennines, Rhineland, Central Europe, Po Valley,



Decorations

Stations

Harvard AAFld, NE	20 Sep 1943-2 Mar 1944
Torretto Airfield, Italy	Apr 1944
Casablanca, French Morocco	c. 25 May-25 Jul 1945

Commanders

Col. William B. Keese	Oct 1943
Lt. Col. Chester C. Busch	Apr 1945-unkn

Squadrons

824th		Bombardment	1943-1945
825th		Bombardment	1943-1945
826th		Bombardment	1943-1945
827th		Bombardment	1943-1945
B-24	Liberator	Consolidated	

Raymond C. Martin

B-24 Pilot, 826th Squadron, [484th Bomb Group](#), 49th Bomb Wing, [15th AF](#), Torretta, Italy. Flew 25 missions including Polesti oilfields (5/31/1944), awarded DFC.



Raymond C. Martin



15th Air Force



484th Bomb Group



826th Squadron

The 484th Bombardment Group (H) was trained in Harvard, Nebraska in 1943 with B-24s and deployed to Italy in March 1944. The group arrived in Cerignola, Italy where the gently rolling mounds of the Foggia plain awaited them. In pre-war days the Italian Air force trained near Foggia, too. The 484th BG took over farmland where wheat was once grown. Dual North and South runways were laid out and paved with crushed gravel, and later improved with pierced steel planking, a dubious improvement especially when it rained.

The group brought 60 new olive drab B-24s to the airfield at the Torretta crossroads about 12 K southwest of Cerignola, itself 35K south of Foggia. The group started out with about 3 trained crews of 10 men for every B-24. This would vary depending on losses and availability of replacements. In the one year of combat operations over 5,000 soldiers and airmen passed through the group. Replacements were brought in to fill in the Table of Organization (TO) due to casualties, illness and to replace flight crews who had finished their combat tours. For a battle area that was expected to offer light resistance tours were set at 50 missions. However resistance was stiff from both fighter aircraft and flak cannons. Credit was shortly reduced to 35 Missions, and modified again by giving double credit to long and arduous missions. Flight crews were given leave to rest camps at the halfway point of 18 sorties. Ground echelon personnel were given leave also when conditions permitted it. One such camp

was on the Isle of Capri.

The B-24 Liberator Bomber



The Consolidated B-24 Liberator was designed and built in such great haste such was the need for a heavy bomber in 1939, when Germany invaded Poland. By taking the long Davis Wing and empennage from a twin-engine seaplane and installing them on an oval fuselage the B-24 was born. To improve ground handling visibility, the whole assembly was set on tricycle landing gear. The design was both good and bad, Good: The Davis Wing in combination with the supercharged Pratt & Whitney R-1830 engines and the Hamilton Standard hydromatic propellers worked well together. Bad: The nose wheel, built up of welded steel struts was too weak and failed when overstressed due to hard landings, strong cross winds, or rough runways. The fuel quantity indicators were of a simple boiler gauge style that required level flight for accurate reading, except that the aircraft actually flew slightly nose high to get additional lift from the fuselage. (The Lockheed Constellation was purposely designed to obtain fuselage lift). The fuel selector valves could be set for all engines to feed from the crossfeed manifold which held about 60 gallons. When this was used up all four engines would quit, not handy during the take off roll. The outboard auxiliary or Tokyo tanks of early model B-24s up to the "H" model did not have any fuel quantity gauges at all. When the fuel pressure dropped when feeding from these tanks it was time to transfer back to the mains before the engines quit.

In doing my research on Uncle Raymond, I was able to contact someone in the 484th Bomb Group Reunion Association. They were able to provide some additional information, including a picture of the crew and aircraft he flew from the USA to Italy.



Salt Lake City, Utah
Dear Bud:

I am enclosing a photograph of the men I flew with. The picture was taken stateside as you can see by the concrete hardstand. We arrived in Torretta in October of 1944 and flew till the end of the war

in May of 1945 when I had completed 31 missions. We ferried a B-24L called "Sweet Revenge," from the states to the squadron. Richard Vance was our pilot.

Sincerely, Charles K Laver 826 Sq.

(See opposite page for ship photo).

Raymond C. Martin, back row far right.



*Plane flown by Richard Vance's crew .
via Charles Laver 826Sq.*

Samuel Arthur Haile Military Service

Arthur served in the US Army during World War II. He was a B-24 gunner assigned to the 22nd Bomb Group, 5th Air Force in the Asiatic-Pacific Theater.

This is an image of the medals my father-in-law, Arthur Haile would have been authorized to wear after he returned from WWII. He was authorized the Asiatic-Pacific Theater Ribbon with one silver service bar and one bronze service star (indicating 2nd award). Air Medal with two bronze oak leaf clusters indicating 3 awards. AM was probably awarded for 5-10 missions in Pacific (was 5 in Europe), so he had between 15-30 missions. Battles and Campaigns listed as: China Offensive, New Guinea, Southern Philippines, Luzon, Western Pacific, and Ryukyus. Departed the US on Sep 30, 1944, returned on Jan 3, 1946.



Some shots from the family collection



Chronology of the 22nd Bomb Group after Arthur would have arrived overseas

- ✘ **Sep 1944** – Began attacks against Japanese bases in the Philippines.
- ✘ **7 Nov 1944** – Ground echelon departed by sea for Leyte, Philippine Islands.

- ✘ **15 Nov 1944** – Ground echelon arrived at Leyte.
- ✘ **26 Nov 1944** – Moved to Anguar.
- ✘ **1945** -Struck airfields, installations, industries and shipping on Formosa and China and provided ground support to Australian forces on Borneo and American forces on Luzon.
- ✘ **20 Jan 1945** – Moved to Samar, Philippine Islands.
- ✘ **21 Jan 1945** – Col. Leonard T. Nicholson assumed command.
- ✘ **12 Mar 1945** – Moved to Clark Field, Luzon.
- ✘ **5 Aug 1945** – Men and officers, other than the rear echelon, embarked on LST #898 at Subic enroute for Okinawa.
- ✘ **15 Aug 1945** – Main body debarked on Okinawa, moved to Motobu.
- ✘ **25 Aug 1945** – Three **Red Raider** Liberators flew their first armed recon mission of several from Okinawa over Japan.
- ✘ **15 Sep 1945** – Okinawa was swept by a typhoon.
- ✘ **16 Sep 1945** – Crews and planes of the 22nd were transferred to the 380th BG. to await further orders for return to the United States. The group was redesignated as 22nd Bombardment Group (L).
- ✘ **24 Sep 1945** – Col. Leonard T. Nicholson was relieved as commander and assigned to V Bomber Command; he was replaced by Lt. Col. James E. Sweeny.
- ✘ **7 Oct 1945** – Lt. Col. Charles W. Johnson assumed command.
- ✘ **17 Oct 1945** – Major John E. Pryor assumed command.

☒ **Nov 1945** – Assigned to Far East Air Force and transferred without men or machines to Fort William McHenry. Luzon , Philippine Islands.

The unit transitioned into the B-24 just prior to Arthur's arrival. Once the Group was in full operation again, the B-24s were used against Japanese installations, oil refineries, and airfields in Borneo, Ceram, Halmahera and, in September, began neutralizing enemy bases in the Philippines. From the Schouten Islands the outstanding targets for the 22nd were the oil refineries at Balikpapan, a nominal 17 1/2 hour, 2610 mile mission. From December 1944 to August 1945, The **Red Raiders** struck air fields and installations on Luzon, supported Australian ground forces on Borneo, bombed shipping, airfields, railroads and installations in China and Formosa.

In addition to his WWII service, he enlisted for the Army National Guard and served for many years. He received an appointment to Warrant Officer and was called to active duty during the Cuban Crisis.

[Samuel A. Haile Service Record](#)