

14 PHOTO LABORATORY, BOMB GROUP, VERY HEAVY

MISSION

LINEAGE

14 Photo Laboratory, Bomb Group, Very Heavy

STATIONS

Kharagpur, India

West Field, Tinian

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Activities of the Photo Lab for the first month of 1945 were much the same as they have been for the last six months. Over six thousand negatives were processed and printed -- most of them aerial although a small part consisted of ground photography such as Public Relations work, UR shots, and Identification Photographs.

The outstanding achievement of the month was the excellent radar photography which was accomplished on Mission 31 -- results which were particularly valuable because of the nature of the mission. Up to this time, the results of attempts to photograph the Radar Scope in action with either a K-35 or K-24 Camera had been poor to nil, and the project was about to be abandoned. However, with the technique of the Operators and installation of the cameras, Mission 31 proved that it could be successful. A large part of the credit for this success belongs to Corporal Jacob Coonin of this organization who had been in charge of this work; his efforts have made the photographing of the radar scope not only possible but practical.

All but a few of the men went on pass to Calcutta at some time during the month and most of them returned loaded with packages for their friends at home. Sgt Olson and Sgt Lees were far ahead of the others in the number of gifts purchased and so quickly earned the title of "God's gift to Indian merchants".

The month ended with the Camera Repair Section installing cameras in preparation for another strike against Singapore and the Developing and Printing Sections were ready for the return of the film on the first of February--the beginning of a month which promised to be one of even greater, and perhaps more varied, activity.

Normal operation of the Laboratory during the month of February 1945 included the processing of films taken on five bombing missions which were flown by aircraft of the 468th Bombardment Group. A total of 5,948 aerial negatives were developed from which 6,325 prints were made. Ground photographic work accounted for 135 negatives and 1,875 prints.

Sergeants Martin A Hangich and Norman F Olson participated, as Aerial Photographers, in three Photo Reconnaissance missions. Each of the men made a trip to Singapore while Sgt. Olson made an additional flight to Kunla Lumpur.

During the month, the unit acquired several mascots - and lost all but one of them. The first arrivals were two ducks which had been "picked up" by Cpl Turner. They were immediately named "Wretched" and "Roger". Roger died soon after his arrival - evidently couldn't stand the strain of life in a Photo Lab. Next to appear was a chicken -name unknown- whose life was made miserable by the domineering spirit of Wretched. The chicken, too, soon decided that the effort of living was too great and joined Roged in the Heaven to which all good little ducks and chickens go when they die. Shortly thereafter, Wretched disappeared; probably to find his final resting place in the cooking pot of some hungry Indian family.

The last mascot to arrive, and the only surviving one, was a small, tan and white puppy, who was adopted by Pfc Pauly. Peggy, as she was named, has unknown ancestors and her pedigree

is obscure so her breed can be best described as "just dog". She has made friends with all the boys and seems to have found a permanent home. Her life is likely to be short and unhappy unless she learns to keep from being stepped on.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.