



89TH ATTACK SQUADRON

MARCH 1944

89TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
3RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)

APO 713, Unit 1,
5 April 1944.

UNIT HISTORY FOR MONTH OF MARCH

1. Changes in organization: No changes.
2. Strength, commissioned and enlisted:
 - (a) 1st of month: Officers: 43
 Enlisted Men: 248
 - (b) Net increases or decrease each month: Increase: Enlisted Men: 18
 Decrease: Officers: 2
 - (c) End of month: Officers: 41
 Enlisted Men: 256
3. Stations (perm or temp) of units or parts thereof, (Show place and APO No.):
 - (a) Date of arrival at each station: No change.
 - (b) Date of departure from each station: No change.
4. Training:
 - (a) Aircraft, numbers, types, serviceable and not. 1st of month and end of month:

A20G - 23 planes, 23 serviceable, 29 February 1944.
A20G - 13 planes, 13 serviceable, 31 March 1944.
 - (b) Number of trained and untrained pilots and crews, number of crews, etc:

Trained Pilots: 29 on 29 Feb 44; 28 on 31 Mar 44.
Trained Crews: 29 on 29 Feb 44; 28 on 31 Mar 44.
Untrained Pilots and Crews: None.
 - (c) Policies for training pilots and crews: Bombing and strafing practice carried out on island in local lake. Formation practice, when tactical situation permits.
 - (d) Remarks (or other pertinent data): None
5. Group Commanding Officers: No change.
6. Squadron Commanding Officers:
 - (a) Name and Rank: Robert M. Dow, Captain.

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6. Squadron Commanding Officers, Continued.

- (b) Source (from what organization): 89th Bombardment Squadron (L).
- (c) Outstanding qualifications: Outstanding ability and experience.
- (d) Reason and authority for new assignment: Appointed by Group Commanding Officer per Special Order number 27, Headquarters, 3rd Bombardment Group (L) dated 6 March, 1944.
- (e) Place and date assumed command: Nadzab, New Guinea, APO 713 Unit 1, March 6, 1944.
- (f) Place and date relieved: Still in command.
- (g) Reason and authority for relief: None.
- (h) Where sent on relief:

7. Outstanding missions:

- (a) Type: Enemy shipping.
- (b) Target and location: 2 Corvettes and 1 Fox Tare Baker; 70 miles Northeast of Wewak, New Guinea.
- (c) Supporting what campaign: Supporting the New Guinea Campaign in a blockade of Wewak, New Guinea.
- (d) Date: 19 March, 1944.
- (e) Number and types of aircraft used: 11 A-20G.
- (f) Number and weight of bombs and ammunition expended: 32 x 500 lb. Demo bombs- 16,000 pounds; 18,000 rounds .50 calibre ammunition.

- (1) Dropped on target: All bombs in target area.
- (2) Jettisoned: None.
- (3) Brought back: 8 x 500 lb. Demo bombs.

(g) Interception:

- (1) No. and types of enemy planes: None.
- (2) Method of attack: None.
- (3) Results to enemy planes: None.

- (h) Results obtained: 1 Corvette and 1 Fox Tare Baker destroyed and 1 Corvette damaged.

8. Enemy aircraft and shipping:

- (a) Destroyed: Aircraft: 1 Tony on ground; in air: None.
Shipping: 1 Fox Tare Baker, 1 Corvette, 1 Lugger.
- (b) Probably Destroyed: Aircraft: None.

9. Losses in action, officers, enlisted men, and aircraft:

- (a) Engagement or mission: Convoy off Wewak, New Guinea, 19 March, 1944.
- (b) Names: S/Sgt Donald L. Bradley, Gunner.
- (c) Killed, circumstances A/A, enemy A/C bombing: Killed in action. The plane S/Sgt Bradley, gunner, was flying in made a strafing and bombing run on a Fox Tare Baker when the right engine was either hit by M/G fire or by flying debris. The engine was loose in its mount disabling the plane to hold altitude and necessitating

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9. Losses in action, Continued:

a crash landing in the water. On landing the plane went under almost immediately, taking Sergeant Bradley with it.

(d) Wounded: By A/A fire: S/Sgt Paul M. Willock hit in left leg; S/Sgt Ceasar F. Bocchino hit in left leg.

(e) Missing: None.

(f) Taken prisoner: None.

(g) Aircraft lost or badly damaged (circumstances): 1 A-20G lost in a water landing. The plane is the same as described in 9 (c).

10. Present members who distinguished themselves in action:

(a) Engagement or mission: Convoy off Wewak, New Guinea.

(b) Names: 1st Lieutenant John Soloc.

(c) Action: While beginning a bombing run on a Fox Tare Baker, Lieutenant Soloc's plane was hit in the right engine by M/G fire or by flying debris knocking the engine loose from its mount and rendering the plane unflyable. Lieutenant Soloc directed his crippled plane to and over the Fox Tare Baker dropping his bombs and making one hit before crash landing moments later.

(d) Awards: None.

11. Photographs of personnel, important scenes of events, etc. of airdromes, aircraft, targets, enemy shipping, etc: None available.

12. Narrative report: See attached sheet.

Robert N. Dow
ROBERT N. DOW,
Captain, Air Corps,
Commanding.

1 Incl.

Incl 1. Narrative Report.

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NARRATIVE REPORT

This month's (March) operational activity was centered chiefly on Wewak, New Guinea: The strips, supply areas, A/A positions, and personnel areas. At the beginning of the month, Wewak was still sufficiently strong to make a somewhat effective defense. Today this base is in a devastated and precarious condition- the destruction of which the 89th Bombardment Squadron (L) added largely through its consistent strikes there.

Considering the formidable nature of the target during this month, losses were slight: One gunner and one plane lost.

Several members of the squadron fell into rather harrowing experiences in the period March 1 to March 31. Eight men on a flight to Sydney in the trust of a C-47 transport were forced to bail out at extremely low altitude. Seven men barely escaped with their lives- one wasn't as fortunate; Sergeant Turpin's parachute failed to open. He was killed instantly.

After escaping from his submerged plane, Lieutenant John Soloc spent 17 hours in a life vest until he was rescued by a Catalina. Sharks paid him frequent visits during the time but did not appear to be too hungry for he was able by splashing and kicking to keep them at a safe distance.

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