

Journal  
cont--

The Moving finger writes: and, having writ,  
moves on: not all your Piety nor Wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,  
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it

August 21,  
Somewhere in England:

So far every mission has been training. We hope to go on operations very soon. The trip over which began in Avon Park, Fla. on July 10, 43. We went by train to Savannah, Ga. There we picked up our plane, a B-26 #131863. We didn't name it, but 1863 is a number I shall always remember. She was a beautiful ship, trim and streamlined in every respect and fast too. With 40,000 lbs. we soar off Savannah's long runways.

Our first stop was New Castle. We flew direct to Richmond Virginia from there we flew airways past Washington, D.C. and it was beautiful. It was my first trip to the city and I was so very sorry that we couldn't land. We continued airways past Baltimore the on across country, to the Delaware the up the Delaware to New Castle air Base and an important base of the Air Transport Command (Ferrying Division). We spent the night in New Castle on the post and I ran into Garry Anderson a chum of cadet days. At the time Garry had made one crossing via Southern route, jumping off from Morrison Field West Palm Beach. He was preparing for another hop to India. We had a jolly time talking over old times at Zondo. Garry was expecting his first soon.

We awoke the morning of July 15, at Newcastle the weather was a bit stinking but we were brief on the complete mission which was to take us from New Castle up to the arctic circle then down to Preswick Scotland our destination. Our first stop after Newcastle was to be Presque Isle, Maine but the weather was closed in above the State of New York. Partridge ask for permission to land at Mitchell Field, New York. We received an O.K. to the delight of the whole crew especially Mac (H.C.W. McKenna - - Co. Pilot) who is a resident of Brooklyn and proud of it.

The trip to New York from New Castle took us about forty minutes. We were on course at Newcastle for New York at 1216 hours and we arrived over Mitchell Field at 1250 hours. We landed, gassed up and checked the weather, and we were delighted to find the weather stinking at Presque Isle. We were all set for a night in the city of cities. Partridge and I were fresh out of tropical sun tans so we had to go into our bags and break out our winter uniforms pink & greens, because we were letting nothing stand in our way; we were going to spend an evening in New York.

As things progressed, however, we saw very little of New York. Diaz (S/Sgt. A.C. Diaz of New Jersey) lined dates up for Partridge and myself and we dined and danced and had a few drinks of course. The girl I was with was named Ethel Roth and she was older than I but full of fun and I was told that she was quite well to do. I missed June very much here as I have on many

such occasions. When I finally turned in it was 0400 hours on July 16. So to a slip up of times we missed Mac & his sister in the Hotel Commodore and I missed meeting his sister.

We all arrived at the field, which is about an hour's ride via tram from downtown New York, at about 0930 hours and though we were a bit tired we decided we had better get along to Presque Isle, Ma. We check the ship and found some minor difficulties I don't recall just what they were, anyway <sup>we</sup> were a few hours before taking off. It was this delay that was responsible for us having an extra passenger aboard on the trip north. He was a dentist stationed at Mitchell or nearby and his home was in the vicinity of Presque Isle. He told Partridge his story and although we were already over loaded, Partridge agreed to let him go with us. I don't remember his name which was undoubtedly of Polish origin. He was a Captain however and he had never been aloft in a flying machine of any kind before. I must say he picked a ship for his first ride.

We had lunch at the PX and I didn't know it at the time but the meal was to be best I would see for some time. We then went to the ship. I instructed our passenger in how to buckle on a chute and also where he would go out in case we were forced to abandon ship.

At exactly 1500 hours we roared down the runways at Mitchell and Partridge had to jerk our ship off the runway and we missed some high tension lines at the edge of the

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for our ship. He said we should call it  
Ex Caliber (Sp??) which I believe was the  
name of King Arthur's sword. We never  
did get around to name 1863 it was just as  
well I guess.

August 24,

Story of first Atlantic Crossing cont:

And so the night of July 16 found us at  
Presque Isle Air Base, headquarters of the  
North Atlantic Wing of the A. L. C. We were  
processed immediately and given quarters.  
We reported a few minor defaults in our ship  
and the ground crews began work that night.

We were briefed the following morning on the  
remainder of our route. I was also given a com-  
plete set of maps. It was a well planned  
trip in every detail, obviously the product of  
long experience and many crossings made over  
the same route. All course lines were laid  
out and marked in sections with the distances  
printed on course lines. Due to great  
changes of variation over short distances in  
those high latitudes our headings were  
changed at intervals all along the route. Back  
to the A. L. C.: most of its personnel is made up  
of former Air Line pilots & crews. They are very  
capable and are doing a damn good job.  
We were briefed long and thoroughly on emergency  
procedures especially. Every little safety gadget  
known was placed at our disposal from tiny  
parachute first aid kits to 11 men dingies. To  
get aircraft across quickly & safely is the A. L. C.'s  
foremost purpose.

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We spent eight days in Presque Isle before we were able to get off. Weather was the main reason for this: we would have left 3 days earlier, however, but we had to have more work done on our ship the morning that the weather would have allowed our going.

We went into Presque Isle a few ~~nights~~<sup>trips</sup>. It was a small but friendly little town. The New England nights were pretty, but a little cool for July. The moon was big and bright each night and we took a few moonlight taxi rides to some of the nearby towns. I went to one dance while I was there with a Miss Benjamin. I don't remember much about her: in fact I probably would not recognize her if she was standing before me now. I was pleased with New England and I tried to imagine what the countryside would look like in December under that same moon. The people were very friendly towards <sup>us</sup> and we enjoyed a slow but not dull time at Presque Isle.

On the 24th we awoke on what seemed to be just another day, we didn't know that it was on this day we would leave the the United States for how long only time will tell. We left Presque on course for Goose Bay Labrador. 1863.163e like the queen she is above the hills of Maine and we pointed her nose north. We were on course over the field at 1439 hours. At 1511 $\frac{1}{2}$  we passed over Cambellton on Baie de Chaleur on course and at 1539 we passed over the Gulf of St Lawrence and on the northern shore we past over our last check point, Mungah, a small airdrome. From there until we sighted Goose Bay we saw

Group Engineering  
Confidential - Pass

13, July 1943

The following men are authorized to enter

B -26 # 41- 3186 3

Lt. Partridge  
Lt. Mckenna  
Lt. Lewis

*David R. Raub*

David R. Raub , Capt. A.C.  
Group Engineering Officer

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nothing below us but rivers, forests, and mountains almost all of them fail to appear on our maps. We did straight D.R. from Mungawon to our destination and we came out very well. We landed at Goose Bay's beautiful and very adequate landing field and bardsome. We at last set foot on the King's soil for the first time that afternoon. We made the run from Presque Isle to Goose Bay a distance of 568 miles in two hours and thirty minutes flat. #1863 performed like a green dream

Aug 27, England:  
North Atlantic Crossing (cont)

Even in July Goose Bay was a bleak place there were scattered showers in all quadrants when we set 1863 down on the new and very good runway. There was a high overcast above the thunder clouds which gave the place an even darker and, I must say, drearer atmosphere.

We talked that afternoon to men Americans who had been stationed there in Labrador for a number of months. We saw pictures on the walls of scenes showing the arctic in December. Deep snows that lie high as late as March and April. As it was on that day in July, however, there was no snow and it wasn't too cold but we wore our jackets as we did in Presque Isle.

After supper and a friendly game of poker at the Officer's Club we retired to our rooms for a good nights sleep. Oh yes! I mustn't

forget the Scotch, we did have a few drinks of good Canadian Scotch during the course of the evening.

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We awoke the next morning. I almost forgot something else. We drew straws to see which of us had to sleep with the ship that night as there were no guards at the base and the planes had to be under guard at all times, I lost. So the next morning I awoke in the plane. My bed was made up of a series of cushions laid end to end from the co-pilot's seat to the nose of the ship. There was plenty of clothing in the ship for cover and I was very comfortable in the good old ship with the rain coming down outside. Again I repeat we awoke, me at three o'clock and I walked down to the room and got the other boys up at 4:00 (It was daylight at three). We were briefed at about eight hours (G.C.T.) and I made out the flight plan while both pilots watched ~~motion~~ motion pictures of a plane on the approach to Blue West One (BW-1) in Greenland. We waited for the weather ship to bring in the data on the route weather.

We were finally on course for BW-1 at 1651 (G.C.T.) on July 25. There was quite a bit of weather around the field and we were forced to fly very low until we reached the coast. We crossed the coast at 1729 hours and found ourselves on course over the Davis Straights. It was here that I saw my first ice-bergs. There were quite a few of them in the cold water below us.

The weather on this leg was the best we

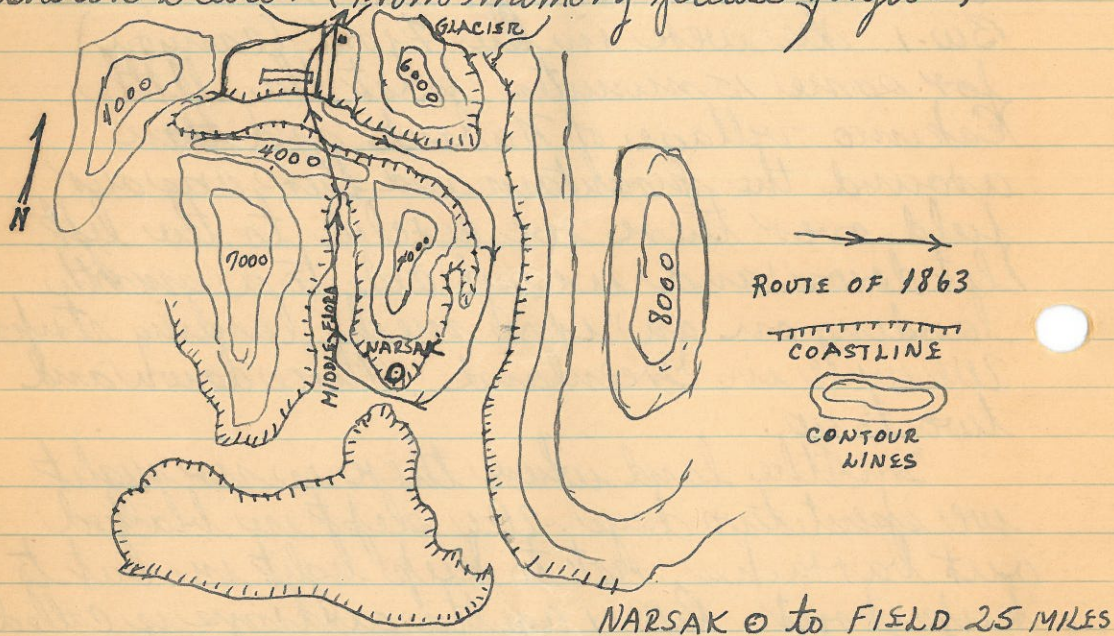
encountered on the whole trip. When we were still some 100 miles out of destination the mountains of Greenland were spotted on the horizon. It was a thrill to look out at see them through the haze, that was Greenland ahead, Greenland almost on top of the world. As we past over the radio tower at BW-3 at 2008 we spotted our fjord, the one we were to follow through the mountains to BW-1. We were in the fjord (canyon) for some 15 minutes. past the little Eskimo village of Narsak and then around the mountain and there was our field over there we circled to the left let downward and we glided to a smooth landing on an iron mesh landing strip. We were in Greenland, three down and two to go.

In the land where there is no night we spent two days. We slept in blacked-out barracks, not to keep light in, but to keep it out. BW-1 as the airbase is called is situated on a fjord that is fed by a glacier that is just above the field itself. It is surrounded by mountains all I would say were at least 6,000 ft or better. There ~~was~~ much higher mountains in the distance.

We tramped around the hills and climbed the mountain that was directly behind our barracks. The place did things to you with all its rugged beauty. It gave you the feeling of strength and I immediately put it on my list of places I hope to see again in peace time.

September 4  
England:

We left Blue West #1 and the land of ice and the mid-night sun on July 27. We took off after the weather briefing and 1863 was in the air #3 at 1332 (G.C.T.) we flew down the Fjord to the skimo town of Narsak and turned right and came back up the middle Fjord to the field as shown below. (From memory please forgive)



NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN

We were on course to Meeks Field Iceland at 1353. We had decided at the briefing to over the ice cap instead of going back to the sea and following the coastline around. This second alternative would have been some 124 miles out of our way. We found the weather on the cap clear as a bell and the sun was so bright we were forced to put on our special sun glasses. The cap was a site to behold. Ice as white as white can be just as far as

far as the eye could see. Flying over ice and snow is very deceptive. It is almost impossible to judge your height by sight. At 500 ft or 10,000 ft it all looks the same. We were told of cases ~~where~~ aircraft actually sliding in on the cap due to instrument failure and the eye failing to judge how far the plane was above the ice. Therefore we flew at 11,000 ft which is at least 2600 ft above the highest known point on the cap. From the time we left the field we could see the coast line in the far distance and we finally crossed it at 1424 hours. The coastline was a wall of ice and it is here in the spring of the year that the ice berg is born. We could see many bergs along the coast north to south.

We had clear weather and good visibility until 1553 at that point (63°28'N 32°00'W) we ran into a cloud bank and we begin to climb to get over it. According to metro we could top anything at 14000. We reached 14000 and we were still in it; some ice began to form on our wings we were completely without deicer equipment. The ice seemed to melt away rapidly and we didn't worry so very much about the ice. Our chief worry was that we were at 15500 without sufficient oxygen equipment. At 15,800 ft we broke out into the blue and warm sunshine. We had three oxygen bottles in front one in tail. Tail gunner Mills kept the one in the tail. We ~~set~~<sup>set</sup> aside one of the bottles in front for the pilot. The R/O, Co Pilot, Eng. and I used the other two. We just gulped down a few breaths every now and then taking it thru the mouth.

at 1623 we were able to come back down to 8000 and we put the oxygen up.

at 1704 we sighted the coast of Iceland and we started our glide in. It looked cold and bleak down there and <sup>there</sup> was a wind of some thirty five miles per hr. blowing. We were the first of our group to land in Iceland.

(To be continued)

September 10 - - -  
England.

I now have three raids to my credit. Yes three sweeps over enemy held territory. The first I made was on Sept 5. Our target was the marshaling yards at Ghent Belgium. Our group (323) was to follow the 322nd in making a grand total of 72 ships. I was with Partridge and crew. We flew on Capt Dave Sloane's right wing. We were in the second flight of a box of six led by Capt M.C. Drubbs. As we approached our land fall which was at Zeebrugge excitement in me was at its peak. I was acting as Nav-Bomb. and I was to toggle my bombs on the lead ship.

As we crossed the coast the Germans through up some flak. There was quite a bit of it but we were using evasive action and none of the flak came close. It seemed a little unreal at first, those little black puffs of smoke. It was hard for me to realize that we were being shot at.

As we passed along the Netherlands border at 12000 ft I could see Ghent off to our right.

We reached our i.p. (initial point) and turned into the target. I was intent at my job. I must get my bombs away the first time. When the lead ship's fall ~~must~~ mine must do the same. I check my control panel all must be right. I had day dreamed long ago about the day I would strike the first blow for victory of how I would drop one for Norway and one for Austria but as we started on the bomb run all that was forgotten. I was one man in about 432 with a job to do. My eyes were glued on the lead ship. Her doors opened, mine opened, her bombs fell & I pressed the switch and said bombs away over inter. phone 3,000 pounds of death and destruction fell from my plane with the slight movement of one of my fingers. I had done my job my bombs were away. We returned with no losses.

My second raid was on the German airbase of Lille-Nord just north of Lille, France on September 7th. I was Navigator for Capt. M.C. D. Juhl and we followed Capt. Dave Sloane who led our box of six. We hit the airbase and all ships returned safely.

My third raid I made with Lt. M. P. Smith on Maj. Brer's left wing. We raided gun emplacements at Boulogne, France, on the morning of the 9th of September. The flak was heavy and our evasive action was violent we got our bombs away whether they hit the target or not I don't know. The purpose of the raid on Boulogne was to cover amphibious practice by the allies carried on in the channel.

September 14

England:

On September 11 ~~the~~ I made my fourth sortie over the channel. Our target was Beaumont le Roger airfield near St. Germer, France. I flew with Capt. Chuck Enderton from the State of Washington. We were leading the high box of the first box of eighteen. We were being led by Capt. Grover Wilcox of the lead box.

?      WILCOX      ENDERTON  
+ + +      + + +  
+ + +      + + +  
+ + +      + + +

Since we weren't leading I left the pilot cockpit as we left the English coast and made my way to the ship's waste guns. I opened one door of the camera hatch, so that I might observe the bomb bursts. The Spitfires, bless their souls, were with us all the way. We entered the enemy coast at Fecamp and encountered no flap and we made our way across the Seine to our target, dumped our load of demo and frags, and made our turn to go out. We left the coast a few miles north of Fecamp. We smashed the target, but good.

We crossed the channel and turned north toward our base as we were abeam of London we ran into soup, we climbed above it. At our e.t.a. we were still on top. ~~we~~ The leader gave the landing signal and let down. Our box let down to the north and we broke out at about 500 ft. I gave the pilot a heading of 120° to the field we flew it for a short time when Enderton decided to get the hell out of here. We ask for a heading to get us out. My



judgment must have failed me. I gave  
 him 200°. We hadn't been on 120° long  
 enough to get us to the east. We could  
 hear squeakers and the pilot was rightfully  
 worried about balloon barrages. I told  
 him we would pass to the east of the  
 ones at Chelmsford and soon the squeakers  
 died out. We circled one field to land but  
 decided it was still too hazy we took a  
 heading of 190° this time and in 3 or 4 minutes  
 we spotted balloons ahead. It was London  
 my course had been way off we were heading  
 for the balloon barrages at London. We  
 circled to the right, sighted a field and landed.  
 When we asked the operations officer the name  
 of the place and it was there that we found  
 out where we were. Hendon air field, north  
 of London.

~~This account #100~~  
 I had been lost in England for the <sup>first</sup> time  
 I hope it is the last.

September 28,

On September 23rd, I made my fifth raid  
 which was my air medal mission. I rode with  
 1st Lt. Charles Boyer of Long Beach, California. Our  
 target was Beauvais Tille air base in France.  
 We went in with thirty six ships and we were  
 followed by another group of marauders which  
 made a total of seventy-two ships in our  
 attacking force. We swept over the French  
 coast and weather was good. We encountered  
 no flak at the coast and along our route

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all was quiet except for a few dog fights  
heard and these between Spitfires and enemy  
planes. We saw quite a bit of flak  
over the target but no ships were hit. We  
unloaded our bombs and returned home  
without anything of interest happening.

On September 29th. I had my sixth  
sweep over the channel. It was a deep  
penetration for mazaunders. Our target,  
the airbase at Conches France. We followed  
the 386th group in over the target and we  
saw into France with a large Spit escort.  
Those lovely Spits kept us safe from all  
attacks by enemy fighters. Over Berray  
I saw one fighter go down: I couldn't tell  
what it was. We passed over our target  
and no flak was seen. As we swung  
off the target we were in behind the 386th.  
We passed close to Rouen on our way out.  
We were to leave enemy territory at a point  
ten miles west of St. Valery. The lead box  
of the 386 passed over the airbase at St. Valery.  
They weren't doing passive and the flak  
came up onto that box and one B-26 went  
down in flames. We (our box of eighteen ships)  
was far to the right and we had only slight  
heavy flak. Capt. Enderton was my pilot and  
Capt. Wilcox of Anahuac Texas was leading  
our box.