



42-95282 Sq No 77, 827 Sq. "Booby Trap," an ex 8th Air Force B-24, note the bullet proof glass cockpit windows. The aircraft is reported to have flown back to the States May 30, 1945.



John Dunn, 827 sq

Orville Hommert 827 Sq

Ship 48, 825 Sq. is shown landing at Torretta. The list shows this ship as both 42-50396, and 42- 50398. Reader comment is welcome.

Additional Notes Regarding the B-24 Liberator Bomber

The 484th Bomb Group operated the B-24 Liberator Bomber during 1944-45. The 484th was assigned to the 49th Wing, 15th Air Force and was based at Torretta, Italy, about 12K SE of Cerignola in the heart of the Puglia District of Southern Italy.

The combat color of the 49th wing was red with the rudder tops painted in that color as well as the individual logos of each of the three groups painted just below the red top. The wing was comprised of the 451st BG, 461st B.G., and 484th BG. A solid red ball signifying the 451st, a red dash for the 461st, and a red bow tie for the 484th BG.

Some B-24 heavy bomber groups of the 15th Air Force including the 461st and 484th used two digit numbers to designate squadron assignments as opposed to the letter codes used by the 8th Air Force. Aircraft displaying three digits were designated "Micky Ship" so called because they carried navigation radar, or electronic counter-measure devices. The radar navigation ships carried a round radome in place of the ball turret that could be raised for take off and landing. Counter measure aircraft carried a variety of antennas.

Using the aircraft serial numbers the planes can be traced back to the factory of origin and manufacturing blocks. The practice during WWII was that each batch of aircraft within one block

would be identical to each other, as modifications were generally confined to separate blocks. Major modifications usually called for a new model designation.

The 461st and 484th BGs used the B-24 G through B-24 M model. An early model such as the B-24 D used in the first Ploesti mission of August 1, 1943 had been withdrawn from front line service, by the time the 49th Wing became operational. The origin of the B-24 was a twin engine seaplane that was designed to fly at lower altitudes. When the wings and tail assembly were lifted off a seaplane fuselage and placed on the slab sided B-24 in 1941, combat altitudes in Europe had doubled. Turbo supercharges were then added to subsequent models so the aircraft could fly higher. At high altitudes the aircrafts performance was sluggish. Attempts were made to improve the flight control response to the pilot's commands by the addition of a formation stick. This did relieve the efforts of the pilot, but was still not a major fix This was a device that worked off of the autopilot No other major modifications to the wings or airframe were made until the B-24 N appeared. Its flight characteristics were greatly improved over the twin tail. But it arrived too late to enter combat in Europe and was dropped from production in favor of its big brother the B-32 that did see limited service in the Pacific theater just prior to the end of the war with Japan.

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