

84 GROUP
2nd TACTICAL AIR FORCE
FROM NORMANDY TO HANOVER
JUNE 1944 – JUNE 1945



A short monograph, (48 pages), detailing the contribution of this 2nd TAF Group in the last year of the Second World War.



Its operations to close the Falaise Gap, get the Armies across the Seine, clear the Channel Ports, the severe winter of 1944-45 in Holland, the push to Cologne – 'Operation Veritable' - then over the Rhine and Victory are all included.



Appendices include messages of congratulation from Tedder, Monty and many others; the entire Group Battle Order, and a two-page statistical

summary of their operations in North
West Europe.



This document despite having been
apparently compiled in some haste,
before those who could tell the story
from first-hand were either demobbed
or posted elsewhere, nevertheless
contains powerful prose descriptions
of what they encountered:

".....Time, it is true, will dull the edge
of memory, and often the urgency of
feeling. But for them it can never
change into a line in a chronological
table the place where stinking horses
lay in grotesque rigidity among an
unbelievable chaos of mangled armour,
where children threw flowers as you
passed by, and where a roadside grave
was a proud reminder of the price that
was paid."

Short this book may be, but a powerful testament nonetheless!



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Hope this may be of interest - many thanks for looking.



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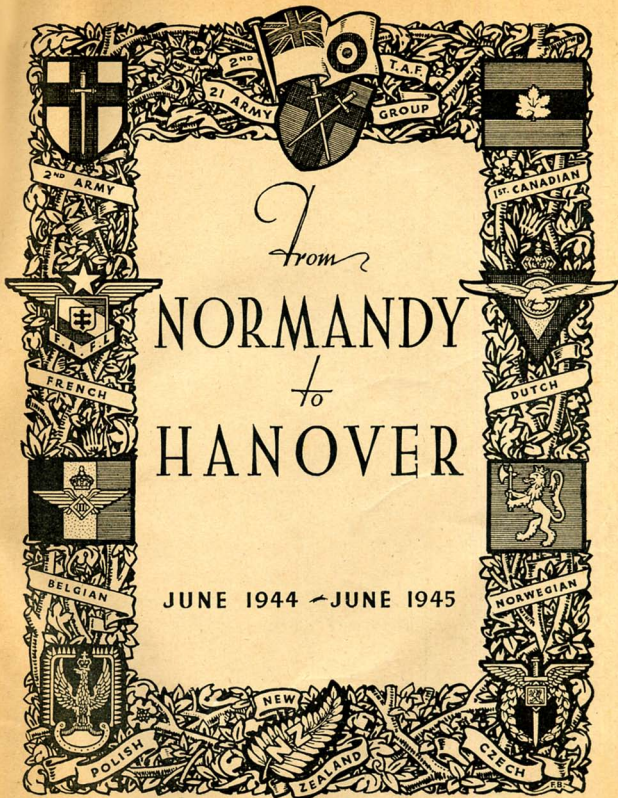




84
GROUP

SECOND T.A.F.

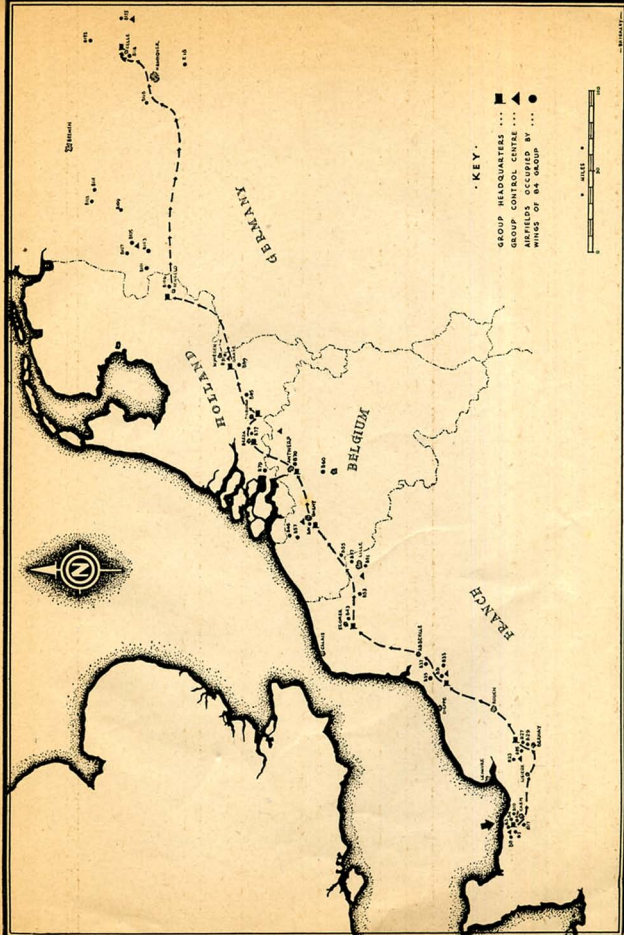
ROYAL AIR FORCE



From

NORMANDY *to* HANOVER

JUNE 1944 - JUNE 1945



KEY.

- GROUP HEADQUARTERS ...
- GROUP CONTROL CENTRE ...
- AIRFIELDS OCCUPIED BY ...
- WINGS OF 84 GROUP ...



VI. OPERATION "VERITABLE".

THIS long-awaited offensive, linked with a parallel push towards Cologne by the Americans, opened on 8th February. It was preceded by an incredible artillery bombardment and by an attack by over 900 heavy bombers on Goch and Cleve. 84 Group, 83 Group, 2 Group and IX U.S.A.A.F. were in full support.

Careful planning had ensured the full use of every available aircraft. 12 pre-arranged targets were attacked on the first day and 552 Sorties were flown, almost all of them in direct support of ground troops. Ammo dumps, cable junctions, defence positions, POL tanks, telephone exchanges, bridges, roads, a shell factory, Headquarters, villages — such were the targets taken on.

Good progress was made and all the first objectives reached on schedule. But in the following days the frost which had made the roads so treacherous in the "moving up" period gave way to a thaw which made a quagmire of the battle area. An important road towards Cleve collapsed entirely and heavy rain led one commentator to remark that the British and Canadian troops engaged were conducting amphibious operations. — not at all an exaggeration. The weather was no more suitable to flying than to ground operations and only on the 14th did it clear sufficiently for the Group to exert its full strength. Yet, in the intervening days we averaged 261 sorties daily, taking on several targets under M.R.C.P. control which, in the words of 84 G.C.C. "emerged with great distinction from its first trials on our front." On the 14th February, 804 Sorties were flown (75 of them by 35 Wing) and, in addition to 200 locos and trucks

VII. CROSSING THE RHINE.

THE Hun over the Maas was still emphasizing his awkwardness and was shelling S'Hertogenbosch when, on the 7th March, Group H.Q. moved up to Grave.

But Boche inhumanity in Holland could not hide the fact that the end was near. On the 7th March General Patton's U.S. troops grabbed an intact bridge over the Rhine at Remagen and in spite of all the Huns could do — suicide attacks and all — got a firm foothold on the east bank. It was a happy augury for the Allied armies now lining almost the whole length of the Rhine and waiting to strike the final blow.

The air preparation for it was soon under way. Day after day heavies, mediums and fighter/bombers pounded communications and it soon became clear that the Ruhr was being methodically isolated. In addition, of course, all kinds of other targets, airfields, factories, dumps and so on were being pounded.

During this time 84 Group attacked a series of tactical-strategic C.D. targets, most of them round about the 20th March, but others after the battle had been joined. The chief ones were H.Q. Army Group "H", H.Q. C-in-C Netherlands, an ammo dump at Schulenburg, a vehicle repair depot at Doetinchem, H.Q. 25 Army, "Sunlight" Factory in Western Holland (a reminder of our constant "V" weapon commitment), an ammo dump at Zevenaer, the main Holland Telephone exchange, and a Paratroop Barracks in a pseudo Renaissance village. Results — as shown by photographs, by ground reports, and by subsequent expert research on the spot — were