The 467th Bombardment Group (H) in World War II: in Combat with the B-24 Liberator over Europe by Perry Watts

Great Account Of An Illustrious 8Th Af B-24 Unit!

In this new 8th Air Force unit history, Perry Watts sets out the history of the USAAF 467th Heavy Bombardment Group, which was based at Rackheath, Norfolk, in the east of England, during 1944-1945. In contrast to the operational focus of many books on the

My Personal Review:
Talk about 'Luck of the Irish!' Right after finishing Mike Westrop's wonderful history of Naval 10, the next book I picked up was Perry Watts' superlative history of the 467th BG, one of the best Liberator outfits assigned to the Mighty Eighth. Indeed, since the 467th was picked to lead the entire 8th AF Victory Fly-Past on 13 May 1945, a case could be made that the 467th was THE best 8th AF B-24 unit. What is undeniable is the absolutely first-class history Perry Watts wrote of the Group's wartime history; this book deserves at least six stars!

The 467th BG, nicknamed 'The Rackheath Aggies,' existed from May 1943 to August 1946. Arriving in England in March 1944, it was assigned to the 2nd Air Division and flew its first mission on 10 April, subsequently logging 221 missions. In the course of those missions the Group dropped over 12,000 tons of bombs. Known for its tight formations the 467th lost only 46 aircraft in combat. One of the Group's B-24s - 'Witchcraft' - logged 130 missions without an abort. In April 1945 the Group became the 1st 2nd AD unit to achieve a perfect score of 100% of its bombs stricking within 1,000-feet of the MPI. The 467th's exemplary reputation was undoubtedly due to its CO, Colonel Albert Shower, the only 8th AF BG CO to lead his unit to England, fly combat missions and bring the Group home at war's end.

Perry Watts' book runs to 424 pages and has to be the most THOROUGH Group history I've ever come across. The author seems to have covered every aspect of the 'Aggies' history. The main part of the narrative runs to 200+ pages but Watts then includes a nine-page 'Tribute and Biography' of Colonel Shower, eight pages of bios of Group senior officers, 24 pages on B-24s assigned to the 467th, a 103-page(!) appendix summarizing all missions, flown, etc.
One of the book's biggest selling points is the many, many first-person accounts from 467th aircrew, ground personnel and English civilians along with material from combat reports and other official documents. You really get to know the 467th through all those reminiscences. Those same veterans contributed many of the over 400 photographs found in the book. Color profiles of the Group's B-24s would have been nice but that was probably Schiffer Publishing's call.

In short, THE 467TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) IN WORLD WAR II, is one impressive book. It skillfully weaves together a variety of primary sources to tell the story of all those fine, young men in unparalleled detail. Make no mistake about it; this is THE definitive history of the Group. And, like Westrop's Naval 10 book, this volume will stand as an excellent example of what a Group history CAN BE.

Highest recommendation.

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