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D E S P A T C H

COVERING OPERATIONS OF

221 GROUP During the MANIPUR CAMPAIGN. - 1st MARCH 1944 - 31st JULY

• BY

AIR COMMODORE S.F. VINCENT, D.F.C., A.F.C.

Headquarters
221 GROUP
Nov, 1944.

DECLASSIFIED

DESPATCH by AIR COMMODORE S. F. VINCENT, D.F.C.,
A.F.C., on OPERATIONS carried out by No. 221
GROUP during THE MANIPUR CAMPAIGN.
1st MARCH 1944 - 31st JULY 1944.

1. The Headquarters of No. 221 Group was situated, during the period of the MANIPUR CAMPAIGN, at IMPHAL, under the Command of Air Commodore S. F. VINCENT, D.F.C., A.F.C.;. The Administrative Staff moved to a rear Headquarters on the 4th June 1944 at SILCHAR returning to IMPHAL on 11th July 1944 after the DIMAPUR ROAD had been opened. This move was carried out in conjunction with IV Corps as a part of a large movement involving a total of several thousand Officers and men and a consequent easing of the supply problem.
2. Although rations were flown into the valley for the whole of the three months that the DIMAPUR ROAD was closed, supplies were never seriously short, but the diet became exceedingly monotonous.
3. Diagrams giving locations of Squadrons during the Campaign together with our own and the enemy's ground forces are attached as Appendix "A". It will be seen that at the beginning of March, 10 Squadrons and one Detachment were operating under the Group, whereas at the beginning of April this had increased to 17 Squadrons and 1 Detachment.
4. During this period 33 Corps commenced operations from JORHAT and it was necessary to provide Air Support. Owing to the difficulties of communication - IMPHAL being completely isolated at this time - certain Squadrons operated directly under 33 Corps and were controlled by No. 25 Air Support Control. These Squadrons were situated at JORHAT and DERGAON and LANKA; in addition the Vengeance aircraft of No. 168 Wing at KUMBHIRGRAM were available for use on either the 4 Corps or 33 Corps fronts.
5. During the Japanese advance, Squadrons were operating from a variety of bases and occasionally were pulling out from some of the forward Airfields at night as a precaution against sabotage from raiding parties. Squadron ground crews were, therefore, in many instances split up over a number of airfields. Furthermore, the ground crews on these Forward strips were living in "boxes" and carrying out exacting guard duties at night.
6. The strip at IMPHAL was shelled on the 19th April without any damage resulting and during the months of May, June and July PALEL was shelled on eight occasions. Nevertheless the serviceability of all Squadrons remained remarkably high, which shows great credit to squadron personnel. The average serviceability figures being 85.5% in March and rising each month to 88.2% in July. The conditions at PALEL, showing the circumstances under which the airmen were living and working are described in Appendix "B".
7. At Appendices "C", "D" and "E" are given the Officers in charge of Departments at Group Headquarters, Wings and Squadrons and at Appendix "F" a list of the decorations received by personnel operating under the Group.
8. The operations carried out by aircraft under the Group were covered by Operational Directive No. 3/44 dated 21st March 1944, issued by Third Tactical Air Force, which laid down the following responsibility :-

- (a) The Air Defence of the area bounded to the North by latitude $26^{\circ} 00'$, to the South by latitude $24^{\circ} 00'$, and to the West by the BRAHMAPUTRA River.
- (b) Maintenance of Air Superiority in the area of land operations.
- (c) Provision of Air Support for 4 and 33 Corps.
- (d) Provision of Fighter Escort or cover as requested.
- (e) Attack on enemy communications and V.P.'s.

9. The number of sorties carried out month by month and also the squadron totals are given in Appendix "G". Although there was a big reduction in the number of sorties flown in June and July - as would be expected with the advent of the Monsoon conditions in the third week in May - it was possible to maintain a high level of Offensive Operations as can be seen from the fact that in March and April the Defensive Operations amounted to 20% of the total operations, in May and June 30%, whilst in July this was reduced to under 5%.

10. The Japanese Air Force during this period carried out very few bombing attacks and in no case was any major damage done. However, in April and May they carried out a number of Fighter Sweeps, which appear to have been in the nature of an attempt to boost the morale of their ground troops. On three or four occasions strafing attacks were made on our forward positions, but at no time was there any attempt to carry out direct support of their ground forces. Appendix "H" gives details of the sixty two enemy raids identified. The number of aircraft sorties involved is over 700. Attached at Appendix "I" is a statement showing the number of Japanese aircraft destroyed and damaged.

11. Defensive sorties amounted to 23.6% of the Group's total operations, these include Defensive Scrambles, patrols and escorts. The majority of the patrol sorties were carried out in order to protect the approaches to the IMPHAL Valley in order that the DAKOTAS, B.25's and WELLINGTONS could proceed unmolested whilst bringing food and ammunition into the valley and evacuating sick and wounded. During June the daily average of such sorties amounted to 174.

12. The large proportion of defensive sorties were due largely to the loss of Radar cover. As our land forces retreated from TIDDEM and TAMU into the IMPHAL Valley it was also necessary to withdraw the Radar Stations with subsequent loss of cover. Eventually it was impossible to give reliable height or to see Mark II I.F.F. The Japanese fighters took advantage of the situation by approaching the valley as low as possible and on occasions were first reported by the forward Army units who were being attacked. The situation was dealt with by detailing "stop-gap" patrols which were highly successful. This aspect of the Campaign is described at Appendix "J".

13. Reconnaissance Operations have amounted to over 3,000 sorties or 11.3% of the Groups total sorties.

14. The Offensive Operations can be divided under 3 headings :-

- (a) Direct Support of 4 and 33 Corps amounting to 25.2% of the Groups total operations.

- (b) Rhubarbs amounting to 7%.
- (c) Attacks on Stores, Dumps and Camps amounting to 14.2%.

15. For the first three weeks of the period at the request of Corps all Squadrons were put at the disposal of A.A.S.C., but it was found that full use was not made of this comparatively strong striking force, it was therefore decided to allow them 2 or 3 Hurricane Squadrons and to switch aircraft to A.A.S.C. from L of C Targets should the need arise.

16. For the first two months Direct Support sorties generally were few in comparison with the total detailed by A.A.S.C. which were more of a softening nature. However, consequent on representations to 4 Corps by this Headquarters air attacks were more co-ordinated with ground attacks and after bombing and strafing attacks dummy runs were often carried out as our troops actually advanced.

17. The Rhubarbs can be claimed to have been highly successful and to a very great extent the Jap was denied the use of his L of C by day. It is interesting to note that there was a falling off in the number of M.T. seen during May and it was not until the Jap began to retreat that he was forced on to his L of C by day despite the air effort which was maintained.

18. In the majority of cases the bombing attacks have also been aimed at the Jap L of C and at Camps and Dumps which it has been possible to pin-point from photographs and on which information has been received from Prisoner of War sources. The weight of bombs dropped on these and on Direct Support Sorties is given in Appendix "K".

19. Apart from the support given to 4 and 33 Corps support was also given to 3rd INDIAN DIVISION by 81 Squadron who established an advanced detachment of 6 Spitfires at BORADWAY on 12th March for about a fortnight and by 84 Squadron in Vengeances who carried out nearly 100 bombing sorties at the direct request of the Division. Appendix "L" is a report on the Advanced Landing Grounds in Burma. In addition Spitfires were employed in escorting the supply dropping aircraft to the 3rd Indian Division front, a total of 314 sorties of this nature being flown.

20. During all these operations 478,000 Nickels have been dropped and from the Prisoners of War who have been captured and the J.I.P.'s who have walked in it would appear that this effort has not been wasted.

21. Despite the deteriorating weather conditions it is satisfactory to note that only 7.2% of the total sorties were abortive.

22. While it is not possible always to assess accurately the results obtained, details of the "Game Bag" are set out in Appendix "M", these figures do not in any way give the true results as no account is taken of the Japs which may have been killed in bombing attacks or where strafing villages and jungle, but only the claims made by pilots when strafing in open country. As our troops advanced down the TIDDIM ROAD a number of tanks damaged by air action were captured and attached under Appendix "N" is a report on these tanks.

23. The results of the Support given to the Army can best be gauged by the " Strawberries " which were received by the Squadrons, a few extracts are set out in Appendix 'O'.

24. These results have been obtained at the cost of the following casualties in the Group.

AIRCREW. Killed. 21. Wounded. 18. Missing. 35.

Ground Crew. Killed. 5.
Details if these casualties appear in Appendix ' P '.

25. During the campaign only one occupied airfield was attacked by an enemy raiding party, a report on this is attached as Appendix Q.

26. By the 31st July the Jap was in full retreat in all Sectors of the MANIPUR Front and although the Jap Air Force still had elements stationed in BURMA they did not appear in this area.

APPENDICES.

- A. Army Situation and R.A.F. Location. Maps as at 8th March 1944, 23rd March 1944, 2nd April 1944, 26th April 1944, 23rd May 1944, 20th June 1944, 23rd July 1944.
- B. Conditions at Palel during the Manipur Campaign.
- C. Group Staff Officers.
- D. Wing Officers.
- E. Squadron Officers.
- F. Awards Received.
- G. Sorties flown.
- H. Enemy Air Activity.
- I. Enemy Aircraft Casualties.
- J. Loss of Radar cover and B.M.O.C. Gatehead Stop Gap Patrols.
- K. Weight of bombs dropped.
- L. Advanced Landing Grounds.
- M. G.M.S. Base.
- N. Report on captured tanks.
- O. Strawberries.
- P. R.A.F. Casualties.
- Q. Report on attack on PAIMEL Airfield.

CONDITIONS AT PALEL DURING THE MANIPUR CAMPAIGN.

At the beginning of the campaign 34 Squadron and 42 Squadron were located at Palel. Both these Squadrons were Hurribombers and had been at Palel since the previous November. At the beginning of April 34 Squadron moved to Dergaon in order to operate on the 33 Corps front and 42 Squadron remained at Palel.

2. On March the 19th 42 Squadron personnel moved into a defensive "box" which had been built round a small hill at the southern end of the strip. The aircraft were parked in bays around the hill. The "box" consisted of a series of slit trenches protected by sand bags and was sited to defend the aircraft. The trenches were dug by the Squadron personnel who were also carrying out night guard duties. From this time on they worked, ate and slept in the "Box".

3. With the cutting of the Dimapur-Imphal road food became less plentiful and the diet more monotonous. The Squadron was operating each day and carrying out on the average 24 sorties, and the ground crews, in consequence, knew no respite. There were generally air raid warnings at least once a day and on two occasions the strip was attacked. The hard work and excitement proved too much for some of the more highly-strung individuals and there were some cases of anxiety neurosis. From a medical point of view conditions in the 'box' were not good. The men were overcrowded and there was a lack of adequate washing facilities due to water rationing. As a result there were some cases of dysentery.

4. On the night of April the 30th the 'box' was attacked by a party of some one hundred Japanese. They were held up by the wire which surrounded the hill and fired off their machine guns and threw grenades in an effort to destroy the aircraft. The attack started at 0230 hours (1st May) and lasted until shortly after dawn. There were no casualties or damage.

5. The following night (1st May) an hour after dusk a second attack developed and firing broke out all round the box. One airman trying to get to his trench was shot, probably by the Indian troops, and died almost immediately. The firing continued until about 0830 hours on the 2nd May but there were no further casualties.

6. Although the 'box' was well sited from a defensive point of view it was not suitable for prolonged occupation. There were no communication trenches between the defence points and it was impossible to construct them because of the taxi tracks. As a result all personnel were immobilised in their particular trenches during the hours of darkness and had there been casualties it would have been impossible for the M.O. to get to them. There was little provision for providing food for the men in case of a prolonged attack and they were largely dependent on their emergency rations.

7. Under these circumstances the high standard of efficiency maintained throughout the period at Palel reflects great credit on the ground crews who serviced the machines and on the pilots of the Squadron who were at readiness from dawn to dusk and who carried out over 2700 sorties during the campaign.

SITUATION AS ON 8 MARCH 44



LEGEND

-  OWN TROOPS
-  ENEMY TROOPS
-  CORPS
-  DIV
-  BRIGADE
-  AIRFIELDS







OWN TROOPS
 ENEMY TROOPS
 CORPS
 DIV
 BRIGADE
 AIRFIELDS

31 DIV
 15 DIV
 33 DIV

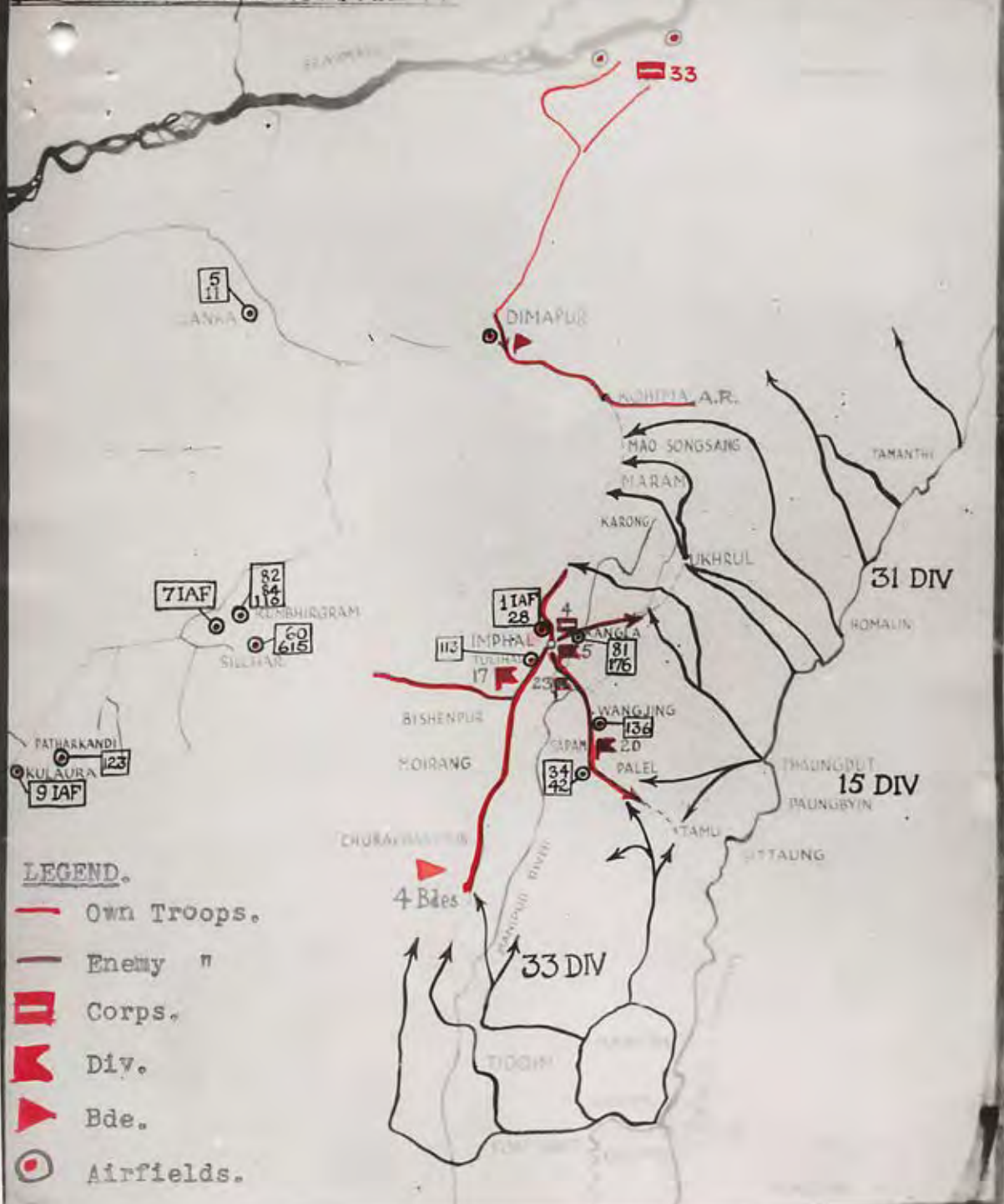
SITUATION AS ON 22 MARCH 44



LEGEND.

-  Own Troops.
-  Enemy Troops.
-  Corps.
-  Div.
-  Brigade.
-  Airfields.

SITUATION AS ON 2 APRIL 44



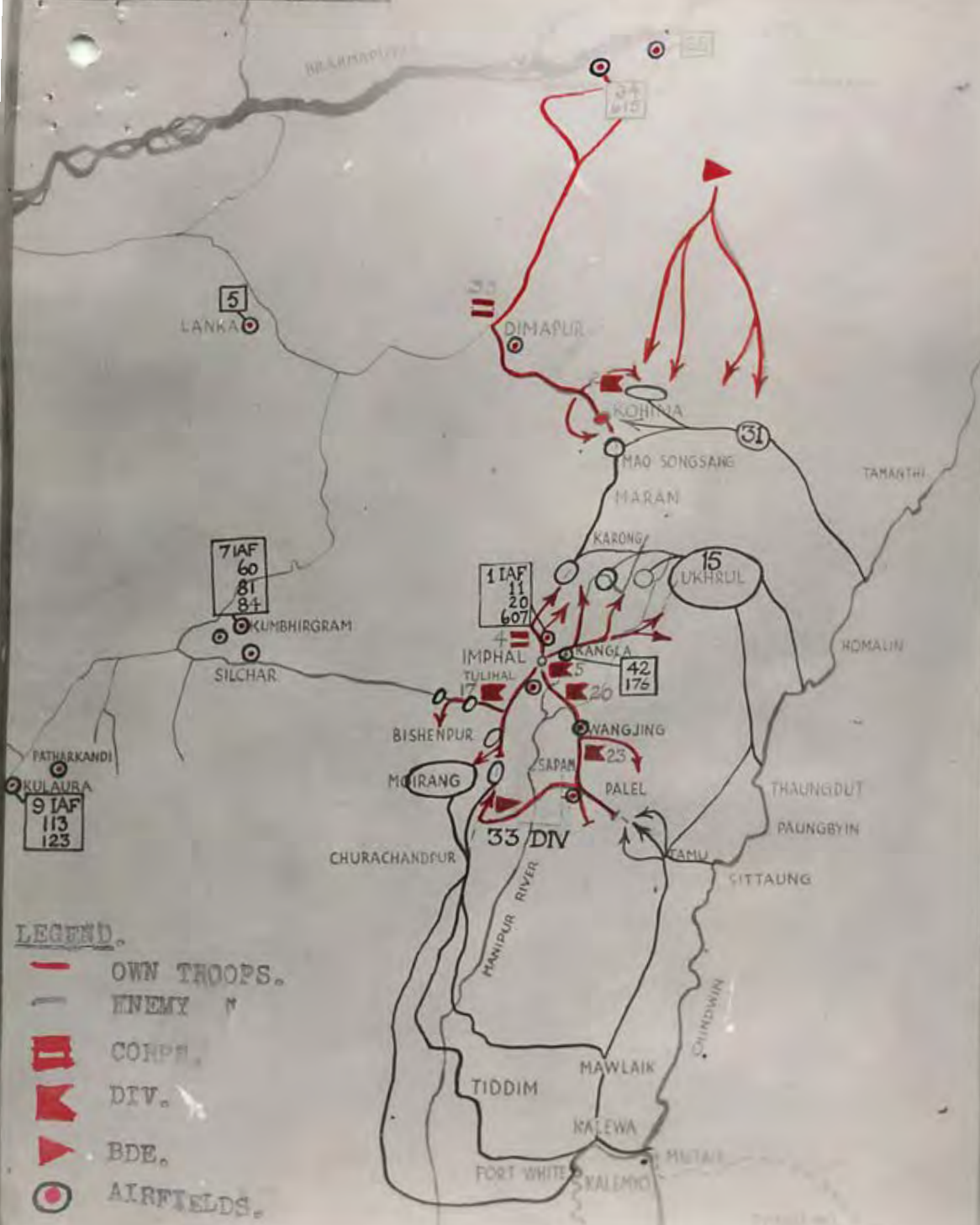
LEGEND.

- Own Troops.
- Enemy "
- Corps.
- ◀ Div.
- ▶ Bde.
- Airfields.







SITUATION AS ON 26 APRIL 44

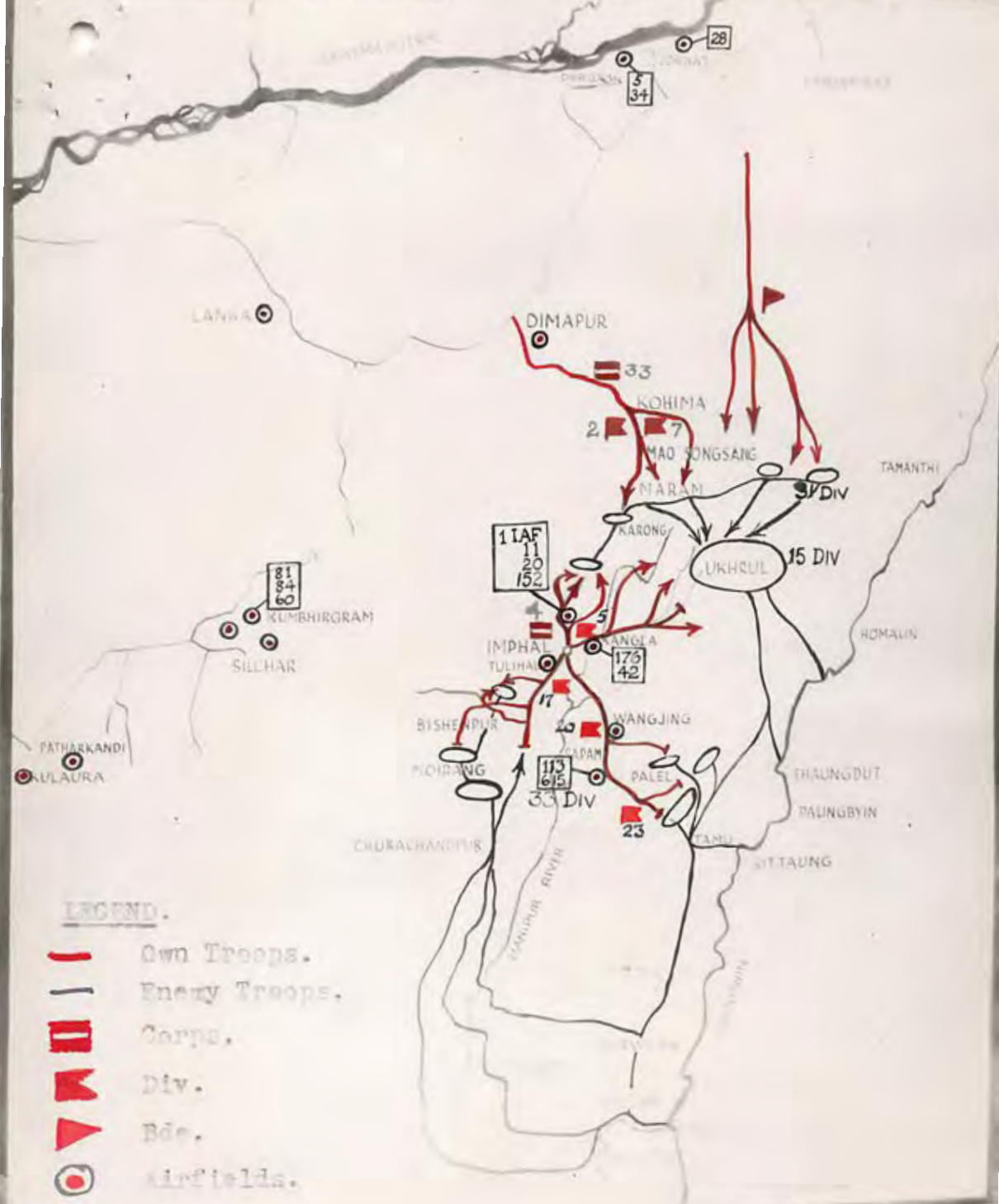


SITUATION AS ON 23 MAY 44









LEGEND.

-  OWN TROOPS.
-  ENEMY "
-  CORPS.
-  DIV.
-  BDE.
-  AIRFIELDS.



LEGEND.

-  Own Troops.
-  Enemy Troops.
-  Corps.
-  Div.
-  Bde.
-  Airfields.

221 GROUP.

STAFF OFFICERS.

A.O.C. Air Commodore, S.F. Vincent, D.F.C., A.F.C.
S.A.S.O. Group Captain G.N. Warrington.
Air I (F) Wing Commander, S.C. Norris, D.F.C. and Bar.
Air I (B) Wing Commander, J.L. Beck, D.F.C. and Bar.
G.I.O. S/Ldr. J.H. Stevens succeeded by S/Ldr. S.A.Hargrove.
A.L.O. Major J. Ritchie.
Air Trg. Wing Commander W. Dougall succeeded by S/Ldr. G. Kerr.
C.S.O. Wing Commander J.A. Robinson.
ORG. Wing Commander I.W. Mitcham.
S.P.S.O. S/Ldr. F. T. Bishop.
Accts. S/Ldr. D.F. Allen succeeded by S/Ldr. P. Nuttall.
S.M.O. Wing Commander C.R. Jenkins succeeded by W/Cdr. S.S. Brown and W/Cdr. L.V. McNabb.
C.T.O. S/Ldr. T. Vaughan-Edmunds.
C.B.C. S/Ldr. J.C. Cracroft-Ried.
G.A.O. S/Ldr. E.F. Price.
Grp Ser. S/Ldr. J.P. Pugh succeeded by S/Ldr. T.F. Ryalls and R.H.A. Garner.
Grp Inv. F/Lt. T. Frawley.
Grp M.T. F/Lt. J. Adams.
A.M.S. Lt/Cpl. E.C. Thompson. O.B.E.
Mess. F/Lt. F.W.L. Playle.
Signal. F/Lt. P. Campbell.
M.C. F/Lt. R. Murray.
Welfare F/Lt. Naram Singh Maan.

APPENDIX 'D'.WING STAFFS168 WING

<u>BRANCH</u>		<u>HEAD of SECTION</u>
<u>AIR.</u>		
Commanding Officer.....	G/Capt. J.B. Black, D.F.C. G/Capt. E.A. Whiteley, D.F.C. (wef. 8/5/44)	
Flying.....	F/Lt. E.W. Bayley.	
Ops. /Intelligence.....	S/Ldr. J. Chirnside.	
<u>ADMINISTRATION.</u>		
S/Ldr. ADMIN.....	S/Ldr. W.C.E. Martin.	
Adjutant.....	F/Lt. W. Chesnut.	
<u>SERVICES.</u>		
Accounts.....	F/Lt. H.A. Holderness.	
Armament.....	F/Lt. A.H. Bibby.	
Engineering.....	S/Ldr. S.J. Davies.	
Equipment.....	F/Lt. J.E. Rutherford.	
Catering.....	F/O. C.R. Young.	
Medical.....	S/Ldr. W.F. Walton.	
Photographic.....	F/O. B.F. Robinson.	
Signals.....	P/O. R.A. Brown.	

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170 WING

<u>AIR.</u>		
Commanding Officer.....	W/Cmdr. H.G. Goddard, D.F.C., A.F.C.	
Flying.....	W/Cmdr. P.H. Lee, D.F.C.	
Intelligence.....	F/Lt. J.H. Buick.	
<u>ADMINISTRATION.</u>		
S/Ldr. ADMIN.....	S/Ldr. J.H. Robertson.	
Adjutant.....	F/Lt. C.L. Methuen.	
<u>SERVICES.</u>		
Accounts.....	- VACANT -	
Armament.....	F/Lt. T.G. Hicks.	
Engineering.....	F/O. J.S. Duffy. (wef. 28/4/44)	
Equipment.....	F/O. A.P.O. Bank. (wef. 28/5/44)	
Catering.....	F/O. J. Atkinson. (wef. 24/4/44)	
Medical.....	S/Ldr. T.R. Davidson	
Photographic.....	- VACANT -	
Signals.....	S/Ldr. R.C. Lambert.	

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WING STAFFS189 WING

<u>BRANCH</u>			<u>HEAD OF SECTION</u>
<u>AIR</u>			
Commanding Officer.....	W/Cmdr.	P.K.	Devitt.
Flying.....	S/Ldr.	G.	Marsland.
Intelligence.....	F/Lt.	A.	Taylor.
<u>ADMINISTRATION.</u>			
S/Ldr. ADMIN.....	S/Ldr.	H.S.	Fender.
Adjutant.....	F/Lt.	L.J.	Harding.
<u>SERVICES.</u>			
Accounts.....	F/Lt.	J.G.R.	Orchard.
Armament.....	F/Lt.	R.	Shore.
Engineering.....	F/Lt.	J.	McCombie.
Equipment.....	F/Lt.	R.H.	Wurr.
Catering.....	-	VACANT	-
Medical.....	S/Ldr.	R.M.	Munro.
Photographic.....	-	VACANT	-
Signals.....	F/Lt.	R.	Simpson.

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243 WING

<u>AIR</u>			
Commanding Officer.....	G/Capt.	E.R.	Bithead to 2/6/44.
Commanding Officer.....	W/Cmdr.	T.P.A.	Bradley, D.S.O., D.F.C.
Flying.....	S/Ldr.	C.H.	Smither.
Intelligence.....	F/Lt.	C.R.	Coleman.
<u>ADMINISTRATION.</u>			
S/Ldr. ADMIN.....	S/Ldr.	L.	Abraham.
Adjutant.....	F/Lt.	B.W.Le.M.	James.
<u>SERVICES.</u>			
Accounts.....	F/Lt.	A.L.	Monkhouse.
Armament.....	F/Lt.	H.	Burge.
Engineering.....	F/Lt.	W.J.	Crook.
Equipment.....	F/Lt.	E.J.H.	Stanton.
Catering.....	F/O.	L.B.	Blackwell.
Medical.....	S/Ldr.	D.S.	Napier.
Photographic.....	-	VACANT	-
Signals.....	F/Lt.	J.	Bell.

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181 SIGNALS WING.

Commanding Officer.....	W/Cm̄r.	W.D.A.	Smith.
S/Ldr. ADMIN.....	S/Ldr.	W.	McGregor.
Accounts.....	F/Lt.	A.D.	Bodman.
Equipment.....	F/Lt.	H.A.	Bone.
Medical.....	F/Lt.	S.M.	Rigg.
Signals.....	S/Ldr.	L.T.	Eden.
Radar.....	S/Ldr.	J.A.	Elliott.

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SDN.	COMMANDING OFFICER.	ADJUTANT.	FLIGHT COMMANDER.	FLIGHT COMMANDER.	ENGINEER OFFICER	INTELLIGENCE OFFICER
1(IAF)	S/L. Arjan Singh.	F/L.P.N.Patwardhan.	F/L.Rajaram.	F/L.Rajar.	F/O.Ram Singh.	F/O.J.C.Kakar.
7(IAF)	S/L.H.N.Chaudhuri.	F/L.R.D.Vedana.	F/L.P.G.Lall.	F/L.E.W.Pinto.	P/O.D.G.H.Higgins (RAF)	F/O.D.C.Seth.
5	S/L.G.J.J.Hagan.	F/L.T.A.Scundrett.	F/L.D.R.Ryde.	F/L.N.M.Bayte.	F/O.G.Bend.	F/O.J.S.Miller.
11.	S/L.Norris.* S/L.D.J.T.Sharp.	F/L.B.N.Harvey.	F/L.V.D.Page.	F/L.J.N. Cranston.	F/O.S.A.Cooper.	F/O.J.D.Blakeley
28	S/L.H.G.F.Jensen DFC.	F/L.D.R.Adams.	F/L.A.D.Guymer.	F/L.E.G.Pannel.	P/O.A.J.Peary.	Vacant.
34.	S/L.C.P.N.Newman. DFC & Bar.	F/L.R.J.W. Collinson.	F/L.R.E.Stout.	F/L.W.L. Richmond.	P/O.P.Hancock.	F/O.W.A.Rumble.
42.	S/L.J.A.Busbridge. S/L.G.May.	F/L.J.E.Morley.	F/L.R.H.Hunter.	F/L.J.C.Fogg.	Vacant.	F/O.A.K.DeDenne.
60.	S/L.R.C.Lindsell.	F/L.J.C.Evans.	F/L.J.A. Busbridge.	F/L.C.M. Dennyhy (26/5/44)	F/O.W.E.S.Allen.	F/O.C.A.Shephard.
81.	S/L.W.H.Whittamore† S/L.J.V.Marshall IFC.	F/L.Caunce.	Capt.R.J.P. Collingwood DFC.	Capt A.D.McClearn	F/O.H.Scriven.	Vacant.
84.	S/L.A.H.Gill.	F/L.B.Lilley.	F/L.J.H. Goldfinch.	F/L.L.S.Johns.	F/O.J.H.Ramsden.	F/O.M.A.Brownrigg.
110	S/L.L.F.Penny DFC	F/L. Grant-Watson.	F/L.R.Topley.	F/L.J.Hedley.	F/O.C.A.Steer.	F/O.G.V.Roberts.
113.	S/L.R.N.d.Courtney.	F/O.S.S.Bailey.	F/L.E.M.Frost.	F/L.J.D.Hopkins.	F/O.R.R.G.White.	F/O.C.S.Marshall.
123.	S/L.A.J.McGregor.	F/L.J.A.R.Nead.	F/L.C.J. Sullivan.	F/L.P.R.W.Avis. Capt.J.J.Loffatt.	P/O.R.A.A.Simpson.	F/O.E.J.Thomas.

* S/Edr. Norris to Fighter Ops 221 Group 15.3.44.

† S/L. Whittamore missing believed killed 13/3/44.

APPENDIX 'E'

SQDN.	COMMANDING OFFICER.	ADJUTANT.	FLIGHT COMMANDER.	FLIGHT COMMANDER.	ENGINEER OFFICER.	INTELLIGENCE OFFICER.
136.	S/L. A.N. Constantine. S/L. E.O. Watson.	F/Lt. L.R.T. Wasey.	F/L. L.H. LeGrew.	F/L. C.T. Doudy.		
152.	S/L. M.R. Ingram. DFC. S/L. P. Stephenson.	F/L. S. Tyas.	Capt. W.H. Hoffe.		F/O. G.F. Stubbings.	F/O. J. Drakeford-Lewis.
607.	S/L. G.G.A. Davies.	F/L.R.J. Collins.	F/L. J.L. Briggs.	F/Lt. L.G. Coons.	F/O. S.H. Bates.	F/O. A.J. Benjamin.
615.	S/L. D.A. McCormick.	F/L. L.R. Smith.	F/L. K.P. Gannon.	F/L. G. Falconer.	P/O. F.E. Fish.	F/O. A. Walker.
656. (AOP)	Maj. D.W. Coyle.	F/L. A.W. Eaton.	Capt. I.N.R. Shield.	Capt. R.T. James.		
1582 Cal. Flt.	F/O. A.S. Lamb.	N/A.	N/A.	N/A.		N/A.
23 AASC.	W/Cdr. A.W. Archer.	F/O. G.A. Smith.	N/A.	N/A.	N/A.	N/A.
25 AASC.	W/Cdr. E.A. Whitely. D.F.C.	F/O. R. Pugh.	N/A.	N/A.	N/A.	N/A.
	Succeeded by W/Cdr. P. Devitt.					
"	" W/Cdr. C. Newman DFC & Bar.					

AWARDS TO PERSONNEL OF No.221 GROUP
GAINED DURING THE WAR IN THE IMPHAL AREA

1944

F/Off.	L.F.M. CRONIN.	81 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
S/Ldr.	C.P.N. NEWMAN.	34 Sqdn.	Bar to D.F.C.
S/Ldr.	G.J.C. HOGAN.	5 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
S/Ldr.	H.G.F. LARSEN.	28 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
S/Ldr.	G. MAY.	42 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
S/Ldr.	ARJAN SINGH.	1 (IAF) Sqdn.	D.F.C.
F/O.	R.J. GARRATT.	28 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
F/O.	A. McPEART.	81 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
W.O.	C.A. WATT.	28 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
S/Ldr.	D.J.T. SHARP.	11 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
S/Ldr.	R.N.H. COURTNEY.	113 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
W/Cdr.	P.H. LEE.	170 Wing.	D.F.C.
F/O.	R.E. JACKSON.	34 Sqdn.	M.C.
F/Lt.	J.G. FOGG.	42 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
F/O.	R.O. SMITH.	42 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
F/O.	K. LISTER.	34 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
P/O.	I.D. CULPAN.	34 Sqdn.	D.F.M.
F/O.	W.S. GARNETT.	5 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
F/O.	K.F.R. DICKS.	84 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
F/Lt.	G.A. BUTLER.	60 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
F/Lt.	A. McBLACKBURN.	84 Sqdn. v	D.F.C.
Capt.	A.D. MACLEAN	81 Sq dn.	D.F.C.
Cpl.	O'SHEA .	81 Sqdn.	B.E.M.
S/Ldr.	S.J. DAVIES.	168 Wing.	G.M.
W/Cdr.	H.G. GODDARD. DFC. AFC.	170 Wing.	D.S.O.
S/Ldr.	A.M. GILL.	84 Sqdn.	D.F.C.
F/Lt.	D.J. HAWKES.	84 Sqdn.	D.F.C.

TOTAL SORTIES FLOWN BY SQUADRONS.

1st MARCH to 31st JULY inclusive.

<u>SQUADRON.</u>	<u>No of SORTIES.</u>
1 (IAF)	1, 796.
5	1, 261.
7 (IAF)	837.
9 (IAF)	334.
11	2, 286.
20 det	254.
28	1, 582.
34	2, 048.
42	2, 719.
60	1, 464.
81	1, 879.
82	290.
84	1, 666.
110	1, 313.
113	1, 912.
123	762.
136	260.
152	565.
176 det	116.
607	1, 268.
615	1, 140.
	<hr/>
	25, 755.
	<hr/>

MONTHLY TOTAL OF SORTIES FLOWN.

MARCH.	4465.
APRIL.	7002.
MAY.	6356.
JUNE.	4527.
JULY.	3405.
	<hr/>
	25,755.
	<hr/>

APPENDIX 'H'.ENEMY AIR ACTIVITY 1st MARCH to 31st JULY 1944.

	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME OF FIRST PLOT</u>	<u>No. OF ENEMY AIRCRAFT</u>	<u>AREA CONCERNED</u>
1.	4th March	0846 hours	1 Recce.	IMPHAL Valley.
2.	6th March	0729 hours	1 Recce.	IMPHAL Valley.
3.	6th March	1214 hours	3 u/i.	IMPHAL Valley.
4.	12th March	0423 hours	6 Bombers.	KUMBHIRGRAM A/F.
5.	12th March	0945 hours	12+ Fighters.	SILCHAR Area.
6.	16th March	0416 hours	5 Bombers.	KANGLA A/F.
7.	16th March	0740 hours	30+ Fighters.	IMPHAL Valley.
8.	17th March	0355 hours	3 Bombers.	IMPHAL Valley.
9.	17th March	0552 hours	(6 Fighters.	PALEL A/F.
			(6 Fighters.	TULIHAL A/F.
10.	24th March	1615 hours	1 Fighter.	PALEL A/F.
11.	26th March	0720 hours	12 Bombers. & Fighters.	MS.120 TIDDIM Road.
12.	28th March	0718 hours	(20 Fighters	PALEL Area.
			(3 Bombers.	
13.	28th March	0843 hours	1 Recce.	IMPHAL Valley.
14.	1st April	0833 hours	1 Recce.	IMPHAL Valley.
15.	3rd April	1945 hours	6 Bombers.	KOHIMA.
16.	3rd April	NOT PLOTTED	1+ Bombers.	KUMBHIRGRAM A/F. (1959 hours)
17.	3rd April	2100 hours	1 Bomber.	IMPHAL Area.
18.	4th April	1632 hours	1 Recce.	IMPHAL Valley.
19.	4th April	2012 hours	3 u/i.	IMPHAL Area.
20.	9th April	0337 hours	3 u/i.	KOHIMA Area.
21.	9th April	0343 hours	3 u/i.	KOHIMA Area.
22.	10th April	0358 hours	6 Bombers.	TULIHAL A/F.
23.	11th April	0805 hours	15+ Fighters & Bombers.	IMPHAL Area.
24.	12th April	1349 hours	20+ Fighters.	UKHRUL Area.

ENEMY AIR ACTIVITY 1st MARCH to 31st JULY 1944.

25.	15th April	0754 hours	20* Fighters 6 Bombers	IMPHAL A/F
26.	16th April	0746 hours	1 Recce.	IMPHAL Valley
27.	17th April	1518 hours	25* Fighters 6 Bombers	IMPHAL area.
28.	21st April	1636 hours	6 Fighters.	KANGLA A/F
29.	22nd April	0630 hours	6 Fighters 3 Bombers.	IMPHAL area.
30.	22nd April	0730 hours	3 Fighters.	IMPHAL area.
31.	25th April	0726 hours 0737 hours	15* Fighters. 20* Fighters.	SILCHAR and PATHARKANDI areas.
32.	25th April	1513 hours	1 Recce.	PATHARKANDI area.
33.	26th April	0858 hours	15+ Fighters.	KOHIMA area.
34.	26th April	0900 hours.	20* Fighters	IMPHAL area.
35.	26th April	1539 hours	1 Recce.	HAILAKANDI area.
36.	28th April	0754 hours	30* Fighters.	KOHIMA area.
37.	28th April	1701 hours	1 Recce.	KUMBHIRGRAM area.
38.	1st May	0758 hours	10* Fighters. 6 Bombers.	IMPHAL area.
39.	6th May	0726 hours	15+ Fighters. 6 Bombers.	IMPHAL area.
40;	9th May	0629 hours	25+ Fighters	IMPHAL area.
41.	10th May	0349 hours	3 Bombers.	IMPHAL area.
42.	10th May	0349 hours	3 Bombers.	HARANGAJAO Fly. Stn.
43.	10th May	0714 hours	20* Fighters.	IMPHAL area.
44.	10th May.	1110 hours	1 Recce.	IMPHAL VALLEY & KUMBHIRGRAM.
45.	11th May.	0326 hours	3 Bombers.	IMPHAL area.
46.	11th May.	0622 hours	20+ Fighters.	PALEL area.
47.	14th May.	0714 hours	12+ Fighters.	KOHIMA area.
48.	14th May.	1012 hours.	15+ Fighters.	KOHIMA area.
49.	18th May.	1132 hours	10+ Fighters.	IMPHAL area.
50.	19th May.	0728 hours.	1 Recce.	PALEL area.

ENEMY AIR ACTIVITY 1st MARCH to 31st JULY, 1944.

51. 21st May 0551 hours 1 Recce. SILCHAR area.
52. 21st May 0712 hours 20+ Fighters IMPHAL area.
53. 23rd May 1211 hours 20+ Fighters OKRROB. area
54. 24th May 1223 hours 15+ Fighters. IMPHAL area.
55. 25th May 0745 hours 20+ Fighters. IMPHAL area.
56. 26th May 1225 hours 1 Recce. KOHIMA area.
57. 29th May 0717 hours 8+ Fighters IMPHAL area.
58. 29th May 0752 hours 20+ Fighters PALEL area.
59. 31st May 1603 hours 20+ Fighters PALEL area
60. 8th June 1042 hours 15+ Fighters. IMPHAL area.
61. 9th June 0140 hours 2 Bombers. IMPHAL area.
62. 17th June 1115 hours 20+ Fighters IMPHAL area.

ENEMY AIRCRAFT CASUALTIES.

MARCH - JULY 1944.

MONTHLY TOTALS.

	<u>Destroyed.</u>	<u>Probables.</u>	<u>Damaged.</u>
MARCH.	12.	4.	9.
APRIL.	6.	7.	23.
MAY.	8.	8.	31.
JUNE.	6.	4.	2.
JULY.	0.	1.	0.
	32.	24.	65.

DETAILS BY SQUADRONS.

	<u>Destroyed.</u>	<u>Probables.</u>	<u>Damaged.</u>
5 Squadron.	-	-	1.
11 "	-	-	1.
28 "	2.	-	-
81 "	13.	8.	23.
84 "	-	1.	-
123 "	-	-	3.
136 "	-	2.	1.
176 "	3.	-	-
607 "	12.	8.	26.
615 "	2.	5.	10.
	32.	24.	65.

LOSS OF RADAR & M.W.O.C COVER & STOP GAP PATROLS.

1. At the commencement of the Japanese offensive against the IMPHAL VALLEY it was decided by 4 Corps to withdraw their ground forces from TIDDIM and the KABAW VALLEY and to concentrate on the IMPHAL VALLEY itself. This subjected the Air Warning System to severe restrictions. Many Units were forced to withdraw from carefully chosen positions to unprepared and operationally inferior sites.

2. RADAR DEPLOYMENT.

The major operational problem attendant upon the deployment of Radar stations in this area is that of ground-clutter (P.E.'s). The country is very mountainous and to reduce P.E.'s while maintaining adequate cover, advantage must be taken of hill screening.

At the start of the campaign the deployment was as shown in fig 1. A mobile C.O.L. at TAMU provided early warning to the South East, while a Light Warning Set at TIDDIM filled a similar role to the South. A static C.O.L. at VABAQAI gave general cover to the area. Height cover in the IMPHAL area was provided by a G.C.I. at MOIRANG and an M.R.U. from KAPCLA. To the North, Dimapur was covered by a G.C.I. This deployment was maintained until March 12th.

By March 25th, three stations had been withdrawn: they were the L.W. set from TIDDIM, the C.O.L. from TAMU and the M.R.U. from KAPCLA. The C.O.L. was re-sited a few miles North-West of Imphal at SENJAM KUNOU, where it replaced, to some extent, the cover previously given by the M.R.U. The M.R.U. and L.W. set were kept at Wing Headquarters. The effect of these movements is shown in fig. 2.

Several changes took place between March 25th. and May 19th. The most significant was the withdrawal of the G.C.I. from MOIRANG to BURI LAZBAR on the 31st. March. The C.O.L. was moved from SENJAM KUNOU to a point approx. two miles north of IMPHAL. Three L.W. sets were deployed one in the SILCHAR VALLEY and two in the IMPHAL VALLEY, their function being to "fill in" P.E. areas of the main stations. Fig.3 illustrates these movements.

3. M.W.O.C. DEPLOYMENT.

Unlike the Radar stations, M.W.O.C. posts are not confined to the roads but can travel almost anywhere a mule can go. In spite of this, good sites are by no means unlimited. A good site would be established on high ground so that Observers were not screened from low-flying aircraft by adjacent hills; in practice it is found that many otherwise suitable peaks are inaccessible for various reasons and that some screening must be tolerated. Owing to this limitation it is not sufficient to deploy a single 'belt' of posts round an area to ensure that aircraft cannot approach undetected.

These posts remained as far forward as possible until they were forced back by the enemy, in fact some posts were surrounded before they closed down, and destroyed technical equipment and documents. Several posts suffered casualties from enemy fire and two or three were actually captured.

It is not practical to display pictorially every move of individual posts and Figures 4 and 5 show the state of deployment at the beginning of the campaign, and on several occasions, during the period March 10th and May 12th, after changes in the line had taken place.

The deployment prior to any withdrawals, shown in Fig.4, gave almost continuous cover from TIDDIM in the South, through TAMU, to DIMAPUR in the North. A series of posts were being deployed joining TIDDIM to the chain that ran South from SILCHAR. With this gap between TIDDIM and AIJAL closed, all avenues of approach to SILCHAR, IMPHAL and airfields in their vicinity would have been covered.

The seven posts in the TIDDEM area had by March 21st been forced to withdraw completely, and warning to the South was reduced by about thirty five miles; also three posts East and North of UKHARUL were withdrawn leaving a large gap North East of IMPHAL. The majority of the remaining posts as far North as KORIMA retreated distances between ten and fifteen miles. The lines between SILCHAR and AIJAL, and between KORIMA and DIMAPUR were maintained. (See fig.4. broken line).

Between 21st and 28th March the SILCHAR belt and posts North of KORIMA held their positions, as did the four posts South of IMPHAL, within the valley itself. The remaining posts, four of which were withdrawn completely, were forced back onto IMPHAL, losing as much as twenty miles in some cases. (See fig.4 dotted line).

The worst time for observer post cover was undoubtedly about April 4th. Of the original twenty nine posts deployed over the TIDDEM - TAMU - DIMAPUR line only twelve were left. IMPRAL was completely unprotected over the East - South quadrant and the chain North to DIMAPUR consisted of four widely spaced posts. The second line of defence was being set up between SILCHAR and DIMAPUR and at this time no posts were in position. (See fig.5).

By April 11th the tide of battle was turning and the enemy was beginning to weaken in some areas. Advantage was immediately taken of this and posts were re-deployed South of IMPHAL and East of AIJAL. Two more were added to the SILCHAR - DIMAPUR line. (See fig.5 broken line.).

The situation had been static for a month by May 12th it was beginning to ease in the vicinity of IMPHAL and it was possible to deploy seven more posts South and East of the town. Whilst they were too close to provide sufficient warning to enable interceptions to be made before a target was reached, they did enable any aircraft in the vicinity to be tracked; so that operations room was not entirely without information of enemy movements. (See fig.5 plain dots.).

4. GENERAL.

The Air Warning system at the outset of the Japanese advance was working very well, and was quite adequate to deal successfully with almost any type of raid that could have been launched against the area.

The first serious setback encountered was on the 17th March, when the mobile G.C.I. at TAMU and the L.V. set at TIDDEM were forced to withdraw. By the 21st of March all M.W.O.C. posts in the vicinity of TIDDEM had also been withdrawn. The net effect of these withdrawals was loss of approximately eight minutes warning on high flying aircraft over the most vital area South to East, and a loss of approximately nine minutes on any low flying aircraft coming from the South. About this time a large breach was made in the M.W.O.C. line North East of IMPHAL, and any low flying aircraft in the UKHARUL area could not be tracked.

On March 25th the M.R. S. at LANGLA ceased to operate, with the resultant serious loss of height cover over IMPHAL. This station was withdrawn to Wing H.Q. and held in reserve. The M.W.O.C. chain now rapidly falling back on IMPHAL, leaving a number of serious gaps through which low flying aircraft might have penetrated without being observed. The G.C.I. was now the Southerly station, and Controllers there received no warning before incoming aircraft were actually observed on their tube, and the time from that moment until the response entered the P.F. area is, with the present terrain, generally quite small. If a raid is to be intercepted before this happens, prior warning must be given to the G.C.I. controller. Should a

APPENDIX J

raid enter the P.E. area before attacking fighters make contact, successful interception demands a high degree of co-operation between the Sector Ops filter and G.C.I. controllers.

The remaining height cover in the IMPHAL area was lost when the key G.C.I. station at MOIRANG was withdrawn to BURI BAZAAR. Army G.L. sets were now the only source of reliable heights, and owing to their restricted cover, Ops Room controllers were without information over large portions of tracks.

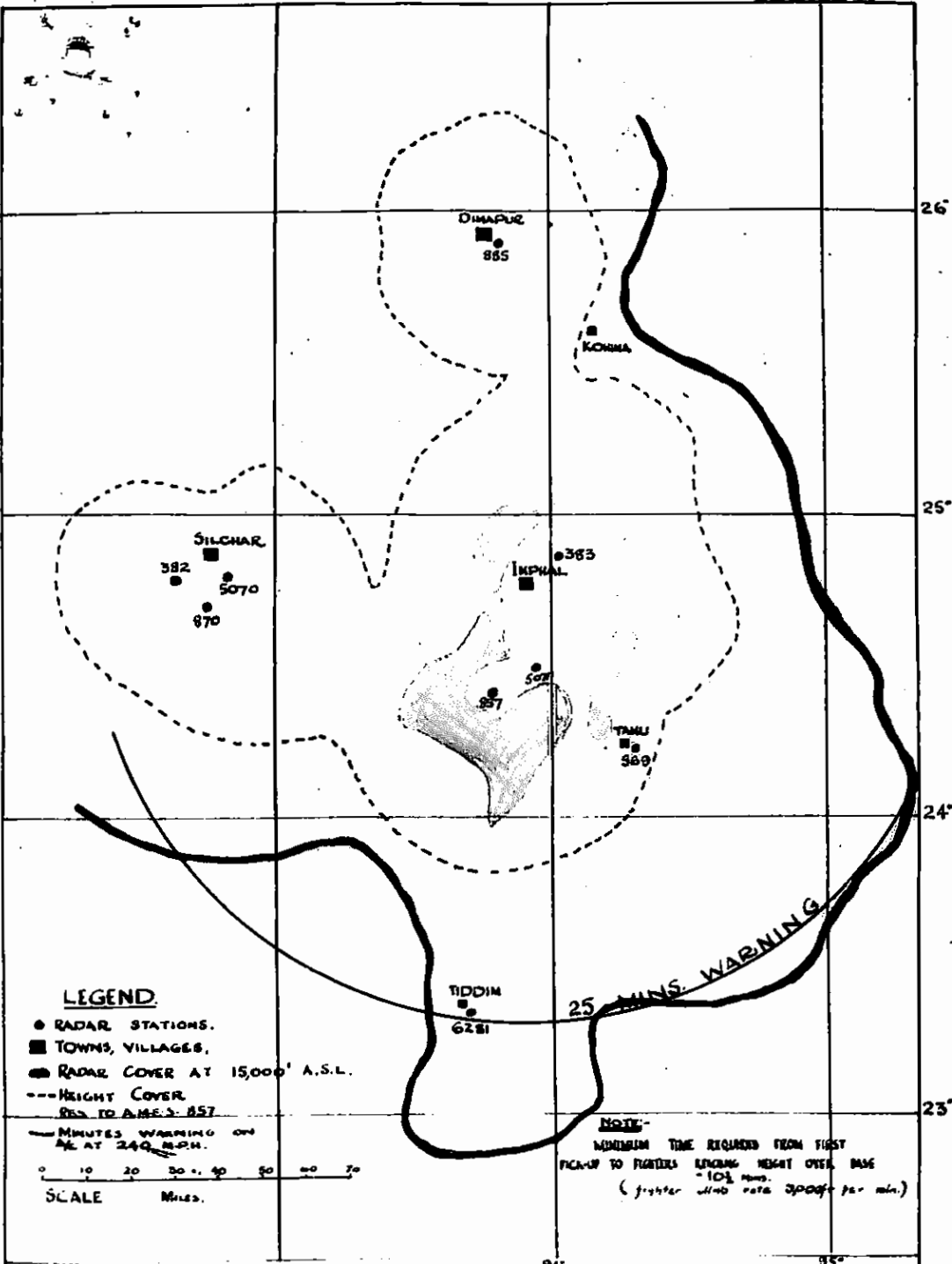
Up to the 20th of April the Japanese concentrated on high flying tactics, and interceptions were, in the main, successful. Night attacks were made, but Beaufighters dealt with the raiders, shooting down one SALLY on the night of March 16th and two LILYS on the night of 3/4th April, despite the fact that information on tracks was meagre when the aircraft were over the IMPHAL VALLEY. This was due to heavy P.E.'s common to all stations, coupled with the fact that the few M.V.O.C. posts within the Valley could not provide continuous tracking. On the 21st April two L.W. sets were deployed south of IMPHAL to cover some of the blind areas.

Low flying attacks were first attempted on the evening of the 21st of April when the strip at KANGLA was bombed. The next morning a similar attack was made on TULIHAI. Nothing was seen of these raiders by Radar but pilots were passed by the M.V.O.C. posts. This type of attack was continued throughout May, very few plots being received.

To meet these low flying attacks 'Stop Gap' patrols were introduced to inflict as much damage as possible on the enemy formations during their withdrawal. For this purpose, some of the scrambled aircraft were detached, usually two groups, and detailed to patrol the Southern extremities of the IMPHAL VALLEY, while the rest of the formation proceeded to the target. The patrolling aircraft flew low to their appointed area and attempted to intercept the raiders as they were running from the interceptors in the target area. These patrols had a number of successes, the most notable occurred on the 17th of June when between fifteen and twenty OSCARS were intercepted, six of which were destroyed, four probably destroyed, and two damaged. After this particularly heavy defeat no further attempts were made by the Japanese to provide air support for their forward troops, and from this date to the end of JULY no enemy aircraft entered the IMPHAL VALLEY.

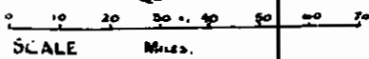
Below is a summary of Radar movements during the campaign.

A.M.E.S. No.	From.	To.	DATE.
6281	TIDDIM	WING STORES	12th March
569	TAIL	SENJAM KUNOU	17th March
383	KANGLA	WING STORES	25th March
857	MOLRANG	BURI BAZAAR	31st March
6130	WING HQ	KUMBHIRGRAM	6th April
569	SENJAM KUNOU	N.W. IMPHAL	7th April
6170	WING IQ	YARIPOK	21st April
6263	WING HQ	S.E. IMPHAL	21st April
333	WING STORES	KANGLA	9th May



LEGEND

- RADAR STATIONS.
- TOWNS, VILLAGES.
- RADAR COVER AT 15,000' A.S.L.
- HEIGHT COVER
SEE DRAWING 857
- MINUTES WARNING ON
AL AT 240 M.P.H.



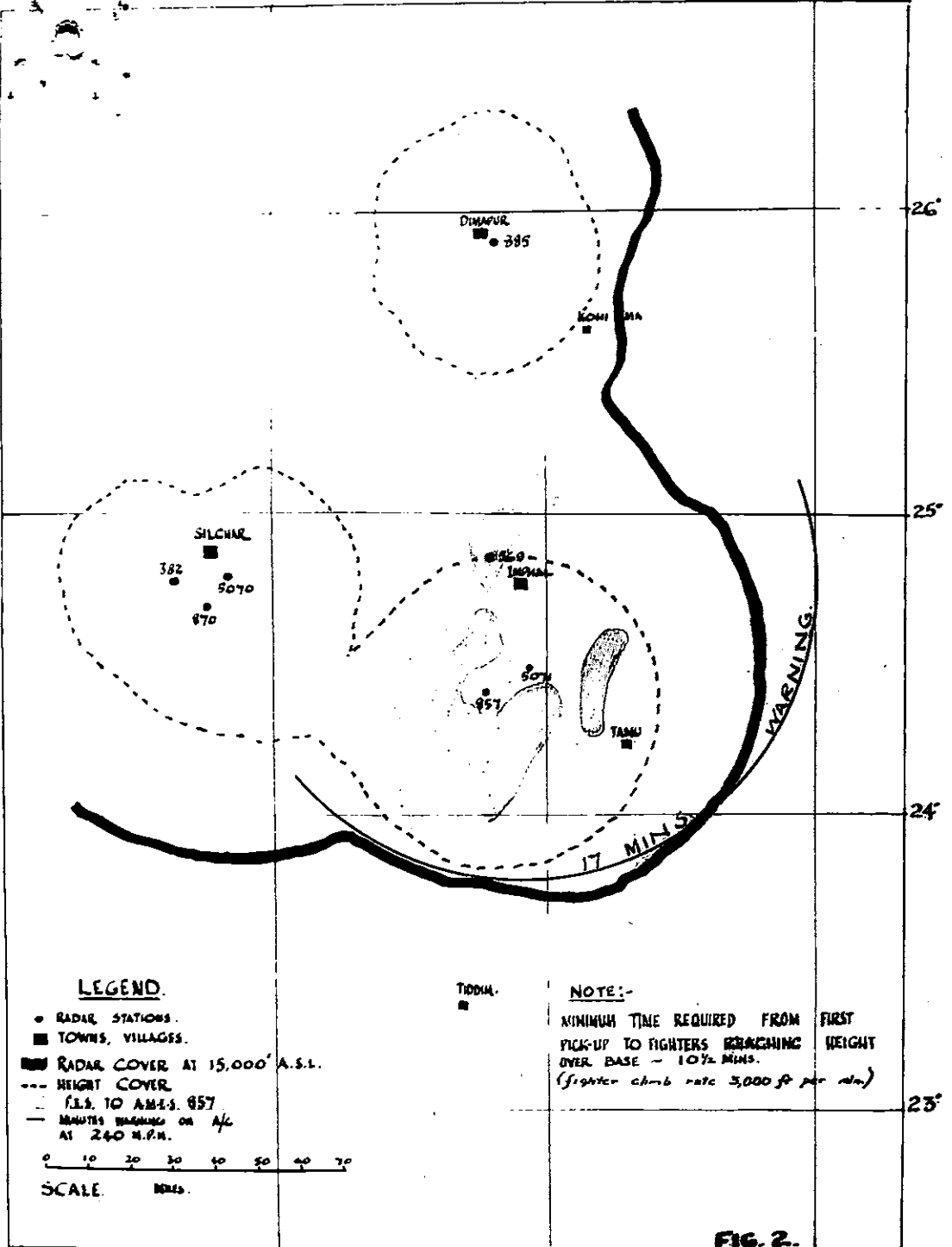
NOTE:-
MINIMUM TIME REQUIRED FROM FIRST
PICK-UP TO FIGHTERS LEAVING HEIGHT OVER BASE
- 10% HOURS.
(fighter climb rate 3000ft per min.)

DRAWN BY	ORR - RM GROVE
TRACED BY	ORR - RM GROVE
APPROVED	HOLLING 1257
DATE	11-10-54
DRAWING OFFICE	
221 GROUP	
R	A

MARCH
12th
1944

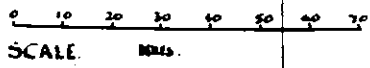
**-RADAR COVER-
221 GROUP AREA**

FIG. 1



LEGEND.

- RADAR STATIONS.
- TOWNS, VILLAGES.
- RADAR COVER AT 15,000' A.S.L.
- HEIGHT COVER
- F.L.S. TO AM-15 957
- MINUTES WARNING ON A/c AT 240 M.P.H.



NOTE:-

MINIMUM TIME REQUIRED FROM FIRST PICK-UP TO FIGHTERS REACHING HEIGHT OVER BASE - 10 1/2 MINS. (fighter climb rate 3,000 ft per min.)

FIG. 2.

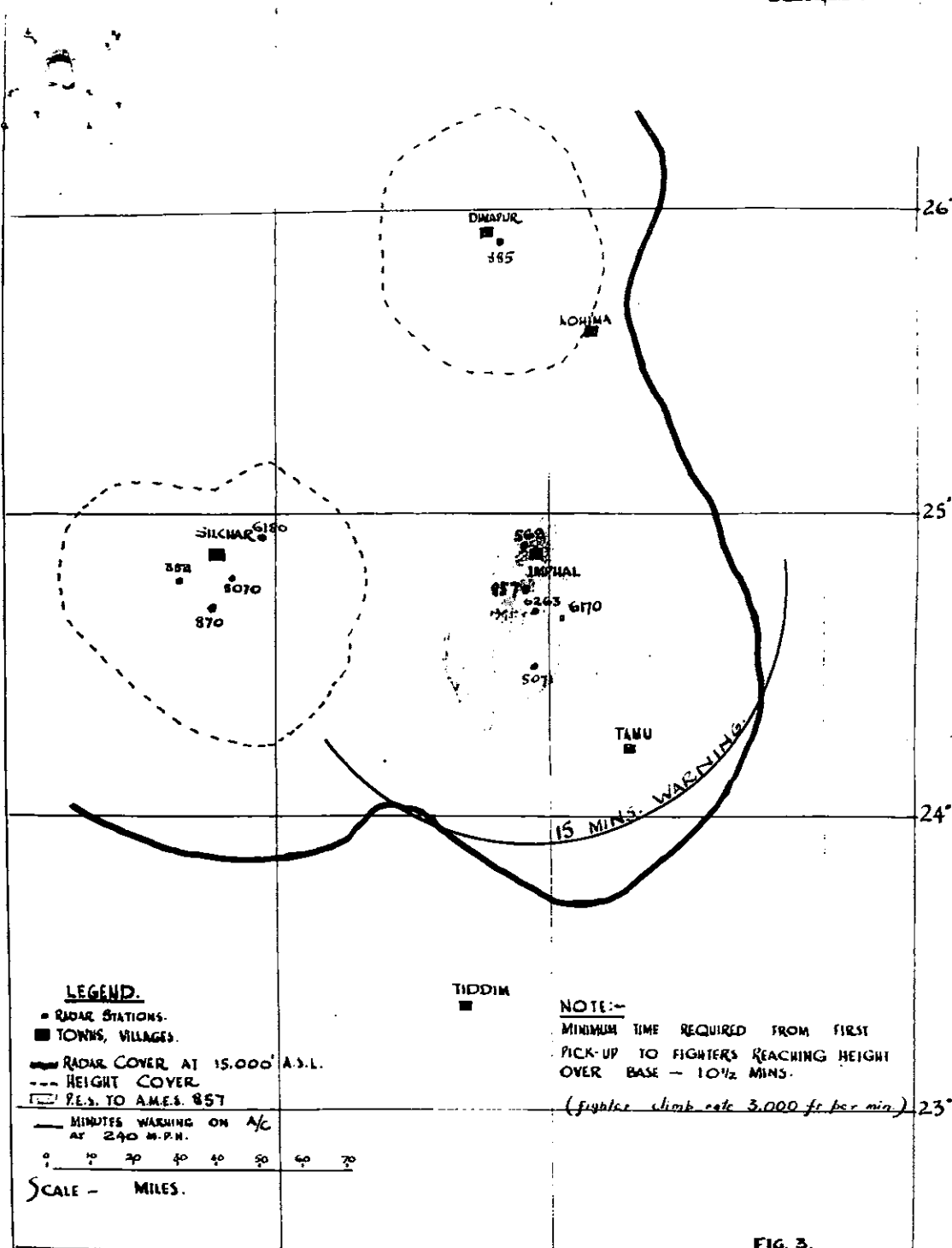
DRAWN BY R1
 CHECKED BY R2
 APPROVED BY R3
 DATE 11-12-44

O.R.S. 221 GROUP
 11-12-44

DRAWING OFFICE
 221 GROUP
 R. A. F.

MARCH 25TH 1944

**~RADAR COVER~
 221 GROUP AREA**



LEGEND.

- RADAR STATIONS.
 - TOWNS, VILLAGES.
 - RADAR COVER AT 15,000' A.S.L.
 - - - HEIGHT COVER.
 - P.E.S. TO A.M.E.S. 857
 - MINUTES WARNING ON A/C AT 240 M.P.H.
- | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|

SCALE - MILES.

TIDDIM ■

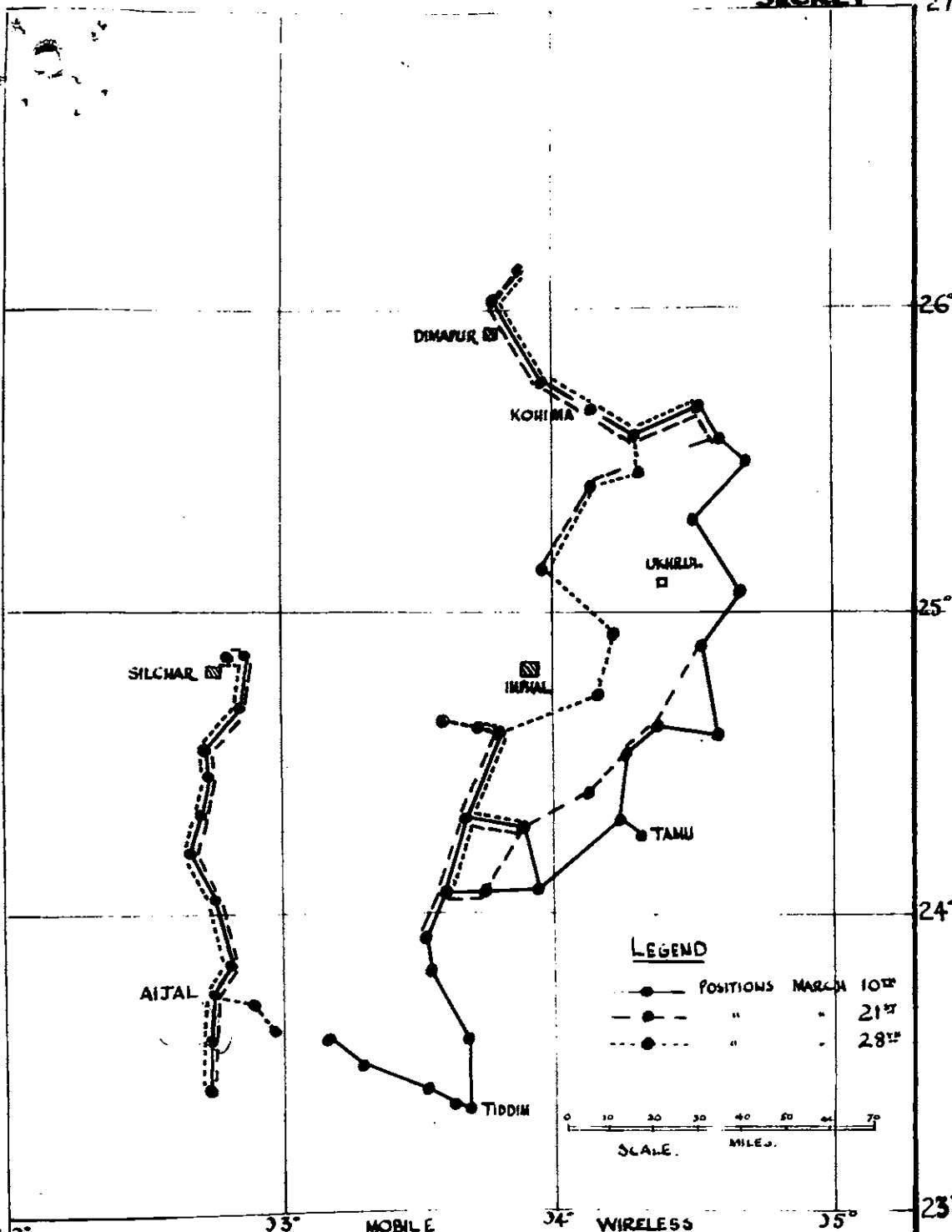
NOTE:-
 MINIMUM TIME REQUIRED FROM FIRST PICK-UP TO FIGHTERS REACHING HEIGHT OVER BASE - 10½ MINS.
(fighter climb rate 3,000 ft per min.)

FIG. 3.

DRAWN BY	O.R.S. 221 GROUP
TRACED BY	<i>[Signature]</i>
APPROVED	<i>[Signature]</i>
DATE	11-10-44
DRAWING OFFICE	
H.Q. 221 GROUP.	

MAY
19th
1944.

- RADAR COVER -
221 GROUP AREA



26°

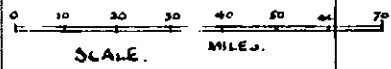
25°

24°

23°

LEGEND

- POSITIONS MARCH 10TH
- -●- - " " 21ST
- ...●... " " 28TH



MOBILE

WIRELESS

≈ OBSERVER POSTS ≈

~ MARCH 1944 ~

FIG. 4

DRAWN BY	O.R.S.-221 GROUP
TRACED BY	<i>[Signature]</i>
APPROVED	<i>[Signature]</i>
DATE	11-30-44
DRAWING OFFICE	
H.Q. 221 GROUP.	

92°

93°

94°

95°

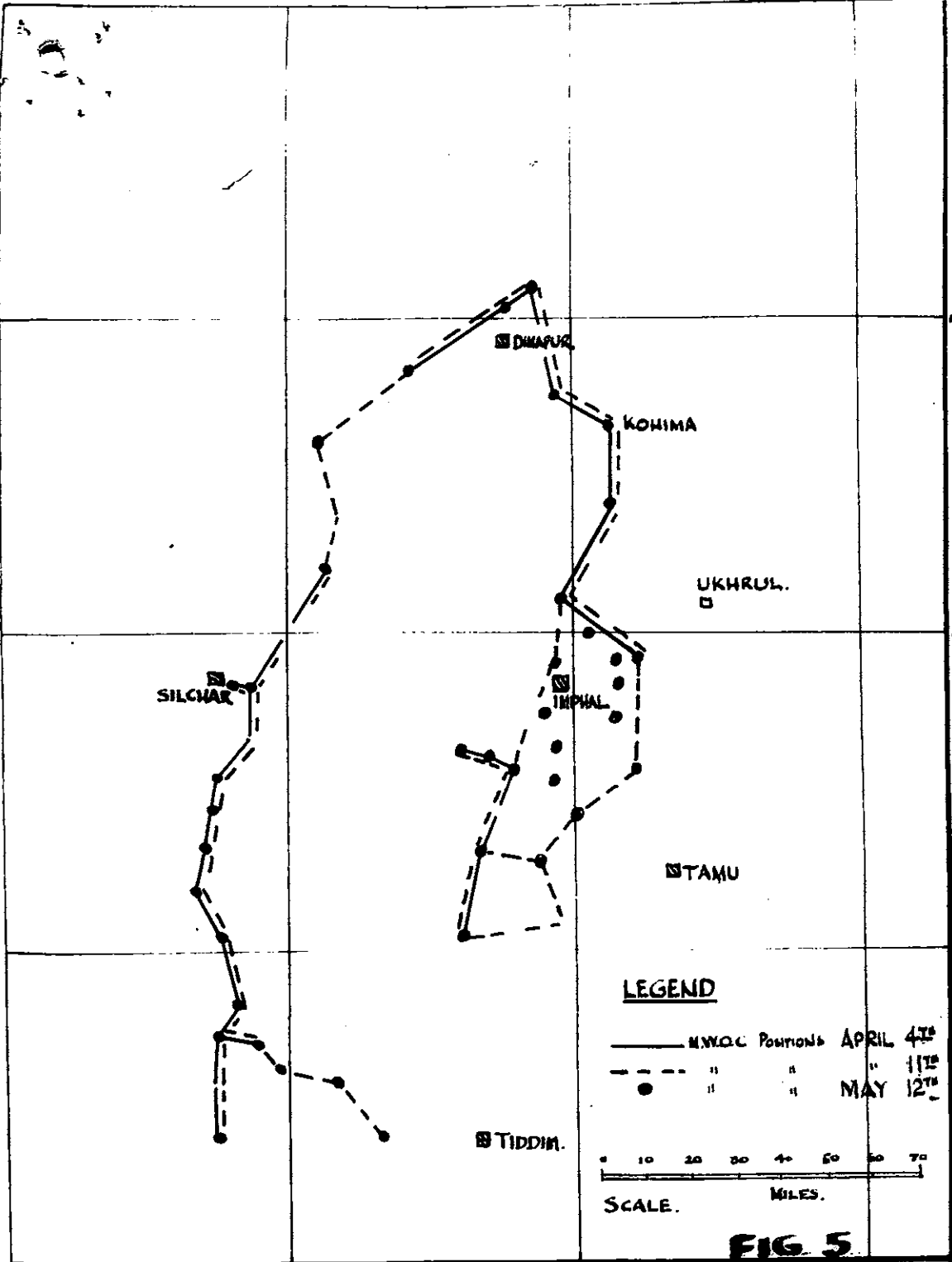
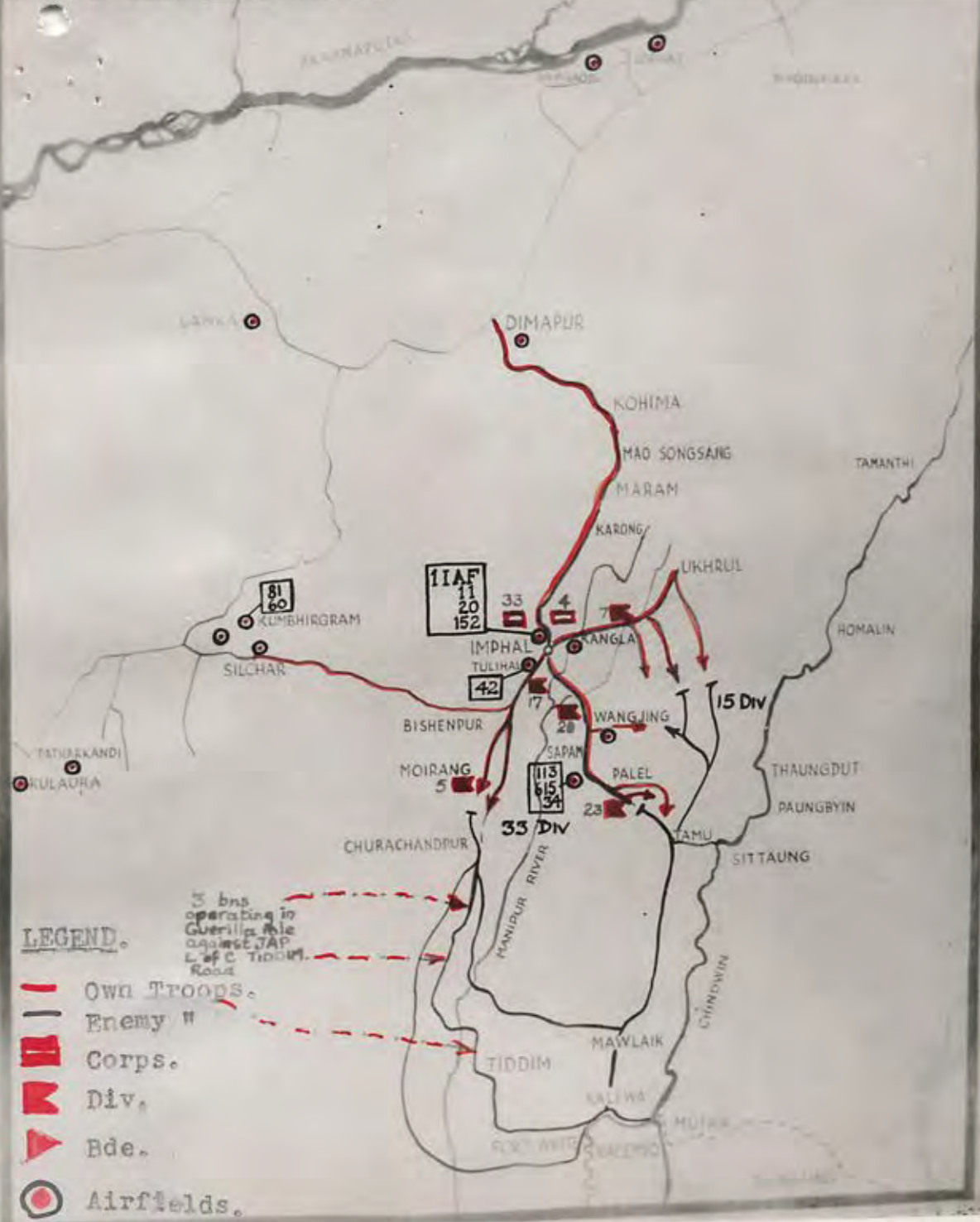


FIG. 5

SITUATION AS ON 23 JULY 44



WEIGHT OF BOMBS DROPPED IN LBS BY SQUADRONS.
MARCH-JULY INCLUSIVE.

7 (IAF) Squadron.	619,000
34 "	812,000
42 "	1242,000
60 "	749,000
82 "	444,000.
84 "	1899,000
110 "	1,111,000
113 "	758,000
	<hr/>
	8,234,000
	<hr/>

Monthly Total of Bombs dropped.

March.	1,912,000
April.	2,649,000
May	1,892,000
June.	774,000
July.	1,007,000
	<hr/>
	8,234,000
	<hr/>

ADVANCED LANDING GROUNDS.

General WINGATE's Airborne Special Force personnel made the initial landing by gliders on BROADWAY - two hundred miles inside JAPANESE occupied BURMA - on the night of 5th/6th March, 1944. During the day the airstrip was cleared with the use of bulldozers and tractors etc., flown in in the gliders, and on the subsequent nights the remainder of the Force was flown in and maintained for over two months throughout the use of BROADWAY airstrip.

2. Support for these operations was given by No. 221 Group in the form of :-

- (i) Attacks against neighbouring D of C by VENGEANCE and HURRICANE aircraft
- (ii) Intruder patrols over airfields which might be used against BROADWAY, by BEAUFIGHTERS.
- (iii) Fighter cover.

In connection with the latter it was decided to establish a Fighter Base at BROADWAY, and on March 12th, six SPITFIRES of No. 81 Squadron, Commanded by Squadron leader W.M. WHITAMORE, D.F.C., with a small servicing party of Squadron personnel, moved to the Advanced Landing Ground, with Cypher and Radar personnel to establish communications and set up a Light Warning Set.

60,240 lbs. of fuel, oil, oxygen and ammunition were flown in and brought up to a pre-arranged holding figure.

3. From March 12th - 14th, Air Commodore S.F. VINCENT, D.F.C., A.F.C., Air Officer Commanding, No. 221 Group visited the airstrip. On March 13th BROADWAY was attacked by 30 OSCARS (Army 01) for 50 minutes. The SPITFIRES scrambled and claimed 3-0-4 for the loss of one pilot - Sergeant CAMPBELL and his aircraft.

4. Evidence that the location of BROADWAY was now known to the enemy was substantiated on March 16th when 3 SALLY's with 15 Fighters attacked the airstrip from 5,000 feet. A.P. bombs were dropped and the area strafed. 5 SPITFIRES and 3 P.51's scrambled but made no contact. The strip was undamaged.

The following day - 17th March - 4 ZEROS with top cover of 8 made a low strafing raid. The plot stated 3 plus so the Commanding Officer decided to scramble only 2 SPITFIRES, piloted by Squadron Leader W.M. WHITAMORE D.F.C. and Flying Officer PEART. 3 aircraft at readiness were caught on the ground and were well strafed, Captain McLEAN and Lt. CASSON had remarkable escapes whilst sitting in their cockpits and were uninjured, but Flying Officer COULTER was so severely wounded that, in spite of a blood transfusion, he died later in hospital. Squadron Leader WHITAMORE shot down an OSCAR, but was himself shot down in flames. Flying Officer PEART also shot down an OSCAR and returned safely and later flew to No. 81 Squadron base.

5. Although R.A.F. Radar personnel were operating the L.V.S.: - it had been sited fully out in the open field by the U.S.A.A.F. technicians - it was destroyed by a bomb.

6. U.S.A.A.F. personnel left on the 22nd March. Only one R.A.F. Corporal and three B.O.R.'s were thus left to operate the L.W.S. that had been flown in.

7. On the 25th March a repaired SPITFIRE was flown out. Flight Lieutenant HUXTABLE arrived at BROADWAY and became Officer i/c R.A.F. Detachment vice Pilot Officer WOLFE, who returned to Base. The R.A.F. Party was in three separate sections - RADAR, SERVICING and SIGNALS.

8. On the 28th March, 6 OSCARS made a strafing attack on the 'STRONGHOLD' position. The pilot of an AMERICAN Light aircraft was killed and his passenger fatally wounded.

The servicing party were repairing the other damaged SPITFIRE.

A party of 200 Japs was reported to be proceeding from HOPIN to attack the 'STRONGHOLD'.

9. Information was also received from Headquarters, 3rd Tactical Air Force that No.221 Group should take over the control of A.L.G.'s in BURMA from the U.S.A.A.F., who were to leave all equipment required, such as electric flare paths, generators etc. A R.A.F. Commander was to be appointed to command BROADWAY, ABERDEEN and PICCADILLY - the latter two being other Advanced Landing Grounds in BURMA. Mobile Operations Rooms were to be set up at ABERDEEN and BROADWAY. All necessary W/T channels were to be arranged for communications, whilst a servicing party was to be stationed at ABERDEEN and BROADWAY for local administration, maintenance of petrol and stocks and servicing of aircraft.

10. On March 24th ABERDEEN became serviceable and SPITFIRE cover was provided at dawn and dusk for DAKOTAS landing and supply dropping.

11. March 27th brought the commencement of the second JAPANESE onslaught on the 'STRONGHOLD'. During the night it was attacked by some 200 JAPANESE, who made three frontal assaults across the strip with heavy losses to themselves and small to us. The following day R.A.F. personnel dug themselves into defence and shelter positions, which they improved during the ensuing days. No.570247 Sergeant TOURLE (Fitter IIE) and No.1142975 Lac BOLLARD (F.M.E.) went out to the damaged SPITFIRE and drained its tanks within range of the JAPS. No supply aircraft landed during the battle but some dropped supplies successfully during the hours of darkness. Despite reinforcements and further attacks the JAPS failed to penetrate the perimeter and suffered heavy losses. Our own troops carried out an offensive against them and on the 31st the JAPS began to withdraw from the main vicinity of BROADWAY after TOKYO had announced its annihilation.

12. As a result of instructions from 3rd T.A.F., No.1 Servicing Party with F/O PUGSLEY in charge, together with extra signals and cyphers personnel and staff to augment the Radar Operators, making a full A.M.E.S., and Station Commander - Squadron Leader V.K. JACOBS with Warrant Officer BAINES as Flying Control Officer, flew in on the 3rd to 5th April to relieve the remaining No.31 Squadron personnel and take over complete charge of the airstrip and station as such.

The Radar L.W.S. was now sited in a spinney and the perimeter wire and defences were extended to take in this position. Despite its location in this sparse clump of trees, the L.W.S. operated perfectly well and was well camouflaged by the trees and branches.

13. Conditions of living and operating were improved and a more powerful R/T set was installed with the result that aircraft were contacted soon after crossing the CHINDWIN river, whilst with the efficient co-operation of Radar in nights of bad weather or poor visibility, aircraft which were lost or had difficulty in finding the airstrip were homed successfully.

14. The R.A.F. Servicing Party completed the repair of the SPITFIRE which was made flyable with a hole in the fuel tank allowing only 60 gallons to be carried, 42 bullet holes in the fuselage, no R/T, no I.F.F. and was flown out by Squadron Leader JACOBS, who returned by DAKOTA.

15. Besides the SPITFIRE, two L.5's and two L.1's were repaired by the Servicing Party, the latter two aircraft being taken out by the AMERICANS who flew in from their Northern base, whilst the two L.5's were flown on supply drops by two R.A.F. Officers attached to XI Column and III Brigade respectively.

16. About the middle of April two HURRICANES were stationed at ABERDEEN for direct support of the Army and were flown by Squadron Leader LANE and Flight Lieutenant GILLIES. Unfortunately Flight Lieutenant GILLIES was shot down on a Tac/Recce a week later and though his aircraft was found, no trace has since been seen or heard of the pilot. Squadron Leader LANE, whilst flying out to IMPHAL to report to Head quarters No. 221 Group, forced landed successfully and was seen to get out of his aircraft apparently uninjured. Maps and food were later dropped to him, but he too has not been seen or heard of since.

17. Several loads of salvaged SPITFIRES spares, a damaged MERLIN engine, two CYCLONE engines from a MITCHELL which had crash landed on BROADWAY and had been abandoned by the AMERICANS were flown out.

18. WHITE CITY, the road and rail block at MAWLU, was evacuated on the night of 9th/10th May, and ABERDEEN the following night.

19. Of the light aircraft, one unfortunately crashed on a kutcha strip just over the CHINA border whilst the other was flown out by Flight Lieutenant LOER of III Brigade.

20. To cover the evacuation, a new road and rail block was made North West of BROADWAY on the main railway to MYITKINA, named BLACKPOOL. This operation was covered by day and night patrols by BEAUFIGHTERS, the blocks being held successfully for three weeks and covering the evacuation of BROADWAY itself which ended on the night of 12th/13th May.

APPENDIX 'L'.

The Radar and W/T sets remained working until two hours before dawn when the last incoming DAKOTA had been picked up successfully and was in visual contact with the airstrip. The crews then dismantled the apparatus, whilst the other aircraft handling crews loaded the remaining equipment, phut-phut refuellers, personal kit and some petrol to even the loads. The last two DAKOTAS containing Radar and Wireless equipment, the Commanding Officer and remainder of the station personnel who had not left earlier flew off from BROADWAY at approximately 0300 hours.

21. Much valuable information as to administration, food and rations was gathered on this excellent though brief holding and working of what was possibly the first R.A.F. airfield operated behind enemy lines, and it was the expressed opinion of Colonel ROME - Commanding Officer of the 'STRONGHOLD' - on the night of the final fly out that BROADWAY had been operated successfully both from the Army's and the R.A.F.'s point of view.

G A M E B A G
MARCH - JULY, 1944.

A. Destroyed.
B. Probably destroyed.

MONTHLY TOTALS.

	M.T.		Horses.		Locos.		R/S.		Eleph- ants.		Buildings. Bashas.		Dumps. Stores.		Bridges.		Japs.		River- craft.		Tanks.	
	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.
MARCH.	111.	363.	49.	103.	-	5.	2.	79.	3.	4.	230.	460.	7.	9.	1.	9.	5.	127.	-	40	2.	13.
APRIL.	107.	340.	27.	74.	-	4	-	21.	3.	9.	404.	625.	6.	3.	-	4.	18.	66.	17.	100.	5.	15.
MAY.	85.	132.	7.	13.	-	-	-	2.	4	1.	104.	191.	2.	2.	-	3.	3.	11.	1.	43.	-	6
JUNE.	59	120.	34.	41.	-	-	-	-	-	1.	91.	139.	6.	16.	5.	6.	67.	93.	7.	15.	3.	18.
JULY.	118.	279.	33.	7.	-	-	-	3	6	1.	143.	161.	5.	28.	12.	5.	53.	65.	13.	51.	4.	16.
480.	1234.	135.	238.	-	9.	2.	105.	16.	16.	1022.	1586.	26.	58.	18.	27.	146.	362.	43.	248.	14.	63	.

DETAILS BY SQUADRONS.

	M.T.		Horses.		Locos		R.S.		Elephants.		Blgs. Bashas.		Dumps. Stores.		Bridges.		Japs.		River Craft		Tanks.	
	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.	A.	B.
1 Sqd.	8	71	20	39					-	3	24	33	2	7			22	35	2	16		
5 "	140	434	5	8	-	8	1	60	6	4	35	72	8	2			7	44	15	128	2	14
7 "											86	169			-	2						
11 "	34	319	55	42	-	1	-	35	-	3	115	164	8	24	-	-	80	127	2	10	2	18
20 "	41	78	7	2					-	1	-	6	1	3	-	-	1	20	7	10	5	23
28 "	30	37	44	139							32	23	3	1			12	114	-	6	-	1
34 "	2	12	2	3							79	105	1	3	1	2	2	8	-	10	-	2
42 "	9	40		-							123	56	1	7	14	16				3		2
60 "	2	13									97	141	1	-	-	1	3	5	-	3	2	2
81 "	12	33	16	-							3	10	-	5			1	-				
82 "											47	100										
84 "											141	296	-	4	2	3						
110 "											108	238										
113 "	14	42	-	3					6	-	101	79	-	1	-	1	4	4	-	5		
123 "	50	42	1	2			1	7	4	4	23	28				1	1	-	3	17	3	5
152 "	76	24									3	4	1	-	1	-	2	-	10	26		1
176 "		3																				
607 "	5	14	3	-						1	-	2					3	2	-	2		
615 "	17	14	2					3						1			8	3	4	19		
	130	1234	155	238	-	9	2	105	16	16	1022	1586	26	58	18	27	146	362	43	249	14	68.

CAPTURED ENEMY TANKS.

Of two medium tanks in THINUNGGEI RK 1631, one was holed through the front armour by a 40 mm A.P. shell. The shell had penetrated the engine cowling and had apparently damaged the sump, the oil from which was lying in the bottom of the turret; it was not possible to assess the full damage, but it was noted that fuel, oil and coolant pipes had been damaged. Another A.P. shell had passed through the side of the turret, and struck the opposite side low down and its further behaviour was not assessed.

2. Several strikes in the bogies by 40 m.m. H.E. shell had left the bogies on the left hand side unserviceable. No damage to the track was observed. The exhaust pipe was holed in several places by 40 m.m. H.E. shell. Several holes had been made by .303 in the small boxes carried on the side.

3. The other tank did not show any signs of damage to the main structure but the left hand bogies had again been rendered unserviceable by both 40 m.m. A.P. and H.E.

4. Owing to the position of these two tanks relative to surrounding trees it had only been possible for them to be attacked over an area mid frontal and left hand side.

5. Of the 6 tanks inspected at NINGTHOUKONG KHA KHUNOU, RK 1633, one had been completely disintegrated by what was considered to be a direct hit with a 500 lb bomb; this particular vehicle was spread over 300 square yards. The remaining vehicles showed little signs of damage and appeared to have been abandoned owing to the means of exit having been blocked by means of bomb craters. On the other hand, they were completely covered in mud and it was impossible to examine them minutely for damage. A 40 m.m. A.P. shell was found inside the front portion of one tank but no entry hole was located.

6. One other tank, a Stewart, captured by the enemy was inspected in PHUBALOWA RK 1728. This had apparently been hit with both .303 and 20 m.m. but negligible damage had resulted; there were also signs of bomb fragment damage to boxes carried on the sides, these again were negligible.

WEST BENGAL

21/3/44 17 Div. Bombing 300 yards from our own
tree & or smoke indicators.
Excellent. MS. 99 MIDDLE ROAD.

29/3/44 PUKHAR. Captured documents show combined
air attack cost the JAPS 14 Officers
and 217 men killed or wounded.

3/4/44 LITAN area. Escaped P.O.W. 4 MAHARAJAS reported
very heavy enemy casualties. 21
prisoners able to escape back to
our lines due bombing.

5/4/44 PURUM. Report from 5 DIV. Strafing PURUM
excellent many casualties inflicted.

11/4/44 Ground sources report strike on
ring contour BE.4478 at 1200 hours
this a.m. highly successful. Ground
troops delighted.

13/4/44 5 IND DIV wishes to thank the Air
Force for the wonderful support they
gave today. The bombs fell just
where they were wanted.

17/4/44 Your bombing this a.m. T.O.T. 0940.
Ground sources report your bombing
a bull's eye.

18/4/44 Good show, air action resulted in
20 bodies being counted, more coming
in.

1/6/44 Strike on VAININ this a.m. was
absolutely first class and extremely
accurate and as a result village fell
comparatively easily.

1/6/44 S.V. KOHILA From General GROVER "Eye witness
reports air strafing of JAP positions
extremely accurate and successful.

2/6/44 N.E. BISHINPUR Ground sources report your strike
very accurate. Good show. The
Divisional Commander says it was an
absolute peach.

4/6/44 N.E. BISH NPDF Ground troops report after air attack
our troops captured position for the
loss of one wounded.

8/6/44 THAKAI Very many thanks. First class shoot.
Brigade very bucked.

10/6/44 BUNGANG Extract from letter from PARACHUTE
BILCADE "It was poor flying weather
and the target must have been very
hard to locate as it was half in mist
for most of the time. Your chaps
came in very low in order to get it
accurately in spite of what seemed to
me to be a lot of enemy a.a. fire and
they did a most successful show owing
to damned good flying on their part.
We appreciate this a lot especially
in this particular R.C. as we know
better than most probably what it
entails. Please thank everybody."

APPENDIX 'O'.

10/6/44	S. of MAO SONS. NG.	Reports indicate bombing and strafing Camp area 556437 very successful. Many casualties caused.
8/7/44	KRODEI KHONON.	Ground sources report three direct hits on bunkers, strafing excellent. Attack very successful.
11/7/44	SAKOK.	Troops report 50 JAPS, many animals killed. Ammunition dump destroyed. Good show: congratulations.
15/7/44	BADU	Ground source reports strike most successful. Villagers with raw shoulders as evidence had to evacuate. JAP wounded for 24 hours after attack.

G.3001/49.
23 IND DIV.,
23rd April, 1944.

Air Commodore S.F. Vincent, D.F.C., A.F.C.
Comd. 221 Group, R. A.F.

I have only just obtained details of the attack on SOKPAO BK. 7154 by 1 PATIALLS of 1 IND. INF. Bde, assisted by air support of HURRIBOMBERS. I saw the O.C. of the Bn. yesterday and he told me how accurate and effective the bombing had been on the evening of 19th April and the morning of the 20th April. During the latter attack he was able to get his men to within 200 yards of the objective before the enemy had recovered. Without this accurate air support, the objective would not have been taken.

Will you please convey my appreciation and best thanks to the Squadron concerned, (or Squadrons, if more than one was involved).

Though I have written this letter with reference to one particular action, I should like to take the opportunity of thanking you for the many other occasions on which your Squadrons, including the Tac/R aircraft, have helped so efficiently and effectively. I shall be grateful if you will convey my appreciation to all ranks, including the ground staffs, whom I know have had to work all out to keep the aircraft in the air.

(sgd) ??? ROBERTS,
MAJ-GEN.,
COMD.

Extract from ORDER of the DAY issued by Lt. General
G.A.P. SCOTTES, C.S.I., D.S.O., O.B.E., M.C.

" 4 Corps have now been fighting for over three months and have not only upset every enemy plan and prevented the capture of IMPHAB, but have killed about 9,000 enemy. This figure of 9,000 is no vague estimate, but it is compiled from figures of casualties actually counted. It does not take into account those killed by artillery fire or by air action. Nor does it include enemy wounded.

enemy wounded/

Throughout the fighting we have had first rate air support from 221 Group R.A.F. and also from Air Transport Command.

Our achievements to date are such that we may feel justly proud of them. I congratulate all ranks on the sterling performance they have put up and on the magnificent fighting spirit and determination they have invariably shown."

Telephone message to A.O.C. from G.O.C. 17 IND DIV,
via 23 R.A.S.C.

" The G.O.C., 17 DIV. expresses special thanks for the number of HURRIBOMBER sorties flown in support of 17 IND DIV during the past month and the extreme accuracy of the bombing. The troops have complete confidence and feel quite safe with a margin of 200 yards between themselves and the target."

APPENDIX 'P'

CASUALTIES MARCH 1944 - JULY 1944.

<u>SERVICE NO.</u>	<u>RANK.</u>	<u>NAME.</u>	<u>SQUADRON.</u>
<u>FLYING - ENEMY ACTION.</u>			
J. 16525	F/O.	BUTLER V.B.G.	136
139992	F/O.	COULTER W.J.	81
1550898	F/S.	LARFIE J.K.	176
R. 136437	W/O.	MAGILL J.H.	11
1339169	F/S.	TAYLOR K.C.M.	60
652245	F/S.	TAYLOR H.G.	176
15473	F/Lt.	THOMAS L.D.	5
C. 015005	F/Lt.	WHALEN J.H.	34
102107	S/Ldr.	WHITAMORE V.M. (DFC)	81
163023	P/O.	WILLIAMS A.F.	28
A. 414148	F/Lt.	YOUNG A.	615
<u>MISSING.</u>			
R. 135134	F/S.	BIBEAU J.	5
A. 412307	W/O.	BOWDEN M.O.	11
145593	F/S.	BRANDON J.	34
107982	F/Lt.	COLMORE D.M.	11
R. 121577	F/O.	CROSSFIELD R.J.	136
60289	F/Lt.	DAVIES A.W.B.	123
1385688	Sgt.	DEYCOTT A.F.	28
136727	F/.	ELLIS J.P.	84
47217	F/Lt.	GILLIES J.	Special Force
149096	F/O.	HERBERT A.L.	113
169440	P/O.	RYDE A.L.	615
J. 25557	F/O.	ILLIOTT J.A.	113
1435125	F/S.	JONES K.H.R.	34
A. 42012	F/S.	KENNEDY E.N.	615
41028	S/Ldr.	LANE R.J.W.	Special Force
1387314	F/S.	McKAY J.B.	615
IND/1716	F/O.	MURCOTT N.F.C.	1 (I.A.F.).
R. 63098	W/O.	NEVILLE K.R.	5
IND/23893	P/O.	ROY A.	1 (I.A.F.).
130642	F/O.	STEWART A.	123
J. 4920	F/Lt.	THURSTON E.G.	5
IND/2383	P/O.	DADABOY M.B.	7 (I.A.F.).
<u>MISSING (believed killed).</u>			
IND/1703	F/O.	ANDERSON T.A.M.	1 (I.A.F.).
IND/13318	Sgt.	BAUL S.	7 (I.A.F.).
150222	F/O.	BEPPY E.M.	11
1430156	F/S.	BISHOP R.G.	11
119706	F/O.	BOYES A.S.	5
159748	F/O.	BRITAIN F.P.	20
1386500	F/S.	CAMPBELL L.V.C.	81
IND/1815	P/O.	KAISRAJI M.N.	1 (I.A.F.).
R. 96261	W/O.	KEPCH O.A.	84
16429	F/O.	KELLEY T.	615
INE/2453	P/O.	MASIH N.S.	1 (I.A.F.).
1371004	W/O.	McMILLAN G.R.	42
751634	W/O.	WATKINS E.R.	84.
<u>WOUNDED.</u>			
1319538	Sgt.	DYER F.R.	84.
NZ. 415412	F/O.	HAMBLYN D.H.	81
NZ. 503014	P/O.	McPHAIL P.	5
2560	F/O.	McPHERSON D.A.B.	28
J. 16608	F/O.	MUFF J.	28
1577053	F/S.	RUSSELL Q.E.	84
1567648	Sgt.	VATSON R.F.	615
R. 105716	W/O.	WATT D.A.	5
A. 407420	F/Lt.	PROST F.M.	113

FLYING ON ACTIVE SERVICE.KILLED.

<u>SERVICE NUMBER.</u>	<u>RANK.</u>	<u>NAME.</u>	<u>SQUADRON.</u>
45063	F/Lt.	FANT D.C.L.	615
J. 6962	F/S.	MARSHALL K.	615
1339204	F/S.	STRINGER M.	81
IND/178	F/S.	BATHI M.S.	9 (I.A.F)
IND/1748	F/O.	KHAN M.L.	1 (I.A.F)
741974	F/S.	SINCLAIR-HILL N	28
156018	F/O.	STOTHARD C.T.K.	615
1337629	F/S.	HOGWOOD A.R.	42
130051	S/Ldr.	INGRAM M.R.B. (DFC)	152

WOUNDED.

IND/1567	F/Lt.	PINTO E.W.	7 (I.A.F).
IND/1622	F/O.	CHACKO A.W.	7 (I.A.F).
A. 405855	F/S.	HILL H.	42
	F/O.	COLTON	11
IND/1740	F/O.	GHOSE M.M.	7 (I.A.F).
IND/1682	F/O.	SANYAL P.N.	1 (I.A.F).
J. 23832	F/O.	PATON P.D.	81
1393431	Sgt.	ASHFOLD K.G.	152
711085	W/O.	GILLESPIE J.	11

KILLED IN ACTION

A. 413660	W/O.	PRITCHARD B.M.	60.
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NON - FLYING.KILLED ON ACTIVE SERVICE.March 1st to July 31st 1944.

972860	LAC	CRANSTON A.	No.2943 Squadron.
1419270	LAC B.S.	HARRIS T.J.	4430 A/A Flight.
1545855	LAC	BEVERAGE T.	4430 A/A Flight.
626384	T/Cpl	BARLOW H.	4430 A/A Flight.

Enrolled Follower.

IND/51714		NANDU	77 R. & R. PARTY.
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GROUND ATTACK ON PALEL AIRFIELD.

At approximately 0100 hours on 4/July/1944 at the South Dispersal Area PALEL sounds were heard by R.A.F. Regt patrol in the neighbourhood of two Harvards - one belonging to 113 Squadron and one belonging to 152 Squadron. On their approach there were explosions in the two Harvards, and in two Hurricanes on the opposite side of the taxi track. They saw some men run away in the darkness and fired on them and followed.

2. In the meantime, more numbers of the enemy patrol took advantage of the disturbance and came in behind the R.A.F. Regt patrol, and placed their bombs in three Spitfires, making off immediately into the darkness to the south. These were also fired at by the Bofors gun crew on the top of the pimple, but apparently without success. This Bofors gun crew had failed to see or hear anyone approach, but this was no doubt due to the fact that our own 5.5 and 25 pounder guns were firing at the time, less than half a mile away to the South.

3. There is no doubt that the enemy took full advantage of this gun fire to cover their movements, and were familiar with the position of the aircraft, and also with the general layout of the aircraft themselves, as the bombs (which appear to have been designed for blast only as no metal pieces were found at all) were placed in air intakes, fronts of radiators and in the back locker of one Harvard, and had apparently only a short delay action.

4. A bomb was thrown into a workshop basha, but without doing any harm than bulging out the wall and making a hole in the floor. This was probably thrown thinking that airmen might be sleeping therein.

5. A Bangalore Torpedo was found near one of the Spitfires and was doubtless brought to blow a hole in the barb wire. The barb wire was only thin, however, and had been cut under the noise cover of the gun fire.

6. The patrol was estimated to be between 10 and 20 strong, and ran away into the darkness to the south, then turned east to re-entry in the hills, and climbed up the hill into the trees. This area was combed out by Indian troops and R.A.F. Regt., with no success other than signs that the enemy had gone that way.

7. There were no personnel casualties.

8. Weather was overcast cloud, but not pitch dark and not raining.