

**T/Sgt. Vincent Durante (Brooklyn, NY)
305 BG down 5 Jan. 44 AC: #4230724
Luft VI and IV**

Bitterfeld is north of Leipzig, just before you get to Torgau. After we broke off from the main group, up north near Hamburg, almost 2000 of us zig zagged, back and forth down the banks of the Elbe. On April 26, we finally got caught in the pincers between the Russian and American forces and got liberated.

If you figure we started out from Luft IV on Feb. 6 (1945) and went clear across Germany; that's over eighty days of hiking, then bedding down for the night by the side of the road. It's really difficult to explain to kids who've had their three square meals a day, that all we had in the morning was a cup of ersatz coffee and a scrap of bread. Our main meal might be a scoop of soup and you didn't know what was in it.

That morning we crossed the river, we just had a sense of relief that "Thank God, it's all over. We've finally made it and we're in good hands now!... No more of this Raus, Raus, Raus coming at you all the time." They bundled us off in trucks and sent us west to Halle. I guarantee you, I wouldn't have been here today, if it wasn't for fellows like Frank Paules and Doc Nordstrom.

Whether it was on that terrible forced march into Luft IV, or all those days out on the road, they just kept trying to keep us all together. I remember Paules as a big commanding fellow. You had to admire him. He was very tight lipped, but strong willed. The men stuck by him. They could trust him to stand up to the Germans.











B-17 42-30724 / DEVASTATING DOTTIE



Production-block:

B-17F-115-BO: 42-30617
to 42-30731

Manufacturer:

Boeing

Bomb Group:

305th Bomb Group
306th Bomb Group

Bomb Squadron:

364th Bomb Squadron
368th Bomb Squadron

RCL: WF-D

Fate:

Lost by enemy aircraft
(05 January 1944)

MACR: 1685

HISTORY OF

B-17 42-30724 / DEVASTATING DOTTIE

DELIVERED DALLAS 17/7/43; SCOTT 8/8/43; PRESQUE IS 17/8/43; ASSIGNED 368BS/306BG THURLEIGH 20/8/43; TRANSFERRED 364BS/305BG [WF-D] CHELVESTON 31/8/43; MISSING IN ACTION KIEL 5/1/44 WITH STEPHEN BARKER, JOHN FARLEY, PAUL WILSON, VINCE DURANTE, BILLY PEYTON, SHERMAN CREWS, JOHN BAUDOIN, JOHN McALLISTER, BILL HASTINGS (9 PRISONER OF WAR), MERLE WOOD (KILLED IN ACTION); ENEMY AIRCRAFT, CRASHED CUXHAVEN, GER. MISSING AIR CREW REPORT 1685.

SOURCE: *DAVE OSBORNE, B-17 FORTRESS MASTER LOG**

Last updated: 22. May 2018