

# **25<sup>th</sup> BOMBARDMENT GROUP (RECONNAISSANCE)**

## **LINEAGE**

25<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (Reconnaissance) constituted, 17 Jul 1944

Activated, 9 Aug 1944

Inactivated, 8 Sep 1945

## **STATIONS**

Watton, England, 9 Aug 1944-23 Jul 1945

Drew Field, FL, Aug-8 Sep 1945

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

Eighth AF

## **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

B-17

B-24

B-25

B-26

P-38

L-5

## **COMMANDERS**

LTC Joseph A. Stenglein, 9 Aug 1944

Col Leon W. Gray, 23 Sep 1944

LTC John R. Hoover, 14 Apr 1945

Maj Ernest H. Patterson, 19 Jun 1945-unkn

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

### **Campaign Streamers**

Northern France

Rhine-land

Ardennes-Alsace

Central Europe

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

**Decorations**

None

**EMBLEM**

None

**EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE****MOTTO****NICKNAME****OPERATIONS**

Operations included reconnaissance over the waters adjacent to the British Isles and occasionally to the Azores to obtain meteorological data; flights over the Continent for weather information needed in planning operations; night photographic missions to detect enemy activity; and daylight photographic and mapping missions over the Continent. Occasionally engaged in scout missions to target areas for last-minute weather information that was furnished to approaching bomber formations, on-the-scene visual evaluation of bombardment strikes, and electronic-countermeasure missions in which chaff was spread to confuse enemy defenses during Allied attacks.

**25th Bombardment Group (R)**

Established Eighth AF: 22 Apr. 44 as 802nd Reconnaissance Group (P), and activated as 25th Bombardment Group (Recon.) on 9 Aug. 44.

**Wing & Command Assignment**

325PW(R) 9 Aug. 44

**Component Squadrons**

652nd Bombardment Squadron (H)

653rd Bombardment Squadron (L)

654th Bombardment Squadron (SP)

**Combat Aircraft**

B-17F(Sep. 43-May44), B-17G (from Nov. 43) and B-24J (Jul. 44-Nov. 44).

Mosquito XVI (from Apr. 44), 653 and 654BS, B-26G, 654BS (few)

**Station**

WATTON 22 Apr. 44-23 Jul. 45.

**Group COs**

Lt Col Joseph A. Stenglem: unkn.-23 Sep. 44.

Col Leon W. Gray: 23 Sep. 44-14 Apr. 45.

Lt Col John R. Hoover            14 Apr. 45-19 Jun. 45.  
Maj Ernest H. Patterson:       19 Jun. 45-Jul. 45.

First Operation: 22 Apr 44 Total Credit Sorties: 3,370 (1,493 by 652BS).

A/c MIA: 15 (652BS 2).

Major Awards None.

#### History

The 652nd BS originated as a provisional weather reconnaissance unit which was formed at St. Eval with B-17Fson 8 Sep. 43 for conducting Atlantic meteorological flights. Moved to Bovington in Nov. 1943. Had flown 231 weather sorties when reorganised as 8th WRS (H) (P) on 28 Mar 1944. Two other squadrons were established at the same date for special reconnaissance operations in enemy air space. Equipped with Mosquitos, WRS(L) (P) engaged chiefly in weather flights over the continent. Later weather scouting missions in advance of bomber formations and visual coverage of target strikes. WRS(Sp) (P) flew photo recon. sorties by day and night. Later duties included 'chaff' screening flights for bomber missions. Nucleus for both Mosquito squadrons came from ex-P-38 pilots of 50FS who were transferred Iceland from Feb. 44. Redeployed USA Jul./Aug. 45. Group established Drew Fd, Fla, and inactivated 8 Sep. 45.

#### 25th BG(R)-802nd RG(P)

Mosquito PR XVI in normal RAF P.R. blue finish: serials black A/c letter on fin in white. 653BS a/c distinguished by white outline circle round a/c letter. 654BS a/c had no marking round a/c letter. In August 1944 vertical tail painted red, existing markings retained. In late September all tail surfaces painted red. This marking necessitated by" frequency of misidentification of Mosquito as enemy type. B-17G 652BS in normal bomber finishes with a/c letter on tail. Squadron codes underwing post-VE-day: 652BS-YN, 653BS-WX, 654BS-XN(?)

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Sources