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42-52196 - "WAR BRIDE"



Originally the plane belonged to 453rd BG, 734th BS

A History of olive drab/neutral grey B-24H-10 (possibly modified to 11) FO 42-52196 "War Bride".

"War Bride" assigned to 453rd BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HEAVY)
734th BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (HEAVY)
as part of Project # 92311, Shipment # 5142-JZ,
and flown by Crew # 42 (2nd Lt. Warren R. Carter) from Hamilton Field (CA) to Morrison Field
(FL) under HQ IV Bomber Command Special Order # 261 dated Dec 13, 1943
and thence to Old Buckenham, England, via the Southern Route by the same crew under HQ
Station # 11, Caribbean Wing.
ATC, Operations Orders # 420 dated Dec 21, 1943.

Individual aircraft letter in the Squadron: A+ changed on May 23, 1944 to A-
Last combat mission with 453rd BG: Jun 14, 1944.

Between Jul 17 & Sep 9, 1944, it was on loan from a USAAF unit belonging to the Office of
Strategic Services (OSS)
to a fictitious company named "American Air Transport Service" ("AATS")

but remained formally under the charge of Air Transport Command (ATC).

It operated out of Leuchars, Scotland, possibly under a US civil registration but, if so, the author has not yet discovered the NC number that it carried in place of the USAAF serial number.

Under the command of Col. Bernt Balchen, a Norwegian, it was engaged on the "Ball" project with the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) - code name: Crupper 5.

On Sep 9, 1944 during a night operation to drop arms and ammunition to the Gullknappen Norwegian resistance group, it crashed in fog, rain and icing conditions into mountains at a place called "Langjefellhaddin", near the Goysen and Gausta peaks, Seljord region (Telemark), Norway . The pilot, 1st Lt. John B. O'Hara, and all 10 others on board were killed.

Researched by Tom Brittan