

# AIRCRAFT ACTION REPORT

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## I. GENERAL

(a) Unit Reporting VMF 122 (b) Based on or at PELELIU ISLAND (c) Report No. 20  
 (d) Take off: Date 11 FEBRUARY 1945 Time (LZT) 0915 -10 (Zone); Lat 7 DEG. N. Long 134 DEG. E  
 (e) Mission BOMB PEKEL ISLAND-YAP GROUP (f) Time of Return 1610 -10 (3)  
1230 -10 (4)

## II. OWN AIRCRAFT OFFICIALLY COVERED BY THIS REPORT.

TYPE (a)	SQUADRON (b)	NUMBER			BOMBS AND TORPEDOES CARRIED (PER PLANE) (f)	FUZE, SETTING (g)
		TAKING OFF (c)	ENGAGING ENEMY A/C (d)	ATTACKING TARGET (e)		
F4U-1D	VMF 122	8	0	8	2-250 LB. G.P.'S.	.1 NOSE .025 TAIL

## III. OTHER U. S. OR ALLIED AIRCRAFT EMPLOYED IN THIS OPERATION.

TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE	TYPE	SQUADRON	NUMBER	BASE
PBY-5A	VP-23	1	PELELIU				

## IV. ENEMY AIRCRAFT OBSERVED OR ENGAGED (By Own Aircraft Listed in II Only).

(a) TYPE	(b) NO. OBSERVED	(c) NO. ENGAGING OWN A/C	(d) TIME ENCOUNTERED	(e) LOCATION OF ENCOUNTER	(f) BOMBS, TORPEDOES CARRIED; GUNS OBSERVED	(g) CAMOUFLAGE AND MARKING
			(ZONE)			
			(ZONE)			
			(ZONE)			

(h) Apparent Enemy Mission(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Did Any Part of \_\_\_\_\_  
 (i) Encounter(s) Occur in Clouds? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, Describe Clouds \_\_\_\_\_  
(YES OR NO) (BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)  
 Time of Day and Brilliance \_\_\_\_\_  
 (j) of Sun or Moon \_\_\_\_\_ (k) Visibility \_\_\_\_\_  
(NIGHT, BRIGHT MOON; DAY, OVERCAST; ETC.) (MILES)

## V. ENEMY AIRCRAFT DESTROYED OR DAMAGED IN AIR (By Own Aircraft Listed in II Only).

(a) TYPE ENEMY A/C	(b) DESTROYED OR DAMAGED BY:				(c) WHERE HIT, ANGLE	(d) DAMAGE CLAIMED
	TYPE A/C	SQUADRON	PILOT OR GUNNER	GUNS USED		

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## VI. LOSS OR DAMAGE, COMBAT OR OPERATIONAL, OF OWN AIRCRAFT (of those listed in II only).

(a) TYPE OWN A/C	(b) SQUADRON	(c) CAUSE: TYPE ENEMY A/C, TYPE GUN, OR OPERATIONAL CAUSE	(d) WHERE HIT, ANGLE (List armor, self-sealing tanks, equipment hit)	(e) EXTENT OF LOSS OR DAMAGE, (Give Bureau serial number of planes destroyed)
1 F4U-1D	122	ENGINE TROUBLE		COMPLETE LOSS-WATER LANDING-BUREAU NO. 57589.
2				
3				
4				
5		NOTE: MAJOR PIERCE HEARD SOMETHING SNAP IN THE ENGINE WHEN ABOUT 25 MILES FROM YAP. ENGINE BEGAN TO RUN ROUGH MAKING WATER LANDING MANDATORY.		
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				

## VII. PERSONNEL CASUALTIES (in aircraft listed in II only; identify with planes listed in VI by Nos. at left).

(a) NO.	(b) SQUADRON	(c) NAME, RANK OR RATING	(d) CAUSE	(e) CONDITION OR STATUS
		NONE		
		NOTE: UNDER VIII (H) BELOW IS LISTED THE FOUR PLANES WHICH RETURNED DIRECTLY TO BASE. THE REMAINING THREE PLANES IN MAJOR PIERCE'S DIVISION PROCEEDED ON TO ULITHI WHERE THE RESCUE DESTROYER WAS BASED.		

## VIII. RANGE, FUEL, AND AMMUNITION DATA FOR PLANES RETURNING

(a) TYPE A/C	(b) MILES OUT	(c) MILES RETURN	(d) AV. HOURS IN AIR	(e) AV. FUEL LOADED	(f) AV. FUEL CONSUMED	(g) TOTAL AMMUNITION EXPENDED				(h) NO. OF PLANES RETURNING
						.30	.50	20MM	MM	
F4U-1D	270	270	3.3 HRS.	402	342			1550		4

## IX. ENEMY ANTI-AIRCRAFT ENCOUNTERED (Check one block on each line).

CALIBER	NONE	MEAGER	MODERATE	INTENSE
HEAVY — Time-fused shells, 75mm and over	X			
MEDIUM — Impact-fused shells, 20mm-50mm	X			
LIGHT — Machine gun bullets, 6.5mm-13.2mm			X	

## X. COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE, OWN AND ENEMY AIRCRAFT (use check list at left).

SPEED, CLIMB, at various altitudes  TURNS DIVES CEILINGS RANGE PROTECTION ARMAMENT	NOTE: THE FIGURES LISTED UNDER VIII ABOVE APPLY ONLY TO THE ONE DIVISION WHICH RETURNED DIRECTLY TO BASE. THE BELLY TANKS ALONG WITH WHAT GASOLINE REMAINED IN THEM WERE JETTISONED AT YAP WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR THE RELATIVELY HIGH FIGURE UNDER VIII (F).
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(OMIT THIS SHEET IF NO ATTACK WAS MADE)

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## XI. ATTACK ON ENEMY SHIPS OR GROUND OBJECTIVES (By Own Aircraft Listed in II Only).

- (a) Target(s) and Location(s) INSTALLATIONS PEKEL ISLAND (b) Time Over Target(s) 1100 -10 (Zone)
- (c) Clouds Over Target 3/10 CUMULUS COVER AT 2000\*  
(BASE IN FEET, TYPE AND TENTHS OF COVER)
- (d) Visibility of Target CLEAR (e) Visibility 30 MILES  
(CLEAR, HAZY, PARTIALLY OBSCURED BY CLOUDS, ETC.) (MILES)
- (f) Bombing Tactics: Type 40 DEG. GLIDE Bomb Sight Used NONE  
(LEVEL, GLIDE OR DIVE) (TYPE)
- Bombs Dropped per Run 2 Spacing \_\_\_\_\_ Altitude of Bomb Release 1500\* AV.  
(NUMBER) (FEET) (FEET)
- (g) Number of Enemy Aircraft Hit on Ground: Destroyed 0 Probably Destroyed 0 Damaged 0

(h) AIMING POINT	(i) DIMENSIONS OR TONNAGE	(j) NO A/C ATTACKING (k) SQUADRON	(l) BOMBS AND AMMUNITION EXPENDED, EACH AIMING POINT	(m) NO. HITS On Aiming Point	(n) DAMAGE (None, slight, serious, destroyed or sunk)
1 PEKEL ISLAND	400 YDS X 150 YDS	6 VMF 122	12-250 LB. G.P.'S.	5	UNDETERMINED
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					

(o) RESULTS: (For all hits claimed on ship targets and for land targets of special interest, draw diagram, top or side view or both, as appropriate, showing type and location of hits. For all targets give location and effect of hits, and identify by numbers above. Use additional sheets if necessary).

(p) Were Photographs Taken? NO Photographs of Damage, When Taken, Should Be Attached By Staple. 2 03238

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**XII. TACTICAL AND OPERATIONAL DATA.** (Narrative and comment. Describe action fully and comment freely, following applicable items in check list at left. Use additional sheets if necessary.)

**ENGAGEMENT WITH ENEMY**

**OWN AIRCRAFT**

- Disposition
- Altitudes
- Speeds
- Approach Tactics
- Use of Cover, Deception
- Angles of Attack and Their Effectiveness
- Distance of Opening Fire
- Defense Tactics and Their Effectiveness

**ENEMY AIRCRAFT**

- Method of Locating, Distance
- Disposition
- Altitudes
- Speeds
- Approach Tactics
- Use of Cover, Deception
- Angles of Attack
- Distance of Opening Fire
- Defensive Tactics

**COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Own Weaknesses
- Enemy Weaknesses
- Offensive Tactics, Own
- " " , Enemy
- Defensive Tactics, Own
- " " , Enemy
- Flexible Gunnery, Own
- Escort Tactics
- Fighter Direction
- Use of Radar
- Night Fighting
- Recognition, Aircraft

**ATTACK**

**OWN TACTICS**

- Method of Locating Target
- Approach to Target
- Altitudes, Speeds
- Approach
- Dive
- Pull-Out
- Dive Angle
- Strafing
- Retirement
- Defensive Tactics
- Use of Jamming

**DEFENSE, ENEMY**

- Evasive Tactics, Ships
- Concealment
- Searchlights
- Night Fighter Tactics
- Use of Jamming

**COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Bombing Tactics
- Torpedo Tactics
- Effectiveness of Bombs, Torpedoes
- Selection of Targets
- Fuzing
- Strafing Tactics
- Defensive Tactics
- Use of Radar
- Reconnaissance
- Photography
- Briefing

**OPERATIONAL**

- Navigation
- Homing
- Rendezvous
- Recognition, Ships
- Communications
- Flight Operations
- Search and Tracking
- Base Operations
- Maintenance

PEKEL ISLAND, STRATEGICALLY LOCATED IN TOMIL HARBOR AT YAP, WAS THE TARGET OF THIS EIGHT PLANE BOMBING MISSION. A SMALL ISLAND (400 YDS LONG X 150 YDS WIDE) IT CONTAINS APPROXIMATELY SIX WAREHOUSES AND HAS DOCKING FACILITIES FOR MIDGET SUBMARINES. NO ANTI-AIRCRAFT HAS BEEN REPORTED AS ORIGINATING FROM THIS ISLAND BUT THERE ARE MANY ACTIVE POSITIONS WITHIN RANGE.

OF THE SIX PLANES STRIKING THE TARGET THE TABULATED RESULTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RELEASE PT.</u>	<u>CONTACT PT.</u>
LT. MELIN	1000'	ONE ON NORTHWEST END OF ISLAND; ONE IN WATER.
LT. SMITH	1000'	BOTH BOMBS STRUCK ISLAND.
LT. TORBETT	1500'	BOTH BOMBS OVERSHOT IN WATER.
LT. BROADUS	1500'	BOTH SHORT-IN WATER.
LT. MORRISON	2000'	BOTH MISSED THE TARGET.
LT. ASHE	2000'	BOTH BOMBS IN TARGET AREA.

GLIDE BOMBING TACTICS WERE USED, THE RUNS BEING MADE FROM SOUTHEAST TO NORTHWEST. DUE TO THE MANY KNOWN ANTI-AIRCRAFT POSITIONS IN THE VICINITY IT WAS NOT DEEMED ADVISABLE TO ATTEMPT AN ACCURATE APPRAISAL OF THE DAMAGE.

LTS. SMITH, MORRISON AND BROADUS REPORT STRAFING AND KILLING ONE JAP ON A RAFT AT "YAP SHEET 3 T.A. 191 UNCLE." LT ASHE STRAFED AND BURNED A BUILDING AT "YAP SHEET 3 T.A. 204 KING."

NEITHER MAJOR PIERCE, THE STRIKE LEADER, NOR HIS WINGMAN RELEASED OVER THE TARGET. DUE TO SERIOUS ENGINE TROUBLE MAJOR PIERCE WAS FORCED TO MAKE A WATER LANDING. HIS COMPLETE STORY FOLLOWS:

"WHEN APPROXIMATELY 35 MILES SOUTH OF YAP I HEARD A LOUD SNAPPING NOISE IN THE ENGINE WHICH WAS FOLLOWED BY EXTREME VIBRATION. THE SETTING WAS 2100 AND 30 INCHES. NOTING THAT EVERYTHING WAS IN ORDER ON THE INSTRUMENT PANEL, I SWITCHED FROM LOW BLOWER TO NEUTRAL BLOWER, INCREASED MY RPM'S TO 2300, AND LOWERED MY MANIFOLD PRESSURE TO 28 INCHES. THE VIBRATION DECREASED AND I THOUGHT I WOULD BE ABLE TO RELEASE OVER THE TARGET AND GET TO ULITHI FOR A CHECK-UP ON THE TROUBLE. CONTINUING ON COURSE I RELEASED MY BELLY TANK AS YAP WAS APPROACHED AND MADE THE NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS PREPARATORY TO GOING INTO THE BOMBING RUN. AT THIS POINT (MY ALTITUDE WAS 7500') THE ENGINE STARTED TO MISS AND THE VIBRATIONS INCREASED. I SWUNG AWAY FROM THE TARGET, JETTISONED MY BOMBS, AND NOTIFIED MY WINGMAN THAT I WAS FORCED TO MAKE A WATER LANDING. THE INSTRUMENT READINGS CONTINUED TO BE NORMAL. I LOWERED MY MANIFOLD PRESSURE TO 22 INCHES BUT FOUND THAT THE ENGINE WOULD COUGH WHEN I TRIED TO RAISE IT AGAIN TO INCREASE ALTITUDE. I DECIDED TO CIRCLE THE ISLAND: FIRST, BECAUSE I WANTED TO STAY CLOSE ENOUGH TO USE IT AS A RESCUE BEARING AND SECOND, BECAUSE I WANTED TO STAY WITHIN

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**XIII. MATERIAL DATA.** (Comment freely on performance or suitability, following check list at left. Use additional sheets if necessary).

- ARMAMENT**
  - Guns, Gunsights
  - Turrets
  - Ammunition
  - Bombs, Torpedoes
  - Bomb Sights
  - Bomb Releases
- COMMUNICATIONS**
  - Radio, Radar
  - Homing Devices
  - Visual Signals
  - Codes, Ciphers
- RECOGNITION**
  - IFF
  - Signals
  - Battle Lights
  - Procedures
- PROTECTION**
  - Armor; Points and Angles of Fire Needing Further Protection
  - Leak Proofing
- EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT**
  - Parachutes
  - Life Belts, Life Rafts
  - Safety Belts
  - Emergency Kits
  - Rations, First Aid
- NAVIGATIONAL EQUIPMENT**
  - Compasses
  - Driftsights
  - Octants
  - Automatic Pilots
  - Charts
  - Field Lighting
- INSTRUMENTS**
  - Flight
  - Power Plant
- OXYGEN SYSTEM**
- CAMOUFLAGE AND DECEPTION DEVICES**
- STRUCTURE**
  - Airframe
  - Control Surfaces
  - Control System
  - Dive Flaps
  - Landing Gear
  - Heating System
  - Flight Characteristics At Various Loadings
- POWER PLANT**
  - Engines
  - Engine Accessories
  - Propellers
  - Lubricating System
  - Starters
  - Exhaust Dampers
- HYDRAULIC SYSTEM**
- ELECTRICAL SYSTEM**
  - Auxiliary Plant
  - Lights
- FUEL SYSTEM**
- FLIGHT CLOTHING**
- MAINTENANCE**
- BASE FACILITIES**
  - Plane Servicing Equipment
  - Personnel Facilities

RANGE OF THE DUMBO PLANE AND STILL PERMIT THE DUMBO TO REMAIN ON STATION DURING THE ACTUAL BOMBING. I STARTED LOSING ALTITUDE GRADUALLY. AT 4000' I JETTISONED THE HOOD AND TURNED ON MY I.F.F., THEN WHEN I HAD REACHED THE SOUTHERNMOST TIP OF YAP I HEADED OUT TO SEA, HAVING BAILED OUT ONCE BEFORE (15 JANUARY 1943-GUADALCANAL-PLANE RIDDLED WITH HOLES) I THOUGHT OF JUMPING BUT DECIDED AGAINST IT BECAUSE OF THE RELATIVELY HIGH WIND VELOCITY. I WAS AFRAID THAT I MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO SPILL THE AIR OUT OF THE CHUTE BEFORE IT DRAGGED ME UNDER. WHEN AT 1000' AND FIVE OR SIX MILES FROM YAP I LOWERED MY TAIL HOOK AND HEADED INTO THE WIND FOR A FULL STALL LANDING WITH 50 DEGREE FLAPS. THE ENGINE WAS STILL TURNING OVER WHEN I LANDED BUT I HAD NO POWER. PRIOR TO LANDING I HAD TIGHTENED MY SHOULDER STRAPS AND SAFETY BELT. THE LANDING WAS VERY SMOOTH. I UNFASTENED MY SAFETY BELT, STOOD UP IN THE COCKPIT AND LOWERED MYSELF INTO THE WATER. THERE WAS PLENTY OF TIME-IT WAS AT LEAST 40 SECONDS BEFORE THE PLANE SANK. ONCE IN THE WATER I UNBUCKLED THE CHUTE AND INFLATED MY LIFE JACKET. THE SWELLS WERE HIGH AND I EXPERIENCED SOME DIFFICULTY IN GETTING THE BOAT OUT AS THE PARACHUTE RAPIDLY BECAME WATER LOGGED AND TENDED TO PULL ME UNDER. WHEN I DID GET THE BOAT OUT I FOUND THAT THE CO2 BOTTLE WAS ONLY 1/4 EFFECTIVE. I HAD TO INFLATE IT ORALLY. I CLIMBED ON AFTER I HAD IT HALF INFLATED. EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT ME THAT IT'S MUCH EASIER THIS WAY. IN THE PROCESS OF INFLATING THE RAFT, MY FISHING LINE, MIRROR, AND KNIFE WERE LOST. I RECOMMEND THAT NO LOOSE ARTICLES BE CARRIED IN THE RAFT. THEY SHOULD BE TIED ON. MY WINGMAN WAS CIRCLING OVERHEAD AND THE DUMBO PLANE WAS HEADED MY WAY. I PUT OUT A PACKAGE OF DYE MARKER TO MARK MY POSITION. THE TIME, I NOTED WAS 1120. THE PARACHUTE I TIED TO THE HEAD OF THE RAFT TO KEEP IT HEADED INTO THE WIND. TO AVOID PUNCTURING THE RAFT I TOOK OFF MY SHOES AND TIED THEM ON. IT WAS TOO ROUGH FOR THE DUMBO TO LAND. I SIGNALLED THAT I WAS ALL RIGHT AND HAVING IN MIND THE NEW LOCAL AIR-SEA RESCUE PROCEDURE, I MENTALLY CALCULATED THAT A ULITHI BASED DESTROYER WOULD BE ABLE TO REACH ME AT ABOUT 1600. I BUSIED MYSELF WITH KEEPING THE RAFT BAILED OUT. FROM TIME TO TIME I PUT OUT A SMALL AMOUNT OF DYE MARKER TO ENABLE THE DUMBO PILOTS TO KEEP ME IN VIEW. AT LEAST ONE DUMBO PLANE KEPT CIRCLING ME THE ENTIRE TIME. I WAS PICKED UP AT APPROXIMATELY 1600 BY THE D.D. LANSDOWNE AND TAKEN TO ULITHI.

AT THE REQUEST OF THE DUMBO PILOT LTS. MISLEY, MORRISON AND ASHE PROCEEDED ON TO ULITHI TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE RESCUE FACILITIES HAD BEEN PROPERLY ALERTED AND THAT HELP WOULD BE FORTHCOMING.

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REPORT PREPARED BY:

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SIGNATURE RANK AND DUTY

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13 FEB 45  
DATE