

**NAME:** Jerome

**RANK:** Sergeant

**ORGANIZATION:** 5<sup>th</sup> Air Force

**OVERSEAS WARTIME SERVICE:** Asiatic-Pacific Theater of Operations

- The following text is directly from an original wartime period document about Jerome's organization. This item is one of many documents from Jerome in the site curator's possession and more will be transcribed in the future.
- The following text is presented under public domain provisions for educational purposes.
- No controversial material has been omitted from the following text aside from an edited racial slur and edited profanity for the protection of younger readers. No grammatical or spelling errors have been corrected.

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**Jerome retains a history of his squadron produced during the Second World War:**

“MARCH 3, 1943

...at 0325 took off...on recco. When the convoy was spotted once again he sent in its position and composition. Cloud cover was the only outward protection that he had against the continuous attacks of zeros...

...departed...at 0800. Convoy had a strong fighter screen and was dispersed in a 15 by 5 mile area. No P-38 protection for our planes...With zeros continually attacking, our planes made their bombing runs...was attacked by approximately 10 to 15 enemy zeros at 6,000 ft. As one zero attacked from the left...the tail gunner, fired a burst and destroyed the zero, which disintegrated in the air. One zero was caught in the fire of the ball turret gunner...and was seen to crash into the sea. One zero was caught in the fire of the side gunner...and was seen to crash into the sea. One zero was caught in the fire of the side gunner...and was seen to crash into the sea with a broken wing...was attacked by approximately 10 zeros making passes from top, side and rear. One zero was shot down by the fire of the nose gun, operated by...the Navigator. Another was shot down by one of the Waist-gunners...and was seen to disintegrate in the air...was set afire by zeros, fire supposedly starting in the pilot's compartment where a small explosion started it. The plane continued to fly along with its bomb bays open only gradually losing altitude and finally plunging in the sea. Some seven men bailed out of the plane, all the 'chutes opening but one which opened and the harness slipped and threw him out of it. Zeros strafed the remaining men as they were floating down...

...left...at 1230 on recco of convoy. He kept it in view all afternoon and came in at 2045 after being attacked many times by zeros and being shot at by cruisers...

...left...at 1325 on Strike...had to return because of engine trouble...continued and later joined five other B-17's from other squadrons. That afternoon saw the last of the convoy...left a large flotilla destroyer that he had just bombed successfully and with other Fortresses went down to about 50 feet above the water and strafed the J \_ ps who were in life boats, or floating around in life-jackets or hanging to wreckage of some sort. What we didn't get the sharks got. Every man in the Squadron would have

given two months pay to be in and burned out two guns.

MARCH 4, 1943

...departed...at 0600 on armed recco of Wide Bay – creeping line search shipping lanes of New Britain. Upon finding about six landing barges somewhere near Lae they strafed them unmercifully just as our men had been strafed the day before. The PT boats had been at their grim work all the previous night and with the dawn our Fortresses were there to continue the good work. The landing barges were fast and one upon doing a sharp curve to escape our guns, upset and no life was observed around it afterwards...

MARCH 5 1943

The convoy which appeared 1 March 1943, now appears to have been annihilated. The lone destroyer surviving was running like hell for Rabaul with the message: ‘The convoy will not come tonight’, when it was caught and sent to join its honorable ancestors. About 50 or 60 enemy aircraft were downed over the convoy...”

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- Jerome made it through the Second World War and passed away in his 70s.
- **For visual context, this link connects to an original wartime period film in the public domain that covers the above action, the Battle of the Bismarck Sea (viewer discretion advised):**  
<https://archive.org/details/gov.fdr.225>
- **For additional detail, this link connects to a Wikipedia article that refers to the Battle of the Bismarck Sea which Jerome’s organization participated in (reader discretion advised):**  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle\\_of\\_the\\_Bismarck\\_Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Bismarck_Sea)