Morning Reports

The Army Clerk Manual states that the Morning Report is one of the most important records in the military service" as it gives "the daily history" and "vital records" of a military unit. It reports on the prior day as of midnight. The remarks section lists by name any change in status (such as change in rank, sick status, or absence) with appended official records. Importantly, it gives the unit strength of officers and enlisted members as well as the rations count (by meal for that day and a three-day look ahead estimate).

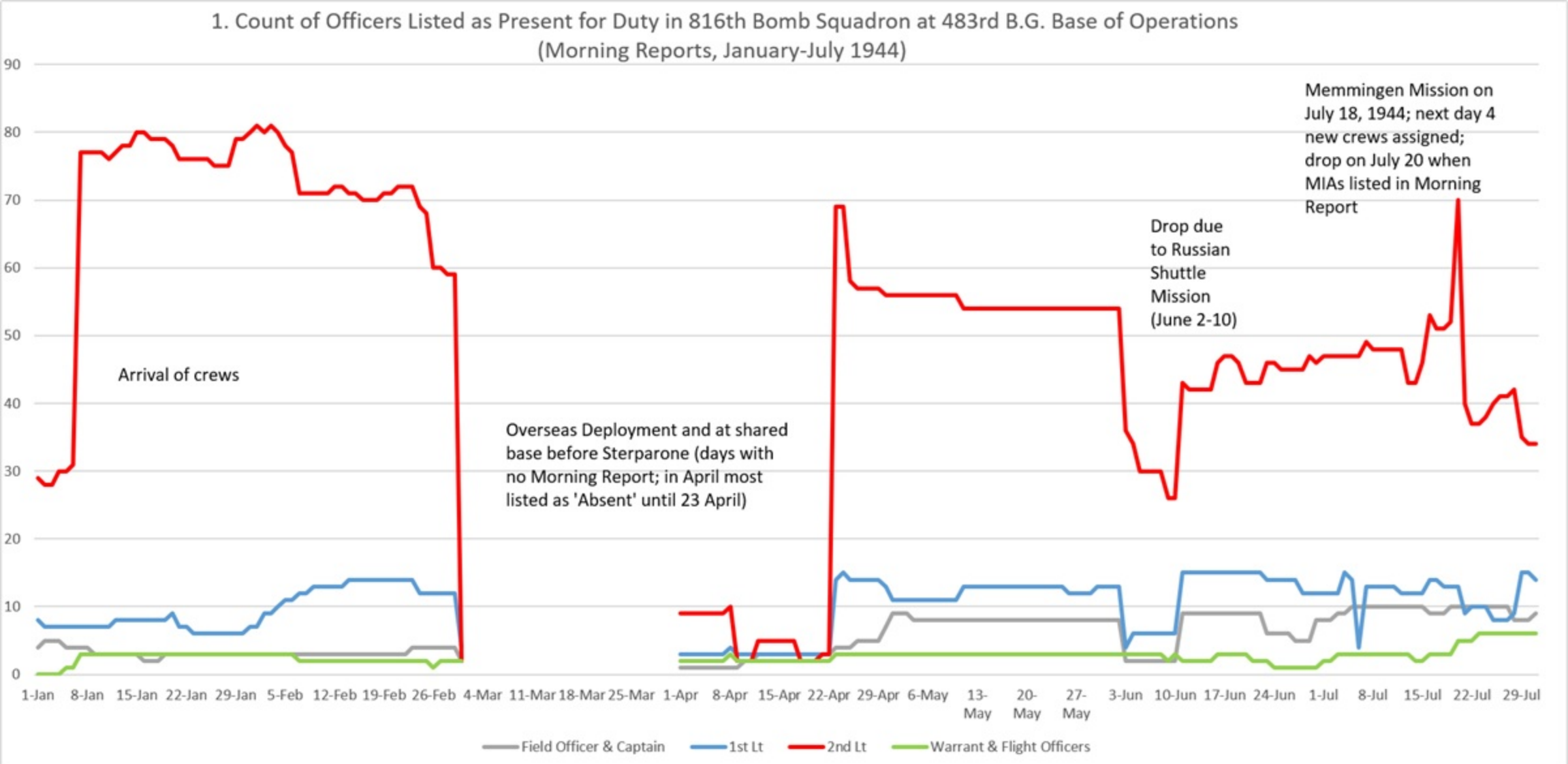
My father, (2nd Lt.) Major Paul Hildreth, was First Pilot and Plane Commander of Crew 617 in the 816th Squadron of the 483rd Bomb Group. His crew was assigned to the 483rd on January 1, 1944 and was shot down in the Memmingen Raid on July 18, 1944, so I am interested in the January-July period. After finding and downloading the 816th Morning Reports from the National Archives website, I entered all the count data into a spreadsheet.

Figure 1 graphs the number of Officers present for duty, by rank. Second Lieutenants were the dominate officer rank. Data reflect the arrival of B-17 crews to the 816th in the early days of January and a long missing gap beginning with the oversees movement on March 1 that extended until the unit was based at Sterparone, Italy. A reduction in flight crews is evident due to the Russian Shuttle Mission (June 2-10) and the aftermath of the Memmingen Mission (July 18).

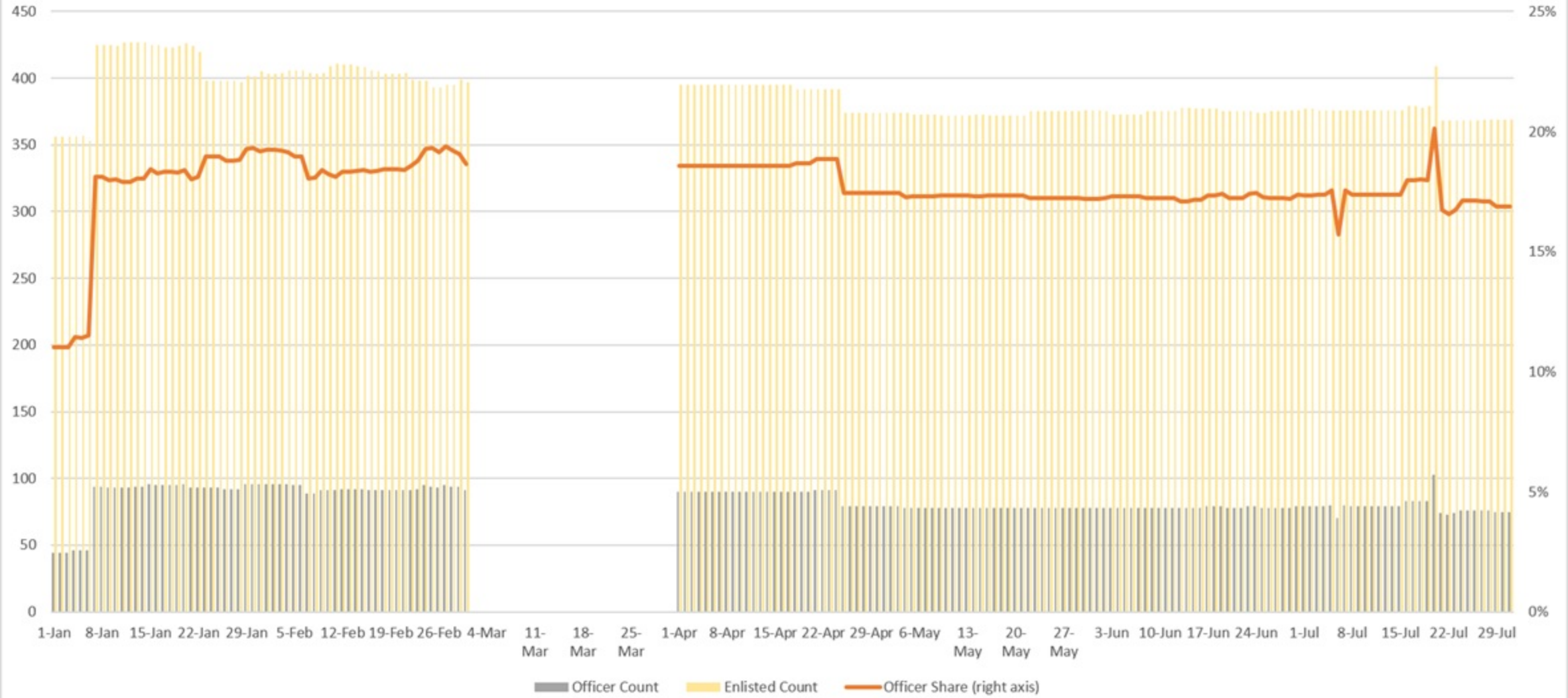
Figure 2 shows the total count of Officer and Enlisted men in the 816th Squadron. Over the period covered here, there was a daily average of 83 Officers and 387 Enlisted, with Officers accounting for an average of 18 percent of the total unit staffing.

Figure 3 provides the personnel count around July 18. On July 19, four new crews (14 2nd Lt., 2 Flight Officers, and 24 Enlisted) were assigned to offset, in part, the loss of crews in the Memmingen Raid. It was not until July 21 when appended to the Morning Report was the listing of 70 Missing in Action names (3 listed as 1st Lt., 26 as 2nd Lt., and 41 Enlisted).

You can find these Morning Reports by month (along with an Abbreviation key) on the Resources section of the web site devoted to my father: https://mphildreth.com . Next to that entry is a Flickr link to all his military orders that contain the names of many others in his units.


1. Count of Officers Listed as Present for Duty in 816th Bomb Squadron at 483rd B.G. Base of Operations
(Morning Reports, January-July 1944)
Arrival of crews
Overseas Deployment and at shared base before Sterparone (days with no Morning Report; in April most listed as 'Absent' until 23 April)
Drop due to Russian Shuttle Mission (June 2-10)
Memmingen Mission on July 18, 1944; next day 4 new crews assigned; drop on July 20 when MIAs listed in Morning Report
Field Officer & Captain
1st Lt
2nd Lt
Warrant & Flight Officers

2. Count of Officers and Enlisted Men in 816th Bomb Squadron, Regardless of Status, and Officer Share (Morning Reports, January-July 1944)



3. Officer And Enlisted Counts of 816th Squadron Around Memmingen Raid of July 18, 1944									
		15-Jul	16-Jul	17-Jul	18-Jul	19-Jul	20-Jul	21-Jul	22-Jul
Field Officer and Captain	Present	10	9	9	9	10	10	10	10
	Absent	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
1st Lt	Present	12	14	14	13	13	13	9	10
	Absent	3	1	1	2	2	2	3	2
2nd Lt	Present	46	53	51	51	52	70	40	37
	Absent	5	2	4	4	3	3	7	9
Warrant Officer	Present	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Absent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flight Officer	Present	0	1	1	1	1	3	3	3
	Absent	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL OFFICERS		79	83	83	83	83	103	74	73
Enlisted	Present For Duty	359	350	350	352	352	382	336	334
	Present Not For Duty	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
	Absent	17	29	29	26	26	26	31	33
TOTAL ENLISTED		376	379	379	378	379	409	368	368
TOTAL OFFICER & ENLISTED		455	462	462	461	462	512	442	441