

War Diary of the 486th Bomb Squadron June 1944

Prepared by: 1st Lt. Glenn L. Pierre

A. Original Unit

(See Outline History)

B. Changes in Organization

None for period covered

C. Stations

No change

D. Strength

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| 1. At beginning of period covered: | Officers – 99; | EM – 372 |
| 2. At end of period covered: | Officers – 90; | EM - 359 |

E. Marches (Diary)

(See War Diary of the 486th Bomb Sq for month of June, 1944)

F. Campaigns

The 486th Bomb Sq continued to participate actively in the bombing of targets on the mainland of Italy. A majority of missions were flown in direct support of the 5th and 8th Army Forces.

G. Battles (Missions)

[The list of 24 missions appears elsewhere on this web site, or see original War Diary.]

H. Commanding Officers in Important Engagements

In the month of June, 1944, Major Robert M. Hackney, Commanding Officer of the 486th Bomb Sq, flew the following combat missions with the Squadron Formations:

June 6, 1944 – Target: Orvieto Rd Bridge

June 7, 1944 – Target: Rd Bridge at Cecina

I. Losses in Action

1st Lt. Coleman E. Sellers, 2nd Lt. Alfred E. Coons, 1st Lt. Bradford R. Tupper, T/Sgt. Ralph Koebcke, S/Sgt. John F. McDonough, S/Sgt. Gerald J. Carey were reported missing in action on June 3, 1944.

J. Former and Present Members who have distinguished themselves in Action

[See original War Diary for rank and decoration.]

Walter W. Stauffer

George E. Durkin

Donald M. Griffey

Donald G. Neumeyer

John Kerr

Howard W. Bills

June 1, 1944

Me for Capri – or rather for Lts. Pike and Baker and Sgts Murphy, Plotsky and Houskem, for 2 days. When they return no doubt they will have been rested (?)....

2nd

The Cairo Cossacks, namely Lts. Satterthwaite, Buchanan, Staub, Phelps, Podvojski and Sgts. Stahl, Baker, Ingle and Cpl. Kalapanidas began their trek toward that land of “We other Gentlemen.”.....Sgts. Young and Turner tried to “take-off” with a “chevy” truck and because of their hospitalization they wince at the sound of “Wright Bros”.....

3rd

Our family will be without the friendly personalities of Lts. Sellers, Coons, Tupper and and Sgts Koebcke, Carey, McDonough because they have, during their mission, been shot down. We hope to see them soon after their escape; beards, “Eyetic” [slang for Italian] clothes and all.....

4th

Snafu - Ordnance and Armament worked all night to load ships with frags to hear “Stand-down” as a reward for their labors. Then orders required the ships to be loaded with 1000 pounders this afternoon so all the frags had to be removed. Its a rough war, Men.....

5th

Usual vacation resort activities such as – oh well, you know what I mean.....

6th

Invasion of France! Yes a time for celebration; for prayer; for work and for thought;;;;; Invasion pool paid off \$49.00 to T/Sgt. Economos and \$10.50 to Cpl. Sanford and \$10.50 to S/Sgt. Addison....Ears were glued to the speaker and talk indicated how many ways the war could be won.....

7th

Sinkers and Java, “for those who care,” courtesy of Red Cross.....

8th

No scandal today.....

9th

The wandering, waylaid escapee returned. Lt. Weil after a leave of absence (involuntary for a change) since March 10, brought good news that although he was the only one to escape, to his knowledge, the others were safe. His appearance was reminiscent of “Ten Nights in a Barroom” but after a tonsorial operation he was officially recognized by S-2.....

10th

Usual squadron activities and inactivities....

11th

Original 0935 briefing canceled for stand-down at 1430 which in turn was superseded by a stand-down for day.....At 2200 it rained and at 2300 tents either had running water or swimming pools.....

12th - 17th

Situation – all debits and credits carried forward.....

18th

Casablanca bid goodbye to Lts. Leggett, Kaiser, and Olson and Sgt. Riordan and Cpl. Moran who arrived with one each barrel of beer. The beer party was a lively affair and accompanied [by] Capt. Meyer, who accordionized.....

19th

Lt. O'Toole left for Texas, that country with the 47 satellites....Early in the morning about 0300 a red alert was enjoyed(?) by all.....

20th

Red alert performance repeated about 2400 hrs – there was some verbal disapproval.

21st

Hamburgers and onions for dinner today – just like at home – almost....Twelve ships went out on a mission; the bombardiers said at least six direct hits – we shall see....During a bull session among Lts. Satterthwaite, Pierre and Capt. Buchanan, the Capt remarked, “The only good thing about this war is that while we are still fighting in it, we need not worry about fighting in the next one.”

22nd

Housewarming tonight by Lts. Wheeler and Schnurr – occasion was the introduction of the 486 to their house of two rooms made from “frag” tins and quarter sawn logs. The house is complete with shutters that operate from the inside and handmade ashtrays.....Mission today was rather rugged. The boys were still talking about it four hours later.....Mud bricks are scattered all around the officer's mess hall. They are drying out before being used in the construction of the officer's club.....

23rd

Stand-down again today after two cancellations of briefing times.....mail is rather heavy, partly because of the lack of missions....The outdoor cinema at the 488th engrossed spectators in a sand-hog story entitled “No Time for Love,” which was enjoyed by all.....

24th

Group Officer's Club celebrated its Grand Opening. The party began at seven and with the help of beer and cocktails, singing was all the more harmonious....”On the line” all comers new and old, were humorously surprised at the christening inebriation of Sgt. Churchill.....Lt. Satterthwaite proudly exhibits a white silk visored cap which he ensconces on his head at a rakish angle. This cap was purchased (not thru channels) in Rome at a “Dime Store”.....

25th

Stand-down again. The men are taking life easy and there are few objections to this inactivity. Church services were held as usual – the attendance was quite promising. Two truckloads of officers and enlisted men attended the USO show produced by unit 251. Everyone was pleased and applauded loudly.

26th

A day of rest followed the previous day of rest – stand-down again. The boys left for the bright spots tonight, namely the 488th's outdoor cinema, complete with sound sometimes.....The officers and enlisted men each won their scheduled soft-ball games – fortunately no one “crowned the ump.”

27th

Mail arrived in the form of beaucoup packages which made recipients happy.....Again a stand-down. Things are slow because of unfavorable weather.....The requirement of 70 missions instead of 50 missions to the combat crews to be eligible for rotation was not welcomed with open-arms, which should be obvious.....The excellent news from all “fronts” is a decisive factor for high morale among all men.....Enlisted men and officers won their respective ball games--

28th

Stand-down was again the order of the day.....The local cinema presented “The Bridge of San Luis Rey,” which caused mostly favorable comments.....The enlisted men tonight again won their ball game. They are quite proud of their team. As for the officers – they came in second best.

29th

A mission today made quite a difference in the vivacity of the squadron atmosphere. Usual questions were asked about flak, weather, who was going etc. Then followed the customary recounting of previous missions whether sanguinary or not. However, all ships returned for a “free ride” and excellent results were again claimed.

30th

Another mission started the day; unfortunately results were not good...Mr. Dixon from the Associated Press has been with us for a few days now and has made friends with a number of the personnel. Mr. Dixon of Virginia says, “Pass the bottle.”...Rations were as usual – four candy bars, two cigars, etc., and oh yes – two cokes.....The officers won the ball game tonight 21-4 and the shouts of the game were heard across hill and vale.....Finally as a major event, we must not fail to record the cinema - “Up in Arms” - it was humorous and the men found it entertaining.....Congratulations to Sgts. Blanch, F. Miller and Williams who were appointed crew chiefs and to T/Sgt. Searles who became a flight chief.

[The photos listed below were not included in the copy of the War Diary we received from the US Army. It is possible that copies do exist at National Archives.]

July 8, 1944

C. Photographs as follows:

1. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Pompeii, Italy February, 1944.
L to R: Sgt. Carl W. Woodland, Cpl. Albert Way, Cpl. James h. Carlyle, Cpl. Herbert h. Morrow Jr., T/Sgt. Walter Sutton, S/Sgt. John Bleizzeffer

2. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Pompeii, Italy February, 1944:
Sgt. John Koban

3. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Catania, Sicily, September, 1943:
Standing, F/O Joseph D. Powelson, Capt. Sammuel F. Shiremen, 1st Lt. Sidney Stein, Kneeling:
S/Sgt. Charles Szklany, T/Sgt. Ralph I. Holman

4. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, San Pancrazio, Italy, November, 1943:
L to R: 1st Lt. Robert E. Stotler, 1st Lt. Francis H. Root, 2nd Lt. William R. Ganz, 2nd Lt. Roy D. Clem, F/O Joseph D. Powelson.

5. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Pompeii, Italy, February, 1944:
L to R: Standing: T/Sgt. Ralph H. Koebcke, S/Sgt. Lawrence G. Coffman, 2nd Lt. Fred Sedach,
1st Lt. Carol W. Click, 2nd Lt. George L. Weil, 1st Lt. John Lee, Kneeling: T/Sgt. Rocco A. Petrozzi, Sgt.
Earl A Leising.

6. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Catania, Sicily, September, 1943:
F/O Ernest E. McCombs

7. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Catania, Sicily, September 1943
F/O Karl T. Blakeley

8. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Foggia, Italy, December, 1943:
Standing: T/Sgt. Paul F. George, Kneeling: T/Sgt. John R. Morgan, Sgt. George Stefanov, Sgt.
Harry T. Gromacki

9. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Catania, Sicily, September, 1943:
L to R standing: 1st Lt. Robert S. Howard, S/Sgt. Henry G. Walters, 1st Lt. William D.
Hendricks, Cpl. George De Young, T/Sgt. Charles F. Dupuy. Kneeling: T/Sgt. Max Sandmeier, 2nd Lt.
William H. Parham.

[Many of these same events are also recounted in the War Diary of the 340th Bombardment Group HQ Squadron, though from a different perspective. The HQ diary can be found here:

http://57thbombwing.com/340th_History/340thGroupHistory.php

Transcription by Dan Setzer, son of Sgt. Hymie Setzer, 340th BG HQ Squadron. April 20, 2015]