

War Diary of the 486th Bomb Squadron

October 1944

Prepared by: 1st Lt. Glenn L. Pierre

A. Original Unit

(See previous outline history)

B. Changes in Organization

None for period covered

C. Stations

No change

D. Strength

- | | | |
|--|---------------|----------|
| 1. At beginning of the period covered: | Officers – 92 | EM – 354 |
| 2. At the end of period covered: | Officers – 98 | EM - 362 |

E. Marches

(See war diary of the 486th Bomb Sqdn for month of October 1944.)

F. Campaigns

The 486th Bomb Sqdn continued to participate in the bombing of bridges and in close support to the troops in Italy whenever the weather permitted.

G. Battles (Missions)

[List of 9 missions can be found elsewhere on this website, or see original War Diary.]

H. Commanding Officers in Important Engagements

In the month of October, 1944, Major Robert M. Hackney, Commanding Officer of the 486th Bomb Sqdn, flew no combat missions.

I. Losses in Action

None for period covered.

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

[See original War Diary for rank and decoration.]

Francis E. Baker	Alexander C. McMillan	Warren E. Little
James R. Mell	Robert T. Moore	Lawrence E. Congalton
John M. Wilkerson	William G. Bree	John R. Nill
Howard W. Bills	Merril D. Kelsey	Delbert L. Gibson
Rex M. Murphy	Richard J. Boney	Thomas H. Phelps
Robert E. Truman	Sidney Stein	Don E. Braden
Bruno F. Rakowski	Rex M. Murphy	Vincent J. Ottavio
Arthur L. Smith	Francis E. Baker	Harold L. Rockefeller
Richard G. Mehle	John P. Carlson	Manley J. Morrison
Eugene L. Schmitz	Robert M. Dalton	William F. Mravinec
John R. Merkel	Harry D. Jones	Robert H. Spoonamore
Joseph P. Whalen	Lawrence G. Kaufman	William L. Tipton
John A. Brink	Henry T. Tereshinski	Dale J. Satterthwaite
Robert F. Savard	Joseph R. Tokarski	
Dana H. Craig	Albert Holbrook	

October 1, 1944

Morning and afternoon missions. Results very good on both. Improvement in the weather promises to heighten our activity. Church services again. It seems Sundays are almost every other day – time passes rapidly. A hymn sing tonight. Again a ship took off for France to have a look-see. Several Officers and enlisted men returned last evening from Capri rest camp.....

2nd

Stand-down today...Stoves arrived for the offices. The Army expects personnel to make their own stoves by ingenuity. Last winter there were plenty of 5 gallon gasoline drums which were easily converted into gas stoves with frag box tin as a stove pipe. However there are none on the island this year and the ingenuity of the boys will be tested. Winterizing continues with surprising results. One tent has sides of ammunition boxes filled with dirt. It should be plenty warm. Another has a built-in shower with cement floor etc. Doors are appearing whenever enough lumber is scrounged. Wood is as scarce as hen's teeth here. There are practically no decent boards and no new lumber. One enterprising tent boasts a good-sized woodpile gleaned from the beach....The EM's Red Cross Club is practically deserted in the evenings now because of the cold drafts. When it is fixed for winter it may be all right....

3rd

Another bridge mission – 100% accuracy yet the bridge escaped. Just one of those things...More ground meat for supper. We have had either hamburger steak or meat loaf for almost a week now....

4th

Mission was to return to yesterday's target but the ships were called back almost as soon as the last ship left the ground. No wonder the civilians have no gasoline.....A light shower fell in the evening which was warmer than usual. Amateur cooks are getting a few licks now on stoves in their tents. Such delicacies as burnt toast and rancid coffee make the mess hall seem like the Waldorf Astoria....

5th

Stand-down. Must have been Italian weather although we also had an overcast for a while...Today is last day for voting on the National ballot and the State ballots have almost all been sent in. Our voting officer, Captain Stith, will heave a sigh of relief when this is finished. The U.S. government will be able to cut their paper use in half too. We've had more memoranda and instructions on voting than on hitting targets....In spite of the A.L.O.'s prediction that we'll be moving to Italy any day now, winterization has been going apace on the line, but took time out for rain this morning. Half a concrete floor was laid in the armament shop yesterday with Blondiek showing everyone how, but the paw-prints found on it this morning look like Butch or Pico passed through at high speed. Griffin, Reeves, Griffey, Jamroz and Peters are resting on Corsica's east coast railroad. They've used the torn up tracks for a foundation on which to lay a floor of frag box lumber....Gasoline stoves follow the 1943 models, and if we were still using desert tents, there would be at least one missing already. Flaming gas forced

Hammond and Hammack out of their tent, but they figured fire must have a conscience for it burned with restraint, and Harry Strait rushed an extinguisher over from a 489th plane.....

6th through 10th

Stand-down. Intermittent rain but mostly it was weather in Italy which held up operations. Further work being done in preparation for winter. Concrete floor being laid in EM mess hall. Usual Sqdn duties with plenty of sack time.....

11th

Another bridge hit. Chivasso this time. The lack of mail is causing plenty of gripes. It seems the bad weather shuts off our mail service. There will be plenty of discontent this winter in that case....

12th

The Air Force on parade in the Bologna – Rimini area. We hit stores in Bologna area. Every type of ship from B-24 to Cub was over there. We hope that means a big push. Hopes are always given an upward kick by ground movement....The mice have made an invasion. I think they are field mice who have rapidly become domesticated. At any rate there are hundreds of them and the boys on the line are busy making mouse traps out of arming wire and C ration crates. One man has a classy job made of Plexiglas. War is declared.....

13th

Stand-down again. Then a six ship nickeling mission was called, but after taking off, they were called back on account of weather. Shortly afterwards it poured....

14th

Stand-down again. Hamburger again for supper. The Cairo Cossacks returned with souvenirs and beer and whiskey. These spirits will lighten “spirits” for a while. Evening cinema “Uninvited” was enjoyed by all. Morning mission scheduled....

15th

Morning mission – not successful partly because of weather. Church services and steak for supper with a truck to the 324 for an evening show were the highlights of the balance of the day. Mail came in yesterday and today in satisfying quantity which made all recipients happy....

16th

Stand-down again. Basketball court is under construction. Movie was “Blond Trouble” with Andy Hardy – entertaining was the opinion....

17th

Stand-down. GI stage show at EM Red Cross Club...

18th

After several “dry run” stand-bys and stand-downs the group took off to discover complete overcast at the target and returned, not without being shot at and disgruntled...The usual PX truck to Bastia, laundry truck to Cervione and shower truck to the 306 S.G. [Service Group] left as prescribed....The evening found the sqdn without lights due to generator failure, which was gracefully borne, because electric service is generally without interruption...The Officer's Club presented a dance, and the outdoor cinema presented the picture “Roger Touhy – Gangster”.....

19th

Mission to N Italy led to one death and four Purple Hearts for the 487th. This sqdn had ten planes holed but no injuries to personnel. The day was windy which almost prevented take-off. Lights were on again all over the area. For the past few weeks fresh eggs have been the main pillar of our breakfasts which causes no little joy...

20th

Mission to N Italy again on bridges. Results were good. Steak for supper and “It's a Date” played at the local cinema. The officers have constructed a basketball court which receives daily attention from all ranks and grades...

21st

Rest trip to Rome today for several men. Stand-down canceled the 0755 briefing scheduled and later drizzle during the afternoon made things quiet and dreary....

22nd - 30th

Stand-downs, showers, mediocre dinners, fresh meat suppers, shows and A.L.O. lectures and the usual activity, training, lectures and inactivity. A new ground officer, Lt. Bahm, arrived Tuesday. Two replacement crews arrived and a few of the veterans returned for their second tour the last few days....

Practice mission this afternoon. A few lectures were given to the new crews and despite warmer weather and sunny afternoons these past few days the weather in Italy has been unsuitable for bombing....The month of October has been relatively unprepossessing – missions were few and consequently the group's contribution to the detriment of Jerry's health has been relatively light. The skies sent rain and hid the sun and causes the atmosphere of winter to pervade men's minds. The meals were fair and the shows were fair and the mail was fair. Next month we look forward to packages in the mail, the same type of shows and the same caliber of meals. So all in all its just keep up the grind – Somebody's bound to win this war sooner or later....

C. Photographs as follows:

1. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Alesan L/G, Corsica October 1944:
2nd Lt. W.C. Clements, 1st Lt. A.R. Bylund, 2nd Lt. P.N. Gilley, S/Sgt. R.J. Boney, T/Sgt. R.G. Mehle, S/Sgt. R.L. Griffith.
2. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Alesan L/G, Corsica October 1944:
Sgt. George Stefanov, M/Sgt. H.M. Faust, Sgt. James Fox
3. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Alesan L/G, Corsica October 1944:
Pfc. E. Schlosser, Cpl. L.H. Burman, Cpl. D. Weech, S/Sgt. C. Moore, Cpl. S. Stuczyk, Pvt. Cheek.
4. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Alesan L/G, Corsica October 1944:
Cpl. D. Engelking, S/Sgt. E.T. Dickson, 1st Sgt. R.A. Dilbeck, T/Sgt. R.G. Kneuvén
5. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Alesan L/G, Corsica October 1944:
S/Sgt. S.W. Sacks, S/Sgt. M.W. Churchill, Cpl. Ivarson, Sgt. A. Robertson
6. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Alesan L/G, Corsica October 1944:
T/Sgt. O.F. Badley, 200 lb wild Corsican boar, S/Sgt. R.L. Kaiser
7. 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, Alesan L/G, Corsica October 1944:
Capt. Herbert C. Nafe, T/Sgt. J. Whipple

[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 21, 2015]