

# War Diary of the 486<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron

## November 1944

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November 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1944

Stand-down all three days. The usual cinemas were presented and the food was pepped up by a chicken dinner Friday night. Practice missions were flown, instructions were given by ALO pertinent sections to four enlisted men in training to be wing bombardiers in this squadron. The new crews have also been undergoing instruction and will soon be up on combat missions.

4<sup>th</sup>

Morning mission today to Asti on which very good results were achieved. Broke a series of stand-downs from Oct. 13!! Unfortunately the 489<sup>th</sup> lost a ship, but chutes were seen. Capt. Stith, our S-2 officer who has been with this squadron since its birth has accepted an office at Wing as Wing Education Officer. We are unhappy to lose such a fine man – It goes with out saying we wish him the very best. A ship from our squadron has been mission for two days now – We are all sweating the men out.

5<sup>th</sup>

Again a mission – fine results. Lt. Brandle's ship did not return and it was last seen entering a cloud bank enroute to the target. We expect word that he landed at another field. The “missing” ship that was bound for Rome and Naples has returned! Certainly gave us a good deal of apprehension and we are glad the men are back.

6<sup>th</sup>

Again 100% on the target. Patterns are indeed excellent. Lt. Brandle and his crew have not returned – We are hoping fervently – ! Captain Stith left the area this morning for Wing to take over his new work – We send along with him our best wishes and hope he gets what he so assuredly deserves, his promotion and a leave to the States.

7<sup>th</sup>

Two missions (6 ships each) today and the crews were interrogated very well by Lt. Bahm, better known as “Frag” (short for the frag bombs which blew up on his P-47 when he bellied in some time ago in a fighter outfit). Usual training carries on as does instruction. Pvt. Roberts flew today on his first mission – We wish him good hunting, as “Monty” would say. Fresh meat for supper on the past four nights. We hope it continues to the end of the war and then some.

8<sup>th</sup>

Mission again – Again 100% and again coffee and doughnuts at the return of the mission. No word on 6M and it is feared Lt. Brandle's ship is definitely “missing.” Evening show was “The Wrong Bride” and it was enjoyed by all. Also a dance at the “Officers Club” was well attended.

9<sup>th</sup>

No mission today [on] account of our turn for stand-down. Lt. Carroll who has finished his flying tour in this squadron has been appointed asst. S-2 officer, which dept. welcomes him. Basketball games were again popular as the weather was fine and our court is very good despite crude materials with which we used.

10<sup>th</sup>

Stand-down again. Last night's blow brought down one-half of the S-3 tent and the officer's kitchen tent. All the other tents swayed in the gale but they stayed up. Lt. Brandle's ship is now considered lost and to the memory of the crew we say “Happy Valhalla.” Another most unfortunate accident occurred today. The carry-all driven by Lt. Carlson was smashed by a 2 ½ ton truck just ½ mile from the area. Lt. Carlson was seriously injured and will remain in the hospital for many weeks. Lt. Clark suffered a fractured nose but fortunately nothing more serious. The truck ran them off the road and then crashed into them. Mail has been quite good lately which brings a corresponding deluge for the squadron censors. Tonight's supper boasted no fresh meat but fresh meat has been frequent lately so no notice was taken.

11<sup>th</sup>

Excellent results on the mission again today. The weather continues to be windy [sic] but clear. PX rations given out today in fine quantity.

12<sup>th</sup>

Church services well attended – No missions again. Chicken for the evening meal and the usual unexciting evenings' activities.

13<sup>th</sup>

Mission today – no bombs dropped on account of weather. Late afternoon rain followed by an evening without lights [on] account [of] generator trouble. Lecture by S-3, communications and S-2 to combat crews. Two new crews arrived tonight. As always, the squadron extends best wishes to them.

14<sup>th</sup>

Stand-down – Usual activities.

15<sup>th</sup>

Stand-down again. A “vivacious” dance was held at the Officers' Club. The usual practice, recreation such as basketball, movies, etc were held. The movie was poor as most have been lately.

16<sup>th</sup>

Mission today achieved poor results. The weather was fine and rumors are increasing to the effect this group will move in about a month to Italy – but they are strictly just rumors. Minor construction (except in the case of newly arrived crews) still goes on as improvements in winter housing are made. Fresh steak for supper tonight! There is now a guard posted at the Enlisted men's mess hall and a wire cage about the Officer's Kitchen. It is rumored mice (two legged) forage at night.

17<sup>th</sup>

Mission again today and again this squadron missed the bridge. An S-2 escape & evasion lecture was given along with an “ops” and communication talk. The evening show to put it frankly, “stunk.” It was entitled “The Falcon in Mexico.” A few days ago the S-2 jeep was used without permission and overturned. Fortunately no one was injured. It has just come to light that two other squadron jeeps have had accidents, without reports of injury. A man killed or injured every day makes little or no impression on a soldier's mind; he continues to drive with an astounding lack of foresight, yet he continues to criticize and ridicule the relative (in terms of material objects) primitiveness of the Italians and French. He even expounds on the speeds at which the colored men drive and at the same time wrecks and injures himself.

18<sup>th</sup>

Mission today to Yugoslavia, the first in a series sure to come. The mission was long and the men were tired but the mission was declared successful. Lt. Zwickie of the 486<sup>th</sup> successfully eliminated his first opponent in the coming ping pong tournament. The weather was clear over the island again and the results of the flood sometime ago are now dried up. Fresh meat again for supper and again a corny show. Food ship back from Catania with just a few items.

19<sup>th</sup>

Mission today to the Eighth Army front, little flak – results 100%. Sgt. Stroup who has been section chief of squadron S-2 since this organization has come overseas, left for Wing to assist Captain Stith. We wish him luck. The Sunday services were well attended and dovetailed with the mission. Steak for supper (with the hoofs left on) and no show.

20<sup>th</sup>

A dreary day, no mission. Captain Bridges received the orders that every body dreams about, namely, furlough papers for a Christmas vacation at home. He wasn't so happy about them at first – He wanted rotation, not a furlough – but he didn't turn them down! Lt. Monson takes over in the interim. Lts. Carlson, Jones and Clarke are still in the hospital and though stiff from inactivity are in good health. A U.S.O. show staffed by seven girls was presented to officers and enlisted men tonight and was enjoyed by all.

21<sup>st</sup>

Stand-down again. The usual activities. A basketball game was again held on the homemade court. The Cairo Cossacks returned today laden with souvenirs. Fresh steak for supper and a Charlie McCarthy, Edgar Bergan movie later, which was not so good.

22<sup>nd</sup>

Frag mission to the Faenza area, very good results. Tomorrow the men are looking forward to turkey. Biggest social triumph of the week (maybe of the season) was the corralling of the new Red Cross girl (small, pert, cute) by three inmates of the communication section after she had concluded her serving of coffee and doughnuts to the men of the line. She said she wanted to see the line day-room (recreation hall, she called it) and soon thereafter (slightly bewildered) found herself in a game of contract bridge...Sgt. Mitchell continued to sweat out radio release, nervously eying the sky for the return of the mission which might mean disaster should it prove that release hadn't released....

23<sup>rd</sup>

After a night of revelry Thanksgiving dawned with a stand-down for this squadron. Breakfast at the usual time and dinner at 3:00 to 4:30 (only two meals served today). In the interim three basketball games, a visit by the Colonel at breakfast for a taste of fresh eggs recently brought from Cairo. The dinner was very well prepared by the cooks who did a laudatory job. It consisted of turkey, dressing, cranberries, fresh potatoes and lettuce, pineapple salad with dressing, peas, gravy, coffee and apple pie. It was a wonderful meal! The evening entertained a dance (and combined pugilistics) at the Officer's Club and a party at the Enlisted Men's Club and of course the usual cinemas. So during the late hours the noise finally died down and almost everyone dropped off to sleep it off.

24<sup>th</sup>

Stand-down again. Usual activities except for an evening fire in the Officer's mess that almost burned the roof down. Gasoline spilled on the floor and the ignited fumes burned the camouflage netting on the ceiling so that the roof paper melted in spots. Fortunately extinguishers were available and charred rafters and furniture was the only harm.

25<sup>th</sup>

The Inspector General from XII Air Force paid a professional call today and as far as can be learned he was pleased with the squadron. An escape and evasion talk was again held by S-2. Fresh steak for supper and a slight drizzle accompanied by lack of a show provided another "Fireside Evening."

26<sup>th</sup>

Stand-down today again, due to weather. Church services again were enjoyed. Lt. Pray has taken over the supervision of the S-2 section. Escape and evasion lectures were held and an A/C identification lecture presented by Lt. Carroll. Several boys returned from Rome which they say offered many and various entertainments. Dyson tried to guide Sturgis' wreck of a weapons carrier through a drizzling night with his head swimming and didn't wholly succeed. The motor pool claim the damage will keep the vehicle out of commission for a couple of weeks. Meantime, Sgt. Dilbeck was on Dyson's tail for various other nocturnal escapades which included rousing Major Hackney out of a sound sleep.

27<sup>th</sup>

Again a stand-down. The weather is very poor for flying. Coffee and doughnuts served by the Red Cross which lately has imported two new girls. A drizzle at night discouraged movie goers.

28<sup>th</sup>

Again a stand-down and a chilly dreary day to accompany the few activities. A movie at the #306<sup>th</sup> was enjoyed by several from this squadron who went by truck up Calamity Highway. Fresh eggs for breakfast again, if only they would last for a few weeks instead of for a few days.

29<sup>th</sup>

Stand-down called after crews had arrived at briefing. A few basketball games were played. The newly acquired pre-fabricated hut is nearing completion and tonight it is rumored three new crews are quartered there because they arrived at the squadron after dark. Fresh chicken was served for supper and except for a continual recurring shortage of mess equipment, everyone enjoyed the meal. Improvements are still being made on the living quarters as materials are "discovered." A dance at the Officer's Club tonight. The show at the 488<sup>th</sup> was a hilarious comedy and finally broke a string of poor pictures. It was entitled "Up in Mabel's Room" and had much good fun and fast action. The men laughed to such an extent they got sore stomachs.

30<sup>th</sup>

Stand-down again, the weather is certainly prolonging the war because the Allies cannot bring into play their superiority as well as they might. Captain Thebault received his majority and received congratulations from everyone. The day was warm and comfortable and again a basketball and football game. A cinema at the 306<sup>th</sup> was visited by a truckload of personnel of this squadron, where they

enjoyed several “shorts” and “Three Hearts for Julia.” Let us again view in retrospect our position. The past month provided little flying weather, the men played basketball, football and hunted to keep occupied. Of course improvements on their tents continue and aside from mail which has been ordinary, the movies, reading and training tend to fill the waking hours. The days are short, the meals have been rather good, a few rest trips leave occasionally but even so, the life is rather dull. The comparative stable “fronts” have caused a decline in speculation about the war and greater interest and emphasis is being placed on education for post war living.....

December 4, 1944

C. Photographs as follows:

1. 486<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, 340<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, Alesan L/G, Corsica, Nov. 1944:  
S/Sgt. Donald Linnabarry, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Lloyd Canon, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Leroy Kennedy, S/Sgt. Harold Rockefeller, Cpl. Joseph Mignagno, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Arne Bylund
2. 486<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, 340<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, Alesan L/G, Corsica, Nov. 1944:  
Kneeling L to R: Cpl. Lawrence Hirleman, Sgt. Verdon Leatherwood, S/Sgt. James Stark, Sgt. Carl White, Sgt. Clinton Schrack, Pfc. Lawrence Lenz, Sgt. Hugh Day, Pfc Frank Gabbamonte, Sgt. George Hogrefe, Cpl. Sherman Bisette, Cpl. Arthur Kalapanidas, Sgt. Eddie Stoppole, Pfc. William Love, Cpl. Robert Potter, Pfc. George Likovich, Cpl. Lloyd walters, Pfc. Rannel Gill, Pfc. Elwin Krom.
3. 486<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, 340<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, Alesan L/G, Corsica, Nov. 1944:  
Kneeling L to R: cpl. Albert Way, Pfc. Herbert Morrow, S/Sgt. John Bleizeffer, T/Sgt. Walter Sutton, Cpl. Frank Thomas, Sgt. Carl Woodland, Pfc. Harold Light. Standing L to R: Pfc. Mathew Super, Cpl. John Merrick, Sgt. Clarence Vaughn, Cpl William Eastwood.
4. 486<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, 340<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, Alesan L/G, Corsica, Nov. 1944:  
L to R: T/Sgt. Donald Neumeyer, 200 lb Corsican boar, T/Sgt. Earl Bonneville.
5. 486<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, 340<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, Alesan L/G, Corsica, Nov. 1944:  
L to R: S/Sgt. George Roe, Corsican Farmer, S/Sgt. Andrew Addison.
6. 486<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, 340<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, Alesan L/G, Corsica, Nov. 1944:  
S/Sgt. Gerald Waterman, Corsican farm boy, Sgt. Edward Bolin.
7. 486<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, 340<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, Alesan L/G, Corsica, Nov. 1944:  
1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Robert A. Dilbeck

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

[http://57thbombwing.com/340th\\_History/340thGroupHistory.php](http://57thbombwing.com/340th_History/340thGroupHistory.php)

Transcription by Dan Setzer, son of Sgt. Hymie Setzer, 340<sup>th</sup> BG HQ Squadron. April 23, 2015]