

Outline-History of the 486th Bomb Squadron

January 1944

Prepared by: 1st Lt. Clifford W. Swearingen

A. Original Unit

(See previous outline history.)

B. Changes in Organization

Effective January 1, 1944, the 57th Bomb Wing and 12 ASC were removed from the chain of command, and the 12th Bomber Command was substituted. The chain of command now is 486th Bomb Sq, 340th Bomb Gp, 12th Bomber Command, 12th AAF, NATOUSA [North Africa Theater of Operations, United States Army]. In operational matters, a Mediterranean Allied Air Command has been instituted. The 486th Squadron continues to be a tactical unit of the Tactical Bomber Force and Tactical Air Force of the Mediterranean Command.

C. Stations

On January 3, 1944, the Squadron Air Echelon, on detached service at Foggia Satellite No. 3, Italy, since December 28th, 1943, joined the Ground Echelon at Pompeii L/G, Italy.

D. Strength

1. At beginning of period: 61 officers and 291 enlisted men
2. At end of period: 66 officers and 294 enlisted men

E. Marches (Diary)

See Diary of the 486th Bomb Sq for month of January 1944

F. Campaigns

The 486th Bomb Sq continued to participate actively in the bombing of targets on the mainland of Italy. The Squadron aided other medium bombardment units in isolating Rome and the Anzio beachhead area from supplies by destroying German lines of communication.

G. Battles (Missions)

[Here the record lists 18 missions flown by the 486th during January 1944. These missions are listed elsewhere on this site, or refer to the original History for details.]

H. Commanding Officers in Important Engagements

In the month of January, 1944, Major Louis E. Keller, Commanding Officer 486th Bomb Sq, participated in the following combat missions with Squadron formations:

January 14, 1944 – Target: Pontecorvo, Italy, Bridge

Major Keller's plane was hit by flak on this mission, and the entire crew bailed-out safely. This was Major Keller's third time to bail out.

I. Losses in Action

1. Mission: January 14, 1944 – Target Pontecorvo Bridge
Names of Casualties: 2nd Lt. R. D. Clem, Pilot; 2nd Lt. W. R. Ganz, Co-pilot; 2nd Lt. E. G. Spray, Bombardier; S/Sgt H. G. Nelson, Radio operator; S/Sgt S. L. King, Gunner;

S/Sgt. W.H. Nelson, Tail Gunner.

S-2 report: "Ship 6-H was seen to go down over target. Ship was burning and one wing was seen to come off."

Present classification: All the above men are Missing in Action.

2. Mission: January 11, 1944 – Practice mission, Pompeii landing Ground, Italy.
Names of casualties: 1st Lt. George A. Smith, Pilot; 2nd Lt. James L. Black, co-pilot; 2nd Lt. Frank T. Saunders, Jr, bombardier; S/Sgt Dean Bryant, radio operator; S/Sgt Roland O. Lowder, Gunner.

Present classification: All Killed in Action when ship crashed and burned.

3. Mission: January 14, 1944 – Target: Pontecorvo Bridge, Italy

Names of Casualties: T/Sgt. T. J. Moran, Radio Operator

Present Classification: Missing In Action

When the ship he was in was hit and apparently disabled, T/Sgt Moran immediately bailed out in the target area. The ship was brought home safely, with the rest of the crew aboard.

J. Former and Present Members who have Distinguished Themselves in Action.

The following is a complete roster of men assigned to the 486th Squadron as of January 31, 1944, showing awards. This does not include men who were formerly with this Squadron but have subsequently returned to the United States. Their names will appear elsewhere:

[Names only are listed here for reference. See original History for rank and decoration awarded.]

Blakely, Karl T.
Chambers, Alvin L.
Click, Carol W.
Coleman, Harry S.
Dozier, Nelson L.
Gibson, Delbert L.
Glade, Duane L.
Howard, Robert S.
McCormick, James J., Jr.
Merryman, Marvin Jr.
O'Toole, Martin F.
Pwelson, Joseph D.
Silvey, Walter E.
Stein, Sidney
Stemple, Ira D.
Stotler, Robert E.
Swope, Richard G.
Wathen, Charles B.
Williams, Andrew C.
Allen, Donald B.
Binner, William HC
Canon, Earl G.
Cole, Nathaniel S.

Easton, Francis L.
Guthridge, Dellavan E.
Holman, Ralph L.
Hunt, Fred C.
Kamber, Charles J
Knuckles, Daniel B.
Longworth, Donald R.
McMahon, Thomas J.
Melott, Herbert R.
Pasek, Edwin S.
Posey, John W.
Pridgeon, Alfred J.
Quinn, Daniel E.
Skertic, Joseph R.
Strunk, John R.
Szklany, Charles (NMI)
Todd, Samuel G.
Tompkins, Willie P.
Varnadore, Clarence S.
Villard, Harold F.
Walters, Henry G.
Wright, Denzil K.
Wood, Forrest (NMI)
Keller, Louis E.
Hackney, Robert M.
Clark, Clair J.
Farry, Albert B.
Knecum, Walter A.
Stoeber, Leslie R.
Tipton, William L.
West, Fielding F.
Pitt, Walter F.
Kelsey, Merrill D.
Benard, George E.
Schoen, Everett G.
Housken, Wayne J.
Brown, Glifton L.

The following Officers and EM have been awarded the following awards of which the 486th Squadron has no record:

2nd Lt. Hallahan, Thomas J.
2nd Lt. Phelps, Thomas H.
S/Sgt M. C. Zeller
Sgt R. S. Ladd
Pvt J. E. Morris
S/Sgt. Brown, Clifton L.

[Transcription by Dan Setzer, son of Sgt. Hymie Setzer, 340th BG HQ Squadron. March 27, 2015]