

## March 1944

[Transcriber's note: Some entries are truncated. Especially the opening lists of wounded in action, distinguished actions, etc. Please see the original document for the full details.]

War Diary, 487<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, 340<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group

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J. Members who have distinguished themselves in action (March 1944)

1. Robert J. Forrester
2. Delbert A. Click
3. Luke J. Crosby Jr.
4. Henry J. McClernon

**No war diary included for March 1944.  
April and May 1944 continue below...**

## April 1944

### I. Losses in Action, April 6, 1944

1. Gerald U. Ashmore
2. Billy B Barker
3. Hamilton E. Finney
4. Robert B. Hicks
5. George J. Simpson
6. Arsene H. Vervacke
7. Julius W. Ikner
8. Jesse S. Klein
9. Donald H. Pinkerton
10. John T. Raschetz
11. Stanley Tulin
12. Bernard A. Burton

### J. Members who have distinguished themselves in action

1. Lewis F. Parsons
2. Casimir C. Klujnsza
3. Charles N. Tessier
4. Billie Jo Barry
5. Raymond G. Hobson
6. Curtis R. Keogh
7. Milton L. Gammage
8. Daniel F. Gillis
9. Francis M. Barnes
10. Frank A Hurney
11. Edward S. Johnston
12. Delbert A. Click
13. Lovell T. Gordon
14. Theodore C. Iwan
15. Edward F. O'Neill
16. Homer H. Willhite
17. Leslie M. Lewis
18. Archibald P. Samuels
19. Austin E. Chandler
20. John E. Blume
21. Ray J. Rosato
22. Thurman R. Vinyard
23. Lewis R. Shields
24. Arsene H. Vervacke
25. John J. Weber

April 1, 1944

At 12:55 six B-25's of the 487<sup>th</sup> squadron took off to bomb a railroad bridge N.W. Of Orvieto. Scattered clouds covered the target which was responsible for the pattern falling approximately 1000' short of the bridge. Heavy, moderate but inaccurate anti-aircraft fire took no toll in the formation and all planes returned safely to the base.....Maj. Parsons and 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Parkins held an unexpected tent inspection which is not the custom and the results were quite a revelation. Four tents in the area were found to be completely out of order although nothing but a warning has resulted.....Men were paid between 1:00 and 3:00 P.M. followed by the customary exchange of money either through debts or a crap game. A man and his money are soon parted should be the slogan of several of our gamblers who always seem to be on the losing side.....A wire has been received in the Group from General Cannon complimenting the organization on its quick recovery from our recent disaster. It is almost amazing how quickly 340<sup>th</sup> planes were in the air after such a happening but it just goes to show that you can't down a good outfit. The 487<sup>th</sup> now has 15 planes which consists of two originals, gifts of the 321<sup>st</sup>, old jobs will us by the 12<sup>th</sup> and some new ones.....About a five minute walk from the squadron area is an American cemetery named Mt. Soprano where numerous crosses and stars mark the spot where many of our fallen comrades lay having given up their lives for the four freedoms. Although we've been overseas a year past, it takes a sight like this to really bring the war home as is the common expression. Everyone who has taken the time out to visit the plot and to pay their respects say "It's a sight you'll never forget".....F/O Paul N. Spencer was this date promoted to the rank of Second Lieutenant....."Crystal Ball" with Paulette Goddard was the attraction at the movie tonite.....

2<sup>nd</sup>

Another attempt was made today to destroy the railroad bridge N.W. of Orvieto. At 11:02 hours six B-25's of the 487<sup>th</sup> squadron were over the target to drop their 24x1000 lb bomb load. Bombs from the first element landed beyond the target with the second element possibly scoring hits on the bridge. Moderate, heavy and accurate anti-aircraft fire damaged four ships. However, there were no hits scored on crew members and all returned safely to the base.....For the first Sunday since our arrival at Guado, church services were held as scheduled. Chaplin Cooper presided over the Protestant Service in the warehouse and an English speaking Italian priest said Mass at a little church in the area. No palm was passed to either of th congregations, but some of the boys were wearing it, having obtained it from Italian Pizons.....Group showers are now open to personnel of the 340<sup>th</sup> which is really a break for the 321<sup>st</sup>. Up until now everyone has been using their little three spout hot-house job.....The squadron area looked almost like the warming up period before a big game at Wrigley field. Officers and enlisted men were throwing every available ball from one end of the place to the other.....Capt Gellman tells an amusing story of how he was unable to get a PFC rating for over a year before entering the Air Corps. It's on the same order of "Local boys makes good".....T/Sgt. R.E. Clarkson was honorable discharged from the army today in order to accept a commission as Second Lieutenant.....Lt. Clarkson spent most of the day shaking the hand of well wishers.....2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. C.C. Klujsza went off the gold standard today for the silver.....Due to great crowds at the show lately a new idea was inaugurated tonite - "The Fallen Sparrow" with John Garfield was shown at 7:00 and again at 9:00 P.M.....

3<sup>rd</sup>

The 487<sup>th</sup> sent twelve ships into the air this morning to attack the railroad bridge N.W. of Orvieto for the third consecutive day. First box bombed beyond the bridge to the west of the target while the second element returned with their bombs unable to find the target due to complete cloud coverage. Ack-ack was heavy, meager and inaccurate although it holed one ship.....Al Kosak is rather fed up with

Italian fishing after not even getting a nibble in his two attempts. He explains that the man at the Creek says they'll have to get there around 4:00 A.M. in order to catch anything, but according to Al "it ain't worth it".....Money orders were being purchased over in the Group operations building all day. Rather than going around to each squadron as was formerly the custom, the entire Group was serviced with the new method. From all general appearances the boys will send home more money than ever before since our arrival in Sicily and Italy, as there just isn't any place to spend it in this location unless some smart Eytie opens a vino shop in the vicinity.....Cpl. Stephens moves out to the line today amidst double trouble. First "Bill" had trouble getting transportation and then after finally getting it packed with his equipment it refused to run – adjectives used to try and start the vehicle are no worthy of print.....Sophie, the "line boys" girl friend carries change around in a huge suitcase according to Malcolm MacKenzie who must speak from experience.....Maj. Parsons' jeep now resembles an accordion rather than a vehicle after being packed up in Torre Annunziata where the thieves ran into a stationary object. No further information is available at present....Pvt. Robert Morrison returned from the hospital today completely recovered from injuries received in a recent jeep accident.....2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. J.P. O'Toole returned from Bombardment Training Center at Telergma where he has been on detached service for the past 33 days....."The Fallen Sparrow" was repeated at the movies tonite.....

4<sup>th</sup>

Six B-25's of the 487<sup>th</sup> squadron were over Perugia A/D at 1130 hours, but to no avail. Due to a 10/10 cloud coverage over the primary target, Perugia A/D, and also a 10/10 coverage over the alternate at Orte, bombs were brought back and neither target was bombed. No opposition was encountered and all ships returned safely to the base....Supply handed out new gas masks at chow this noon in exchange for our old ones. They are lighter and less cumbersome although the terrific interest in chemical resistance of late denotes the possibility of the use of gas by the Germans when the situation becomes critical.....Lt. Fleming, our newly made second lieutenant, seems to possess a certain fascination for attempting to parlate Italiano with the local population. His subject of the day, trying to convince Lt. Fleming that he wanted cigarettes said, "Capito Signorina, Capito vino, but no capito cigaretta".....A meeting of all musicians in the Group was called at 7:00 P.M. for the purpose of organizing a swing band. Little "Moe" Ferraro is sponsoring the idea and is so enthusiastic that he's humming out arrangements for all or any willing listeners. Due to an insufficient number of musicians in our Group, the 321<sup>st</sup> is going to collaborate in order to turn out a solid organization.....No reason was given by Group Special Services for the lack of a movie tonite.....

5<sup>th</sup>

A scheduled morning mission was postponed until noon at which time a stand-down was declared because of bad weather in the vicinity of our organization and all available equipment was checked out of Special Service. Unfortunately there was not sufficient base ball gloves to meet the demand, but an effort is being made to procure additional equipment to keep the boys happy.....Daylight saving is now in effect and gives us a few more hours in the evening to bask in the beauty of Sunny Italy.....Sgt. Liphardt caused a riot in the mess-hall at noon when he displayed a picture of somebody's "laundress" in the nude – washing clothes is not the most profitable business for a Signorina.....Special Service was quite busy these last few days taking orders for Mother's day flowers and very few have forgotten the one who raised her boy to be a soldier.....Two 487<sup>th</sup> planes were buzzing the field at intervals while practicing for anticipated low altitude missions.....Flight Officers, Foster, Schooley, White, Chandler, and Keogh were today honorably discharged from the Army to accept commissions as Second Lieutenants.....Cpl. Runyon returned to the hospital after being back with us only a short time....."Swing Out" with Henry Aldrich unreeled to a jovial crowd at the movies tonite. It was again

necessary to have two showings at 7:00 and 9:00 P.M.....

6<sup>th</sup>

An early mission had been scheduled and combat crew members had early chow, but at 10:00 A.M. the raid was postponed until afternoon. Takeoff was at 14:25 when ten B-25/s of the 487<sup>th</sup> left the runway to attack Perugia A/D. The formation was over the target at 17:17 hours dropping their entire bomb load of 80x500's in a pattern which started short of the Airdrome extending to the edge of the airfield. It is believed that only two or three bombs may have hit in the eastern dispersal area of the drome. All ships were holed by an intense, accurate concentration of anti-aircraft fire. 7K was hit over the target and only two 'chutes were observed coming out of the ship before it exploded upon contact with the ground. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lts. B.B. Barker, R.B. Hicks, S/Sgt. A.H. Vervacke and Sgts. S. Tulin, J.T. Raschetz and D.H. Pinkerton were crew members of the ill fated bomber. 7T was also crippled by ack-ack over the target and was last seen aflame as it spiraled earthward. Four 'chutes left the plane which most probably added four more men to the P of W list. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lts. G.U. Ashmore, H.E. Finney, G.J. Simpson; Sgts. J.W. Ikner, J.S. Klein and Cpl. B.A. Burton were crew members aboard 7T. Sgt. Joe Ferraro received an ankle injury from the bursting flack and is recovering in the hospital. Sgt. Gerhardt sustained a piece of flak in his thigh which had no serious effects.....Cpl. Wright and Pvt. A.D. Rice are beautifying the squadron area during their tour of extra duty for an unauthorized fling in Naples. One can view them at almost anytime of the day with rake or shovel in hand – extra duty is one way of limiting details.....Major Parsons reports his candy ration stolen. He also admits being “P.O.” at the whole incident.....A detail of four officers left for Naples tonite in order to be first in line for their ten tickets to see “This is the Army.” If they secure them, forty enlisted men of the organization will witness the show tomorrow.....340<sup>th</sup> Group provided no movie tonite due to some unsolved controversy over the film distribution.....

7<sup>th</sup>

Today's mission, after being postponed several times finally took off at 11:55 with a railroad bridge at Ficulle, Italy, as their target. Six of our planes were over the designated area at 14:10 hours and dropped 24x1000 pounders, but sad to say, not very effectively. No hits were scored on the bridge. Some bombs were observed to have overshot the bridge and landed about 300 ft. from the center of bridge in the fields on the south side of the target. Ack-ack was heavy, moderate & accurate, slightly holing three of our ships. All planes and crews returned safely to the field.....Forty men left the squadron at 10:00 A.M. for Naples and the afternoon performance of “This is the Army.” About five miles this side of Pompeii the two trucks were intercepted by Lts. Fleming and Evans who had been patrolling the road in a jeep, to advise the merry group that no tickets were procured. After whiling away a few hours in Pompeii and Torre Annunziata the disappointed boys returned to the squadron hoping for another chance to see the much talked about G.I. entertainment.....It has been found necessary to increase the guard on our planes. Four men on each shift means that the most undesirable detail will come too often.....For the second nite in succession the 340<sup>th</sup> Group had no picture to entertain the lovers of the cinema.....

8<sup>th</sup>

Stand-by all morning until a raid was declared around noon with the target being a railroad bridge two miles south of Attigliano, Italy. Six planes of the 487<sup>th</sup> were over the intended target at 13:07 hours, but due to the fact that selector switch was not on, the bombs overshot the bridge and landed in the fields approximately 1000 yds. southeast of the target. No enemy opposition was encountered.....Thirty-six

men and four officers of the squadron left the field at 10:00 A.M. in another attempt to see "This is the Army." They arrived in Naples to find Capt. Bugbee and his three associates had secured the tickets for the gang. The show was more widely enjoyed than any performance hitherto shown on the continent or in Africa. It is now the desire of all to see "This is the Army." One truck enroute to Naples was picked up by the British Red Caps for speeding at 38 miles an hour and they had a stop watch to prove their point to Tony Niels, driver who said "Well give us a ticket and let's get going".....at 4:30 P.M. General Knapp was met in the ruins of Paestum by a formation from all four squadrons assembled for the purpose of decorating combat men of the organization. It was an inspiring ceremony with the ancient columns of Greek civilization providing local color.....The shoe-shine parlor opened up today after a drive among the squadron's members for the donation of shoe shining paraphernalia....."Intermezzo" with Leslie Howard was shown at the movies tonite.....

9<sup>th</sup>

Easter Sunday in Italy was typical of the same day at home when the ladies of the land try to outdo one another in the traditional Easter parade. The cloudy overcast would have kept Italian women from wearing their best if they had a best to wear. However, in spite of the weather an impressive Sunrise Service was celebrated in the Ancient Greek ruins of Paestum at 7:15 A.M. The garb worn was strictly of the G.I. variety and lent little to the feeling of a modern Easter, but in this strange world of today when peoples of all creeds are looking to God for peace, a simple service with a devout purpose was entirely in keeping.....An early morning mission was scheduled but was called off later when a stand-down was declared due to the weather conditions.....Word has arrived that we are to move within the next few days and most probably the move will be by water to Corsica. Much unfavorable discussion of the Island is to be heard all over the area concerning the lack of things to do over there, extremely high prices and the unfriendly attitude of the inhabitants to say nothing of the possibility of frequent visits from the Luftwaffe. We have all heard so many about future bases that a great deal of stock isn't being taken in the idle chatter at least until experience tells us otherwise.....Capt. Birmingham finally took Joe Perronne for his first plane ride and really put him through the paces. Joe didn't get sick but returned to the ground a mass of perspiration and content to continue his duties in the mess-hall.....

10<sup>th</sup>

487<sup>th</sup> sent six B-25's out at 9:58 to bomb a railroad bridge 3 miles northwest of Oret, Italy. They were over the target at 11:32 dropping their 24x1000 bomb load in a pattern extending across the tracks with one possible direct hit on the north end of the bridge. No ack-ack was encountered although two ME 109's were observed north of Terni, but didn't attack the formation.....The whistle blowing for work details started early this morning in preparation for the scheduled move. If it weren't for the details and confusion involved everyone would enjoy an occasional move for a change of routine, but unfortunately the details take the fun out of it. The mess-hall requires the most work and is therefore avoided whenever possible by all concerned. However, it must all be done and today is the day. Personnel tents are not to come down until further notice.....Lots of packages and mail come in today which is usually the custom when we're in the midst of a move.....An advanced party of 50 men left for the docks at 5:00 P.M. to guard the heavy equipment sent down by quartermaster trucks.....2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Ernest Elsner went on DS to HQ 11<sup>th</sup> Depot Repair Squadron for additional training in chemical warfare.....The Cairo carry-all took off today with 1<sup>st</sup> Lts. Evans, Knapp, Langlois, Scheier; S/Sgts. Powell, Click, Shields. Holzman and Kelly aboard for a week's leave in the Utopia.....

11<sup>th</sup>

An early morning mission was canceled in favor of a stand-down due to undesirable raid weather.....There isn't much left to the squadron area other than a single mess tent and the personnel tents. All spent the morning waiting for the word to tear down their tents when a meeting was called at 1:00 P.M. and we were instructed to have tents and baggage on trucks by 3:00 P.M. for departure at 5:00 A.M. in the morning. Later the hour was changed to 12:30 A.M. which made everybody feel better when they could look forward to a normal night's rest. When tents were all down the boys made a mad scramble for shelter in the few buildings which previously housed the different sections. Fortunately with the aid of these and the tobacco warehouse all were out of the elements for the night. No lights and a minimum of accommodations sent most of the fellows over to the 321<sup>st</sup> movie.....Maj. Parsons, Capt. Willhite and Sgt. Roger Lynch flew over to Alesan Airfield this morning as an advanced party to our new base.....Moving this time didn't seem to involve all the work that it usually does as our set up at Gaudo was more or less temporary.....

12<sup>th</sup>

A railroad bridge five miles north of Todi, Italy was the intended target of the 487<sup>th</sup> six ship formation. However, no hits were recorded and the mission unsuccessful. Anti-aircraft fire was nil and all planes returned safely to the base.....Breakfast was served at the usual time 6:30 to 8:00 and the customary hustle and bustle followed that is so typical of the 487<sup>th</sup> in the process of moving. In the midst of the confusion it was announced that the time of departure has once again been changed to 3:30 P.M. A c-ration dinner was served from 10:30 to 11:15 and the remaining mess tent was immediately torn down. The rear party remaining with the flight echelon will mess with the 489<sup>th</sup> squadron who will be here for a few days along with the 488<sup>th</sup>. The convoy was formed on the road adjacent to the squadron area and contrary to custom the caravan started to move about, on time. Behind the 486<sup>th</sup> convoy, we arrived at the docks in Salerno around 5:00 P.M. at which time the waiting began. c-rations were distributed and eaten while Italian beggars looked on. After trucks were driven ahead and unloaded, but our own vehicles were not on the boat until dawn of the following morning. Capt. Bugbee was the only casualty of the day – while directing traffic onto the boat this hand was caught between a stationary object and a truck that kept on going. He has a bad looking hand but nothing serious.....The flight echelon and remaining ground crew members started to mess with the 489<sup>th</sup> at supper tonite. Meals aren't considered as good but it's any port in a storm.....

13<sup>th</sup>

Most of the boys were expecting to get on an American L.S.T. where they would have a sack to rest their weary bones and showers in hot water, but unfortunately the ship was British and without accommodations. Not only was it totally lacking in personal comforts but filthy beyond belief. An unpleasant voyage was looked forward to immediately upon sight of the vessel. The beds provided were those for crew members only, consequently 487<sup>th</sup> personnel threw their blankets in any bare spot to catch a wink of sleep if possible. The ship's mess-hall and the open deck assumed the appearance of an East Side flop house, but the boys were tired enough to sleep anywhere. Meals were served in the same mess-hall which made it quite cozy although sandwiches and coffee were about the extent of food eaten on board. The "luxurious" craft sailed with the tide for Corsica at 3:00 P.M. Morale was at its lowest ebb for some time, brought about naturally by the living conditions on board the British ship. All retired to the floor rather early after last night's ordeal.....At Guado L/G another railroad bridge 2 ½ miles northeast of Ficulle, Italy was the target for six bomb laden aircraft of the 487<sup>th</sup> squadron this morning. One aircraft failed to bomb while another bombed the primary target scoring a near miss.

The remaining four ships plastered the alternate target which was Terni M/Y scoring at least four direct hits in the yards and some on buildings in the vicinity. No enemy opposition of any kind was encountered.....With the exception of the morning mission there is little in the way of excitement or things to do. Everyone is rather anxious about the new base.....

14<sup>th</sup>

After finally arousing people who were sleeping where the mess line was to be set up, breakfast was served from about 8:00 to 9:30 A.M. Most of the remaining day was spent taking in the sights from the deck. The number of islands or rocks jutting out of the water in and around the straights of Sardinia was the chief amazement. Corsica was sighted early in the afternoon and at 3:00 P.M. the ship dropped anchor in Port Vecchio. A fleet of Quartermaster trucks met us at the docks where a detail of at least half of the squadron loaded them up until 8:00 P.M. From the docks we went to a staging area three miles inland to spend the night where our cooks whipped up a roast beef supper. First impression of Corsica is that its cleaner and more picturesque than Italy. Few civilians have been seen so its impossible to pass judgment on the inhabitants as yet. An early hour has been set for arising in the morning, consequently the sacks were out and prepared for sleeping early.....At Guado L/G – this morning Viterbo Airdrome was declared as the target for nine b-25's of this squadron. At 10:59 hours the formations fragmentation bomb load was dropped, starting on the Southeast corner of the A/D and extending across the field. Several fires and explosions were observed as a result of the precision bombing. One plane was holed by ack-ack.....After several days of subsisting on 489th's poor chow, arrangements were made to start eating with the 321<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group when the 489<sup>th</sup> pulled out for Corsica. The boys has no idea that food could be so bad until they saw it with their own eyes and tasted it with their own mouths.....

15<sup>th</sup>

An early breakfast of cereal, dried eggs, bread, jam and coffee was served after which the convoy was formed for the final trek of our 210 mile move. The 487<sup>th</sup> convoy reached Alesan Airfield at 12:30 A.M. As usual the area resembles somebody's backyard, but this one was surprisingly green and pleasant looking. C-rations weer again passed out and not too palatable after roast beef last night. Following the repast a detail of men assisted in the erection of a mess-hall tent while the rest worked on their own personal tents. Stake driving was found to be similar to that at Hergla-ground is as hard as rock and consists mostly of rocks and solid clay. However, by nightfall things were shaping up and the area was beginning to resemble a military reservation after a hard days work.....A shortage of tents permits for only two man tents for the officers and six enlisted men to each pyramidal job. In spite of a hard day some of the boys accumulated enough energy to dig slit trenches.....At Guado L/G – Six crews were briefed this noon to bomb Marsciano bridge at PP-A-655800. A compact pattern straddled the track about 200' north of the bridge with some hits in buildings within the target area. The error was attributed to wind change. No opposition was encountered and all planes returned safely to the base.....T/Sgt. Ed Johnston is finding the food at the 321<sup>st</sup> so lousy that he couldn't let pass unmentioned and consequently had words with the Mess Sergeant.....

16<sup>th</sup>

A rainy, miserable day hampered the setting up of our organization. The mess-hall , always the biggest problem in a move, is just about completed although there is much discussion going on regarding the possibility of a separate mess-hall for the officers. The idea is not well received by the majority as the combined affair which has been in existence since our arrival on foreign soil necessitates enough added



work and an additional mess-hall would be entirely out of the question unless of course, some natives from the Island can be employed to lessen the burden. Personnel tents are popping up all over the place with little or no attention being paid to the 50 yd. distances between "homes" - lack of space makes this ruling an impossibility.....Officers are using the new two men tents exclusively and enlisted men in the six man pyramidals. At the present time there is a scarcity of each, but Capt. Tasker is endeavoring to requisition as many as possible from Quartermaster - no doubt when we are finally straightened out there will be a surplus.....At Guado L/G six 487<sup>th</sup> planes participated in a mission to destroy a bridge 5 miles north of Todi, Italy. The formation was over the target at 12:00 hours and dropped 24x1000 lb bombs from 10300', but not too successfully. The bombs straddled the track about 350' south of the bridge with one possible hit on the track. No ack-ack or other enemy opposition was encountered. All planes and crews returned safely to their base.....

17<sup>th</sup>

Most of the combat crews and planes are still at Guado L/G. awaiting word to depart for our new station, Alesan Airfield at Corsica, but in the meantime they are participating in regular combat missions. At 09:15 hours, six 487<sup>th</sup> planes were in the air with the railroad bridge 5 miles north of Todi, Italy as their target for the second time. 24x1000 bombs were dropped on the target from 9800' at 11:03 hours, but sad to say not successfully, bombs landing short and south of the bridge. No ack-ack or other enemy opposition was encountered - all planes and crews returned safely to their base.....At Alesan rain continued to slow up the progress of our new camp site, although despite many handicaps the spot is beginning to take on the aspect of a fighting unit.....Three planes ferried more of the personnel from Guado.....Rumor has it that we may be able to obtain some men from the Italian labor battalion to do K.P. and other details which is music to the ears of all concerned.....Fishing promises to be one of the favorite forms of relaxation while stationed here as we hear biting is not too bad in the nearby streams. Capt. Bugbee and Greg Moore were observed this evening digging for worms with which to attract their "catch" - we even heard about a proposed fish fry.....

18<sup>th</sup>

No mission today from either field as crews are preparing to vacate Guado L/G at Paestum, Italy to depart for Corsica. With the exception of three planes all arrived at Corsica during the day.....Our Armament section is up night and day loading up both our own planes and those of the 489<sup>th</sup> whose own Armament department is now enroute.....The Mess-hall is drawing five K.P.'s a day to assist with the additional work brought on by the 489<sup>th</sup> combat crews messing with us. K.P. in this squadron is something new for the boys and is definitely disliked. Before we were able to get civilian help, mess personnel did their own work, but apparently the cans have gotten a little tougher to open since that time.....Details are still in order especially hole digging. This is the second day being spent on a 8 ft. deep grease pit and thus far no more than three feet have been penetrated. Ordnance is cooperating with the use of land mines, but even they can't move the boulders encountered in the ground. On one such occasion today, a mine was set off and two tents were destroyed by the showering debris. Sgt. De Lorge was the unfortunate who had his tent pierced and insisted that he get a new tent with a detail to erect it.....Italian lire is being accepted for exchange into francs. It's the squadron's second time to use French money as a unit of exchange, but the boys all find merchandise more effective.....F/O Harold Sterling was discharged from the Army this morning to accept commission of second lieutenant....."Swede" Holmstrom is now a member of the Detachment of Patients at the 23<sup>rd</sup> General Hospital following several lengthy sojourns in various hospitals. No doubt we'll hear from "Swede" next enjoying the utter luxury to be had in our own United States.....

19<sup>th</sup>

The entire squadron and all our planes are now together at Alesan. First mission from our new base took off today at 12:14 to bomb harbor installations at Piombino, Italy. Our six planes were over the target at 13:50 hours dropping their bomb load from 12000' with an excellent degree of success. Pattern started at the shore line and extended across harbor installations to the right of large water tank and covered large buildings within pattern. Ack-ack was heavy, moderate and fairly accurate. One of our ships was slightly holed. All planes and crews returned safely to the field.....With the organization completely set-up and the sun shining brightly our limited supply of baseball equipment is being used to much advantage. Lt. Shemwell is encouraging th idea with a view toward many inter-department teams and games.....Another meeting of the Album committee was called tonite and Capt. Gellman passed along all the information received in reply to his letter written to a Publishing company back in the States. Each department was allotted a certain number of pages according to the size of their sections and work on the book has now really started in earnest.....S/Sgt. John E. Blume who has been in the hospital recuperating from a broken arm and leg sustained in a crash landing at Pompeii was today transferred to Detachment of Patients at 118<sup>th</sup> Station Hospital.....

20<sup>th</sup>

Weather conditions in Corsica thus far don't seem to be too favorable for flying. Today's mission was canceled and a stand-down declared due to a hazy sky.....A detail of six enlisted men from tis squadron and six from the 486<sup>th</sup> left the field by airplane for Naples to pick up six jeeps assigned to the Group. Shortly after their departure word came in that the jeeps had arrived at Port Vecchio and were awaiting drivers to deliver them.....Lt. H.H. Young returned from detached service with the 11<sup>th</sup> Depot Repair Squadron to find himself in the railroad track category.....Sgt. Bornstein is now able to get all the wood he can use which has boosted his morale 100% so we hope to have many fine products of his carpentry in the near future.....New combat crew men joined the organization in droves today, making the outfit richer in complete crews than ever before. Those to join today are: 2<sup>nd</sup> Lts. C.R. Klebes, D. Konigsberg, H.A. Van Etten, V.I. Salsbury, W.F. Joyce Jr.; S/Sgts. J.H. Rogers, Walter Joseph, C.L. Fritch, J.E. Kelley, T.R. Olander, E.D. Grahm; Joseph Cote Jr., and L.S. Young.....

21<sup>st</sup>

Bad weather conditions again prevented our planes from taking off and a stand-down was declared for the entire day. Missionless days at most of our other stations were spent visiting the nearby places of interest, but it seems like in Corsica, we'll have to content ourselves with a restful day in the squadron area as there is absolutely no place to go that might possibly prove of interest.....Today we received two more new planes (B-25 J's) which brings our total to twenty-three, making it the largest number of planes we've had since our introduction to combat.....P.X. rations were dispensed today to both officers and enlisted men and the generous quantity of candy helped considerably to boost morale. About all we have to look forward to on this Island is a regular and substantial supply of cigarettes, candy etc and it's hoped that our initial ration will be repeated at frequent intervals.....Lt. Linthicum our S-2 officer is receiving congratulations on his promotion to the rank of Captain.....

22<sup>nd</sup>

Six 487<sup>th</sup> planes took off at 07:45 to bomb a railroad bridge 2 ½ miles N.W. of Ficulle, Italy. The formation was over the target at 09:04 hours, but due to poor approach to the target caused by intervening mountains, the primary target was not bombed, but a target of opportunity, a railroad bridge

at Pote Nuovo, was attacked by the second element of our formation, but the bombs overshot the target. The three ships in the first element brought their bombs back. No ack-ack or other enemy opposition was encountered – all planes and crews returned safely to the base.....T/Sgt. Elmer Ryerson, crew chief, was reduced to Staff when he accepted appointment as a gunner on one of the combat crews. Keeping his ship in perfect condition for flights over enemy targets became too monotonous and Elmer decided he would rather see some real action.....Sgt. Dan Barton paid for his excessive celebration on the convoy with a “bust”.....Group Special Service presented the first picture at our new base tonite - “As Thousands Cheer” a fairly recent production was unreeled to an appreciative audience, but poor sound effects detracted from the full enjoyment of the film.....

23<sup>rd</sup>

Sunshine this morning sent six crews and ships into the air at 9:59 hours to again attack a railroad bridge six miles north of Orvieto. The lead box mistook Canteno for the I.P. and failed to find the prescribed target, so all returned without dropping their bombs. No enemy opposition was encountered.....The jeep detail of six men returned from Naples this noon after sweating out a plane for three days. However, the sweating out procedure was not considered a difficult task in the officers transient hotel.....Complete lack of laundresses on the Island of Corsica makes it necessary for the boys to patronize the Quartermaster laundry. They offer a weekly service but only six items may be sent in a bundle. It looks as though we'll have to revert to doing a lot of our own clothes during the summer or remain dirty.....PFC Fahndrick and Fitzgerald were reduced to the grade of Private for an unauthorized jeep accident that took place in Pompeii.....Orders on the bulletin board state that each tent must have a desert lily, slit trench and a mosquito net must be draped over each bed. Thus far we have had no use for a slit trench although the more pessimistic members expect to be leaping into their slit trench any day.....”As Thousands Cheer” was repeated at the movies tonite.....

24<sup>th</sup>

Stand-down until 13:00 at which time six crews were alerted for an afternoon mission. Takeoff was at 13:55 with the railroad bridge six miles N.W. of Orvieto as their target. The formation was over the designated area at 15:07 hours and dropped their bomb load very successfully on the bridge. Bombs started short of the middle of the bridge and extended beyond with two direct hits scored on the center of the bridge. Ack-ack was heavy, moderate and accurate, holing three of our ships. No other casualties resulted.....A party of ten officers and enlisted men left today for Sfax, Tunisia to decorate the grave of our late C.O., Major C.A. Whittington who was killed in a crash on April 25, 1943 at that field.....Lt. Eustis left for Cairo to attend Bombardiering school for one month which providing the classes are not difficult will prove to be a break for our P.X. officer.....F/O Deere was discharged from the Army this morning to accept a commission of second lieutenant, leaving only F/O Chandler to sweat out his commission.....The picture scheduled at the movies tonite was canceled when the courier plane failed to return with the film.....

25<sup>th</sup>

Crews were alerted this morning, but didn't take off until 14:30 at which time nine planes and crews of the 487<sup>th</sup> left the runway to bomb a railroad bridge south of Ficulle. They were over the target at 15:41 dropping their bombs with precision accuracy. Our full box reported bombs starting at the east approach of the bridge and extending beyond. Smoke and dust from previous flights obscured results of the composite box. Heavy, intense although inaccurate ack-ack was responsible for all ships returning undamaged.....Mess Sgt. McMillen and Otto Stellato went to Bastia this afternoon in search

of civilian kitchen help, but returned in the evening empty handed.....One of the combat crews mascots, G.I., a small puppy of varied breeds, was injured by a GMC near the operations trailer. An emergency operation was performed on "G.I." by Rounis and several other first aiders who expect him to be on his feet shortly. "G.I." is now doing nicely.....Today brought many sun bathers out bare to the waist to bask in the brilliant sun. Everyone is pretty white now, but after a few more days like this they'll either be tan or most likely a shade of lobster red.....Sgt. Bornstein and his detailed helpers are constructing screens for the mess-hall and from all appearances they're progressing rapidly as one side is now completely screened.....PFC Henry H. Greer was transferred to the 486<sup>th</sup> Dispensary after being with this outfit almost since activation.....Ordnance personnel who have been attached for rations only since our arrival on the Island are now assigned and joined for duty.....Playing at the movie tonite was "The Man from Down Under" with Charles Laughton and Donna Reed.....

26<sup>th</sup>

Rain continued all day following an exceedingly wet night. There seems to be nothing more depressing than a camp site in the rain. G.I.'s stir only when necessary and then it's a rush to the mess hall and back. Following a rainy day the censor is usually beside himself with a deluge of mail written in a cozy tent during the rain. A raid was scheduled for the morning at which time a stand-down for the remainder of the day was declared.....Mail brought in by the Group courier was distributed which always tends to boost morale.....Boys in Naples awaiting transportation after a rest in Capri are really getting a break out of weather conditions as they'll remain in Naples until planes can leave this field. This makes one day over their prescribed leave.....Donald Brown of transportation didn't like some remarks made by Communications boys and was ready to wage a minor battle with "Red" Conwill and several other boys. However, Preswich stepped in and prevented anyone from getting hurt. The fellows were only kidding but "Brownie" didn't see it that way. Too much overseas service is inclined to make anyone irritable which was the trouble in this case.....A rifle inspection was held by 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Parkins this P.M. and surprisingly the rifles were in pretty good shape. However, the customary few shall have to bear another inspection tomorrow.....A squadron meeting was canceled this evening due to the rain, the movie also was washed out.....

27<sup>th</sup>

Continued rain all night and day caused a stand-down for the second successive day. A mission was scheduled but later postponed when takeoff was practically impossible.....In spite of the inclement weather a hard working detail hauled gravel and spread it throughout the mess-hall to give the "Salon" a more appealing atmosphere. The three native K.P.'s were discharged for inefficiency which gives our boys more to bitch about as no one likes the pots and pans detail. An effort is being made to acquire suitable, able-bodied men to relieve the pressure in the kitchen and until they are found the officers will use their own mess gear.....A meeting of the entire squadron was called this evening at which Major Armistead warned of the dangers of Malaria and cautioned all to erect their mosquito bars without further delay. Capt. Coyle spoke on the formation of base-ball teams and Capt. Gellman added a few words concerning the planned squadron album. He requested full cooperation to make the book a success and advised all interested parties to "kick in" \$10.00 next pay day. The Special Service tent went up today after much unavoidable delay and many requests for reading material. The Special Service section has been more or less of a side issue until very recently and is now eagerly looked for, in fact should have first priority after the mess-hall is erected at a new base....."Government Girl" starring Olivia De. Haviland was the picture shown by Group tonite. A very entertaining comedy and an all around good performance.....

28<sup>th</sup>

The first bright, clear morning in three days brought forth a schedule of two routine missions plus the Group's first low altitude attack. The first raid of the day was to destroy two objectives, the Orvieto sough railroad bridge plus another railroad bridge south of Attigliano. However, both elements of the nine ship formation reported no hits on either target. Ack-ack northeast and northwest of Orvieto was heavy, moderate and accurate although no ships were damaged, placing the raid in a "milk-run" category. Takeoff was at 15:30 for the second mission of the day with the main railroad bridge at Orvieto as target for six B-25's of the 487<sup>th</sup>. A 48x500 lb. bomb load was dropped from 8600' at 16:50 which landed beyond the target northwest of the bridge. No enemy opposition was encountered chalking up the day's second "milk run." The most effective raid of many days was the Group's debut into low altitude work. Two planes from the 487<sup>th</sup> and two from the 489<sup>th</sup> left the field at 5:00 P.M. carrying 3x1000 lb. bombs each. They came into the coast at 8000', dropped to 400' and destroyed one of two bridges at Montepulciano which was their objective. After releasing their bombs in conjunction with the 20 ship Spitfire escort, they strafed everything in sight. This mission was considered as most devastating and is probably the fore-runner to many more similar attacks. Crew members claimed that they enjoyed it and actually had a good time.....T/Sgt. Gammage was reduced to the grade of Pvt. after failing to put in an appearance for a scheduled mission and is now doing extra duty for a one week period.....The grave decorating committee returned from Sfax this evening with 2000 eggs from Africa plus a few other kitchen supplies. However, they did not accomplish their main purpose in making the trip as Major Whittington's remains had been moved to a National Cemetery....."Song of Bernadette" with Jennifer Jones played to a capacity crowd at the movies tonite.....

29<sup>th</sup>

Terni viaduct, at 9:21 hours was the scene of attack for six bomb loaded B-25's of the 487<sup>th</sup> squadron. The bomb pattern started at a point below the west end of the viaduct striking the railway tracks and extended along the tracks onto the viaduct scoring several direct hits on the objective. All planes returned safely to the base – no enemy opposition was encountered.....Our best meal since arriving in Corsica was served for dinner today. Menu included fried chicken for early comers and pork chops for the later arrivals. Plus fresh butter, vegetables, mashed potatoes, coffee and fresh cookies. Chow hounds were in their glory.....Much running around took place this morning when word came through that the squadron was to send three combat men up to Group immediately for the purpose of returning to the States for a period of thirty days at which time they will return to the squadron. In absolutely no time T/Sgts. Wood and Johnston and Lt. Stewart were ready, willing and able to make the trip. The rest of the day was spent bemoaning the fact that more people couldn't have gone - "Particularly me" was the remark passed by many.....Soft ball game between clerks and pilots tonite brought the pilots out on the long end.....Fishing on the Island has been banned to all members of the Armed Forces stationed here. Its a tough break for the boys who really enjoy fishing, but the ruling must have some logic behind it....."Song of Bernadette" showed for the second time tonite to a touched crowd.....

30<sup>th</sup>

Again today six of our planes took off at 15:40 to bomb the Marciana railroad bridge, but the pattern landed beyond the target area to the right of the bridge. No enemy opposition was encountered throughout the raid.....2<sup>nd</sup> Lts. Risch and Gibson went on DS to HQ. 11<sup>th</sup> Depot Repair Sq. Depot #5 where they will attend a short training program. The much anticipated K.P.'s arrived from Naples this afternoon in a B-25. There were five kitchen men and one barber all told. Perhaps the presence of a barber in the organization will lend that well groomed appearance which has been lacking since our

departure from Italy. No more K.P. for the boys is a most heralded innovation.....Fresh eggs for breakfast followed by a hot-dog dinner was a treat for the 487<sup>th</sup> warriors.....In Lt. Eustis' absence Lt. Farley handled the officers P.X. today which consisted of a pretty good candy ration, plus a carton of cigarettes. Enlisted men were serviced likewise by Greg Moore and staff.....Squadron album committee was called this evening, but due to the late mission the meeting was canceled until May 3<sup>rd</sup>.....Our mail situation since arrival in Corsica has been very poor and limited mostly to odds and ends which hasn't done a great deal for morale. However, an attempt is being made to pick it up daily in Naples, but it just doesn't seem to be there.....No movies tonite.....

## May 1944

### i. Losses in Action

1. Francis B. Latady
2. Raymond R. Reynolds
3. Joe J. Hawkins
4. Joseph L. Ferraro
5. Raymond E. Gerhardt

### j. Personnel who have distinguished themselves in action

1. Jack E. Gellman
2. Francis G. Jackman
3. Archibald Samuels
4. Paul R. Bergen
5. Edward S. Johnston
6. Bernard A. Zucker
7. Robert D. Wolfhope
8. Joseph L. Ferraro
9. Raymond E. Gerhardt

May 1, 1944

With an escort of twelve Spits, six B-25's of the 487<sup>th</sup> were over their target at 9:48 hours. Orvieto N. railroad bridge was the original designation, but a cloudy overcast forced the formation to seek the alternate, Albinia railroad bridge. However, the pattern fell short of the objective for another near miss. Three ships were holed by heavy, moderate and accurate anti-aircraft, but no casualties were caused.....Late this afternoon another low level attack formation left the Group with two ships of this squadron participating. Results were favorable and all planes returned safely.....The beaches off the squadron area have been de-mined and are now open for swimming. However, it will have to warm up a little bit before the boys can take advantage of the facility.....Two more soft ball games were played this evening with Engineering losing to Communications and the Bombardiers on the losing end of their game with Armament.....Several smatterings of mail came in today having a desirable effect on the varied dispositions in the squadron.....A teletype machine has been added to the Communications section recently, but to date no one has figured out its purpose. After being without one for fifteen months it seems rather useless and extravagant at this late date.....S/Sgt. Reid reports that his little bride-to-be has already selected her wedding gown in anticipation of that happy event to come. He has finished his missions and shall be leaving for home soon....."Swingtime Johnny" was the attraction at the movie tonite. Approval of the Andrews Sisters numbers was unanimous.....

2<sup>nd</sup>

Six 487<sup>th</sup> planes were in the air at 10:49 with the N. Orvieto railroad bridge once more as their target. The formation reached the spot at 11:40 and dropped 22x1000 lb. bombs on the junction. The pattern started just west of the bridge and extended away from the target area. However, some crew members believe the bridge was hit by two to four bombs. No flak was encountered on the bomb run, but a heavy, moderate and accurate barrage was met as the formation left the target. Four of our planes were slightly holed – no other casualties resulted.....”Cliff” Parsons and Major Schreiner were seen arm & arming it after “Cliff” makes Tech and finishes fifty-six combat missions.....Other Staffs who gained another rocker today were: Lambert, McClernon, Rabon and Zucker.....Sgt. “Moe” Ferraro who has been in the hospital recuperating from an injury received on a combat mission was today transferred out of the squadron to the Detachment of Patients at 23<sup>rd</sup> General Hospital. Cpl. Joseph E. Doyle was likewise transferred to the same hospital.....Lts. Foster and Schooley left today for a temporary assignment with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Air Base Area Command.....Ideal weather is bringing the boys out nightly for the inter-department soft ball games. Tonite the Clerks defeated the Pilots in a hotly contested game which ended with the pilots on the short end of a 9-7 score.....The Group was honored with a visit from General Cannon today. Apparently his business was confined to Headquarters as he did not appear in any of the squadron areas.....”Swingtime Johnny” was unreeled for the second time to an amused audience. An added feature at our out-door theatre tonite was a lively, colored G.I. orchestra that beat out some hot rhythm before the picture.....

3<sup>rd</sup>

Todi North Railroad bridge was the target for our Group formation in which six ships of the 487<sup>th</sup> participated. At 10:18 hours the formation dropped their devastating load in what may prove to be the most concentrated piece of bombing to date in this theater of War. Bombs started just short, covering the bridge at the center and right center placing the bridge in the category of a “has been.” No enemy opposition was encountered on this most successful attack.....Every morning at approximately 10AM a D.C.-3 buzzes the Squadron area at an almost death defying altitude. The pilot is believed to be Lt. Schooley carrying out a threat, made when he left the Squadron to fly DC's pending orders to go home.....Although no official word has come out everyone seems to be aware of the fact that our Group received a citation from the War Department for meritorious achievement through and including the Sicilian campaign. Wonder how much closer to home that gets us?.....S/Sgt. E. M. Smith has shaved his head and several other boys on the line have followed suit. They must be figuring on remaining in Corsica for some time because few would have the nerve to appear publicly resembling a cactus plant as they do now. Crew cuts or Hitler haircuts are quite popular in the squadron at present and far more attractive.....Rumors of the coming invasion of Southern France are rampant. Some are going so far as to bet that the zero hour is set as one within the next two weeks. Another angle is where, when and how many places the Allies will invade, simultaneously. Encouraging incidents are numerous and we all hope evident.....”Melody Parade” at the movie tonite featured a lot of good music plus many fine dance routines.....

4<sup>th</sup>

Scheduled raid this morning was canceled in favor of a stand-down for the remainder of the day.....Formerly on such occasions combat crews took off to the nearest town, where wine, women and song were abundant. However, in lieu of the limited activity on Corsica many are now spending stand-down days playing ball, reading, writing letters, sleeping or washing clothes. Laundry is getting to be quite a problem over here when the Quartermaster will only accept six pieces of laundry per week and



with the total lack of local laundresses it looks as though the boys will have to do a bit of washing. Its not a very pleasant outlook but we were up against the same situation all the way through the desert without a Quartermaster and seemed to manage so its apparent that we'll have to do likewise in our present circumstance. Some of the fellows seeked out a vino emporium about eight miles from the base and returned this evening in a most festive mood as a result of the potent beverage.....Sgt. Greg Moore is regretting the fact that he gave a negative of a California belle to Sgt. Liphardt for the purpose of knocking out a couple of prints to be inserted in Sgt. Moore's personal album. Liphardt not only knocked out the prescribed number, but enough to adorn every bulletin board in the squadron plus every other place in public view. Sgt. Moore's bathing beauty now has an unlimited number of admirers in the 487<sup>th</sup>.....T/Sgt. Hickey, Group Public Relations man, is getting a lot of cooperation with the States pictures. Everyday several States are selected in alphabetical sequence and each member of the organization from that particular state assembles for the Group picture which will be distributed to the new agencies and picture pools throughout America for release in local papers. The boys are showing a great deal of enthusiasm for the idea and are turning out in quantities for the camera man....."Seventh Victim" was the spine chiller at the cinema tonite.....

6<sup>th</sup>

Stand-down all day lent an atmosphere of calm throughout the squadron area. However, it being P.X. day most of the men remained in the vicinity to draw their ration of three good candy bars and a carton of cigarettes plus two Phillies.....Sgt. Marcus Fuiks and Pvt. Theodore M. Johnson joined the organization after serving for some time with the 57<sup>th</sup> Bomb. Wing. Johnson is already performing in the kitchen and Fuiks is assigned to Public Relations.....Several PFC ratings made the bulletin board today. The lucky lads are Lackey, Leckey and Ben Harmon.....Rumor has it that by July 1<sup>st</sup> ten percent of the organization will be leaving the squadron monthly on the rotation basis. Here's hoping it isn't strictly rumor, but it's too good to be fact.....All sorts of good rumors concerning the invasion of Europe are running rampant among the men. Some are betting that it will take place before the 15<sup>th</sup> of May and the more conservative give it another month. In every event all agree that it depends almost entirely on the Politico's.....Eight bags of packages filling everyone with anticipation until they were distributed to the handful of fortunates....."Seventh Victim" was the movie again tonite.....

7<sup>th</sup>

Combat crews were on stand-by until noon at which time the possibilities of a mission was very unlikely and a stand-down was declared for the rest of the day. In spite of intense cloudiness we had no rain which enabled the boys to explore the few places on the Island not visited heretofore. Early this morning well wishers were on hand to bid a happy landing to Capt. Gellman, Lts. O'Toole, Puckett and Watson, who left the area at 8:30 on the first leg of their return trip to the United States. The lucky boys who have completed their tour of combat are ferrying planes to the Zone of Interior that are not practical in this theater of operations. Several members of the ground crew were told to remain in the area as they were the first to go home on the ½ of 1% rotation plan. All concerned parties are sticking close by awaiting the word to "take-off." One eager soul said he wouldn't mind being permanent C.Q. until the precious documents came thru. In that way he wouldn't be doing the wrong thing at a critical moment. The fact that rotation has at last started in the 340<sup>th</sup> helps considerably to bolster the morale of all the war weary members of the 487<sup>th</sup> squadron. A strong rumor that 10% of the ground force is scheduled to depart sometime in July has built up hopes and many groups are heard discussing plans of just how the system should work – opinions vary greatly, but time will tell who carries the lucky charm.....No movie was shown at the Group theatre tonite, but Hdq. Ack-ack Battery presented "Heavenly Body" starring Hedy La Marr – needless to say the 340<sup>th</sup> was well represented at our

neighbors play house. The title of the picture speaks for itself and the enjoyment of the flicker goes without saying.....

8<sup>th</sup>

Stand-down all morning until noon at which time Group briefing was set at 4:00 P.M. and a stand-down was declared at briefing. Weather hasn't been very favorable lately for operation.....A spattering of mail came in this morning which is annoying to say the least. A good guessing game would be: "What happened to the 340<sup>th</sup> mail between here and Italy?".....Ed Burke spends most of the day going to and from the mail tent which has classified him as a mail hound.....Several of the boys celebrated this stand-down by tying on a beautiful drunk. Sgt. Ebert, claimed to have five and one-half gallons of the intoxicating brew in his tent.....Cpl. Balawedjer is the first Cpl. to pull C.Q. in this squadron. It's an entirely new system and will alleviate the pressure on the higher grades.....Towns in Corsica are still out of bounds to members of this Group, consequently few have discovered the charms of the Island.....Group showers should be ready for use shortly, but in the meantime we're still running a truck down the road to the Engineers outfit daily.....Late this afternoon another crew who were supposed to have gone yesterday left for the States. A few more plane loads and the squadron will consist entirely of B-25 J's which is the purpose in sending crews home in the outdated aircraft. Capt. Willhite piloted the ship that left today with Lt. Lewis, T/Sgt. Casey and S/Sgt. Marvin aboard who were all homeward bound.....S/Sgt. Jimmy Connolly had a hell of a time finding tent room for the new crews that came in tonite.....Everyone enjoyed "Madame Curie" with Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon at the movies tonite.....

9<sup>th</sup>

Up at 06:30 hours for an early morning mission which couldn't take off because of the heavy overcast. Crews kept their flying clothes on in anticipation of a later raid which was never called, but a stand-down was declared around noon. It was a gloomy dull morning although the sun came out later in the forenoon which made it a pleasant day after all. The phonographs in the Day Room never stopped from early morn til dusk. Although most of our records were destroyed back in Pompeii by Vesuvius we have since acquired a new machine and a couple dozen records. "There'll be a Hot Time In Berlin" sung by Frank Sinatra is the squadron's favorite while Fats Waller's numbers run it a close second.....A few more combat crew members were scheduled to go home today, but due to the general mix up in orders and bad weather conditions no one left the field.....1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Parkins officiated over a general "ass eating" squadron meeting at 6:00 P.M. this evening. The main topic of discussion was our four squadron representatives awaiting court martial in the guard house. It all happened in twenty-four hours and each one has a different offense. Military courtesy was of course brought up – it seems to be a standard. The meeting was adjourned with an order to take your Atabrine tablet daily and to be on the alert for Commando raids and gas attacks. Judging from recent warnings it must be apparent that the enemy is considering the use of gas.....Group showers opened up today with hot water which is really a break.....Again "Madame Curie" played at the Group movie.....

10<sup>th</sup>

After a four day stand-down the weather cleared sufficiently to warrant the takeoff of six 487<sup>th</sup> planes. The formation was over the target, Terni Viaduct, at 09:21 hours, but no bombs were dropped because bomb-bay doors in the lead ship refused to open at the correct moment. On the return to the base, a run was taken on Attigliano North bridge. This time the bomb-bay doors opened, but the bomb racks failed to function. All planes returned to the base with their 48x500 lb. bomb load intact. During all this

flying around enemy territory, no ack-ack or other opposition was encountered.....The C-ration kids when not holding forth on the ball diamond can be found almost any evening congregated in a tent, getting much enjoyment out of a bingo game. Quite a change from their past forms of relaxation, but Zientek says "The boys get a big kick out of the game".....Capt. Birmingham has been appointed assistant operations officer, filling the vacancy left opened by the departure of Capt. Willhite. Lt. Salsbury has been given the job of squadron P.X. officer.....So much enthusiasm has been shown in the nightly soft-ball games that individuals were keeping the equipment in their own tents to be certain of having a glove at game time. Lt. Shemwell took the situation in hand and collected all gloves so that no confusion will result at the last minute.....After three days of fierce fighting, the Russian communique last nite announced the capture of Sevastopol, a most important Crimean city. Is it any wonder that the Allied forces in this theater are bewildered by the apparent political reason keeping them away from home by delaying the invasion of France?....."Princess O'Rourke" starring Olivia De Havilland & Robert Cummings was an excellent picture shown at the Group movie tonite.....

11<sup>th</sup>

Porto Farraio docks, Isle of Elba was the objective for six planes and crews this morning. The formation was over the target at 10:32 hours dropping their 24x1000 lb load with devastating results to the docks and several buildings within the target area. Crews reported it as being one of the most effective raids they've carried out in sometime. Ack-ack was practically nil allowing for a safe return of all participating aircraft. The Isle of Elba is a new one for the 340<sup>th</sup> Group.....For the boys who missed gas mask inspection last nite, there was another opportunity tonite. These new masks seem more comfortable than the old type, but no one is very anxious to test it out for performance.....All combat crew members were called to a meeting at Group operations by Colonel Chapman at 4:00 P.M. today. They were advised of the part this Group is to play in the big push against Cassino tomorrow. The plan is to saturate the area with bombs and then leave the rest up to the ground troops. The Colonel said that this would be the last attempt at a major offensive in the Italian campaign and was the first in a series of events leading to the invasion of France....."Princess O'Rourke" was repeated at the movies tonite.....

12<sup>th</sup>

The all out attempt to take Cassino started this morning for the 340<sup>th</sup> Bomb. Group. Sixty planes left the field early this morning, but all returned with their bombs due to complete cloud coverage. Naturally this was a great disappointment but a later mission consisting of twelve ships from the 487<sup>th</sup> took off at 16:22 hours. They were over the town of Itri at 17:55 hours dropping their 96x500 lb. bomb load with exquisite exactness. Bomb pattern extended through the east end of Itri crossing the roads and hitting several buildings. All ships returned undamaged although a fairly accurate barrage of anti-aircraft fire was encountered. Crews reported that the big push had started with a bang judging from the number of Allied aircraft waiting to descend upon the target.....After sweating out orders and bidding many fond adieus Capt. Jackman, Lt. Samuels, T/Sgt. Parsons, S/Sgt. Reid and S/Sgt. Wolfhope finally left for the States. They shall be remembered as a swell bunch. The most amazing thing thats taken place since we've been overseas happened today when two members of the ground crew went to Naples to await transportation home. Cpl. "Lew" Lloyd an S/Sgt. "Joe" Kenney were the two fortunates, although both has a good reason, Lew to settle his Mother's estate who passed away during his foreign service and Joe for failing health. It was really a wonderful break fro them and a great boost to the morale of the remaining ground personnel – providing they follow....."Swede" Holmstrom who we thought was homeward bound is back in the squadron in an unassigned status awaiting reassignment.....Handzel and Moltzen are off again for parts unknown with Air Commodore

Sinclair....."Holy Matrimony" gave the boys a laugh at the Group movie tonite.....

13<sup>th</sup>

Last nite around 10:00 A.M. the squadron was delighted by the barrage of ack-ack put up not too far distant from the field which everyone thought to be Bastia, but later proved to be the Airfield occupied by the 57<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group. However, it was another story when at approximately 3:30 A.M. we were shaken out of our beds by the return of Jerry whose target this time was Alesan Airfield. The raid lasted about an hour and destroyed a great many planes on the ground and field installation. Line personnel hugged slit trenches while fragmentation and screaming demolition bombs were released. The 487<sup>th</sup> dispersal area was the least effected although several casualties were sustained. One explosion killed T/Sgt. Latady instantaneously, Sgt. Hawkins was severely injured when a frag landed in the same slit trench he was occupying and Sgt. Reynolds died several hours after being taken to the hospital. Last reports on the casualty toll are 16 dead and 106 hospitalized. Jerry made many runs on the field and had obviously been well briefed for the raid as he succeeded in destroying Group Operations and S-2 and the majority of the Group's aircraft, although only two of the 487<sup>th</sup> planes were rendered permanently out of service. Strafing after the bombs were dropped accounted for a lot of the personnel, tents and motor vehicles. Night fighters were obvious by their absence although anti-aircraft fire accounted for at least two of the raiding planes. Squadron area personnel retired to slit trenches in anticipation although no strafing or bombing took place in the immediate vicinity. Nerves were at high tension throughout the day and probably shall remain so for sometime. One of the boys remarked "that it takes something like that to make boys out of men," another said he was scared enough to utter a prayer. An air of solitude permeated the squadron for the remainder of the day while a number of the boys went down to the hospital and donated blood.....A mission had been scheduled for 9:00 A.M. at which time it was canceled due to lack of planes to put in the air. However, at 17:00 hours a hurried raid was called and six ships of the 487<sup>th</sup> left the field with a 39x500 lb bomb load to destroy the railroad tunnel 1 ¼ miles south of Itri. Crews reported their pattern to 100' short, crossing the mouth of the tunnel and extending across the road. Heavy, moderate but inaccurate anti-aircraft fire was encountered and two F.W. 109's were observed but did not attempt to attack.....Squadron personnel were thanked for their cooperation and warned of the Malaria menace again at a squadron meeting tonite.....Picks and shovels were at a premium throughout the area all during the daylight hours while those who didn't have a slit trench dug one and others improved upon theirs. If Jerry returns tonite as he's expected to, there won't be a soul unprepared.....No movie was shown tonite.....

14<sup>th</sup>

Stand-down until 14:00 hours when six 487<sup>th</sup> planes were alerted for an attack on Arezzo railroad bridge. The formation was over the target at 16:46 hours and dropped their 24,000 lb. bomb load from 10300'. Bombs started at the east approach of the target and extended north to the road bridge. Due to smoke in the area it was impossible to determine whether hits were obtained on the bridge. Ack-ack was heavy, moderate and inaccurate – all ships and crews returned safely to the base.....Jerry did not return tonite to fulfill our expectations and thereby enabled the boys to enjoy a good night's rest – something we all needed after yesterday's early morning episode.....Funeral Services for our comrades who lost their lives in yesterday's raid on the field were held this afternoon in Bastia. Guards of honor from all squadrons in the Group attended the inspiring but depressing ceremony.....Lt. W.L. Evans was elevated to the rank of Captaincy while Milton L. Gammage was re-instated to the rank of Tech. Sergeant.....P.X. rations for officers and enlisted men helped somewhat in relieving the tension hovering over the squadron.....Church services of all denominations were largely attended today in commemoration of Mother's Day.....No movie was shown at the Group theatre tonite.....

15<sup>th</sup>

Cloud coverage obscured Ficulle South railroad bridge making it necessary for the formation to proceed on to the alternate, Piombino Harbor. Our six ships and crews were over the target at 10:50 hours releasing their 24x1000 lb. bomb load between two large jettys at Piombino with a possible hit on the south jetty. Ack-ack was extremely inaccurate consequently no damage was done to the formation. Crews were alerted for an immediate stand-by after the raid until 4:00 P.M. when a stand-down was declared.....Major Armistead came back from Foggia last night with a broad grin on his face and those much sought after rotation papers. Following a good night's sleep and hurried preparation the Major left for Catania this afternoon on his first hop towards the home shores.....The third victim in the 487<sup>th</sup> of Jerry's surprise attack of two nights ago passed away this morning. Sgt. Hawkins will probably be buried tomorrow next to his comrades who met with the same fate. The 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. made the announcement in the mess-hall this noon and requested that more of the squadron personnel appear at the funeral than did at Sgts. Latady and Reynolds burial.....Capt. Linthicum and Capt. Bugbee set out on a two day fishing trip yesterday – at least they took rations to last them two days. Maybe they'll come back with enough fish for a squadron fish fry.....Six ships off the coast of Italy viewed from the highest hill in the squadron area gave food for some good rumors. However, it wasn't possible to determine whether they were Allied or Axis ships so no one was quite sure who was to be invaded Italy or Corsica.....The Group movie showed “Swing Fever” with Kay Kyser tonite. We saw the picture before at Guado and weren't too impressed with it at that time.....

16<sup>th</sup>

Clouds obscured the main target today, consequently the formation proceeded to the alternate which was again Piombino Harbor. Six ships of the 487<sup>th</sup> squadron were over the harbor at 13:45, but due to heavy clouds the 48x500 lb. bomb load landed beyond the target in a field northwest of the objective. Ack-ack was encountered, but due to its inaccuracy no damage was done to the formation.....Funeral services for Sgt. Hawkins were attended by many members of the squadron this morning in Bastia. It's the sincere hope of all that the squadron has buried its last casualty at least in this theater of operation.....Slit trenches are being improved daily, some to the point of perfection. The little shack with the tin roof belonging to the farmer owning this property is nothing more than a mere skeleton of its former self. Wood was the first to disappear for kindling and now the metal roof is covering up many of the super de luxe slit trenches.....Lt. Miles, T/Sgt. Bergen and S/Sgt. Shields were pleasantly surprised by hurried orders to get ready and board Major Bachrach's ship for home this afternoon.....The boys in the Medics celebrated Major Armistead's departure so heartily the other night that they kept the entire squadron awake until the wee hours of the morning.....No picture at the Group movie tonite.....

17<sup>th</sup>

First mission today for six planes of the 487<sup>th</sup> squadron was over the Poggibonsi railroad bridge at 10:58 hours and released their 24x1000 lb. bomb load from 8800' with excellent degree of accuracy. A good pattern completely covered the target bridge. No ack-ack or other enemy opposition was encountered, enabling all planes to return safely to the base.....Second mission of the six planes was in the air at 17:25 with a railroad junction at Frosinone, Italy, as the target for their 48x500 lb. bomb load. The formation reached the designated area at 18:35 and dropped their bombs from 9500'. The pattern crossed the highway approximately 200' to 300' south of the road junction. Heavy, moderate and fairly accurate anti-aircraft fire was encountered, but inflicted no damage on our formation. All planes and crews returned safely to the field.....Cpl. Runyon returned from a three weeks stay in the nearby field

hospital. "Damon" hopes he sees no more of hospitals for the duration, "I'm fed up" was his only other comment.....T/Sgt. E. S. Johnston whom we hope by this time is enjoying a furlough in sunny California with his family and friends, will definitely return to the squadron when his 30 day leave of absence is completed. It seems like "Ed" was too quick to accept the furlough, if he had waited just a few days longer he's find out that his name came up on rotation – now his rotation orders are rescinded....."Monkey" pet dog of Sgt. Parkins was buried after a fatal accident with one of our trucks....."Whistling in Brooklyn" with Red Skelton provided some good entertainment at the movies tonite.....

18<sup>th</sup>

Twelve 487<sup>th</sup> planes took off at 10:55 to bomb a railroad bridge at Via Reggio, Italy. The formation reached the target at 11:49 hours and dropped their 48,000 lb. bomb load from 10200' with only a fair degree of success. First box started at railroad tracks and extended into an industrial plant at P-21. The first element of the second box started at the tracks between the overcast and the bridge with some possible hits on the north approach. The last element bombed about 4000' short. No ack-ack or other enemy opposition was encountered – all planes and crews returning safely to the base.....Cpl. Oliver Stokes was promoted to Staff Sergeant while Graham, Hyland, Olander and Woodward added another rocker to their staff stripes....."Lenny" Tetreault spent the afternoon in the hills putting his excellent command of the French language into play most advantageously. He returned in time for supper feeling quite gay and admits they have some every good wine which remains in its hiding place until some extra special visitor comes along....."Peggy" one of the Red Cross representatives was on hand this afternoon to dispense hot coffee and donuts. Lt. Swearingen, visiting from the 57<sup>th</sup> Wing, expressed delight in arriving at an opportune moment.....The Cairo express departed this afternoon on a food buying mission for the squadron. It will take at least eight days to transact all the necessary business – so says the crew & passengers.....Capt. Bugbee's latest innovation is a comfortable hammock swung between two trees in the vicinity of his tent, where he whiles away idle moments....."Whistling in Brooklyn" was repeated at the movies tonite.....

19<sup>th</sup>

Target for twelve of our ships today was the Pontassieve railroad bridge. The 44x1000 lb. bomb load was dropped at 11:30 hours from 9900' scoring hits on the tracks leading to the bridge although no direct hits were observed on the target itself. No ack-ack was encountered which made for a successful return of the bombers.....With the Allies progressing so rapidly on the Italian front a general interest in the missions is developing among the fellows. The question now is: When do we take Rome and when is the big invasion coming off? All this current "D" day talk and no "D" day doesn't do much for morale especially when one can see so much political significance with no apparent regard for how long the war lasts. Perhaps its a pity that American troops aren't as gullible as their enemy.....Sgt. Vollie Mullins who is one of our first members of the ground echelon to go home on rotation has been sweating out planes to Naples for three days. He finally got on one today and after forty-five minutes of lurching around in a storm the plane returned to the field. Needless to say Vollie is sweating out tomorrow's weather. Five bags of mail came in today for our first delivery of quantity since arriving in Corsica. Unfortunately the bulk was outdated newspapers and packages.....Lts. Knapp, Clarkson, May; T/Sgts. Rounis, Morrison, and S/Sgt. Grantham left for the States today after completing the customary tour of combat missions.....The following combat crew members were assigned to the 487<sup>th</sup> Squadron as of this morning: 1 First Lieutenant, 14 Second Lieutenants, 1 Flight Officer and 14 enlisted men....."Sweet Rosie O'Grady" starring Betty Grable gave the boys a treat at the Group movies tonite.....

20<sup>th</sup>

Combat crews were alerted for a mission this morning, but extreme cloudiness and intermittent rains resulted in a stand-down for the entire day.....Corsica doesn't provide much in the way of diversion and practically all activities are confined to the squadron area, although a few of our members find much enjoyment in visiting the one vino establishment located somewhere in the hills, where two drinks of a certain brand of vino makes you forget all about yourself. A few drink the putrid stuff and the majority use it for lighter fluid.....Sgt. Vollie Mullins finally got a flight to Naples, but not without experiencing difficulty. He was up bright & early this morning and proceeded to the line only to discover that weather conditions prevented takeoff. However, he finally got off later in the day and by this time Mullins should be going through the process preparatory to embarking for the home shores.....P.X. rations broke the monotony and under the supervision of Sgt. Stellato our new P.X. man, cokes, candy and cigarettes were on sale practically all day.....Ben Harmon celebrated a birthday in traditional style with his co-workers from the mess-hall. Ben has been on the wagon for sometime, but such an event could not pass unheralded – needless to say all the celebrants hit the sack at a late hour feeling quite gay and noisy.....Six officers from the 5<sup>th</sup> Army were today attached for rations only. They came to us in exchange for Lts. Butterfield, Hurlbut, Rushton; S/Sgts. J.E. Kelley, Fritch and Sgt. Koster who will spend five days with the Infantry boys at the 5<sup>th</sup> Army front.....”Sweet Rosie O’Grady” was repeated at the movies tonite.....

21<sup>st</sup>

Mission was canceled today supposedly due to climatic conditions over the target, however, one rumor emerged that the Germans were in such a disorderly retreat no Allied bombers could go over for fear of bombing our own troops. Nothing official substantiated this rumor although it gives food for thought. Late in the afternoon two ships from the squadron participated in another low level mission with the Group. Bombs were reported to have bounced off the bridge that was their intended target. Talk is that for this reason low altitude raids will no longer be a task of this Group.....Sgt. Pinneo and all ground crew members of his new ship, posed in front of the plane that was donated by Muncie, Indiana high school children. The new ship is a B-25J, bearing a name plate for the kids who gave it. They asked for a detailed account of its first mission and Public Relations is endeavoring to give it to them thru the newspaper.....Major Parsons and his crew consisting of 1<sup>st</sup>. Sgt. Parkins and S/Sgt. Dunlap among others returned this afternoon with two cases of liquor and a radio, after spending two enjoyable days in Malta.....PFC's Harmon, Dugas and Mitchell became Corporals today.....The squadron's most annoying problem is still the mail, or rather, lack of same.....As usual no movie on Sunday nite.....

22<sup>nd</sup>

Today's early morning mission was canceled just as crews were piling into the trucks. A stand-down was in effect until 2:30 at which time twelve planes and crews of the 487<sup>th</sup> took off to bomb a road at Cave, Italy. The 48x1000 lb. bomb load was dropped from 12200' with the first box starting short but crossing the road in the target area while the second box placed their pattern parallel to the first box and crossed road to the right of the previous pattern. The formation was running out of gas on its return, and some made very hasty landings after dropping red-red flares. From the ground it appeared as though they had been shot up, but no opposition was encountered. Lts. Doyle, Naruszewicz and Sgt. Robinson returned to the squadron after being marooned on Capri for two weeks. It seems as though the Germans mined the harbor which prohibited traveling to and fro for a few days although the waters have been swept now and Capri is again functioning. It was a break for them any way one looks at it.....A steady stream of crews are coming in daily – two yesterday and two again today bringing us up

to a grand total of twenty-six crews. However, several have finished their tour of combat and are awaiting traveling orders.....Four enlisted men were promoted to the grade of T/Sgt. While another three made Staff. These were all flying personnel as ground crews ratings have been frozen for some unknown reason. "Joe" Cherven was finally transferred from the kitchen to the Motor Pool upon his won repeated requests, but he also relinquished his SERGEANCY.....The battles of Cassino and Russia were shown to an interested crowd at the movies tonite.....

23<sup>rd</sup>

Weather conditions around the target area kept our planes grounded again today, although the sun shone brightly in our own vicinity. Sun bathing is the fad among our personnel these days with everyone aspiring to a deep coat of tan. If there is nothing better to do a number of the boys remove their cots from the tents, strip to their shorts and bask for hours under the rays – this will continue until some unfortunate gets a severe case of sunburn.....Since Major Armistead left the organization for the U.S. the dispensary is functioning without a medical officer and getting along very nicely – cases needing the attention of a qualified medico are referred tot he Flight Surgeon in the 486<sup>th</sup> .....A large quantity of mail came into the squadron today, much to the relief of all concerned. Much griping has been going on about the mail deliveries since we arrived at Corsica and it is hoped that from now on we'll get regular communiques from the home front – letters from home is still the biggest morale builder.....Another new combat crew joined the squadron today....."Adventures of a Rookie" was the movie at the Group theatre tonite.....

24<sup>th</sup>

First mission of the day took off at 09:30 to destroy Poggibonsi Viaduct, Italy. Twelve of our ships were over the target at 10:30 and dropped their 88x500 bomb load from 8500' without success. First box overshot on 82 ° heading and the second box failed to find target on initial run, made an attack on 262 ° and overshot the viaduct. No ack-ack or other opposition was encountered on this "milk run".....Second mission of five planes was in the air at 16:30. Due to cloud coverage the primary target was not bombed, but the alternate, the North Orvieto railroad bridge was demolished. Bombs paralleled the river as it approaches the bridge, with probable hits on the bridge as they crossed it. large fires were observed as a result in the target area. Ack-ack was heavy, scant and inaccurate causing no damage or casualties to our crew members. The following new combat crew members joined the squadron as of this date: Capt. Fred P. Camp, 1<sup>st</sup> Lts. Ferrell, L. Holley, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Harry D. George, F/O Joseph E. Semenak, Sgt. James D. Grodell, S/Sgt. Carleton A Coombes, Sgt. Donald C. Dick. Four new ground crew replacements also joined the outfit today in the person of: Pfc. Derwood Lindamood and Pvts. George R. Fricks, James R. Fowkes, Pierre P. Garvan.....Staff Sergeants Daston, Fritch, Rogers and Sorbello were promoted to Techs....."Standing Room Only" starring Paulette Goddard and Fred MacMurray was the flicker at the movies tonite.....

25<sup>th</sup>

Stand-down was in effect until 16:00 hours when twelve of our ships and crews prepared for a mission over Orvieto road bridge. The formation was over the target at 18:00 hours, dropping their bombs from their 9500' altitude very successfully. The first box started short and crossed the southern approach to the bridge with possible hits on the approach. 2<sup>nd</sup> box started short, straddled center of bridge and scored a direct hit. Enemy opposition was nil – all planes returned safely to the field....."Peggy" was on had this afternoon with hot coffee and donuts for all the men in the squadron area. Apparently she has a soft spot in her heart for the 487<sup>th</sup> or at least some of its members as her visits are becoming more



frequent than has been the custom in the past.....Otto Stellato and his detail returned this afternoon from Naples & Torre Annunziata where they have been for the past four days, making contacts to procure some fresh vegetables for the mess-hall. A truck load of cabbage, onions and a few radishes & cherries was the extent of their purchases – we understand that some of Otto's relatives reside in Torre.....2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Paul N. Spencer and S/Sgt. Theodore Iwan departed today for a thirty day furlough in the States much to the envy of their comrades.....”Standing Room Only” was repeated at the movies tonite.....

26<sup>th</sup>

First mission of today was over the target, Piteccio viaduct, Italy at 10:38 hours and released 96x500 lb. bombs from 10000' to no avail. Both boxes missed the target area as it was difficult to ascertain bridge aimed at by each box. It is believed that the bombs hit in the vicinity of the second bridge south of the target. No ack-ack or fighter opposition was encountered.....At 16:00 hours the second mission took off with the Orvieto railroad bridge once more as their target. The formation was over the designated area at 17:01 hours and very successfully dropped their bombs from 9400'. The first box crossed tracks north of the bridge with possible hits on the approach. The patterns of the second box started approximately at the bridge with definite direct hits on the southern approach. Again no ack-ack or fighter opposition was encountered – all planes and crews returning safely from the day's operations.....The progress of the Allies at the front is most encouraging and boosted morale considerably. Everyone expects Rome to fall within a day or so and after that very quick action, so that we can all return to our own peaceful country.....Silver bars today for Lts. Barry, Hobson & Sherwell.....2<sup>nd</sup> Lts. Foster and Schooley were today transferred to Brooks Field, Texas. A lucky break which they justly deserved after completing a tour of combat.....The six Infantry officers who have been attached to us for the past week observing how the Air Corps operates, returned to their own outfits today probably entertaining ideas of a transfer.....”Three Hearts for Julia” starring Ann Sothern & Melvyn Douglas was the picture at the movies tonite. Although it was presented by the Group on two evenings at Pompeii, it was worth seeing again.....

27<sup>th</sup>

First mission of the day took off at 09:35 to bomb Castiglione de Lago railroad bridge. The target was reached at 10:42 and our twelve planes dropped 96x500 lb. bombs from 10000'. The first box had a compact pattern south of the bridge starting short with hits on the tracks. Bombs from the second box landed in the dust obscured area of previous formation, bombing to the right and beyond the target. No flak was encountered.....Second mission for twelve of our aircraft was in the air at 15:44 hours with a railroad and road bridge at Necropoli, Italy, as the target for their 96,000 lb. bomb load. The formation was considerate in dropping their bombs as they distributed 48 on the primary target and 48 on the alternate, a road & railroad bridge N.W. of Pisa, Italy. The bombs of the first box bombing the alternate, landed across the tracks south of the railroad bridge. The second box bombed the primary target, with bombs crossing the road bridge scoring probable hits. Ack-ack was heavy, light, moderate and accurate, causing slight damage to three of our ships. All planes and crews returned safely to the field.....Our combat crew personnel was strengthened with the assignment of nine second lieutenants and eight enlisted men.....Results of the squadrons latest courts-martial are: Pvt. A.D. Rice – 45 days hard labor, \$60.00 fine; Pvt. Wright – 30 days hard labor, \$25.00 fine; Pvt. Harlan Smith, 4 months hard labor, no fine.....A new loud speaker was installed in the area so that everyone could enjoy the radio broadcasts and be informed of pertinent announcements.....Today's mail consisted of many burnt and mutilated letters salvaged from a courier plane that ran into difficulty somewhere between Naples and Corsica.....”Three Hearts for Julia” was repeated at the movies tonite.....

28<sup>th</sup>

At 07:50 hours today twelve 487<sup>th</sup> planes took off to bomb a railroad bridge N.W. of Pisa, Italy, but due to a cloud coverage the formation proceeded to the alternate target, a bridge at PP L-750190 and dropped 44x1000 lb. bombs from 9800' unsuccessfully. The first box bombed just beyond target with some bombs landing in the stream. Second box bombed beyond and to the left of target, possibly with a few bombs landing short of the tracks. No ack-ack or fighter opposition was encountered on this "milk run".....Sgts. Handzel and Moltzen returned to the squadron today after completing a long stretch of temporary duty with the Tactical Air Force.....Cpl. McKinney and PFC Lindamood left on detached service to the 303<sup>rd</sup> Service Squadron in Pompeii. The purpose of their mission is to salvage armor plating from the ships we left behind when Vesuvius forced us to evacuate the field.....Morale took another descent today when it was learned the Allies were not as close to Rome as previously reported by S-2 section. It seems like someone screwed up the bomblines – they can't do those things to us.....There was no picture at the Group movies tonite.....

29<sup>th</sup>

At 10:29 hours twelve planes of the squadron took off to bomb a railroad bridge at Bucine, Italy. The first box bombed the center of the viaduct with three center spans knocked down and the second box bombed about 1500' beyond the target on the third pass after failing to find the target previously. Their 48x1000 bomb load was dropped without interference of flak or other enemy opposition and all planes returned safely to their base.....With these one and two missions every day, and milk runs at that, the combat boys are finishing up their tour of duty before they're even know in the squadron. A great number of them that came in at Pompeii are sweating out their orders to go home. Rightfully it has the ground personnel rather annoyed seeing them come and go with absolutely no provision other than a one and one-half percent rotation basis for the war weary Air Force ground personnel. Some even regret that they didn't fly when they first came over – they'd either be home or no longer among us. The men overseas would rather have something done about the present situation than a lot of post war Utopian world talk.....The Catania courier returned today with many fine Sicilian blood oranges and other mess hall supplements.....Plane guard has been abolished since the arrival of a Puerto Rican guard detachment. No one is quite sure of their nationality, but whatever they are it's an appreciated gesture.....Poor mail service is prevalent and the situation is doing nothing for morale.....A few practice shots from the field had everybody in their slit trenches for a while the other night. Some weren't aware that it was only practice and others were avoiding falling shrapnel.....Deanna Durbin in "Honeymoon Lodge" was the entertaining picture shown by the 340<sup>th</sup> tonite.....

30<sup>th</sup>

Alert for twelve ships and crews was at noon, but takeoff wasn't until 15:50 hours. They were over Guarcino road at 17:31 although clouds prevented the first box from dropping their bombs and the second box jettisoned 8x500 lb. bombs in the sea dropping the rest to the right of the target scoring possible hits in the edge of town. Flak was scarce and inaccurate – all planes returned safely to the base.....Results of the entire Group's missions have been so poor lately that Col. Chapman deemed it necessary to call a meeting of all combat crew members this evening. He told them that it would be necessary to fly at a lower altitude and that they were to run on the target until it was sighted. The Colonel states further that there will be no stand-downs declared early in the day until the push is over. In other words the meeting consisted of a general calling down.....Cpl. Gross has returned from the hospital after a serious operation, still rather pale.....Another new crew came in today namely: 2<sup>nd</sup> Lts. Byars, Jones and Smith; S/Sgts. Bousquet, Ramsey and Sgt. Maliszewski.....Our first dance since Sfax

was held tonite in Cervione, a small village about five miles from the base. No one anticipated very much and they weren't disappointed. There were at least 200 G.I.'s in a stuffed unattractive hall with approximately twenty French girls and Peggy of the Red Cross brigade who sponsored the affair. A fine colored band made up for a lot that was lacking although the girls had quite a time trying to keep up with the all American jitter-bugs. The main event for the girls was the spam sandwiches and coffee served following the dance. Mid-nite saw the girls home with their mothers.....Two air raid alerts got the boys out of bed twice during the evening....."Honeymoon Lodge" with Deanna Durbin was repeated at the movie tonite.....

31<sup>st</sup>

Again today twelve ships of the 487<sup>th</sup> squadron took off at 07:45 hours to bomb troop concentrations at a pinpoint a few miles beyond Rome. 93x500 lb. bombs were dropped on the target and 3x500 were jettisoned in the sea due to rack failure. Large fires and explosions were observed as a result of the excellent bomb pattern laid out by our formation. The 487<sup>th</sup> formation received no flak although the ships following were quite severely attacked. Apparently last nite's lecture had some effect on the men judging from today's results – the lecture was repeated tonite for the benefit of those who were absent for the first session. All the foregoing was recorded on the sortie report, but according to photos the 487<sup>th</sup> missed the target completely. After sending in a hundred percent hits score, the photos were received. No doubt there shall be repeat lectures in the next few days only a little stronger.....Crew members returning from the 5<sup>th</sup> Army front today had many a hair raising fact to impart. They spent the entire week in fox holes 300 yards from the fighting lines moving right up with the troops. Stories of heaped casualties were none too fascinating.....Rotation mongers were busy with rumors not two minutes after twelve new ground men joined the squadron today. However, official reports state that they are not replacements, but additions to cover the new T/O. We're still wondering where all the men who are supposed to be leaving the States regularly are located.....S/Sgt. Mathurin holds the title of "Best Soldier in the Squadron" after almost two years instructing experience with the Infantry boys. After listening to him, it's no wonder he transferred to the Air Corps.....Sgt. Wolkes; PFC's Ballard, Larson; Pvts. Sim Johnson, Katowski, Arlis, Krone, Kunst, Le Face, Lane, Ledlow and Lee are the new additions to the mess-hall, Armament and Communications.....Sgt. Liphardt finally made T/Sgt. as section chief of the Photo lab. He's already wearing the stripes upon instruction of the 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt.....Another two alerts had us up during the nite – fortunately no bombs were dropped in the vicinity....."Johnny Come lately" with James Cagney played a return engagement at the Group movie tonite.....