

June 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, 487th Bombardment Squadron, 340th Bombardment Group

Prepared by: Sgt. James P. Shanley and Cpl. Richard C. Hurley, 487th BS.

i. Losses in action

Wounded in action over Perugia Airdrome, Italy April 6, 1944

1. Bernard A Burton

Wounded in action over Fano marshaling yards. Italy June 10, 1944

1. Joseph N. Hogarth
2. William P. Crandell
3. Jack L Parks, Jr.
4. Joseph P. Whalen
5. Edwin A. Kenyon

Wounded in action over Pietrasanta, Italy June 19, 1944

1. James D. Cordell

Wounded in action over Gricigliano, Italy , June 22, 1944

1. Joseph E. Semenak

(2) Personnel previously reported as missing in action in raid over Perugia Airodrome April 6, 1944, have returned to their organization.

1. Bernard A Burton
2. Hamilton E. Finney
3. George J. Simpson

j. Personnel who have distinguished themselves in action.

1. George G. Birmingham
2. Bernard A Burton
3. James D. Cordell
4. William P. Crandell
5. Bernard J. Geors
6. Joseph N. Hogarth
7. Edwin A. Kenyon

8. Jack L. Parks, Jr.
9. Benjamin J. Porter
10. Joseph E. Semenak
11. Everard B. Sherwell
12. Joseph P. Whalen
13. Henry J. Schreiner
14. Robeert H. Pirnie
15. Leslie N. Lewis
16. Melvin L. Miles
17. Homer H. Willhite
18. Harvard F. Stewart.
19. John W. Watson
20. Jack E. Gellman
21. Archibald P. Samuels

War Diary June 1944

1st

For the first time in the squadron's history an eighteen ship formation was put into the air. All three boxes were over the target of Fossato railroad bridge by 11:45 hours dropping their 120x500 lb bomb load with devastation effects. First box straddled the western approach of the viaduct and the following boxes bombed in the smoke cloud created by the first box. Flak was nil and all planes returned safely.....Huge amounts of packages and newspapers came in today, but no first class mail to speak of. Packages and newspapers are nice to get if one is receiving letters regularly, but its rather annoying when mail is almost a month due now. Perhaps if current magazines would devote more space to where the mail is expedited rather than treating the subject generally, these soldiers who aren't getting any mail would be better satisfied.....The Group officers undefeated baseball team played a losing game to the 487th team – score 9 to 1 in our favor.....Donuts and coffee were served by Lola in the mess-hall this afternoon. Such an afternoon is really an appreciated gift from the Red Cross because it gives the boys an opportunity to get together and shoot the breeze for an hour or so.....According to latest orders from Headquarters, headnets[?] and leggings will be worn to the movies nightly, consequently the audiences should and no doubt will show a considerable decrease.....A practice formation was carried out this afternoon with particular emphasis on formation flying and dry bomb runs. It is suggested that an addition be made to the sign at headquarters – bombing is our sideline.....”Johnny Come Lately” was repeated at the movie tonite.....

2nd

Combat crews were on stand-by all day, but it wasn't until 17:34 hours that six planes took off to bomb a road bridge at Civita-Castellana, Italy. The formation was over the designated area to 18:40 hours and successfully dropped their 24,000 lb. bomb load from 8000'. The bombs fell beyond the target with several hits within the target area. Heavy, scant and inaccurate flak was encountered but none of our ships were holed.....The Cairo carry-all returned today after a two weeks stay in the famous Metropolis. An excellent time was had by all who made the trip and they did manage to return with some fresh eggs and oranges.....PFC Glenn was today promoted to Corporal and it came as such a surprise that Glenn was speechless for a minute - “Anything can happen now” says Glenn.....Fresh neat hamburgers for dinner today didn't taste too bad to us G.I's, but the way they were prepared didn't

suit our civilian Italian tailor and believe it or not he asked the Mess Sergeant for a “can of Meat & Beans”....Rumor has it that plans are being formulated for opening another apartment of facsimile there of in Catania, Sicily, whereby the weary ground crew personnel may have a place to spend a few days free time – provided the place selected offers a few luxuries which were obvious by their absence in the former so called rest camps.....”Corvette” starring Randolph Scott was the picture shown at the movies tonite.....

3rd

Take-off for eighteen B-25's of the 487th Squadron was at 11:26 hours when they left the ground with a 72x1000 lb. bomb load to be dropped on the Vernio railroad bridge in Italy. The first box cut the tracks just south of the bridge and the second box bombed the Northern approach while the third hit short of the target. Flak or enemy fighter opposition were again obvious by their absence. 7I returned from the mission after a mechanical failure caused the life raft to break loose, and doing so it struck the elevator forcing the plane into a 4000' dive. While the ship was in the dive two 1000 lb. bombs broke through the bomb-bay doors severing the hydraulic line. Lt E.P. Dombrowski crawled into the bomb-bay and released the two remaining bombs by hand.....Besides eggs and oranges the Cairo carry-all brought back watches and cigarette lighters for the P.X. which were sold today before ninety-five percent of the squadron even saw them. Ice cold beer is going to be sold tomorrow evening – one bottle per man. Common consensus of opinion is that G.I.'s still prefer Alexandria to Cairo.....Rumors of going home are still rampant and outrageous as ever. Latest is that we go home for a thirty day leave before commencing a voyage to China. Most consoling is the tale of the entire original unit being replaced by September, but thus far no one has predicted the year.....Sgt. Fuiks finally got off to Naples where he'll spend a few days with the wife and kiddies – at least that his story.....S-2 drew Sgt. Wolkes, our one and only new clerk, claiming that they're badly in need of fresh talent.....We're seeing little of Sgt. Parkins in the area these last few days as he's supposed to be officiating in the construction of a Group E.M. Club. The Club is going to provide a snack bar and many other delights when completed.....”Corvette” unreel'd for a second time at the movie tonite.....

4th

Vernio railroad bridge was again the target for six planes of the Squadron. They were over the target at 11:14 hours dropping their 25x1000 lb. bombs slightly beyond the objective striking to the northeast of the north approach although no hits were observed on the approach. All planes returned safely to Corsica without encountering any enemy opposition.....The announcement of our troops entering Rome this morning at 8:00 A.M. brought about much hilarity and cheering from the men in the area. naturally everyone was happy to see Rome fall especially since the squadron has played such an important part in the Italian air offensive leading to the downfall of the Eternal City. Rome is the first European Capital to be liberated in the present conflict and we hope that the remainder of them following shortly. According to all reliable news sources there is much importance attached to the fall of Rome and it all hinges on the invasion.....Cpl. Bartkus has already asked that a Special Service tour of Rome be arranged as soon as possible – everyone is eager to see the city, but that's a little towards the extreme.....Orders came in today authorizing the Distinguished Unit badge for all members of the 340th Bombardment Group who participated in the Tunisian and Sicilian campaigns. We understand that the 98th Bombardment Group and 57th Fighter Group are the only other Air Corps units to be so cited. If we remain over here much longer we'll resemble a bedecked Christmas tree upon our return to the States although everyone is quite well pleased with themselves and the 340th about now.....1st Lt. Robert M. Weaton joined the squadron today.....For the last few days the squadron area has taken on the aspect of a bathing beach with the boys parading around in shorts, exposing themselves to the Corsican sun. The shorts are of the underwear variety but they serve the purpose.....Several of the

Cooks have set up a make-shift shower close to their tents and claim that it is more convenient than the Group showers although it looks like a lot of work to take a bath.....No show on Sunday nite.....

5th

At 09:45 this morning twelve planes and crews of the 487th squadron took off to bomb the Orte road bridge in Northern Italy. The first box crossed the bridge scoring many direct hits although the second box wasn't quite as successful and bombed short to the left, but laid their pattern on the road approaching the target. Our formation encountered scant and heavy anti-aircraft fire, but so inaccurate that no ships were holed. Crews remained on the alert until another twelve ship formation was called to attack the same Orte road bridge at 16:50 hours. They were over the second time at 18:47 hours dropping their 96x500 lb. bomb load in an excellent pattern scoring direct hits, but observers asserted that the bridge remained standing – no doubt the bridge is of a very durable masonry cement. This time the formation encountered heavy, scant and accurate flak although none of our ships were holed.....Everyone is still talking about the fall of Rome and eager to inspect the famous city. The realization of what the Allies have been striving for ever since the invasion of Italy is almost too much to comprehend.....Captain Linthicum reports that while he and Lt. Lukas were wining in Cairo hot spot a great deal of commotion was caused by the entrance of King Farouk. They inquired of the waiter as to the identity of the distinguished visitor and as he told them in hushed tones that it was the King, Lt. Lukas replied “Bring me another beer”.....Work on the squadron album is progressing quite rapidly through the combined efforts of all. Lt. Farley who has finished his missions and should be on his way home is waiting around to take the complete copy back for submission to the printer. “Greg” Moore is doing a beautiful job on the illustration work. All in all we expect to have something really worth while when the war is over and this is past history.....Although “Five Graves to Cairo” was shown before at Gaudo it's a wonderful picture and was enjoyed again tonite.

6th

Little or no work was done in the squadron today after Supreme Headquarters in London announced the event that the entire world has been awaiting for the past two years – INVASION. It came as such a shock to everyone that there were no answers and all just smiled – no doubt they were speechless. For those of us who have been overseas for sixteen months it as the day of all days, but to those who have been over a short time, it as just something to be anticipated. All work was put aside while everyone remained glued to the radio for further progress. We now have reason for lack of mail in the past weeks and are quite satisfied to go without mail if it means we'll be on our way home sooner.....Two missions this morning, one following the other by twenty minutes. Target for the first six ships was the apparently undestructible Orvieto south road bridge, while the second box of six planes bombed the Zeppanami road. Bombs fell to the right of the road bridge with possible hits on the approach while the other formation crossed Zeppanami road with their bombs and scored probable hits on buildings within the target area. Neither flak nor enemy fighter opposition were encountered on these engagements. Shortly after the boys took off they heard General Eisenhower announce the invasion over the radio and from all reports there was even much hilarity in the air. No doubt the good news had an effect on their bombing and they anticipated a full day of operation, but were surprised to find a stand-down had been declared before their return.....Each man received a ration of one bottle of cold beer tonite at supper. It was our first since Sfax and really hit the spot. The last crew returning from Cairo brought enough that when added to what we already had made enough to go around.....”Five Graves to Cairo” was repeated at the movies tonite.....

7th

Crews remained alerted throughout the day although takeoff was scheduled for 16:30 hours at which time twelve ships and crews were bound for Viareggio, but due to complete cloud coverage the formation proceeded on to Cecena railroad bridge, the alternate target. No direct hits were observed on the bridge although it is believed that some of the bombs cut the railroad tracks. The second box possibly caused a road block by laying a pattern that extended from the south approach of a highway bridge to a group of factory buildings within the target area. Spite escorting the formation were seen to peel off and dive although it was not known what they might be attacking, but it was assumed that they might have spotted enemy fighters – the formation met no resistance.....Sgt. “Al” Kosak has adopted a young Ram as a pet and the animal follows him from one end of the squadron area to the other. It not only has the human members of the squadron bewildered as even the dogs belonging to other fellows join in the parade with Al leading and the dogs smelling and barking at the strange animal in their midst. The Ram was presented to Al by PFC Kwolek.....Construction of the I.M.'s bar has begun with Cpl. McKinney doing his best to make a replica of the one destroyed in the eruption of Vesuvius. A detail went over to Catania today to pick up liquor for the grand opening. They are going to bring back fresh vegetables for the mess-hall also.....Lt. Lukas started a new idea today by checking out a couple of magazines to read en route to the target which only goes to show that “Look” is more interesting than a combat mission especially these days when flak is almost unheard of.....News of the invasion is still unsatisfactory although the reason for lack of details is that the enemy is more anxious for data than we are. Thus far everything is progressing as expected and fighter landing strips are already built on the bridge-head. In Italy troops have crossed the Tiber river in some sectors which is almost astonishing when you consider the stalemate of a month ago.....”Claudia” with Robert Young and May McGuire played at the movie tonite.....

8th

At 10:25 this morning six planes and crews of this squadron took off to bomb Bucine control viaduct. Due to a heavy could coverage all planes returned with their bombs with the exception of one ship that due to mechanical failure salvoed their 4x1000 lb. bomb load.....Throughout the entire day ack-ack batteries around the Airfield were sending practice shots in the air and regardless of our being warned ahead of time, it was still a surprise each time a barrage was sent up. many were craning their necks for Nazi bombers to no avail.....S/Sgt. Berry, our chief enlisted medic gave Lola of the Red Cross unit a shot where she's never been kissed. Sick call patients were ushered out of the dispensary during the tough performance, PFC Burke remained at the typewriter but claims to be a touch typist.....Sgt. Netzner returned from Naples today after visiting the light of his life in Poggi[...rino. “Rog” had a wonderful time although his time was limited. Sgt. Fuiks finally caught a plane after overstaying his three day pass by four days – apparently his so-called wife has what it takes.....Lts. Ronson and Keogh were returned to the Zone of the Interior from temporary duty with the 87th Fighter Wing.....Major Schreiner, operations officer since we entered combat, left for the States a few days ago with Capts. Evans and Piruie, Lts. Auter, Messier; T/Sgts. Gammage, Runney, Rabon; S/Sgts. Drause and Warrington..... Capt. Birmingham relieved Major Schreiner as Operations officer and Lt. Spencer who is now on thirty days leave in the States will assume the duty of assistant upon his return.....G.Q. and Latrine detail have been temporarily abolished as there are enough men with extra duty penalties to handle it for quite some time.....The Group flew its 399th and 400th missions today and it is believed that this total of 400 missions is more than the total of any respective Group under the 57th Wing being in combat longer than ourselves.....”Claudia” was repeated at the movie tonite.....

9th

At 09:33 hours twelve 487th ships loaded with 1000 lb. bombs took off to bomb a road bridge at A-182714. The designated area was reached at 10:30 hours and dropped their bombs from 9300' with very good results, although the first box bombed the alternate target, a bridge at A-170710. Their pattern started on bridge with 4 to 5 possible direct hits on the bridge. The second box bombed the target bridge hitting the west approach of same approximately 300' to 400' short. Two ships of the second box dropped their bombs prematurely due to mechanical failure of bomb release. No ack-ack of fighter opposition was encountered, enabling all planes to return safely to the field.....An order for all men to turn in all of their woolen clothing to supply, paved the way for numerous rumors. The one most talked of was the possibility of this group being sent to the Pacific Theater. The original ground men of this organization are very much against the spreading of such talk as sixteen trying months in the European Theater is more than enough for any man.....R[?]jeks & Neile have been spending their idle moments for the past week in enlarging their two man tent to a more spacious and comfortable "home." Capts. Linthicum and Winebrenner after admiring their improvements decided to do likewise and were observed last nite in the renovating process....."The Gangs All Here" starring Alice Faye was unreeled to an appreciative audience at the movies tonite.....

10th

Mission this morning consisted of eighteen ships and two distinct targets for the 487th Squadron. The first and third box struck Rimeni [Remini?] M/Y with a great degree of accuracy, laying a pattern that started at the point near the station and extended entirely across the tracks into the buildings beyond. Second box bombed Fano M/Y with just as good results extending their pattern from the warehouse and entirely crossing the marshaling yards. Flak was heavy, intense and accurate holing twelve planes and wounding Sgt. Hogarth in the pelvis and abdomen. The hydraulic system on the left side of 7D failed causing the plane to go off runway on landing and nosing over. All in all we had a pretty rough day, but with it all, two targets were wiped out.....Several promotions were announced today: Cpls. Mesler and Ivan Johnson made sergeant and PFC Perrone made Corporal. Such outbreaks for ground personnel aren't often seen in this squadron any more.....The Armament section presented Cpl. Forsythe with a caricatured birthday card before celebrating the occasion with several bottles of Cognac.....T/Sgt. Gillis was given a ticket in Catania yesterday for not being in proper uniform and was reprimanded by a 2nd Lt. which made it even worse for Sgt. Gillis. Supply called for each man to turn in one blanket which was done with reluctance this morning. Naturally, this started much India talk as they say "it's warm in Burma." Even rumors of this kind are bad for morale and if it ever becomes an actuality there will be no more morale – an outfit without morale doesn't maintain a high efficiency standard.....The 306th Service Group presented a U.S.O. show tonite, featuring three entertainers that if it weren't for the U.S.O. program would have starved to death years ago in a nickel beer joint....."The Gangs All Here" was repeated at the movies tonite.....

11st

Stand-by was in effect all day until a stand-down was declared late in the afternoon following intermittent showers. The showers that developed into a downpour before the evening was over didn'tn stop the horseshoe enthusiasts who continued to play throughout the inclement weather. Lt. Lukas made a fair size fortune by challenging any and all comers.....F/O Simenak is replacing Lt. Sherwell as Athletic officer of the squadron. Lt. Sherwell has finished his missions and professes to be sticking close to his sack as he refuses to be among the missing when his walking papers come through. He's taking no chances on going to Cairo and won't even see Rome unless he can go and return on the same

day.....The Catania carry-all returned today with fresh vegetables and a good supply of liquor for the opening of the enlisted Mens Club. The opening has been anticipated for almost as week now so we can expect it at any odd time.....Our Italian K.P.'s had quite a time on the vino brought back from Catania for them – they admit being drunk which is unusual for any Italiano.....News from all fronts is very good although there is still much to be desired in the way of facts from the French landing. It is reported that the Allies are now seventy miles beyond Rome which is short of amazing when one considers the stalemate of several weeks back.....Rumor has it that the rotation that never really went into effect as far as this Group is concerned has been canceled even for combat crews who have finished their missions which indicates that there will be another landing in Southern France before too long which will require the entire strength of the heralded 340th Bombardment Group.....It being Sunday there as no show tonite.....

12th

Target for today was a pinpoint at Arezzo Viaduct in Northern Italy. Only five planes of this squadron participated as one ship returned before reaching the target due to mechanical failure. A 40x500 lb. bomb load was dropped on the viaduct at 10:07 hours in a good compact pattern on the west approach leading up to the pinpoint itself. Enemy opposition was nil and all planes returned safely to the base.....1st/Sgt. Parkins held a special session for those who failed to turn in their blankets at 18:00 hours this evening. Everyone appeared looking smart in their best summer uniform with rifle and rifle belt. The penalty was much manual of arms followed by short order drill throughout the surrounding area for several hours.....Tonite marked the opening of the enlisted mens bar with much hilarity and noise making. An appropriate name would be “A little bit of Italy” as a strictly Italian beverage list is offered of Cherry brandy, Cognac Vermouth and Vino. It is supposed that beer will eventually be included on the menu, that is, if beer can be procured. If intoxication means that the club was a success – it's a WOW.....For the first time since our bow to combat S/Sgt. Wilbur Snaper trusted S-2 to the rest of the staff and joined one of the flights for Malta. This is the first time Wilbur has been away so we can expect anything from now on.....Allied progress on all fronts is a good indication that we may be home by Christmas of 1944 providing we are returned to the States when the European conflict comes to a halt. The reward for our efficiency in this theater may be a transfer to the Pacific according to latest rumors although it doesn't seem possible that the Army will deem our presence necessary to winning the other part of the war. No one minds sweating out this campaign, but India is another story.....Special Service announced that the show-goers could wait around in case a picture popped out of a tree - naturally no such thing occurred and a disappointed crowd returned to their tents after an hour or so wait to no avail.....

13th

Time over target was at 10:15 hours for six of our aircraft participating in a bombing mission on Perugia road bridge (RP. N[?]-734922). The 24x1000 lb. load was dropped with devastating effects covering the sough approach and south end of the target bridge. Ack-ack was scant and inaccurate which surprised combat crew members who had flown over the Perugia Airdrome not two months previous encountering one of the most deadly barrages of anti-aircraft fire thus far witnessed over any single target. Boys that are coming into the Squadron now don't really know what a rough mission is and consequently are talking about what a [????] combat is with twenty or thirty flakless missions to their credit. The fellows who went through the beachhead missions have a secret passion that the Germans will make with the ack-ack one of these days for the benefit of those who think that combat is such a push over.....Tony Niele has forsaken his duties in the Motor Pool for a transfer to the Photo Lab. It should prove to be a break for Tony because the rating he's been sweating-out is there.....Lt.

Risch, who joined the Squadron at Pompei departed for the States today after completing a tour of duty. We no sooner get to know them and they're off for home these days of many missions.....Our new Medical Officer came in yesterday – his name is Lt Forest M. Kendall and on sick call this morning he impressed everyone by his concern over individual cases.....The new E.M. Club provided another hilarious evening this P.M.....Capt. Young delivered a speech on Chemical Warfare which was supposed to last for one hour and a half, but fortunately it lasted only about twenty-five minutes. If we hadn't heard it all at least a dozen times before it might not be so annoying. Before Capt. Young took over the Squadron meeting, Capt. Birmingham complimented both the ground and air men for their efficiency during the big push in Italy and remarked that only six ship formations would be put into the air daily for the time being.....Bing Crosby in "Going My Way" was the feature at the Group movie tonite.....

14th

Six 487th crews and planes loaded with 1000 lb. bombs took off at 09:30 hours to bomb a tunnel at PP [?]-588978. the formation reached the target at 10:25 and dropped their bombs from 10100', but not too successfully. Bomb pattern hit near the north tunnel mouth at a point northeast of the viaduct which enters the tunnel. Most of the pattern was over and it is believed that the tunnel mouth was not hit by the pattern although it is possible that several of our bombs may have hit the north end of the viaduct. Anti-aircraft fire was heavy, scant & inaccurate. For to six enemy aircraft were observed at the target area. From three to four made attacks on our box and one of our planes, 7N, was attacked from below. Turret gunner, S/Sgt. J. E. Kelley reports that he saw tracers from his guns hit the E/A which was about 600 yards away when he fired upon it and peel off, diving towards the earth in flames. All planes returned safely to the base and crew members admitted that the mission was an exciting one.....another Chemical Warfare lecture scheduled for tonite was postponed much to the delight of all concerned.....Our undefeated base-ball team played another victorious game with the quartermaster laundry on the short end of a 9-5 score.....Lt. Deere returned from Capri sporting a Panama hat – says he wants to be reminded of those happy summer civilian days. S/Sgt. Lincks and McClerman who were also resting up at Capri say "it's the spot".....Lt. Fleming who has spent most of his time in the hospital since our arrival in Corsica has returned to the fold once more, feeling like a million dollars and looking a lot better too....."Jam Session" was the film attraction at the Group movie tonite.....

15th

Six of our planes and crews took off this morning at 09:35 hours with a 24,000 lb. bomb load to destroy Fabrica Viaduct at pinpoint C-512939. The target was reached at 10:40 and the formation dropped their bombs from 9000' with poor results. Their pattern overshot the bridge starting approximately 1000 feet to the east and extending through the wooded area east of the bridge. No ack-ack or other enemy opposition was encountered adding another combat mission to the "milk run" list.....Now that only six of our planes are participating in the Group's missions, many of the boys are spending their idle time down at the beach acquiring a coat of tan. Even though it doesn't make one feel better, it makes for a healthier appearance.....At 11:00 P.M. tonite a volley of shots from the field had everyone prepared to hit the slit trenches when an announcement was made over the loud speaker that their was not cause for alarm – an unidentified vessel out in the sea was being fired upon for recognition – apparently it was friendly as she did not return the fire.....The mail delivery is still a critical situation and has everyone guessing. When mail is delivered regularly many things are overlooked, but lack of any word from the home front makes all of us irritable and minor incidents become major problems....."Jam Session" was repeated at the movies tonite.....

16th

Pietrasanta road bridge at Pinpoint U-963938 was the target for twelve of our ships and crews this morning – takeoff 10:45. The formation was over the target at 12:32 hours and dropped their bombs with an excellent degree of accuracy although it was difficult to plot the exact pattern due to smoke coverage caused by previous bombings. However, it is known that direct hits were scored within the target area. Heavy, medium, intense and accurate flak was encountered wounding S/Sgt. Cordell who was flying in 7E. The flak was removed from S/Sgt. Cordell's body on the field before he was taken to the hospital. Unfortunately, the new boys are finally finding out how really rough mission can be.....Capt. Birmingham and a ship load of pleasure seekers left for Oran but they will stop over in Malta and Catania for local color en route. Everyone seems to be going away these days. S/Sgt. Snaper who just returned from Malta found that he had missed his interview at Wing which was to determine whether or not he is to become a 2nd Lt. What irked Wilbur most was the fact that this was the first time he's been away since being overseas.....We all enjoyed the reading of the Articles of War by 1st/Sgt. Parkins this evening – there must be purpose to the semi-annual occasion but it's difficult to figure out just what it is.....Our baseball team, undefeated until tonite, lost their first game of the season to the ack-ack boys coming out on the short end of an 8 to 4 score.....A nickeling mission was called this afternoon to drop leaflets advising all German soldiers to surrender immediately and they would receive food, medical attention and would be removed from the combat zone promptly. With all that in the offing they should be eager although in order to comply they'd have to dodge the bullets from behind them according to all rules of combat.....The Island of Elba was invaded tonite by French forces fighting in Italy....."Knickerbocker Holiday" with Nelson Eddy was featured at the Group movie tonite.....

17th

Breakfast at 04:30 hours this morning to prepare for an immediate alert declared last night for 05:00 A.M. but when the trucks arrived at Group Operations a stand-down had been declared, however, we were on an immediate stand-by throughout the day. Even though there is no mission the organization must go through all the motions which makes for just as hectic a day if not more so because there is just as much work and nothing is accomplished. Crews after getting up before the crack of dawn are a very unpleasant lot after finding that they left their comfortable couches for no good reason.....Stars and Stripes have been coming in very sparingly since we've been on the Island, in fact all told we have received not more than fifteen issues which indicates that Corsican based units have little or no priority status.....Cokes and P.X. rations were distributed today which tended to relieve the monotony despite the fact that they weren't the best rations we've ever received. The Port of Pompei spoiled us for future stations as we had everything there that the Army has to offer including excellent food and super candy rations to say nothing of the surrounding local color.....T/Sgt. Liphardt has been seeing quite a bit of a Red Cross belle in Bastia, who is from Chicago, Liphardt's home town, but upon his last visit she broke the sad news that she was being transferred to Sardinia. Today after assuring himself that the girl had left the Island, "Lip" unveiled her picture. Frankly she isn't the glamor gal that we had anticipated but Liphardt is already making tentative plans for a hop to Sardinia....."Knickerbocker Holiday" was repeated at the Outdoor theatre tonite.....

18th

Stand-down was declared in the morning to be in effect until 2:00 P.M. at which time a sky and intermittent shower kept planes on the ground for the remainder of the day. Capt. Birmingham's plane rumored to have gone to Oran for beer, returned today after getting as far as Catania. They brought

back an abundance of beverages Italiano for the Enlisted Mens Club.....Several promotions made the bulletin board today - 2nd Lts. Cook, Curley, and Gurrentz are now wearing their silver.....F/O Smith was honorably discharged from the Army to accept the commission of 2nd Lt.....Orders come through so fast now for combat crews to return to the States, that it's a few days before they're even missed as was the case with Sgts. Stokes and Mataurin who departed yesterday for the Z of I.....S/Sgt. Crosby, who served a tour with the 12th Bombardment Group and returned to this theater of operations upon his own request has almost finished another tour but wants to go home on the thirty day deal and return rather than go back on the rotation basis. That is something that none of us can understand although Sgt. Crosby says, "We'll be of the same opinion after two weeks in the worse than chicken s _____ States." After hearing the stories of boys who have returned to an operation[??????] following their rotation to the States it doesn't leave very good taste in our mouths as to what's in store for us providing we are ever rotated?.....The boys of the Squadron had a letter from S/Sgt. Stanley Dealio, an ex-487th gunner who is now stationed at a field in Mass, with an organization preparing for overseas combat. Stanley is no longer on flying status and is doing his part towards victory in an Armament section. T/Sgt. Grillo reports from Chanute Field, Illinois – has no desire for another tour, is perfectly satisfied as is.....As usual, no movie on Sunday nite.....

19th

Another missionless day although a stand-down wasn't declared until noon at which time combat crews left the base for everywhere on Corsica. It's not often that a stand-down is called in time to go anywhere, however, the beach is always available and that seems to be the most popular spot nowadays. A threatening sky with an occasional shower made for a most uneventful day.....Mail in fair quantity came in for the second consecutive day absolutely amazing the recipients as well as pleasing them no end. It was quite a bit of old stuff but nevertheless enthusiastically received.....The Cairo commandos returned this P.M. after enjoying a two week leave divided between Cairo and Alexandria. They brought back everything by the kitchen sink which includes baseballs, film, watches, beer, cigarette lighters, eggs and any number of interesting items. The only pity is that they can't bring Cairo itself back or better yet, Alexandria. Everyone enjoyed themselves throughly in the exotic cities. "The women are wonderful" they exclaim. Our most welcome returning commando is Capt Norick[sp?] the Group dentist and one of our best commandos by the way – a real character. Orders just came through from Group that the will be no more ground personnel going to Egypt which was especially "good" news for those who were planning on making the trip.....At a staff meeting this evening, awards and citations plus more publicity were the main topics. It smells like an eager beaver in a higher headquarters, although a well know Group should have the advantage of priority when the time for rotation shows its welcome shadow.....Allied progress is still remarkable. Late bulletins report our troops to be within six miles of Cherbourg's great port while troop movements in Italy are so rapid that one can hardly comprehend its swiftness....."Lady Takes A Chance" with Jean Arthur was the entertaining picture at the Group movie tonite.....

20th

Stand-down all day in favor of some training schedule. Combat crew members anxious to complete their missions are not at all in favor of the lull as the quicker they roll up the score the sooner they'll hit the home shores. Ground men however, for the most part are welcoming the respite as the going has been no easy job for them during the past six weeks – especially the men on the line who are taking advantage of the beach for a rest and a good sun tan.....Fresh eggs for breakfast this morning had everyone up for the treat. A long unserved line at 8:00 A.M. proved that a change of the regular diet is very much needed and appreciated. The Medics worked hard all day putting a wooden floor in the

Dispensary and beautifying the place all around as per orders from the Group Surgeons office.....Capt. Hauser, Lt Sherwell and S/Sgt. Holzman are three disappointed people – after getting everything in readiness for the trip home and being advised that their orders were in the squadron, they suddenly discover that for some unknown reason the precious documents were canceled – a slap in the face to any war-weary individual. Capt. Hauser went on detached service to the 57th Wing as of today – perhaps while there he'll get the score on the situation. Meanwhile Lt. Sherwell and Sgt. Holzman will “sweat it out” in traditional army style.....”Lady Takes a Chance” was repeated at the movies tonite making it the fourth time for a showing of the film to this Group.

21st

A stand-down was in effect all day until 17:00 hours when six 487th planes prepared for take off at 17:40. The formation was over their target, a road bridge at Pietrasanta, Italy at 18:49 hours and dropped their 24,000 lb bomb load with a fair degree of accuracy. Bombs landed in the smoke of previous formations and believed to have crossed the southern approach to the bridge with possible hits on the rail bridge to the right. No anti-aircraft fire or other enemy opposition was encountered thereby chalking up another “milk run” for our combat boys.....Two more members of our ground personnel left for the States on the ½ of 1% rotation plan. They are lucky fellows, T/Sgt. Gaffney and Cpl. “Bill” Stephens, bot eager for a glimpse of the home shores, but no more than the rest of the weary ground crew members. When do “I” go home? is the uppermost thought in the minds of all those going on seventeen months in the war zones.....The squadron is supplying daily details to erect a Red Cross club on the field for the benefit of the 340th Group. Work on the project was begun almost two weeks ago and up to the present time only a cement floor has been accomplished. No doubt the structure will be completed about the same time we receive moving orders.....Too much time on the beach has resulted in some severe cases of sun-burn and the boys were urged to take precaution when acquiring a sun-tan.....”We've never been Licked” was the film unreeled tonite to an appreciative audience.....

22nd

The 487th lost its first crew in a long time over the heavily defended Gricigliano rail bridge at pinpoint Q-713953. The bomb load was 20x1000 S.A.P. and 216x20 frags. Although due to the intensity of ack-ack it was impossible to plot the bomb pattern but it is believed to have overshot the target. 7C in which Lts. Casey, Dombrowski, Georges, S/Sgt. A[??]stom; Sgts. Kaplan and Obrovata were riding was hit by flak on the bomb run just after dropping its bombs. The plane was observed to be on fire before it exploded upon impact with the ground. Only one parachute was seen exiting from the ship although one observer reported two or more black dots coming from the ill-fated craft but no parachutes were seen to open. F/O Semenak was slightly wounded by flak in another ship. Accidents of this kind are bound to happen in war but regardless of when they do its a shock to the entire group and is remembered perhaps not outwardly, but felt deeply.....Lt. Farley is finally wearing the captain bars that he's known have been on orders for sometime although it became official today. Now all he has to do is complete the album and make for the States.....Word is going around that any combat crew member who has not put in one year of overseas duty will fly 70 missions before returning to the Z of I Which is quite a leap from the prescribed fifty missions to a tour. Quite naturally it isn't going over too big with the boys although anything new and more difficult is never accepted with enthusiasm. The question still arises s to our U.S.O. buddies who have never left the home shores.....487th Sqdn's. first ship to land in Rome left this morning full of curiosity seekers on official business. Everyone is anxious to see the Eternal City but its rather doubtful if all will have the opportunity.....We had our customary donuts and coffee in the mess-hall this afternoon through the courtesy of the Red Cross.....”We've never been Licked” was repeated at the movies tonite.....

23rd

Group briefing was scheduled for 8:00 A.M. this morning but when combat crew members arrived at Group to be briefed a stand-down had been declared for the remainder of the day. Naturally, a great majority took off for the beach while others hit their sack in the customary G.I. fashion.....Most encouraging note of the day was the arrival of four new ground crew replacements namely: Cpl. Everett Nordman, Pvts. Flores Madario, Robert F. Palson and Hewlette A. Gordon. An occasion of this kind not only boosts morale but makes room for more rumors, all dealing with rotation which is a most cherished subject among the ground personnel of the 487th Squadron.....Cpl. Burton who was supposed lost on April 6th over Perugia Airdrome returned to the Squadron this evening. He told of how he parachuted to the ground before the plane in which he was gunner crashed. Since that time he lived in the hills awaiting the Allies or a chance to escape which finally presented itself and Cpl. Burton made his way through the lines after being picked up by the Germans and escaping again from the guard. He says it was a hell of a sweat but he's thanking God that he's still alive. Lts. Finney and Simpson are still hiding out in the hills according to Cpl. Burton, but the rest of the crew is believed dead. Cpl. Burton is now only attached for rations while he awaits orders to go home, a fate to which he's entitled.....The Rome courier returned this evening following two pleasant days in the Eternal City. Everyone agrees that its the most beautiful city yet seen on the continent. Rome is clean, respectable and awe inspiring making it so entirely different from neighboring Naples....."No Time for Love" with Claudette Colbert played at the movie tonite.....

24th

No mission again today which made way for the swimmers and sun bathing artists at the beach. Most of the regular habitués are sporting an even coat of Corsican suntan.....Everyone seems to have lost interest in going to Naples now that Rome has been taken although no courier system has been inaugurated as yet, 57th Wing is supposed to have taken a hotel in the Eternal City to be used as a rest camp but its still in the formative state.....Sgt. Karl Platz delivered a lecture on Chemical Warfare this evening which was attended by all and not voluntarily. If gas is ever used in this war it is doubtful if the enemy will seek out the 340th when there are so many more vital areas although one must admit its best to be prepared for the worst.....The entire squadron is talking about Walter Winchell's latest prediction concerning the war – "It will end in six weeks" which if correct makes the finale on or about July 24th. Naturally everyone is eager to believe the most optimistic of opinions, however, nothing is impossible in this screwy conflict. It is also believed that the fall of Cherbourg, which should come at any moment now, is the key to further landings on the continent....."No Time for Love" was repeated at the movies tonite.....

25th

Stand-by was in effect all morning until a stand-down was declared for the rest of the day. It's impossible to ascertain the reason for all these stand-downs as the weather seems to be especially good for raids, but perhaps the weather office has different ideas. T/Sgt. Liphardt picked a bad time to take leave in Algeria as he isn't missing any work, no missions, no photos.....Mail has been coming pretty regularly of late which has improved morale no end. The only one who isn't interested in the arrival of mail is Cpl. Nelson the Mail Orderly. S/Sgts. Holzman and Hartley got off for the States today after completing their tour and just getting their papers in under the line as neither one of them had been overseas a year nor had they finished 70 missions. Both intend to give up flying for pencil pushers positions lasting for the duration. A squadron EM's meeting was called tonite to discuss prices of the PX and liquor – one or the other must be raised to build up the squadron fund. It takes money to buy

these eggs and other delights that are brought back from Cairo and Italy.....Cpl. Don Kuhn and Sgt. Roger Lynch had apparently been drinking too strenuously this evening which promoted their decision to wake up the entire squadron about 11:30 P.M. Perhaps it was a good idea though as everyone in the vicinity was wide awake for the air read alert at mid-nite.....No movie on Sunday nite as usual giving the operator a nite off. Our cherished rifles were called in today and a good wager would be that not five percent of them were ever fired. They say we're going to get carbines which will be a little easier to cart around anyway.....

26th

No mission again today although a stand-by was in effect until 1:30 P.M. at which time a stand-down was declared. Weather was given as the reason. A stand-down always means an easy day, but surprisingly the boys would rather run a mission because it makes us that much closer to the end, at least that's the opinion.....Carbines were distributed today. They seem to be a nice little weapon although [??] cares for little weapons". Anyway they'll be much easier to carry around but the thing everyone is worrying about now is the new manual of arms that goes with the carbine.....Italian lire is at a premium these last few weeks as so many are leaving the Island and it's impossible to exchange Corsican francs for any other money even at an Army Finance office. The only thing one can do is buy a money order providing you know far enough in advance of your journey otherwise you're up the creek unless some kind soul has foreign money to offer. It seems like a very inefficient system for an organization as far advanced as the U.S. Army.....The Algiers crew returned tonite after spending three days in the African city. No one failed to purchase a straw hat which are now being worn at various angles throughout the squadron area, the strangest things appeal to a G.I. From all reports there isn't an awful lot to do in Algiers but drink beer which was done in abundance. The beer is enough to encourage a long waiting list for Algiers.....PFC "Bruno" Burke has been transferred from the Medics to the Photo lab. At his own request. He never liked the Medics but had to remain there until a replacement came in – it's here and Bruno's out.....Betty Grable gave the boys a leg show tonite in "Coney Island"

27th

Stand-down again today although the Squadron was on a stand-by until late afternoon. Missionless days are beginning to get monotonous even though they provide much leisure. Everyone is wondering just when we're going to go to work on France particularly so because of our desire to move into the country. This is all assuming that we follow the ground troops in an invasion of Southern France if a landing is accomplished.....News of the capture of the great Cherbourg port was received with enthusiasm in the Squadron today. After securing the beachhead, Cherbourg was the next main objective so now with the huge port at the Allies disposal we should see considerable gains in Normandy. Bets as to the war's end are being made fast and furious – Several months is the common estimate.....Seventeen bags of packages and mail came in today which is our largest delivery since coming to Corsica. Needless to say morale soared to a new height.....Lt. Deneen donned the silver today when his promotion from Second to First Lieutenant was announced.....Lt. Sherwell bid the boys a final farewell before taking off on the first day of his homeward trip this afternoon....."Coney Island" was repeated at the movie tonight.....

28th

Early last evening Group called for a six AM alert but before the night was over the status was changed to 1:30 P.M. stand-by. This morning was one of the darkest and gloomiest we've seen on Corsica and

consequently a stand-down was declared. Threatening showers persisted throughout the morning and afternoon although by night fall a clear sky was overhead.....Our first carbine inspection was held this afternoon in the area. At the time we received the guns they were in perfect shape so the inspection was no more than a check to determine who did and who didn't have a piece. Naturally there was no need for the customary cleaning procedure before usual inspections.....The mail situation has so improved that it eliminates our most profound bitch. For the last week, a mail call daily has us beside ourselves with joy. "It can't last" is the common opinion.....The 487th seems to be monopolizing the Group dentist time of late judging from the number of toothless grins encountered throughout the area. It must be the quality of the food eaten overseas that accounts for the loss of teeth as it isn't natural for the majority of men within service age to lose teeth as they have been doing. If something isn't done shortly about getting us home the outfit will become know as the "Toothless 340th" out of necessity.....We're still awaiting the opening of the Red Cross Enlisted Men Club in which a great number of the Squadron personnel did work details....."The Bridge of San Luis Rey" was the movie tonite.....

29th

The Squadron's first raid in six days took off at 16:44 hours to bomb the Imperia Railroad bridge in Italy, about fifty miles from the French Border. The twelve plane formation dropped their 48x1000 lb. bomb load scoring several direct hits. It is believed that one span of the bridge is down as a result of 487th bombing accuracy. No opposition was encountered and crews were able to make valuable observations of harbor activity at Imperia. Its been such a long time since we've run a mission that its almost novelty. Here's hoping that we start on France soon.....One plane coming from Malta today had quite an experience – the entire navigation equipment had gone on the fritz leaving them out over a body of water and no one was sure of what body of water it might have been....All agreed that it was really a sweat until they sighted Italy but it was such a procedure that they didn't even enjoy the view of Rome from the air. From all the reports the most enjoyable feature of Malta is Jim's restaurant where real American fried chicken is served and washed down with beer or scotch. Jim is a colored American band leader who was caught in Malta when the war broke out and has capitalized on the restaurant business since that time. They say that Malta has undergone over 3300 air raids in the last few years.....Group personnel are already wearing their Distinguished Merit badge but the Squadron hasn't gotten around to passing ours out as yet. They say there is a lot of red tape to it and we'll have it in a few days.....Even the Red Cross girls are going home now although unfortunately that no indication that we'll be following....."The Bridge of San Luis Rey" was repeated to satisfied audience at the movie tonite.....

30th

Nine ships of the 487th Squadron attacked the Pietrasanta railroad bridge this morning at 10:54 hours carrying both frags and demolition bombs. Due to cloud coverage it was difficult to observe absolute results although it is believed that the demolitions hit their target while the frags raised hell with five or six motor vehicles going along the highway just north of the bridge. Heavy, moderate and accurate flak was encountered holing five of our ships. apparently the window was quite ineffective due to the fact that the bombing flight went too far north of the initial point and target.....We now have Crandell, Hurlbut and Serangeli running around as first Lieutenants rather than seconds. Baskerville, Bielski, Coleman, Lewis, Collamore, Powers and Triungo are now sporting a second rocker which has ground personnel who have been sweating out ratings for months burning.....Paul Wright, who was recently released from the guard house is presently holding forth in the Ordnance section.....S/Sgt. Coombes was caught off the base one evening and is suffering as a flying private because he did not have a pass.

Guess he'll get a pass from now on?.....Fresh from the land of the free and the home of the brave came S/Sgt. Walter H. Shanessy and Cpl. Eugene Schlosser to replace two war weary 487th members we hope. If people continue to come in its a cinch that some will go home sooner or later, so the Squadron continues to sweat out more G.I.'s.....Along with our pay today we received the Distinguished Merit Badge awarded to the Group sometime ago, everyone got one but those joining the Group after August 17th will only be able to wear it during their tour of duty with the 340th. P.B.S. beer was rationed at the rate of two quart bottle per person this afternoon. Home was never like this: beer, pay day, D.M. badges and what have you....."Up in Arms" with Danny Kay and Dina Shore played at the movie tonite.....

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