

## August 1942 – August 1943

[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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### F. Campaigns:

#### 1. Tunisian Campaign

Period of participation: March, 1943, to the capitulation of Axis Forces in North Africa.

Purpose: To give direct tactical support to the British 8<sup>th</sup> Army by bombing troop concentrations, installations, and avenues of retreat, thus aiding directly in the destruction of Axis military forces in North Africa.

#### 2. Campaign against Italian Islands in the Mediterranean (Pantelleria and Sicily)

Period of participation: May, 1943, to capitulation of both islands.

Purpose: To destroy defense installations on the Island of Pantelleria. To prepare the way for and to give tactical support to forces invading Sicily, and to block the enemy's retreat and destroy his armies.

#### 3. Campaign against the mainland of Italy

Period of participation: The first and only mission flown against the mainland of Italy in this period, ending August 31, 1943 was flown on August 30, 1943, and constituted a bombing attack on the town of Marina di Catanzaro.

Purpose: To reduce the enemy's capabilities for defending himself when the invasion of his stronghold should begin.

### G. Battles (Missions)

April 12, 1943 - 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. James L. Flack and 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. James S. Johnson rode as co-pilots in planes of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Squadron (12<sup>th</sup> Bomb Gp), participating in a 12<sup>th</sup> - 340<sup>th</sup> bombing mission, to become the first men of the 487<sup>th</sup> to see combat.

April 19, 1943 - 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. James L. Flack and entire crew participated in a combat mission with planes of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 340<sup>th</sup> Groups.

April 23, 1943 – 1<sup>st</sup>. Lt. James L. Flack and crew and 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. James S. Johnson and crew participated in a 12<sup>th</sup> -340<sup>th</sup> bombing raid on Soliman A/D, Tunisia. Lt. Johnson's plane and crew were lost.

April 25, 1943 – Major Cyrus K. Whittington, Commanding Officer 487<sup>th</sup> Squadron, rode as pilot in a 489<sup>th</sup> Squadron ship, with 489<sup>th</sup> crew. His ship collided with another over the field. All Crew personnel were killed.

May 4, 1943: Combat crews and partial combat crews of the 487<sup>th</sup> Squadron participated with personnel and planes of the 489<sup>th</sup> Squadron in a 36-ship raid on Zagouan, Tunisia.

May 6, 1943: Mission No. 1: One plane and 2 crews of the 487<sup>th</sup> Squadron participated in a 36-ship bombing mission against supply dumps and troop concentrations at Furna and Massicault, Tunisia. Several pilots also rode as copilots with the 489<sup>th</sup> Squadron. Captain Donald J. Marcan, commanding officer 487<sup>th</sup> Squadron, rode in a ship which was shot down in flames.

Mission No. 2: One crew, with 489<sup>th</sup> pilot, participated in a raid on St. Cyprien, Tunisia. One 487<sup>th</sup> pilot rode as co-pilot in a 489<sup>th</sup> ship.

May 8, 1943 – Mission No. 1: Three crews participated in a raid on Pantelleria L/G. Second mission : Five crews participated in a raid on Pantelleria harbor.

May 9, 1943 – Five ships and 3 crews participated in a raid on Pantelleria L/G.

May 10, 1943 – Mission No. 1: Three crews participated in a raid on Pantelleria L/G. Second mission: Five crews participated in a raid on Pantelleria harbor.

May 11, 1943 – Three crews participated in raid on gun emplacements at Djebel El Krera, Tunisia.

May 12, 1943 – Three crews and planes participated in a raid on gun emplacements and troops North of Enfidaville, Tunisia.

May 30, 1943 – Troop concentrations on Pantelleria. (6 planes)

June 6, 1943 – Gun installations on Pantelleria (6 planes)

June 7, 1943 – Airfield at Pantelleria (6 planes)

June 8, 1943 - Gun installations on Pantelleria (6 planes)

June 10, 1943 - Gun installations on Pantelleria (6 planes)

June 11, 1943 - Gun installations on Pantelleria (7 planes)

July 3, 1943 – Comiso A/D, Sicily (9 planes)

July 4, 1943 – Comiso A/D, Sicily (6 planes)

July 5, 1943 - First mission: Sciacco A/D, Sicily (3 planes)  
Second mission: Comiso A/D, Sicily (9 planes)

July 6, 1943 - Comiso A/D, Sicily (13 planes)

July 7, 1943 – Comiso A/D, Sicily (12 planes)

July 8, 1943 – Comiso A/D, Sicily (13 planes)

July 11, 1943 – Trapani/Milo A/D, Sicily (11 planes)

July 13, 1943 – Town of Termini/Imerese, Sicily (night) (9 planes)

July 14, 1943 – Town of Paterno (12 planes)

July 15, 1943 – Town of Paterno (12 planes)

July 16, 1943 – Town of Valguarnera (12 Planes)

July 17, 1943 – Town of Catania (9 planes)

July 19, 1943 – Town of Randazzo, Sicily (12 planes)

August 1, 1943 – Roads near Bronte, Sicily (12 planes)

August 2, 1943 – Town of Randazzo, Sicily (12 planes)

August 4, 1943 – Southern exits of Bronte, Sicily (6 planes)

August 6, 1943 - 1<sup>st</sup> mission: Troops South of Adrano (11 planes)  
2<sup>nd</sup> mission: Motor Transport N. of Biancavilla (1 plane)  
3<sup>rd</sup> mission: Town of Randazzo (8 planes)

August 7, 1943 - 1<sup>st</sup> mission: Town of Randazzo (12 planes)  
2<sup>nd</sup> mission: Town of Randazzo (1 plane)

August 9, 1943 – Road Junction near Divieto, Sicily (12 planes)

August 10, 1943 - 1<sup>st</sup> mission: Town of Randazzo (1 plane)  
2<sup>nd</sup> mission: Town of Randazzo (2 planes)

August 11, 1943 - 1<sup>st</sup> mission: Town of Randazzo (12 planes)  
2<sup>nd</sup> mission: Town of Randazzo (1 plane)

August 12, 1943 - 1<sup>st</sup> mission: Town of Novara, Sicily (12 planes)  
2<sup>nd</sup> mission: Roads at Patti, Sicily (1 plane)

August 13, 1943 - 1<sup>st</sup> mission: Town of Falcone, Sicily (1 plane)  
2<sup>nd</sup> mission: Beaches South of Messina (4 planes)

August 14, 1943 – Enemy concentrations at Gesso, Sicily (11 planes)

August 15, 1943 – Gun emplacements South of Divieto (12 planes)

August 16, 1943 – Beaches North of Messina near Torre de Faro (12 planes)

August 30, 1943 – Town of Marina di Catanzoro, Italy (12 planes)

## H. Commanding Officers in Important Engagements

### 1. Major Cyrus A. Whittington

On Easter Sunday, April 25, 1943, at Sfaz el Maou L/G, Tunisia, pilot in a Mitchell Bomber (B-25) of the 489<sup>th</sup> Bomb Sq. The others of the crew were members of the 489<sup>th</sup> Bomb Sq. Th this time the 487<sup>th</sup> Bomb Sq. was new to combat and this mission was Major Whittington's third in combat, all flown with other Squadrons. On take-off, Major Whittington's plane and another of the 489<sup>th</sup> Squadron collided, with full bomb load, most of which exploded. The entire personnel of both planes, including Major Whittington, were killed. All bodies were recovered and buried with military honors in the cemetery in the city of Sfax, Tunisia. Memorial Day honors (My 30<sup>th</sup>, 1943) were paid to these and other dead of the 340<sup>th</sup> Group.

Major Whittington was regarded as a superlative commander.

Captain Donald J. Marcan, a veteran pilot of the 12<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group who had a short while before been transferred tot he 487<sup>th</sup> Squadron as operations officer, was chosen to succeed Major Whittington as Commanding Officer. On May 6, 1943, Captain Marcan rode as co-pilot in a 487<sup>th</sup> ship piloted by Colonel William C. Mills, Commanding Officer of the 340<sup>th</sup> Bomb Gp. Take-off was at 0615 hours from Sfax el Maou L/G, Tunisia, and the target was supply dumps and troop concentrations at Furna and Massicault, Tunisia. As Colonel Mills' ship came off the target, it received a direct hit from the intense anti-aircraft fire. It was seen to go down in flames. To date, little official news has been received regarding the tragedy, but it is definite that Captain Marcan bailed out successfully, although one of his hands was either badly injured or wholly severed, probably by contact with a propeller. He was taken by the Germans and placed in a hospital near Tunis, where he was left when the Axis forces retreated to Cap Bon. He has never returned to the Squadron.

Although Captain Marcan was with the 487<sup>th</sup> Bomb Sq. for only a short time, his friendliness and his very evident interest in the Squadron were building for him the foundations of a deep regard for him among officers and men as a commanding officer.

Major Charles E. Murray was chosen to succeed Captain Marcan as Commanding Officer of the 487<sup>th</sup> Squadron. During his tenure of approximately two months, after which he was elevated to the position of the 340<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Executive Officer, Major Murry flew the following missions as Commanding Officer of the 487<sup>th</sup> Squadron:

June 8, 1943: Target – Gun positions on the island of Pantelleria

July 6, 1943: Target – Comiso A/D, Sicily

He has flown other missions with the Squadron since assuming his duties with 340<sup>th</sup> Group Headquarters.

Major Murray was the first American pilot in the Middle East. He has been overseas more than two years. Major Murray's extraordinary technical familiarity with bombing planes undoubtedly contributed much to the Squadron's paramount maintenance record.

Succeeding Major Murray as Commanding Officer, Captain Lewis F. Parsons has participated in the following combat missions of the 487<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron:

Pantelleria  
Djebel El Krera  
Sciacca  
Comiso  
Termini/Imerese  
Paterno  
Bronte  
Adrano  
Divieto  
Novara  
Marina di Catanzaro

#### I. Losses in Action

February 18, 1943

Lt. Frances X. Tehan  
F/O Robert Lytle  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Robert Crowell  
M/Sgt. Jess Brazell  
T/Sgt. James Hughbanks  
S/Sgt. Russell Hinchman  
M/Sgt. Richard Hanson

February 26, 1943

F/O Lester Long  
Edwin Welcome  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Jo Davidson  
S/Sgt. John Roth  
T/Sgt. George Cummings  
S/Sgt. Athel Pate  
T/Sgt. Carleton Budd

April 23, 1943

1<sup>st</sup> Lt. James S. Johnson  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt. William B. Hille  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Joseph F. Schooley  
T/Sgt. George B. French  
S/Sgt. Spencer

April 25, 1943

Major Cyrus A. Whittington

May 6, 1943

S/Sgt. Russell E. McGuire

T/Sgt. Gordon W. Warren bailed out, was hospitalized, is reported to have been evacuated to the United States. Captain Donald J. Marcan bailed out, was captured and hospitalized by the enemy, was freed by allied occupation of Tunis, and has been evacuated to the United States.

May 30, 1943

T/Sgt. Ted Bernstein

On this mission 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Edward J. Cunningham, bombardier, was seriously injured, was hospitalized in Tunisia, and subsequently was evacuated to the United States. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Ray I. Sherbourne and 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Charles P. MacCabe were treated for shock and minor injuries and were returned shortly, with S/Sgt. Roland S. Berry, gunner, to the Squadron.

July 13, 1943

2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Elmer L. Baran, Pilot; 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Warren H. Lewis, copilot; 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Stanley P. Matthews, bombardier; S/Sgt. Ira Wade, gunner; T/Sgt. John W. Fox, radio operator.

July 15, 1943

Sgt. Lyttleton E. Chance

This plane was hit by flak and made a belly-landing in friendly territory. Sgt. Chance was killed in the landing. All other crew members returned safely to the Squadron within a few days.

August 16, 1943

Captain James L. Flack, pilot; 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Jonathan Leete, co-pilot; 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Sidney C. Ormsbee, bombardier, S/Sgt. Eugene F. Hobart, gunner.

On this mission S/Sgt. Robert L. Goulding, radioman, successfully bailed out and returned to his organization.

J. Former and Present Members who have distinguished themselves in action:

Lambert, Marshall E.  
Parsons, Lewis F.  
Rodgers, Bobby  
Schreiner, Henry J.  
Brown, William T.  
Cunningham, Edward j.  
Emslie, William A.  
Fonda, Willard C.  
Garrett, Claude L. Jr.  
Hague, Harold H.  
Henderson, Horace L.  
Hollis, John T. Jr.  
Howle, Benjamin S.  
Ipera, Orlando  
Loysen Alton J.  
McCabe, Charles P.  
Peterson, Robert N.  
[missing text] serial no. 0-664714  
[missing text] serial no. ?-726692  
[missing text] serial no. 0-791873  
Warnock, Arthur R.  
White, John W.  
Wilkerson, Harold H.  
Willhite, Homer H.  
Wrede, Henry F. Jr.  
Anderson, Harley H.  
Bell, Kenneth L.  
Black, John C.  
Cerutti, Robert L.  
Cox, Lee R.  
Gavin, Edward F.  
Hover, Arthur G.  
Mayer, Robert A.  
O'Neill, James F.  
Rosenberg, Maurice Z.  
Simenitzky, John  
Wolkoff, Eugene M.  
Griffiths, Melvin W.  
Over, Jeremiah. R.  
Sterling, Harold M.  
Katherman, Ivin L. Jr.  
Lynch, Marion M  
Berninger, Robert S.  
Campbell, Dennie  
Driscoll, Paul E.  
Furey, Robert D.  
Guolding, Robert L.

Grillo, Dominic  
Kinsinger, Edgar L.  
Longman, Harold S.  
Mancini, Leo F.  
Pinion, William J.  
Wynne, Joseph P.  
Berry, Roland S.  
Bilodeau, Raymond J.  
Birkley, Herbert I.  
Crane, Nathan J.  
Dillingham, Henry e.  
Durie, William E.  
Dzialo, Stanley  
Hall, Frederick L.  
Hickman, Spencer O.  
Jones, Harold L.  
Kachelriess, John d.  
Morgan, Jackson V.  
Zona, Martin F.  
Reilly, Edward J.

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January 2, 2009