THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

SP-Bomb-489-M1
Oct 44

P.R.C.

DECLASSIFIED
DOD Dir. 5200.30

[redacted]

MICROFILMED
00047420

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

SQ-BOMB-489-HI
Oct 44

SECRET

RESTRICTED

DESIGNATION SHEET

Historical Records

AIR FORCE: Twelfth Air Force

WING: 57th Bombardment Wing

GROUP: 340 BG(M)

SQUADRON: 489 Bomb Sq

OTHER UNIT:

Documents Transmitted: (Period Covered)

X OUTLINE HISTORY dup October '44

X WAR DIARY: dup

___ SPECIAL ACCOUNTS:

___ PHOTOGRAPHS:

___ SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

SECRET

SQ-Bomb-489-HI
Oct 1944

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

S E C R E T

Headquarters 340th Bomb Group (M)
APO 650, c/o PM,
New York, N.Y.

489th Bomb Squadron (M)
OUTLINE HISTORY
October 1944

SUBJECT: Historical Records.

TO : Commanding General, Twelfth Air Force, Through Channels.
Attention - Historian.

1. Outline History of the 489th Bombardment Squadron (M) for the period of 1 October to 31 October.

a. Present Designation: 489th Bombardment Squadron (M).

b. Changes in organization.
(1) Staff officer.
(a) Major Howard Bunch, Squadron Executive Officer, rotated back to the States on 17 October 1944.
(b) Captain Merle Peterson made Squadron Executive Officer to replace Major Bunch.

c. Strength for month of October.
(1) At beginning of period.
(a) 95 officers.
(b) 340 enlisted men
(2) At end of period.
(a) 93 officers.
(b) 353 enlisted men.

d. Station.
(1) Alesan L/G, Corsica.
(a) Arrived : 19 April 1944.
(b) Departed: --

P.H.C.

e. Movements of unit or echelon.
(1) None.

f. Campaign.
Northern Italian.

g. Operations
(1) Tactical bombing of targets in Northern Italy.
(2) Missions for period : 9.
(3) Sorties for period : 113.
(4) Results of most important missions.
(a) On the 1st of October this squadron attacked the Magneta road and railroad bridges in Italy. Intense anti-aircraft opposition was encountered, which was probably responsible for the poor bombing results. This made necessary a return trip there on the 2nd, with only slightly better results.
(b) On the 12 th of October we ran an especially successful mission to an ammunition stores depot and bivouac area just southe of Bologna. The majority of the bombs, which were radio released, were dropped well within the target area.

h. Command Officers on important missions.
(1) Captain Rittenhouse, Operations Officer, on mission to ammunition stores depot and bivouac area south of Bologna, on 12 October.
(2) Major Leonard Kaufmann, Jr., flying as Acting Command

S E C R E T RESTRICTED

64

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

S E C R E T

Pilot, on mission to Magenta bridges, on 18 October 1944.

1. Losses in action.
(1) None.

1. Number of photographs being submitted.
(1) None.

2. Inclosed are WAR DIARY, 489th Bombardment Squadron (M), for the period 1 October 1944 to 31 October 1944.

For the Dommancing Officer.

LEONARD KAUFMANN, Jr.
Maj., A.C.
Commanding.

SECRET

65

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

SECRET

WAR DIARY

489th Bombardment Squadron (M) Alesan L/G, Corsica

Month of October 1944

DAY	EVENTS

1 - Twice today we were out in force over Northern Italy, blasting targets of great importance to the enemy. Both times we accomplished our objective, leaving the Germans just a little less able to continue their stubborn resistance to our hard hitting ground forces.

The latest headline news is as follows; it appeared in the Basic News, a United Nations news service put out by the Psychological Warfare Branch of AFHQ.

"British repulse counter-attacks as battle for Holland rages; thirty-seven ships of the German merchant marine sunk by Royal Navy subs; 5th Army in Italy advances closer to Bologna; Reuter says Red Army massing for drive into Germany; U.S. heavy bombers hit Jap supply ports."

We have another Assistant S-2 Officer. Lt. Robert M. French replaces Lt. Dale G. Kesterson, who is now assistant to the Transportation Officer. Lt. French also holds the position of Squadron Navigation Officer and has over fifty combat missions to his credit. He is the first S-2 Officer we have had who is on flying status, which makes him valuable to this office.

2 - Strong winds and threatening skies made combat flying impossible.

3 - Eighteen planes of the squadron were sent to the Magneta railroad bridge and gun positions nearby. Dropping high explosives and incendiaries in the face of fierce enemy opposition, we failed in our objective.

Numerous airplanes were holed, and there were some close brushes with death. A gunner had an experience which should give him something to think about, and he should consider himself living on borrowed time A large piece of flak went completely through his flak suit and half way through a Bible which he carried in his left shirt pocket. Lt. Bulkeley brought his plane in safely on a single engine.

4 - Our crews were briefed to strike at the Magneta railroad bridge again. All the planestook off and were forming up when they were called in because of poor weather over the target.

The following extract is from an Intelligence report for 4 October.

"Ground sources report that the attack by 340 Group, 16 September on the M/T Park and repair area at Bologna was most successful. The M/T Center and nearly all the vehicles including 30 motor tank trucks were destroyed. There were 130 German casualties."

Mail service from home has been exceedingly poor during the past three weeks; in fact, it is by far the worst that it has ever been. Explanations for this situation are not forthcoming.

The meals lately have been neither good nor bad. Occasionally, about three times a week, we have fresh meat and fresh butter. The diet is mainly deficient in fresh vegetables. We have eaten much more poorly, and we have eaten much better.

5-6 - This has been another period of stand-downs, of heavy rains, of very high winds, of long days and longer evenings.

The dry river bed where once most of the linemen lived has angry torrents rushing along its course in haste to reach the sea. It seems that ever since coming overseas we have had to contend with the fickle

SECRET

66

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

S E C R E T

DAY EVENTS

ELements. Heat, cold, dust, sand, wind, rain have been consistently conspiring against us, with the possible exception of this summer in Corsica. Living under the conditions that we do, we are made more acutely aware of our physical environment.

7 - Early in the morning there was promise of a good day. Although the weather continued to be auspicious, there was no mission, probably because of unfavorable flying conditions over the target area.

In line with the policy to fly practive missions whenever the opportunity presents itself, we sent up a number of planes today for that purpose.

Captain Rittenhouse has just returned to the squadron after having spent a number of weeks in the U.S.A. He has assumed his former duties as Operations Officer.

Virtually everywhere in Europe the war has bogged down to a snail's pace. A Soviet writer, Colonel Tolchenov, declared: "The present period of military operations may be regarded as a period of accumulation of forces for the last decisive storming of Germany."

Aside from official military Intelligence reports, we are kept informed of the progress of the war through two sources: (1) The radio; and (2) The "Stars and Stripes," an Army newspaper written and published in the Mediterranean Theatre of Operations and circulated widely to all military personnel. This squadron has flown to it each day a number of recent issues. Thus we are kept fairly well informed.

8 - Everything was readied for a mission this morning, but it did not go off - another weather difficulty. However, the weather over the island was not so bad that we could not fly a practice mission.

9 - Weather as usual prevented any combat flying.

Here are some revealing statistics concerning the 340th Group.

To date we have flown 578 missions; 11,400 sorties, of which 9,923 are classified as effective sorties; we have dropped 16,251.905 tons of bombs; and we have lost 75 airplanes to enemy flak.

This is a formidable array of figures. It shows that we of the 340th have been doing our part to destroy the Axis. But is does not show the man hours and the energy and the hardship and the material and the money and the scores of other tangibles and intangibles which have made possible these imposing statistics.

When no missions are run, the days drag by. Add to this, longer evenings of darkness, and you have two good reasons why time lately appears to be passing so slowly.

10 - It is the same old story: bad flying weather, no mission.

11 - Finally we got a mission off. Leading the Group, twelve of our big bombers struck at the Canneto R.R. bridge in Italy. The bombs were radio released from our first box. There were possibly two direct hits on the bridge, but the majority of the bombs fell short.

Today we received from Group S-2 target charts covering targets in southern Germany and in Austria. This is a fairly good indication of things to come. Perhaps before long we shall be operating against these two countries.

12 - The mission today carried us to Northern Italy.

S E C R E T

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

S E C R E T

DAY | EVENTS

13-14 - This has been another period of inactivity. Weather continues to work against us and to the advantage of the enemy.

15 - It is the middle of the afternoon of a fall day. Outside across the road the peasants are gathering their harvest grain and in the distance the sea is placid in its azure hue. The air has just a touch of chillness to it, and the sun is reluctant about making an appearance. Outside of this S-2 tent some boys are playing touch football as relaxation from a strenuous morning of flying. Down from the dispersal areas on the line comes the mighty roar of airplane engines as the crew chiefs fondly check their charges. Now and then someone comes in here for a map, for information, or just for the purpose of engaging in conversation.

As the war wears on and our overseas service accumulates, the passage of time seems to become progressively slower. Days, weeks, and months have an aggravating way of lingering, of refusing to pass and to get out of the way as soon as possible.

We ran a mission today to Northern Italy. The photographs are not yet available, but indications are that the mission was a successful one.

16 - A mission was scheduled. The boys piled on the trucks, and then Group called in with the announcement of a stand-down.

Operations, S-2, and the Parachute Department are now housed in a long, low prefabricated building which was just recently erected. All of us are happy that our offices are in a building. The tents which we were in were anything but conducive of work. They leaked, they were dirty and dusty, and the light was poor.

In this camp area and in the camp areas of all the other squadrons changes and improvements are being made in anticipation of our spending all winter right here.

Major Bunch, Squadron Executive Officer, is expected to leave tomorrow to spend thirty days in the States. He will then return to the squadron in his present capacity. He is the first ground officer to be granted a furlough to the States. It is hoped that this privilege soon will be extended to ground enlisted personnel.

17 - For the second day running we were unable to carry a load of bombs to the enemy; it was the weather again.

18 - Early in the morning twelve crews started for Group S-2 to be briefed. But before they arrived there, a stand-down was declared for the rest of the day. But Wing, undoubtedly unintentionally, fooled us, for just after dinner they informed us of an immediate stand-by. A few minutes later we were sending the crews down for immediate briefing. The planes took off, formed up, and started for the target in the northern part of Italy. When they arrived at the target, they were unable to drop any bombs because of complete overcast, and they returned to us with a full bomb load.

19-20 - Flashing in an azure sky, our planes are circling overhead and are joining up for a flight to Northern Italy. Everyone in Operations and in S-2 ran out to view this common sight, something that is never

S E C R E T

48

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

S E C R E T

DAY EVENTS

tiring, no matter how often you have seen it. Huge and obstreperous and associated with an element of danger, airplanes have an everlasting appeal.

Airplanes and flying have become so much a part of the lives of most of us that when the day does come for us to give all of this up, we shall undoubtedly sorely miss it.

Yesterday the mission to the road and R.R. bridge at Magenta, Italy, was unsuccessful, many of the bombs not even falling within the target area.

Results are not yet forthcoming for the mission to Northern Italy. But in a very short time, we shall be hearing the boys radioing in the results as they return to the base.

Today it was announced that the Philippine Islands have been invaded by the forces of General Douglas Mac Arthur. Details are not yet forthcoming, but indications are that present activities are proceeding according to plan.

21-22 - No mission - weather as usual.

23 - Weather again prevented any combat flying. However, in spite of poor flying weather, we ran a practice mission. No matter how experienced the boys become, there is always room for improvement.

24-26 - Unabated rain has been pouring furiously the past three days. Accustomed as all of us are with the worst kind of weather, yet none of us have seen anything quite as bad as this. The countryside has been flooded, and raging torrents are rushing down the mountain sides to the sea. Very few of our tents did not leak, and some of them were levelled for lack of secure support. If this is but a taste of what is to come, as it certainly appears to be, then the hardships of last winter in Italy will be dwarfed by comparison. But in spite of these great difficulties one seldom hears anyone complaining. It is all taken in a good-natured spirit.

27-31 - Bad weather has prevented all combat flying. But weather did not prevent our running a number of practice missions.

Walter F. Greve Jr.
WALTER F. GREVE, JR.
Sgt., A.C.
S-2.

WFG/wfg

SECRET

69

THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958