

379th Bombardment Squadron

History for the month of January 1945

Section I...Outline of Month's Activities

Prepared by Sgt. Albert Sulman

For an abbreviated month, our operation activities were at their peak...a mission practically every day. The targets were principally in the enemy's Brenner Pass line of communications, with bombing results generally satisfactory.

Movies and U.S.O. stage shows provided the usual brand of entertainment for the troops...with Spring-like weather coming on, basketball and softball games were begun in anticipation of a hectic sporting season. Men were given a few day's leave to Rest Camps in Cairo, Capri, Cannes and Rome.

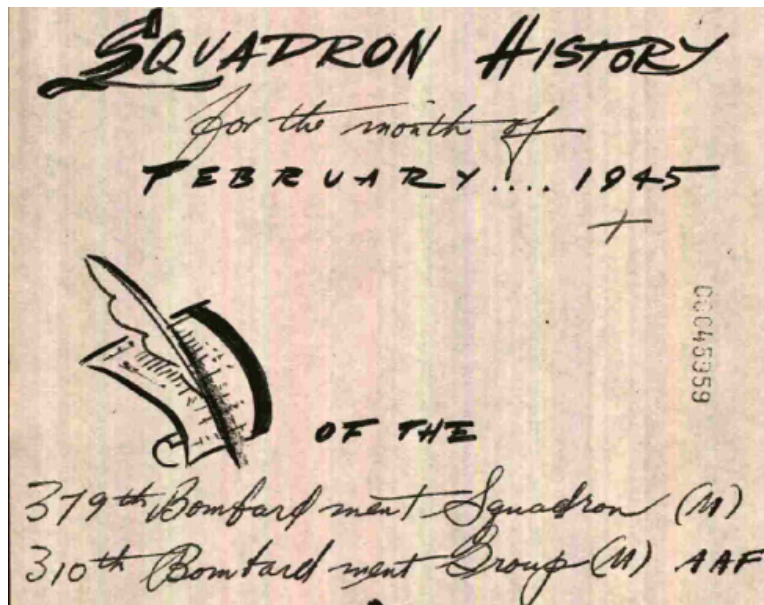
A few combat boys completed their tours of duty and returned to the States for a well-earned furlough. Meanwhile, combat replacements continued to come in...

Formations were held to present awards to both combat flying personnel and also ground men. Also we received a streamer for our flag staff representing the Presidential Unit Citation which our Group received a number of months ago.



Figure 1: Presidential Unit Citation Streamer

Under the auspice of the I. & E. program, lectures and discussion meetings were held, and at these gatherings vital questions of the present and postwar periods were discussed...Weekly War Reviews were also give, plus G.I. movies. Attendance was favorable. Plans were made to commence classes in certain courses of study...it is believed that this Educational program will gain increased importance as the War in Europe nears its conclusion.



Section II.....

Squadron Diary Day-by-Day

1 A quiet day, with no mission.. Sgt. Wayne R. Page was assigned from Hq 57th Bomb Wing. Movie: A Kay Kyser musical called “Carolina Blues.”

2 1st Lt. James T. Gordon Jr. was transferred to Hq XII AFSC. We were authorized to wear another battle star on our Theater campaign ribbon, for participating in the action in Southern France.

The following named officers were promoted to the rank of 1st Lts.:

2nd Lt. Andrew I Dennis, 2nd Lt. Herman P Greenman, 2nd Lt. Gordon M Jacobs, 2nd Lt. Francis Roberts, 2nd Lt. Saul Walsh.

Mission to bomb the Rovereto R.R. Bridge in Italy. Sixteen aircraft took part.

3 No mission. Usual field duties.

4 Six of our planes hit the Dogna RR Bridge, and six also bombed the R.R. Bridge at Canale D’Isonzo.

5 A beautiful warm spring-like day. We had pork chops for supper. Sgt. Edward J. Barndt and Cpl. Gilbert Maddox returned to the Base after a 10 day furlough.

Fourteen aircraft participated in the day’s mission to bomb the San Michele Rail Fill.

6 A nickeling [*Nickel – propaganda leaflets*] mission over Italy, and also six aircraft bombed the Ala R.R. Bridge. Several enemy aircraft attacked the formation, the first time in many months, but were driven off by the aggressive firing by our gunners.

Movie: An Abbot and Costello Comedy. “Corny.”

7 Twelve aircraft bombed the R.R. bridge at Canale D’Isonzo, Italy.

8 S/Sgt. James F. Manning was assigned from Hq 19th Replacement Battalion. Mission to Dogna Town Rail Bridge, with fifteen aircraft participating. Gun positions in the area were also attacked. Ten enemy aircraft made one short and ineffective pass at the formation.

9 The mission was canceled. Immunization shots were given in the Squadron Dispensary. The days are getting longer now, and the supper hour was changed to 5 to 6 P.M. A basketball court has been set up, and we are looking forward to a hectic season. Softball games will also be started soon.



10 The mission almost took off, but was finally canceled. There was a U.S.O. stage show, probably the worst we have seen to date. Movie in the evening: "Bowery to Broadway," a good musical picture.

11 No mission. The Special Service office is arranging tours around the Island. After one year on Corsica, we think it is a good idea to see what this place is like! ...A Formation was held to present awards to both our combat men and ground personnel, the latter receiving Bronze Stars. They were presented personally by Brig. Gen. Robert D. Knapp, Wing Commander, with our Group C.O., Colonel Peter H. Remington in attendance.....



A lecture and discussion meeting was held in the evening at which the War situation was reviewed, and movies were also shown of action on the Western Front.



Figure 2: Awards Ceremony

12 S/Sgt. Allen E. Merrill, S/Sgt. Joseph Gianforte, and S/Sgt. Albert W. Wright, 1st Lt. Robert A. Haislip, Jr., and 1st Lt. Robert H. Reddick were relieved from assignment with our Squadron and transferred to the 7th Replacement Depot for transshipment to the U.S....

No mission today for our Squadron.

13 Mission to Chiusaforte and Dogna Railroad Bridges. Eight of our aircraft participated.

14 A Spring-like day. The boys were out playing basketball and softball. Fifteen aircraft participated in the mission to bomb the Railroad Bridge at Ponte All Isarco [*Ponte Sull'Isarco*], Italy.

15 Mission to bomb the Ammunition Dump at Spilimbergo, Italy. Six of our aircraft took part....

A B-25 of another Squadron crashed on takeoff; the members of the crew got away from the wreckage before the bombs exploded. The concussion was felt at a wide distance from the scene.... Movie: "Hollywood Canteen," showing the activities of Hollywood stars in entertaining G.I.'s in the film capital.



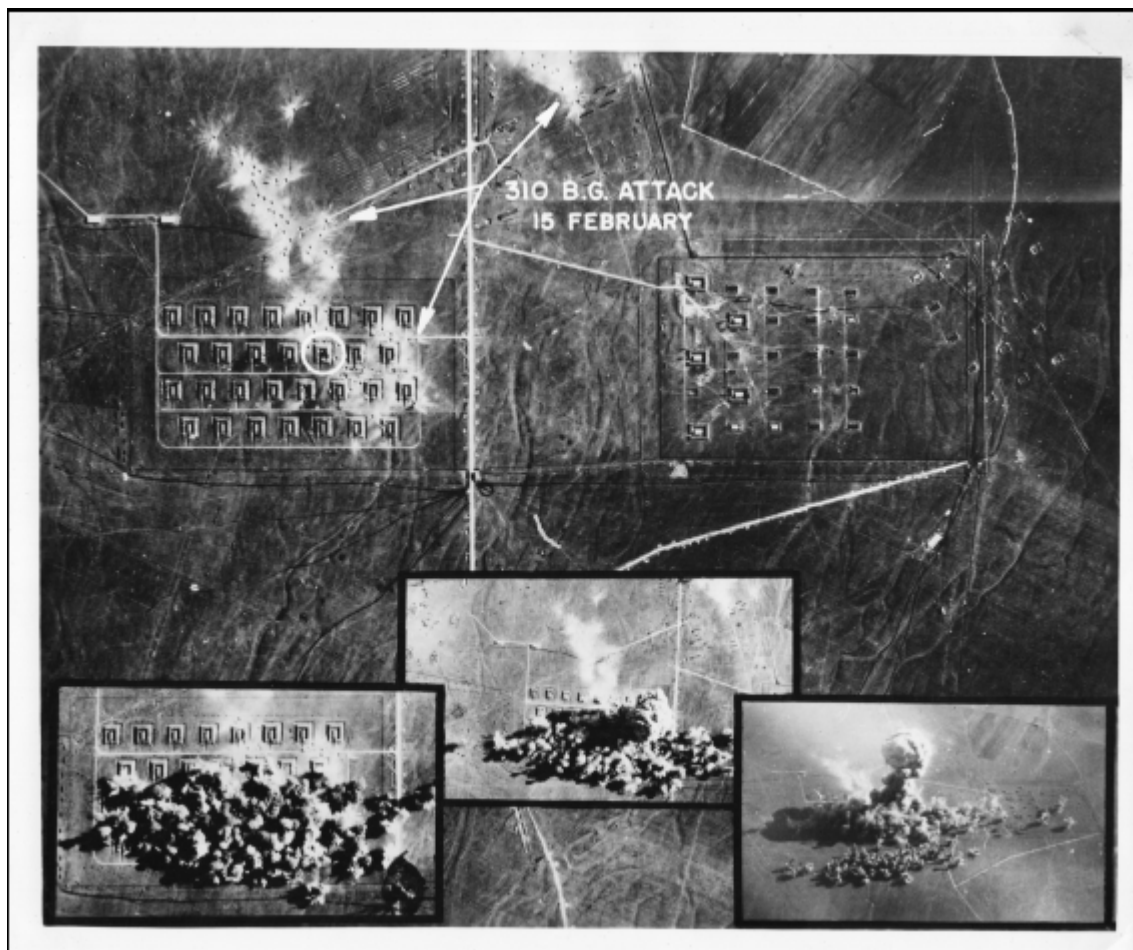


Figure 3: February 15, 1945 attack on the Spilimbergo Ammunition Dump

16 1st Lt. John A. Moler, 2nd Lt. Harry R. McKenny, and Sgt. John C. Simmons joined us today for combat flying duty...The mission was a standown...

A formation was held in which Maj. Gen. John K. Cannon presented the Presidential Unit Citation Streamer; and impressive ceremony was held on the field...



17 Fifteen of our aircraft bombed the Railroad Bridges at Chiusaforte and Dogna, Italy...Movie: "Strike Up the Band," an old musical film revived, with Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland...S/Sgt. Ira T. Finley, Jr., S/Sgt. Roy L. Mincy, and S/Sgt. Rupert R. Harrell were promoted to the grade of Technical Sergeant...Sgt. James V. Casconi, Sgt. Frank M. Faff, Sgt. Arthur J. Holmes, Sgt. George Prout, Sgt. Marvin R. Wedel were promoted to the grade of Staff Sergeant....2nd Lt. Frank G. Uerling was appointed 1st Lt....Cpl. Hubert A. Austin, Cpl. Henry S. Fleek, Cpl. Thorwald A. Rykken, Cpl. Anthony E. Wilbik, Cpl. Morris J. Williamson were promoted to the grade of Sergeant...



18 Twelve of our planes bombed the Lavis R.R. Bridge, Italy. Sgt. Bernard R. Murray was transferred to the 7th Replacement Depot for transshipment to the U.S...

A G.I. hypnotist performed on our stage and amused and amazed the audience with his feats of hypnotism.

19 No mission...Our Squadron basketball team played Group Headquarters team, and we lost 32-30...



Figure 4: Donald Hastings

20 Nine aircraft bombed the Chiusaforte R.R. Bridge and gun positions...The following men were assigned to our Squadron for combat flying duty: 2nd Lt. Harrison Clark, Jr., 2nd Lt. Donald D. Hastings, F/O John E. Castro, Cpl. William Bowden Jr., Cpl. George G. Jollie, and Cpl. George P. Moloney...

21 Mission to bomb the Udine Marshaling Yards, but all ships brought their bombs back to the Base, due to unfavorable weather conditions at the target. Fifteen of our aircraft participated...Movie: "Winged Victory," a grand film on the Army Air Forces...Our basket ball team beat the 380th by a close score: 20-18...



22 Twelve of our planes bombed the Ala Railroad Bridge and Gun Positions, Italy...Capt. Alva A Joiner Jr. returned to the Squadron from DS [Detached Service] in the U.S....

23 Nine of our aircraft bombed the Dogna Town R.R. Bridge and gun positions, Italy...Cpl. Bernard B Barrett, Cpl. Charles G. Courbat, Cpl. William Feinstein, Cpl. James C. Gaither, Cpl. Joseph L. Johnson, and Cpl. Willie L Witt, Jr., were promoted to the grade of Sergeant...Pfc James F. North, Pfc Harvey H. Pardue, Pfc Walter Schaap, Pvt. Willard J. Depue, Pvt. Walter J. Heisner, Pvt. Charles A Huggins, Pvt. John B. Husted, Pvt. Fred E. Kirgan, and Pvt. Laddie Rysavy were promoted to the grade of corporal...

24 Nine of our planes bombed the Lavis Railroad Diversion Bridge and gun positions, Italy...

25 Twelve of our aircraft hit the Dogna Town R.R. Bridge and Gun Positions, Italy...Basketball game between our team and the 428th Squadron. We lost: 34-24...

1st Lt. Philip P Marcy was assigned to the 7th Replacement Depot for transshipment to the U.S...

26 Capt. Peter J. Grant was assigned to our Squadron. Also assigned for combat flying duty were 1st Lt. Robert T. Hricko, F/O Kermit O. Guthrie, Cpl. Robert M. Gray, Cpl. Leonard J. Gazdeck, and Cpl. Gilbert E. Nadeau.

Thirteen aircraft participated on the mission to bomb the Ala Railroad Bridge, Italy.

27 Fifteen of our planes took part in the day's mission to bomb the Bressanone R.R. Bridge, Italy.. S/Sgt. Frank Bor Jr. was slightly wounded when a piece of flak penetrated his right foot...

28 Five of our aircraft hit the Ponte Di Piave Railroad Diversion Bridge, Italy...Pay day...A group of prominent newspapermen and artists arrived on the Base to gather material for publication in the States...

Officers assigned at the end of February 1945:	99
Enlisted Men assigned at the end of Feb 1945:	366

Section III.....

Mission Rosters and Mission Reports

[See the original diary for Rosters and Reports]

Section IV.....

Casualties

On the mission of 23 February, S/Sgt. Frank Bor, Jr. received lacerations from a piece of flak in the right foot. The target for that day was the Dogna Town Railroad Bridge.

Awards and Decorations

Air Medal



[See original General Orders for award of clusters]

10 February 1945

Harold J. Arnwine
Wilbur A Barton
Charles T Cook
Samuel A Blackwell, Jr
William M Carr
Daniel G Wolfson
Joseph A Cahalane
Joseph L Johnson

16 February 1945

Paul A Basso
James D Nelson
Robert B Stewart
William B Vaughn, Jr
Earl E [illegible]
John P Jarvis
Sewall E Brown
Lawerence C [illegible]
Bernard B Barrett

18 February 1945

Herbert C Gilman
Ning Lee
Ray H Judd
John E Argo
Thomas J Coyne
William Feinstein

20 February 1945

Eugene H Bingham

24 February 1945

Robert G Dilly

Soldier's Medal



[None]

Distinguished Flying Cross



George S Watts
Ellis J McKanna
Walter J Rath
Wilson C Barnes
Albert F Hocknell, Jr
Alex Slalaban

Silver Star



[None]

Bronze Star



Ellis A Ruppert
Joseph Y Bennett

Purple Heart



[None]



Figure 5: Brig. Gen. Knapp presents DFC to 1st Lt. Wilson C. Barnes

Section VII...

Special Events and Miscellaneous

[Individuals featured in the Public Relations Releases]

Philip P. Marcy

Angell H Tedesco

[Photo Addenda]

GI's featured in photos:

Robert W Tischler

Vance B Reed

Roy W Lack

Floyd J Seay

Paul S Hreinson

Rubin Bloom

Lester W Edwards with mascot "Peewee."

Chester J Swiatek

Emil A Grippo

Harold F Matousek

John Latushko

Anthony J Dina

Michael J Korak

Albert G Honnet



Figure 6: Angell H Tedesco



Figure 7: Robert W Tischler receives Bronze Star from Gen Knapp