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Sheet No. 46 War Diary 428th Bombardment Squadron

Ghisonaccia

Month of February, 1944

Prepared by 1st Lt. George F. Basith

DAY

Feb. 44

EVENT

1. Captain Haines arrived from Africa with 10 men. His little contingent might well be called the advance portion of the rear half of the advance ground echelon. They've been away from the outfit since December 4th. Blown off their course on the way to Corsica the first time, Captain Haines and about fifty men had been all over Africa, spending one night at Sousse, and finally ending up in Algiers. Part of the time they spent aboard a Liberty ship in the harbor--eating cold "C" rations while just a few hundred yards away, in the town, was everything that could be imagined. The mental strain was terrific. We always seem to get split up like this.

2. Finally, after months of delay, our squadron navigator's promotion worked its way through the chain of changed commands and arrived here. It's Captain Akerland now. Oliver Fayard got his railroad tracks too.

4. Our mess situation hit a new high today. Roast whole potatoes, roast beef, and pie graced our table. A meal like this would have exceeded our fondest hopes six months ago.

5. The bulk of the Flight Echelon remaining at Phillipville arrived today. Some 80 men, flying crews and key line personnel, arrived with new "G"'s and a few "C"'s. Pvt. Arthur W. Wilnot returns to the fold for the first time since the end of the Tunisian Campaign. That's our nomination for the grand-daddy of all overseas AWOL's. We're beginning to assume the number and operational potential of a bonafide squadron.

7. Lt. Baraniuk's temperamental anthropoid, Josie, started her simulated combat exercises today. She had been watching her roommates renewing the fervor of the fireplace by judicious (X) use of gasoline. When Jerry left the room today he left the diminutive monk in Lt. Douglas's questionable supervision. As soon as the boss was gone Josie waddled purposefully to the fireplace and threw the whole molotov cocktail in the fire. All hell broke loose. The only casualties were Jerry's jacket and a badly scared monk. She's been punished, though. Jerry took his blanket back from the unpredictable female.

9. Nine more men of the Phillipville stand were flown up to us at Ghisonaccia.

10. Jinx, Lt. Fleming's little Boston Bull is about ready to deliver her first litter. Concern is high over our most affable and affectionate pet. 15 men promoted a pool a few days ago--the winner wins 30 dollars and automatically becomes the honorary Godfather of little Jinx's pups.

11. Jinx has been in labor all day. We're worried. 22 enlisted men and 60 all "G" crews arrive from Phillipville.

13. Our puppy died today. All the skill of a Bastia veterinary was to no avail. Quiet, well mannered, and exceptionally friendly, Jinx was the ideal pet. She was an unconcerned veteran of 13 sorties against the enemy.

14. Valentine's Day--but all it means is memories.

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Sheet No. 45 War Diary 428th Bombardment Squadron

Ghisonaccia.

1st of February, 1944

Prepared by 1st Lt. George F. Bfisch

DAYEVENT

15. A cold, very clear day. The last few nights have really been cold. Winter seems to make a belated appearance in Corsica. Wood chopping, fuel hunting and stove experimentation went on feverishly.

16. A mail call of super proportions arrived today. This one could hold us for weeks.

17. "Passport to Suez" was the feature attraction in our new movie house. It's a long shed that probably had use as a ware house for this little railroad town. It's no improvement over the 350th Fighter Group's open air arrangement.

19. It was steaks this time. Were it not for bitter memories we could congratulate Quartermaster. How did they get out of Algeria?

22. The "Doc" returned from his excursion to Naples and Foggia. The men hoped that he might be able to throw a little light on the new standards for sending combat men home. Results weren't too hopeful but at least the men know where they stand--or do they?

23. Lt. Chambers flew down to Algiers and returned with 9 members of our mess personnel stranded with that segment of our rear echelon. On the return trip they counted at least 120 vessels within sight moving East along the coast. They were being attacked by subs. Two M/V's were listing badly, apparently hit by torpedoes, with survivors swimming about by the hundreds. The water was scattered with debris. An oil slick may have marked a third vessel, sunk. Let's hope it was a submarine. It's not a pretty scene to see, and less so to take part in.

24. We all know that Gilligan is here. The cherry pie we had tonight was distinctive. The rains really came with a vengeance. There can be no doubt that operations will be suspended for days to come. Promotions came today en masse. Boswell, Douglas and Raugh are our new Captains. Our Group Executive Officer is now Lt. Col. Bell. 12 second lieutenants become first lieutenants.

26. The enlisted men elected a new set of officers for their club. T/Sgt. Jack, just turned 20 years old, is the new president. M/Sgt Gaylor is the vice-president and S/Sgt Brach fills the Secretary-Treasurer function. Ernest Maffi, Italian Sergeant Major, now a prisoner of war, was unanimously supported to retain his bartender's job. Perhaps an ironical sidelight, Maffi used to be in the A.A. outfit at Sciacca that used to give the boys so damn much hell. Ernesto said the drome's gunners claimed 14 allied aircraft in two days before the Sicilian campaign started. Don't know whether they were that good, but men who were there said it was the roughest they've ever seen. The boys like his present shots ever so much better.

27. Combat officers are moving to the winds. Bastia, Ajaccio, Corte, and Phillipville are being invaded by the 428th. This spell of miserable weather is giving the men a much needed rest after the long spell of all day, every day alerts.

29. The 379th's aircraft arrived at Borgo from Bambut in Cyrnacchia. Hungrily we search out old friends gathering crumbs of what we know was a grand opportunity for fun. Tales of ice cream, girls, liquor etc in Cairo. Why can't we be