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Sheet No: 1 *War History*  
 Gattine History, 445th Bomb Sq, Solenzara Airfield, Corsica  
 Month of December 1944. Prepared by Staff Sergeant John L. McNavin, Jr.

December 1 - The squadron supplied 12 ships to bomb the Po-Torreberretti bridge, Italy with 62.5 percent bombing accuracy achieved. There was the usual training program in effect. Two ships went to the bombing range; there was instrument and transition flying while one test hop was flown. Capt. Farrell - pilot in the first replacement crew to reach this squadron in Africa - held court in the operations-intelligence hut this evening where he spun some interesting tales about his experiences in Cairo and Tel-Aviv. Capt. Farrell's captivating humor and contagious laughter never fails to delight his listeners who are content to listen to him by the hour. "Bono", Capt. Jeffrey's usually-meek dog, became disgusted at the "ribbing" given him by two other dogs and proceeded to whip them in a short but spirited battle in the officers area.

December 2 - Ten crews went along on the mission to bomb the Praduro road bridge, Italy. Led by Capt. Wagner, this squadron scored 100 percent bombing accuracy. Lt. Col. Cameron flew with Lt. Cox in the anti-flak ship. Capt. "Doc" Smith and his Mitchell-Aires went to the new Wing rest camp at El Rousse to entertain there. They were transported in two ships.

December 3 - The squadron was shocked when tragedy was enacted on the flight line today. While aiding in the boresighting of turret guns of aircraft 680, Sgt. Richard W. Dexter was fatally wounded when a live round was discharged from one of the guns after he had requested another armorer to test the firing solenoids of the turret guns. He died almost instantly. A quiet and conscientious worker, Sgt. Dexter was respected and well-liked by all the men. Capt. Jeffrey and crew left for Cairo while Lts. Bowling and Silnutzer were sent to the rest camp at Capri. Lt. Lowery gave a gun maintenance lecture to 5 new gunners; Lt. Finkhouse gave a lecture on bombing to 2 bombardiers; and Sgt. Wendell J. Bell lectured 11 engineer-gunners on the B-25 aircraft.

December 4 - The entire armament department attended the military funeral given to Sgt. Richard W. Dexter near Bastia today. He was buried in an Allied cemetery with full military honors. Sgt. Haynes, armorer-gunner, failed to clear his guns upon return from today's mission and he was recommended for disciplinary action. The squadron is clamping down on carelessness in this respect following the unfortunate accident that cost Sgt. Dexter his life. Capt. Daniel P. Collins was appointed investigation officer to report on the fatal gun accident. Pvt. Robert D. Knapp, Jr., son of the Commanding General of the 57th Wing, was assigned to this squadron today. Cpl. Naughton went on flying status today. Sgt. Bell again lectured new engineer-gunners; three new enlisted bombardiers were given lectures on B-25 bombing equipment; two radio-gunners were lectured on B-25 radio equipment; while the 17 newly-assigned gunners reported to Lt. Lowery for gunnery instruction. There was a good mail call today.

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Sheet No. 2 Outline History, 445th Bomb Sq, Solenzara Airfield, Corsica  
 Month of December 1944. Prepared by Staff Sergeant John L. McNevin, Jr.

December 5 - A total of 16 crews were scheduled for two missions but they were cancelled. The Red Cross girl served doughnuts and coffee this morning. During the noon meal, a drawing was conducted to determine the lucky man to receive orders authorizing a 30-day leave in the USA. Tetla, communications man on ES to group, was the fortunate individual. Lt. Lower checked out 3 crews on dry ditching, 7 enlisted bombardiers were lectured on the use of the navigational computer by Captl Franklin at group while the 17 new gunners again were given a gunnery lecture by Lt. Lowery.

December 6 - The operational mission for today was cancelled. Lt. LA. Miller returned from the USA today. He left the squadron in June. Sgt. Irving L. Haynes was reduced to the grade of Private for inefficiency and taken off flying status for his carelessness in leaving a live round in his gun following repeated warning about this evil that had cost a life in the squadron. Lt. Starzewski was transferred to the 446th Squadron. He completed 10 missions for this squadron. Seven officers and 5 enlisted men combat crews were assigned today. There was a large number of packages arriving today. A dance was held at the enlisted men's club tonight with Doc Smith and the Mitchell-Aires supplying the music. Only a few French girls made an appearance.

December 7 - The operational mission for this date was cancelled. Pvt. Manuel Garza was promoted to corporal today and placed on flying status. He was grounded several months ago due to the fact that he was a private and therefore ineligible to fly. He has about the longest overseas service in the squadron - about 3 years of it. The weather was moderate today, very pleasant indeed. There were two separate package calls as Christmas bundles began arriving. This was the 3rd anniversary of Pearl Harbor, a fact which many of the men overlooked - indicating that the men had become accustomed to war and the tendency is now not so much looking at the past as it is hoping for the future. There was quite a bit of flight training today.

December 8 - It was a stand-down order for both missions today. Only a few non-operational flights were made as the weather was a bit inclement - windy, cloudy with a few raindrops falling. Hamburgers highlighted the supper meal today and were very much enjoyed. Some Christmas packages arrived in the squadron after supper.

December 9 - Both operational missions were cancelled as weather conditions continued to be unfavorable. The older men in the squadron listened with no small amusement to the various stories related by the new gunners who arrived here from England where they participated in some missions over Europe flying in Forts and Liberators. Some of the stories, the men insist, could gain considerable favor in the Tell Story Club. Sgts. Gray, Leach, McDonald, Hafner, Miller, Valley and Cummings left the squadron today on rotation orders sending them to the States. They are all aerial gunners. Lts. Bang, Young and Weiner went to Capri's rest camp for a week. Luxury rations were distributed this afternoon. Roast pork was served at supper. Later in the evening, there were brilliant flashes of lightning and loud claps of thunder but there was no rain.

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Sheet No. 3 Outline History, 445th Bomb Sq. Bolenzara Airfield, Corisca  
 Month of December 1944. Prepared by Staff Sergeant John L. McNevin, Jr.

December 10 - The squadron finally took off and participated in two missions, one of which attacked Paenza troop concentrations while the other hit the Bologna barracks in two tactical raids. The latter attacked, led by Lt. Dyer, resulted in 100 percent bombing accuracy. In a 6-man touch football game, the 445th enlisted men and the 447th enlisted men played to a hard-fought 13-13 tie at the latter's field. Staff Sergeant John Arcuri, gunner, was ordered to appear before the Medical Disposition Board. Trips to Catania were cancelled until further notice, the chief complaint being the purchase of foodstuffs. This purchase of rations which ordinarily would be sold to civilians has aggravated the black market conditions. There is no complaint about the purchase of liquor.

December 11 - The crews were already at briefing today when the "stand-down" order came in on the mission. The crew which went to Cairo on the 3rd returned today. Lts. Fatherly, Hagerman and Baker left the squadron today on their way home on rotation. More packages arrived today around noon. The day was very cold and a brisk rain made conditions very damp at night. After a delicious roast beef supper, the men were treated to a mail call which made the evening more or less successful.

December 12 - The operational mission for this date was cancelled. Lt. Dyer was enroute to Naples today on a cross-country but was forced to return to this base due to unfavorable weather conditions. Lt. Dyer received his captaincy today along with Lt. Napple, Squadron Navigation Officer. 2nd Lt. Heck, a bombardier, was promoted to 1st Lieutenant. Brig. Gen. Knapp made a trip to the group today to award a number of squadron personnel both air and ground at special ceremonies at the 446th area. The day was unusually warm and some packages and mail arrived. Roast beef again for supper. The drinks were on Captains Napple and Dyer at the officers club tonight.

December 13 - The combat crews had already been briefed, had proceeded to their ships and were taxiing out to the runway when the belated order to "stand down" was forwarded. Six ships flew some practice formation today. Sgt. Lavine helped roll up the gas barrel to its perch this morning and received a great ovation from his audience in the intelligence-operations hut. The day was cloudier and the weather was a bit cool. Capt. Hatcher was stranded out on the line today when the trucks passed him up after the mission was cancelled. Lean, tall Texans have their own particular way of registering discontent. Latest innovation at the enlisted men's club is a library of various books which the men may take out, read and then return.

December 14 - Operational mission for today was abortive due to weather although the crews received credit for a mission since they were in the vicinity of their target. The men took time out in the afternoon to attend a USO show at the group's theater. Khaki clothing was turned in today at supply. Chicken was the main course at supper tonight. There was limited training today.

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Sheet No. 4 - Outline History, 445th Bomb Sq., Solenzara Airfield, Corsica  
 Month of December 1944. Prepared by Staff Sergeant John L. McNevin, Jr.

December 15 - Crews took off on another mission which was abortive due to weather. There were a few non-operational flights made. T/Sgt. Sidney Lestz may well be proud over the maintenance he has achieved. The two ships that he has crewed have flown an aggregate number of 150 straight missions without an early return due to a mechanical failure. A new type field jacket was issued to the men today to replace the older ones. This new type doesn't appear to be any warmer but does have a better appearance. The news that close-order drill would soon be effect in the squadron was received with a notable lack of enthusiasm. The movie "Hail the Conquering Hero" with Eddie Bracken and Billa Rains was especially enjoyed tonight.

December 16 - Due to bad weather, the mission was cancelled. However, eight aircraft flew a mock mission, three other ships went to the bombing range, two ships were test hopped and there was one cross-country flight. In a thrilling, see-saw struggle, the 445th enlisted men's 6-man touch football team edged out the enlisted men of headquarters, 35-31 at the 447th football field. Followers of this squadron's team continue to marvel at the success Sgt. Hunsberger has with his "sleeper" play. It worked several times in today's game. Capt. Jeffrey did a swell job of refereeing. Capt. Smith posted a notice on the operations bulletin board warning all combat crew members to report to the dispensary whenever they experience trouble with their ears. He listed a number of complications that could arise from faulty ears.

December 17 - Thirteen crews were standing by for the mission but it was cancelled. The non-operational flights covered many phases of training. The men were informed that the close-order drill sessions would begin tomorrow. A notice on the bulletin board today disclosed the fact that gas stoves were now authorized providing the men used the semi-combustion stove. The men who were eagerly awaiting such an order initiated preparations to obtain the necessary materials to erect these stoves in the tents. Chicken was enjoyed for supper and coincidentally enough, Sgt. Lorton Wellnitz was on K.P. It is hardly necessary to add that the squadron's leading chowhound got his share of the spuds.

December 18 - The mission was cancelled due to bad weather. Rain fell most of the day, turning the area into a veritable sea of mud. About the only good point in the rain was the fact that it postponed drill for at least another day. Extra luxury rations were distributed today. The men in the squadron are displaying quite a bit of consternation concerning the big Nazi counter-offensive on the western front.

December 19 - The mission was again cancelled due to weather. Thirteen crews were standing by for the mission. The bad weather and muddy condition of the area again postponed drilling. New sleeping bags were issued to the first 90 men on the roster today. Opinion was divided as to their effectiveness. There was a meeting at group special service today for all members of the athletic councils in the group. Schedules for basketball among other subjects were discussed while the councils procured some sports supplies. Chicken was the main course for supper tonight. Some mail arrived today.

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Sheet No. 5 - Outline History, 445th Bomb Sq., Solenzara Airfield, Corsica  
 Month of December 1944. Prepared by Staff Sergeant John L. McNevin, Jr.

December 20 - Rained hard most of the day and the mission was cancelled. The area in which the 445th has settled is poorly drained. This fact is greatly in evidence after only a few hours of rain which is sure to turn the area into a huge quagmire. Out on the line, the weather also stops operations with the various taxi strips and hardstands turned into slippery fields of mud. During this rainy weather, many of the men manage to get out to the line in search of materials necessary to construct gas stoves.

December 21 - More rain cancelled the mission again today but the rain didn't last long enough to postpone the drill session. These sessions opened up today at 11:15 A.M. Lt. Lowman drilled the area personnel while Capt. Jeffrey drilled the combat crews. The line personnel will drill out on the line. The men were a bit rusty at first - for most of them it was the first drill in about 2 years - but soon came around and showed some fancy steps in time. During these days of rain and mud, there is plenty of "sack time" to be had.

December 22 - More rain. If you think yesterday was rainy and muddy, you should see today.

December 23 - The mission was again cancelled but the first plane in 5 days managed to take off for Tripoli for foodstuffs. Chris "Galom" Beccarelli made the trip. With the Christmas season almost in full bloom, the area is taking on an appropriate appearance. Both the officers and enlisted mens clubs are decorated with Christmas trees, spruce and holly. Chaff has been used for tinsel to decorate the trees while some of the men managed to procure lights to add to the gala appearance at night. Several trees in the area have sprung up and have been decorated. The men may be far from home but that "Christmas spirit" is still there.

December 24 - Christmas Eve brought promotions to five officers, four of them combat crew members. 2nd Lieutenants Vaughan, Weiner, Dentoni and Lewis all polished the silver bar while 1st Lieutenant Bruce Lowery scrapped his silver bar for the "railroad tracks" of captaincy. Capt. Lowery, a former enlisted man who flew as turret gunner with Gen. Knapp in North Africa, is affectionately called "Field Marshall" by the armorers out on the line. Free drinks were served at the enlisted mens club today, drinks being "on Major Bounds". The cooks worked most of the night preparing the big Christmas dinner. The Eve was very gloomy with a hard rain falling most of the night. Worth Wagers and his carolers were reported to have serenaded a number of personnel at 2 A.M. Thus far, there have been no favorable reports on the singing.

December 25 - Christmas Day and there was very little activity in the squadron with a stand down order issued in respect of the mission. There were no flights made today. Major Bounds payed for all drinks consumed today. There were but two meals served today with the big Christmas dinner starting at 2:30 P.M. Roast turkey and all the trimmings were enjoyed by one and all. Colonel Smith dropped in on the men for a few minutes. In the evening, the men enjoyed some fine Christmas shows on the radio. It was a quiet but enjoyable Christmas, 1944.

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Sheet No. 6 - Outline History, 445th Bomb Sq., Solenzara Airfield, Corsica  
 Month of December 1944. Prepared by Staff Sergeant John L. McNevin, Jr.

December 26 - The squadron finally participated in a mission, its first since December 10. Two separate targets were attacked. In one attack, the Ponte di Piave diversionary bridge, Italy was hit with 100 percent bombing accuracy resulting. In the other mission, the squadron scored 50 percent bombing when they attacked the Padua north railroad bridge, Italy. Bomb release equipment is being placed in the cockpits of aircraft 714 and 545 as a measure against the expected bombardier shortage in the near future. 1st Lt. Donald I. McKay, veteran of 65 missions, was transferred to the 57th Bomb Wing. Lt. Coale was sent to the Ile Rousse rest camp. Several representatives of special service in the squadron were sent to a soldier show conference being held at Caserta for three days starting tomorrow.

December 27 - This squadron participated in two missions, the first of which attacked the Canale d'Isonzo railroad bridge with 63 percent bombing accuracy and the second of which attacked the South Ambrogio tunnel, Italy with a bombing accuracy of 91.6 percent. Four officers and four enlisted men went to the Rome rest camp. Lt. Sides was ordered to appear before the Medical Disposition Board at Florence. A plane left for Tripoli to obtain foodstuffs and beer.

December 28 - This squadron scored a slim 55.5 percent bombing accuracy in today's attack on the Canale D'Isonzo railroad bridge, Italy. The planes that landed at Fano airdrome near Rimini yesterday following the long mission, returned to base today. A plane left for Catania in order to obtain New Year cheer, liquid form. Christmas mail and packages, principally the latter, arrived in full force today as mail orderly "Buck" Sergeant was snowed under by a postal landslide.

December 29 - The squadron attacked the Rovereto railroad bridge, Italy with 94 percent bombing accuracy resulting. A ship - 714 - which was equipped in such a manner as to allow the pilot to drop bombs from the cockpit, went along on the mission today and results were reported to be "very satisfactory". Nine gunners received some training on the new "Jam Handy" gunnery trainer at group today. 1st Lieutenant William E. Moore left the squadron today on his way to the USA on rotation orders. There were a few training flights made today. Tripoli plane arrived home today.

December 30 - Capt. Lord called a meeting for all enlisted men tonight and warned them that "no fireworks would be tolerated on New Year's Eve". The men well recall last New Years when many guns were discharged in celebration of the new year. The plane which went to Catania returned today with plenty of liquor. Three crew members of this ship were left behind when their parachutes were stolen. Lts Webb, Peck; Sgts. Watts, Mocrehead and Kavan went to the Rome rest camp.

December 31 - It was a comparatively quiet New Year's Eve. Once again free drinks were served, including Tripoli beer. There were no fireworks and only the usual drinks plus a few more celebrants. Lts. Menger and Spencer and Sgt. Hope went home on rotation. Three officers went to the rest camp at Capri. Plenty of men spent their first sober New Year's Eve in a long time.

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