

765<sup>TH</sup> BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)  
461<sup>ST</sup> BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)  
Office of the Combat Intelligence Officer

WFF/jdk

APO 520, NY, NY  
30 December 1944

## SUMMARY OF THE SQUADRON HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

The weatherman was more or less on our side during the month of December. There were fifteen (15) of our scheduled missions that were accomplished successfully. Results brought back were few because of the haze over the targets at the time of the bombing, however, on clear days where observation could take place the results were accurate and good. Castelfranco was a target in the northern section of Italy which was bombed with extreme accuracy. The plot photos show that 65% of the bombs dropped were inside the target and therefore we had a score of excellent for this day's operation. There is another mission of which we can boast of for the month, the target being Vensone Viaduct, also in the northern sector of Italy, where six of our ships carrying six, one-thousand pound bombs in each, were dropped on this particular target, and we received another score of excellent. These bombings were done visually. We also had several missions on which the bombings were done by PFF, but because of adverse weather conditions, and cloud coverage, results were not observed. Only one double mission was scheduled to be flown this month, targets being the marshalling yards at Ali Pasin Host, Yugoslavia and Innsbruck, Austria, but these were cancelled because of adverse weather conditions.

Tragedy struck home for the members in the squadron this month. It was a mission that proved to be disastrous. The target was the oil refinery at Odertal, Germany on December 17. Seven aircraft took to the air from this squadron, one aborted and returned early, four others though were unaccounted for, and the other two returning safely, but severely damaged. From information gathered, our planes were struck by enemy aircraft that were encountered shortly before reaching the I.P., however, with determination one of our ships got through to the target. Latest information has it that our group had lost approximately ten ships for this day's operation. To our credit, the gunners claimed to have shot down three enemy aircraft and one probable. The planes of the squadron that are MIA were piloted by Lt. Ford, Lt. West, Lt. Crossman and Lt. Smith. Lt. Welton piloted the one that completed the mission, also going over the target, and Sgt. Anderson, Sgt. Rauworth and Sgt. Russell each claimed to have destroyed one enemy aircraft apiece.

Now out of the dark and into a bit of sunlight for a part of the better news of the squadron. Once again the group has done it. On December 3 the Commanding General of the 15<sup>th</sup> AF paid us another visit to give the group its second War Department Citation for outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy. After the presentation had been made the men passed in review before the general.

The morale boosters for the squadron this month were primarily the receiving of a super abundant amount of Christmas packages. Some of the men were a little disappointed though when Vienna sausage and cans of spam were to be found, but all of them laughed it off. Second

on the morale list was the drawing of War Bonds. All of the men were satisfied and were very anxious to see if they would win a bond. So eager were the men on this drive that tickets are now being sold for a second bond drive. The cinema was the third booster for the motion picture fans. The pictures this month were good but the projector seemed to want to take a night off now and then which proved to be a detriment to the morale of the men. The fourth but not the least of the morale builders was a Christmas dinner. Like Thanksgiving, as for Christmas, we had everything from soup to nuts.

The good luck that the squadron had, has certainly dropped this month, ill fate was upon us once again, for several of the men in the squadron were sent to the hospital with capital symptoms of diphtheria. Too many cases had broken out so some 15<sup>th</sup> AF medical officers were sent down to give the men a shick test, to discover the number of men that were immune to this sickness and those that weren't. After all the men had taken the test and were examined it was found that the far greater percentage of the men were immune to diphtheria than those who weren't. S/Sgt. Walter Lenjer, supervised all the clerical work in summarizing the results of the shick test during the hospitalization of the squadron surgeon.

So ends the squadron activities for the month of December. However it means more than just closing the month for it means closing out 1944. The men were dreaming of a white Christmas this year, but adverse conditions did not permit it to be so, but let us hope that the dreams and the wishes that the men are making this new years eve, will all be answered in this coming year of 1945.

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EXTRACTS FROM THE SQUADRON HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

December 1. The target for today was to have been the M/Y at Innsbruck, Austria, but it was called off because of the bad weather. First Lieutenant Troy Dendy was promoted to the rank of Captain. There were also eighty-one enlisted men promoted in the squadron today. The following men were sent to the hospital today: Lt. Campo, S/Sgt. Waitherwerch, Sgts Detweiler, Haelewyn and Norcross, Cpl. Medelis, Pfc. Weatherly, and Pvts Cokrhame and Main.

December 2. A big mission was scheduled for today, the target being the oil refineries at Blechhammer, Germany. Nine of the squadron's planes were provided for by this squadron. The results of the mission were unknown due to the haze over the target, however all planes returned safely. Lt. Summers was forced to land his plane at the Isle of Vis for fuel, he also being slightly injured by flak that came through the windshield of his ship. Sgt. Phillips and Pvt. Ferraro returned from the hospital today. Lt. Wilson was taken to the hospital today. Lt. Bock, S/Sgt. Millard, and Sgt. Baker left for the States after completing their missions. T/Sgt. Flaherty, S/Sgt. Morvec, and Cpl. Esposito returned to the squadron after spending a few days in Rome where they made a recording on the Rome radio. "GI" shorts were the feature attraction at our squadron theater.

December 3. A double mission was scheduled for today. They took off but were called back for some unknown reason. The targets to have been struck were the Marshalling Yards at Ali Pasin Most, Yugoslavia, and the other was the Marshalling Yards at Innsbruck, Austria. On the latter target the crew never left the ground. The group was presented its second presidential citation by the Commanding General of the 15<sup>th</sup> AF, General Twining. After the presentation the men passed in review before the commanding general. Sickness still prevails in the squadron as yet. Today Lts. Pogue and Lt. Burleson, Cpl. Yount, and Pvt. Green were sent to the hospital. Four officers and five enlisted men were sent on DS to the 835<sup>th</sup> Bomb Sq. They were Lts. DuSell, Mueller, Simons, and Tower, Sgts. Hunnicutt, and Gregory, Cpls. Adams and Colvin. Three new combat crews from the States have just been assigned to the squadron

December 4. Stand down for today, however a number of practice missions were flown. Sgt. Blaney and Sgt. Shawcross were on the sick list this morning and were taken to the hospital. Four officers and nine enlisted men returned to duty after a few days rest at the Isle of Capri, and a new amount of men was sent to Capri for a few days rest. "Melody Parade" was the feature attraction at the squadron theater.

December 5. A mission originally scheduled for today was cancelled. Two more men were taken to the hospital today. They were Pfc. Blaine and Cpl. Crimmins. Two men returned to duty from the hospital. They were T/Sgt. Brown and Cpl. Arsi. Doctors were here from the 15<sup>th</sup>

AF and gave the “shick test” to all personnel of the squadron to determine the immunity of a person toward diphtheria.

December 6. Mission #143 was flown today and the target was the Marshalling Yards at Maribor, Yugoslavia. Nine of our squadron planes took off for the target and all but one dropped their bombs on the target. Capt. Samuel B. Sinai, squadron adjutant, was relieved from his duties and further assigned to the 2616th Investigating Detachment. Major William K. Booth was transferred from the 49<sup>th</sup> Wing to act as squadron rollcall officer in the absence of Capt. Nathan who became ill and was taken to the hospital this morning. S/Sgt. Dane and Sgt. Mezera returned to duty from the hospital this morning. No movie tonight as the same old story of a broken projector.

December 7. Target for today was the Marshalling Yards at Innsbruck, Austria. Bombing was done by PFF, and only one ship took to the air from each squadron. Our ship was forced to turn back because of engine trouble, jettisoned its bombs in the Adriatic before returning to the base. All personnel who were given the “shick test” on Dec 5 were examined today and a large number were found to be immune to diphtheria. Construction of a new squadron orderly building was started today.

December 8. No combat mission was flown today, but a number of crews went up to practice “formation” and drop a few practice bombs on Fianese Isle. The picture “Bombardier” was showing on the squadron screen starring Bat O’Brian and Randolph Scott.

December 9. A mission was scheduled for today, but was not completed. Crews were briefed and the planes took off, only to return a few hours later without having reached the target due to bad weather. The target was to have been an industrial area near Linz, Austria. A new squadron adjutant was assigned to us, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Alfred B. Taylor, Jr. S/Sgt Waitherwerth returned from the hospital this morning. Sgt Freeman was taken to the hospital.

December 10. Another mission was scheduled for today, but it was cancelled. The crews were briefed and they took off, but returned because of bad weather. The target was to have been the synthetic oil plant at Brux, Czechoslovakia. The following men returned to duty from the hospital: S/Sgt. Shinn, Sgt. Stack, and Pfc. Gallup. The picture shown on the squadron screen was “Impatient Years” starring Joanne Arthur.

December 11. The target was a Goods Station at Vienna, Austria. Although the weather was clear bombs were dropped by PFF. Most of the bombs fell short of the target. Eight planes took off from this squadron, three returned early because of mechanical failures. The rest of the planes returned safely. Lt. Hughes and his crew were dropped from the rolls and are being carried as MIA. The following men were taken to the hospital: Sgt. Fitzpatrick, Cpl. Bathurst, and Cpl. Whitecotton.

December 12. Another mission today, the target the oil refineries at Blechhammer, Germany. Bombs were dropped by PFF. Two planes took off from this squadron but neither one reached the briefed target. Plane #30 had a malfunction in the PFF equipment. On the return trip they bombed the marshalling yards at Gottendorf. Plane #20 returned early because of a leak in the fuel system, dropped their bombs on Ostrava, Czecho. After leaving the target he was

intercepted by enemy fighters and his plane got badly shot up. Two of his gunners were injured in the encounter. They were Sgt. Hale and Sgt. Lynn. They were taken to the hospital upon arrival. Pvt. Lee returned from the Hospital. "So's Your Uncle" was the feature picture showing on the squadron screen.

December 13. The mission originally scheduled for today was called off when the crews had gotten down the line. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Turner and Cpl. Yount returned from the hospital and reported to duty. S/Sgt. Tyree was taken to the hospital.

December 14. The mission originally scheduled for today was cancelled. Sgt. Freeman returned to duty from the hospital. Construction has been started on an extension to the Officer's Club and Mess Hall. "Gambler's Choice" was shown on the squadron screen.

December 15. Mission #149 was flown today. The target was the M/Y at Linz, Germany. Eight planes took off from this squadron, and all planes returned safely except one. Plane #31 failed to return. Bombing was done by PFF through a heavy undercast so the results of the mission are unknown. Lt. Burleson, S/Sgt. Mosiman and Sgt. Purdue returned to duty from the hospital.

December 16. The target for today was an oil plant at Brux, Czecho. Bombing was done by PFF through a heavy undercast. The results were unobserved. No enemy aircraft encountered, but the flak was intense. "GI" Shorts were shown on the squadron screen.

December 17. The mission briefed for this day's operations proved disastrous for the squadron. The target was the oil refinery at Odertal, Germany. Seven of our aircraft took off, one aborted and returned early, four are unaccounted for, and two returned badly damaged. The planes that are missing were piloted by Lts. Ford, West, Crossman, and Smith. As far as is know those losses were due to enemy aircraft, encountered shortly prior to reaching the target. Only one of our aircraft was able to reach the target which was piloted by Lt. Welton. Capt. Chalmers had to jettison his bombs at the IP because of the extensive damage done to his ship. He returned to the base with a much battered ship and two wounded gunners aboard: Sgt. Russell, and Sgt. Waitherwerch. Latest information has it that the group has lost ten (10) ships on this day's operation. Three enemy aircraft were destroyed by our gunners, and one probably destroyed. Capt. Dendy returned from the hospital, Lt. Campo, Lt. Dubal, Lt. Pogue and Sgt. Lynn also returned from the hospital today.

December 18. Mission No. 153 was flown today. The target was the Blechhammer oil refinery, Germany. Five planes took off from this squadron and all returned safely except No. 60, piloted by Lt. Yancy who was forced to land on Vis Isle for some unknown reason. Bombs were dropped through a heavy undercast. Enemy opposition was slight. Pvt. Green was taken to the hospital. Lt. Marshall and his crew who were lost on Dec. 13 were dropped from the rolls and carried as MIA. "Follow The Boys" was the feature showing at the squadron theater.

December 19. Another mission today and again it was against the oil refinery at Blechhammer, Germany. Three planes took off from this squadron but none reached the target because of bad weather. Bombs were dropped on unidentified targets. All three aircraft returned safely. More construction work has been started and it being a new orderly room being built just south of the S-2 and the Operations building. Lt. Tyson and S/Sgt. Potter were taken to the hospital.

December 20. Mission No. 154 was flown today. This time the target was an oil refinery at Brux, Germany. Two planes were scheduled to fly from this squadron but only one got into the air. This plane piloted by Lt. Presho did not get to the target because of bad weather dropping his bombs on Linz, Austria by PFF and then returned to the base. The crews of Lt. Crossman, Lt. West and Lt. Smith who were lost on Dec. 17 were dropped from the rolls today. Lt. Williams returned from the hospital today. "Casanova Brown" was showing on the squadron screen starring Gary Cooper.

December 21. A stand down was called and everyone was a little relieved as the squadron had been flying pretty steady for the past few days. Cpls. Bathurst and Whitecotton, and Pfc. Blaine returned from the hospital today.

December 22. A mission was scheduled for today, but was cancelled before the planes got in the air. Lt. Col. Hardy was relieved of his duty as commanding officer of this squadron and was further assigned Deputy Group Commander of the 461<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group. Capt. Robert K. Baker, squadron Operations Officer, is the new Squadron commanding officer. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Robert E. Hearn, returned from DS to the Flex Gunnery School, Lerado, Texas. His principal duty will be aerial gunnery officer. "Phantom Lady" was showing on the squadron screen.

December 23. Stand down for today, the cause was the adverse weather condition. Lt. Ford, Lt. Landry, and T/Sgt. Priest, MIA since Dec. 17, were dropped from the rolls today.

December 24. Another mission was scheduled for today, but it again was called off because of bad weather. T/Sgt. Josephs and S/Sgt. Donaghue left for the states today. Lt. Tyson and S/Sgt. Priest returned to duty today from the hospital. "Stinky" a member of the canine family and well known by all squadron personnel, presented the squadron with three little pups.

December 25. A Christmas day mission was in the making, the target was the synthetic oil plants at Brux, Germany. None of the planes reached the primary target, because of bad weather at our base, the planes were forced to land at another field south of here. Because of the weather condition, they bombed the second alternate which were the marshalling yards at Wels, Austria. Results poor.

December 26. Stand down for today. Pvt. Casanova returned from the hospital today. "Chip Off The Old Block" was shown on the squadron screen starring Donald O'Connor and Terry Lynn.

December 27. Mission No. 156 was flown today. The target was the Venzone Viaduct in northern Italy. Eight of our planes took off with six one thousand lb. bombs aboard. All planes returned safely, and although clear weather prevailed, the enemy opposition was slight and the results were poor.

December 28. Another mission today and again the target was the Venzone Viaduct in northern Italy. Six planes took off from this squadron with six one thousand lb. bombs each. Bombing was done visually. Results were good. "Christmas Holiday" was showing on the squadron screen starring Deanna Durbin and Gene Kelly.

December 29. The target for the mission today was the main marshalling yards at Passau, Germany. Due to adverse weather conditions they were not able to reach the briefed target so they bombed the first alternate, which was a Locomotive Repair Shop at Castelfranco, Italy. Bombs photos show a good concentration of hits on the target. Word has just been received here that Lt. Marshall and Lt. Jarnagin, missing since Dec. 15, were safely in the hands of the partisans in Yugoslavia. The whereabouts of the rest of the crew is unknown.

December 30. Stand down for today. The following named EM returned to duty from the hospital: Sgts. Alexander, Blaney, Shawcross, Cpls. Karpierz, Tallant and Pfc. Weatherly. "GI Shorts" were showing on the squadron screen.

December 31. A mission was scheduled for today, but it was called off during the night. Capt. Jasper T. Jenkins was relieved from duty and was transferred to the 7<sup>th</sup> Replacement Depot.