

Sept. 1945
RECORDS AUDIT P&D
Sioux Falls AAF
Sioux Falls, S. Dak.

Subject: Closing out the books.
To: Former members 461st. Bomb
Group (H).

This, in all probability, will be one of the last communications that I, as former Group Adjutant, will mail regarding the old outfit. I'm mailing this one to those whose addresses I have available from the Shipping List for return to the *ZI and from letters that have come to me. That is naturally a small list because many "high pointers" were transferred from the Group shortly before the Group returned.

If you are in communication with former members, you might want to pass some of this "dope" on to them. Some of the following information may be known to you, but I will repeat it for the benefit of any who may not have received earlier letters.

The Group and Squadrons were inactivated 28 August 1945 per GO 116 Headquarters 2nd AF (1945). All personnel returning to ZI by boat were transferred from the unit to Sq. X, 211th AAFBU (AS) Sioux Falls, S.D.

From Squadron X you know your own fate. Some men did not arrive at Sioux Falls as they were separated at the Reception Centers, but of those arriving here the above may help complete your personal 201 file.

What happened to our T.A.T. boxes? Here's all I could find out. On TWX instruction from Washington (SPTOM DC 1053) the Port Authorities segregated the boxes into three divisions. (1) The AAF equipment was sent to East Kelly Field, San Antonio, Texas. (2) QM issue, etc. was extracted and returned to normal supply and (3) The remainder was shipped to AAF Intransit Depot No. 5 Newark, N.J.

During the period 18th to 26th October I was on TD to learn what the Intransit Depot did with it. While there I was informed that they shipped the boxes unopened to MATSC, Olmstead Field, Middleton, Pa. After a few hours at Middleton I learned that the boxes had arrived there about mid Septeber. They opened them. The Officer in charge of the warehouse said that Govt. checks, morning reports, sick books, etc. were turned over to the Base.

Base officials showed me letters of transmittal to TAG. I asked what disposition was made of packages not sent to TAG and they said all papers, etc., not official were burned. The cameras, radios, etc., that carried name tags were boxed and shipped to the Effects Quartermaster, Kansas City, Mo.

12

I could find no records of those items shipped. I did, however, locate some of our shipping cases; they were empty. I do not plan to go to Kansas City, but will probably write regarding my radio. You may do the same.

We have another battle participation award. the Awards and Decorations Officer showed me the letter recently. Here's the dope.

"Central Europe, 22 Mar 45 to 11 May 45 per 4th Ind, Hq ETO 18 Sept 45 to Ltr 49 Bomb Wing 21 Aug. 45 File 200.6."

In going through Group and Squadron mail recently I found a letter of interest to those of you who purchased Easter or Mother's Day flowers for delivery in the US and delivery in some cases not being made. Refunds may be had by writing

HQ. Adriatic Base Command
Army Exchange Service
APO 388 NY., N.Y.

This place is a mere shadow of its former self. I doubt if there are more than 5,000 here including permanent party. The paper says SFAAF will close by the end of the year.

Will be looking for you at the national convention of Veterans 1947.

R. FOSTER SCOTT
Major, Air Force Corps
*Zone of the interior (USA)

Dear Bud and Bea:

Too frequently when war stories are told they involve beastility, atrocity or the animal nature of man. When I was with the 824th Squadron, I learned of an event which represented the extreme opposite of this and which may be of interest to the Association membership.

We had a T/Sgt. who was in charge of our parachute room. He was not flying at the time but was a former air crew member.

As the story goes, during a mission, his crew was badly shot-up. While time has erased some of the details, I recall that there were some casualties and serious injuries involved. The aircraft was also seriously damaged and it was necessary for the crew to ditch in the Adriatic. The surviving crew members were picked up by a German hospital boat. Our airmen were made comfortable and wounds treated. The captain of the ship spoke perfect English or was so related. As part of his interrogation, he offered our airmen the alternative of being taken back to Germany as prisoners or to be returned to the waters in their life rafts. The crew requested a return to the life rafts. As was related to me, the men were given blankets and hot beverages.

A most amazing thing also supposedly happened. The German captain radioed our authorities and provided the crew's location. As a result,

77 *Leatherhead Mouldart*
a short time later our men were picked up by a PBY flying boat.

Again, much is lost in the translation when such tales are related. Also, I may be a bit off regarding the actual details. However, I am convinced that there is some validity to the events related above.

I am fascinated about this display of humanitarianism of enemies during wartime. However, I would very much like to meet or hear from someone who was directly involved.

I am also certain that this would also be very interesting to our other members. I do not recall any names or dates, except that it took place several months prior to my arrival in Italy in October 1944.

HAPPENED TO BOB Bedwee June 13, 1944
Sincerely,
HANK RONSON
824th Squadron

Dear Bud and Bea:

Much to my regret, I am unable to attend this year's reunion due to a family commitment, i.e. a wedding and graduation.

Needless to say, I am very disappointed in not being able to make it to our 4th Reunion.

I have a few good follow-up stories that tie in to the episodes by Trefry A. Ross of the 765th Squadron's "The Last Flight of Crew No. 14." I didn't fly that day (Dec. 17, 44) but my log book said "Sunday, Dec. 17, 1944, 765th Squadron was hit by fighters over Blechammer and only one plane returned. Sidovar (from our Squadron, the 766th) was hit by a 20 millimeter shell and was last seen heading for the Russian lines. I hope he made it. He's a swell guy." His was the only plane from 766th missing.

I flew to Blechammer two days later, Tuesday, Dec. 19, 1944 and was "missing in action" for 3 days. That sounds worse than it really was, because after a harrowing experience trying to stretch my gas I came down on *Vis and didn't have gas enough to get parked.

There are a few coincidences that I personally experienced that tied into the Oct. 4, 1944 mission to Munich where Capt. Tallant was killed in action. I'll try to get them to you later.

Have a good time. I'll be thinking of you and all of my comrades-in-arms, on June 1-4.

Best Wishes,
GREG MAZZA
766th Squadron

*Editors Note: See Story in this issue on the Island of Vis. See Page 27.