

HEADQUARTERS
460TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) AAF
APO 520, US ARMY

20 May 1944

SUBJECT: Historical Records.

TO: Commanding General, Fifteenth Air Force, Attention:
Historian (through channels).

1. Units history of the Headquarters, 460th Bombardment Group (H) for the period of 1 April 1944 to 30 April 1944.
 - a. (1) The present designation of this unit is: 460th Bombardment Group (H) assigned to the 55th Bombardment Wing (H).
 - b. (3) Lt. Colonel Bertram C. Harrison became Commanding Officer vice Colonel Robert T. Crowder missing in action. Authority: General Order #1 460th Bomb Group (H), 16 April 1944.
 - c. Strength, Commissioned and enlisted:
 - (1) Month of April 1944.
 - (a) 26 officers, 55 EM.
 - (b) 1 officer, 0 EM.
 - (c) 0 0
 - (d) 27 officers, 55 EM.
 - d. Spinazzola Air Base.
 - e. None.
 - f. Italian Campaign - still in progress.
 - g. In all the Group flew fifteen missions during the month of April:

#1. MOSTAR- - -2 April 1944.	#6. BUDAPEST- - 13 April 1944.
#2. KNIN- - - -3 April 1944.	#7. BUCHAREST - 15 April 1944.
#3. NIS- - - - 5 April 1944.	#8. T. SEVERIN- 16 April 1944.
#4. ZABREB - - 6 April 1944.	#9. FANO - - - 20 April 1944.
#5. ZAGREB - -12 April 1944.	#10 T. SEVERIN- 21 April 1944.
	#11 Weiner Neustadt - 23 April 1944.
	#12 BUCHAREST - - - - 24 April 1944.
	#13 TOULON - - - - - 29 April 1944.
	#14 CASTEL MAGGIORE- 30 April 1944.

(1) The first two of these missions, MOSTAR and KNIN, were freshman missions on which the Group formation could be improved un combat conditions and the flaws in bombing might be detected and eradicated.

(2) After 5 April and the mission to NIS, the Group graduated from the freshman class in a hurry. The list for the balance of the month shows that it hit and hurt as important targets as have been assigned to the Fifteenth Air Force. Outstanding was the second mission to ZAGREB when excellent bombing results were attained on this important enemy air base and M/Y adjacent. Another splendid bombing result is recorded at BUDAPEST on 13 April, when the TOKOL DUNA a/c factory was thoroughly damaged.

(3) On the mission to BUCHAREST on 15 April the Group Commander, Colonel ROBERT T. CROWDER, was lost in action. His ship was raked by an enemy fighter who came out of the sun at 12 o'clock high. This e/a was shot down, the B-24 caught on fire and disappeared into the undercast out of control. Although three chutes were seen to open from Colonel Crowder's plane, no word has been heard from and crew members missing in this engagement. Colonel Crowder had led every Group mission, nine in all, at the time he was lost. He did not need to assume the strain of leadership day after day, but he seemed to welcome it. He seemed to be intent upon discovering by personal experience every problem that could confront a leader in action, before he should turn his responsibility over to his staff officers, Deputy Group Commander and Squadron Commanders.

(4) On 21 April, the briefed target was again the M/Y at BUCHAREST, with the M/Y at TURNUL SEVERIN as an alternate. On this day adverse weather conditions were met with and most of the groups of the Air Force were called or turned back. The 460th persisted on its mission to the target at TURNUL SEVERIN. It is one of the few groups in the Air Force who received commendation from General George C. Marshall for the work done on this day. A copy of General Marshall's message is attached. Lt. Colonel Bertram C. Harrison led the mission.

(5) The BUCHAREST M/Ys were hit by this Group on 24 April, this being the third time the long journey had been assigned to the 460th. On this occasion, weather was favorable for the first time and the portion of the yards assigned was hit exactly, several bombs finding the specific aiming point, the roundhouse. Again, Lt. Colonel Bertram C. Harrison led the mission.

(6) The Group received orders to bomb the Nord A/D at Wiener Neustadt on 23 April, the objective being to destroy all a/c on the ground. Hits were scored in the dispersal area of this A/D and other hits carried across into the Wollersdoff A/D. In all the Group was credited with 11 a/c destroyed, 3 damaged, and 4 probably destroyed on the ground this day. Major William B. Campbell, S-3, led the mission. In addition, 1 e/a was destroyed in the air battle, 1 probably destroyed and another damaged.

(7) In all 5 e/a were destroyed in the air during April.

1. During the month, the AIR MEDAL was awarded to Colonel Robert T. Crowder and Lt. Colonel Bertram C. Harrison.
2. Enclosed is the War Diary dealing with life in the Group for the month of April. Also enclosed in letter form, a special account of a combat crew member's reaction to the life he is leading.

For the Commanding Officer:

CLYDE Q. CARPENTER, JR.,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

Incls.

Incl 1 - Special Acct.

Incl 2 - GO #1

Incl 3 - Go #3

Incl 4 - GO #2

Incl 5 - Ltr 201.22

Incl 6 - War Diary (in trip)

Incl 7 - Historical Letrs.

HEADQUARTERS
460TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)AAF
APO 520, US ARMY

760TH Bombardment Squadron (H)

MONDAY 3 April 44

Today we drew the M/Ys at Knin, Yugoslavia. Target well covered on an unmolested trip.

Capt. Long (our sawbones) made the trip; upon reporting for interrogation he commented with that glint in his eye; "Give me my shot." (What some people will do for two ounces of Bourbon).

P.T.A. System, handy gadget to have around—about half the Squadron payroll went home.

TUESDAY 4 April 44.

More use of P.T.A. 75% of Squadron payroll went home.

Softball was inaugurated by a game between officers and enlisted men. Final score Officers 5, EM 4. Officers give thanks to Lt. Tom Garvey's big bat.

WEDNESDAY 5 April 44.

Target: M/Y at Nis, Yugoslavia. Must be a set-up, because the squadron assistant S-2 (Lt. Harry Bernstein) is making the trip as guest of Lt. Carl Schuneman. Lt. Bernstein is the first S-2 in the Group to participate in a mission.

All Squadron planes returned safely, only opposition met was light flak.

S/Sgt. Marion D. Hendrick and S/Sgt. Forest L. Bishop became the first Squadron personnel to earn the Air Medal.

THURSDAY 6 April 44.

Airdrome at Zagreb, Yugo. To catch hell today. Squadron S-2 (Lt. William C. Palmer), not to be outdone by his assistant, was mission guest of Capt. Keith W. Mason. (Looks like another set up, you know these S-2 boys never take any unnecessary chances.)

Bombs were brought back—damn the undercast. Flak and fighter opposition were conspicuous by their absence.

Guard system again became Squadron Function. Each plane will have two guards.

Add the following men to the list of Air Medal winners: Lt. George P. Bishop (Squadron Navigator); S/Sgt. Dale Hayes, Sgt. Herbert Gillory, Sgt. Harry Joy and Prvt Thomas Majure.

FRIDAY 7 April 44.

Mission cancelled. Only activity was a soft ball game, a lesson administered to the officers of the 761st Squadron by our own officers at our home grounds—Score: 4 to 3... Again, it was Lt. Tom Garvey's big bat that did the trick.

SATURDAY 8 April 44.

Briefing at 445 and then the mission was called off.

Officers of the 761st were given their second soft ball lesson to the tune of 5 to 4 in an extra inning. Doc Long gave us a glimpse of his sprinting days at the University of Chicago when he stole home the last half of the eighth to win for us. (As reward no one attended sick-call next day.)

Lt. Bitterly received fourteen pocket knives and one cigarette lighter from P.X. for distribution. Distribution took the form of a raffle—Lt. Tom Garvey won the lighter. (Who is this guy Garvey?)

SUNDAY 9 April 44.

Our first Easter Sunday abroad—hope it's the last one, too. Another briefing and another cancellation. Most of the day spent in reminiscing about Easter bonnets.

MONDAY 10 April 44.

Heavy ground fog—no flying. Plenty sack time.

TUESDAY 11 April 44.

Due to inclement weather the scheduled mission was called off.

Ground school was given later in the day with lectures on "Malaria Control" and the "World Situation."

WEDNESDAY 12 April 44.

Lt. Feriman Susand and his crew arrived as replacements and were assigned to the squadron.

THURSDAY 13 April 44.

Lts. Robert Evans and Jack Smith and their crews were assigned to the Squadron.

Nine planes, of the squadron, raided Budapest, Hungary. All planes returned safely, but a number of the crew members were hit by the intense "flak" at the target. Lt. John W. Thornton received "flak" wounds in the left leg. S/Sgt. Dale C. Hayes was wounded on the cheek and neck. S/Sgt. Arthur G. Mulherin, Photographer, was wounded across the eyes, he was landed at Bari and admitted to the 26th General Hospital for treatment.

FRIDAY 14 April 44.

Lt. John W. Kellogg was transferred to the 762nd Bomb Sqdn. Lt. Robert Jackson, bombardier, joined the Squadron.

Lt. Joe Brennick was appointed Squadron Bombardier, in place of Lt. Kellogg.

SATURDAY 15 April 44.

Planes took off for a raid over Bucharest. Upon return the crews reported that the target was completely overcast, nevertheless, the bombs were dropped on ETA in the vicinity of the target. All the planes returned without casualties.

SUNDAY 16 April 44.

Fifty-three EM received notice of promotions as of the 15th. Today's target was M/Ys in Yugoslavia; due to the bad weather all planes returned early. Crews reported that they did not encounter any opposition enroute.

The following named personnel of the Squadron were awarded the Air Medal for sustained operational flights against the enemy:

1st Lt. George P. Bishop
S/Sgt. Forest L. Bishop
S/Sgt. Dale C. Hayes
S/Sgt. Marion B. Hendricks
Sgt. Herbert J. Guillory
Sgt. Harry V. Joy
Pvt. Thomas W. Majure

MONDAY 17 April 44.

Capt. Dewitt Clinton Jones III was assigned as Ass't Sqdn S-3. Capt Jones came from the 55th Wing and will replace Lt. Reeves, who was acting Asst S-3. Lt. Reeves was assigned as "Flight Commander".

TUESDAY 18 April 44.

Capt. L.J. Anderson was appointed Malaria Discipline Officer.

The Good Conduct Medal, symbol of exemplary behavior, was awarded to three hundred-twenty-one enlisted men of the Squadron.

An early return board was appointed today composed of the following named Officers: Capt. Draper L. Long, Capt. Keith W. Mason and Lt. Owen D. Eshenroder. The boards function is to meet all early returns from scheduled missions and determine and fix cause of return.

WEDNESDAY 19 April 44.

No hits, no runs, no errors—uneventful day.

THURSDAY 20 April 44.

Lt. William A. Liddell departed on Detached Service with Communications school sponsored by the signal Hqs & Hqs Co. of the VII Fighter Command.

S/Sgt. Arthur Mulherin was transferred to the 26th General Hospital, as a result of injuries sustained on the mission of the thirteenth.

FRIDAY 21 April 44.

The target for today was the M/Ys at Bucharest, Rumania. Due to heavy overcast, the Group dropped their bombs on Turnu Severin, the alternate target.

Lt. Carl T. Schunneman and his crew failed to return. Upon interrogation the crews reported that Lt. Schunneman had probably run out of gas near the coast of Yugoslavia, and was forced to either ditch or bail out. Major Martin out Commanding Officer, said he heard Lt. Schunneman say "take the controls while I put on my chute".

We expect the resourceful Lt. Schunneman and his crew to show up any day and their bunks are all ready for them, in their new home, when that day arrives.

SATURDAY 22 April 44.

The enlisted men's mess hall was officially opened today. This clean, spacious, building with chairs and tables will add much to the already excellent food being dished out.

Five more men were promoted from Private to PFC; thus the ranks of the NO stripers becomes thinner and thinner.

SUNDAY 23 April 44.

Planes were dispatched to attack the A/D at Wiener Neustadt near Vienna. When the planes returned the crews reported scattered hits on the A/D and nearby fields. Flak and enemy fighters put up stiff

opposition, but all planes returned safely. Lt. Hannon had so many flak holes in his ship, it looked like a sieve.

MONDAY 24 April 44.

Lt. Johnson returned from the hospital after a two-week illness.

Four planes went on a raid to Bucharest, Rumania and from reports of returning crews the bombing of the M/Ys was excellent. All crews returned safely, the only opposition being flak over the target.

TUESDAY 25 April 44.

Sixteen of the "Key Personnel" arrived today after wandering all over Africa and Italy in search of the 460th Bomb. Go. The men were in New York, Patrick Henry, and Morrison Field, before catching a fast ocean liner to Africa.

WEDNESDAY 26 April 44.

The weather has really been terrible today and all flying called off. Most of the Officers and men worked on their tents and houses and then hit the sack.

THURSDAY 27 April 44.

The mess hall is in full operation now. The men have tables and chairs so they can actually sit down and eat a real meal. Much credit must be given to Major Martin, Lt. Bitterly, Lt. Creswell and Sgt. Gomringer for their effort put forth in building the best mess in the Group.

FRIDAY 28 April 44.

Engineering Dept. moved into their new office today. The line almost looks like a small community with their large parachute building and new Engineering Officer.

SATURDAY 29 April 44.

Eight planes took off for a raid on the harbor at Toulon, France. Crews reported the bombing as being poor due to the haze over the target.

Lt. Erfeldt landed at Corsica to gas up again before returning to the base. Flak was light at the target and all planes returned safely.

SUNDAY 30 April 44.

Nine planes were dispatched to attack M/Y in Northern Italy. Crews reported the primary target covered; instead bombs were dropped on a road bridge and railway bridge. Hits were observed on both

bridges, there is a possibility that the road bridge was completely knocked out. All planes returned safely.

763rd Bombardment Squadron (H).

SUNDAY 2 April 44.

It still doesn't seem possible does it? Today was a high prize to pay. A hell of a way to earn a living if you ask me. Roger's Rangers they call themselves, all good boys.

What an outfit! They get us up at five this morning to fly up to Brod or Mostar at two this afternoon.

Major McGraw claims that he would like to get in a glider outfit so that he wouldn't "have any more goddam engines to worry about." McCall punched his ticket for him. I think every officer and enlisted man should have at least three weeks at a Chaplin's School before going on active duty.

The more I see and try to understand these damned Italians, the more I despise them. We forget very easily—too easily. They are a people of shallow character. No love of country—little pride. Most of us seem to forget that until a few months ago they were just as bad as the Germans. If you don't believe that—all you have to do is to talk to some one who has been a prisoner of war of Italians since the beginning of this war.

The boys are quiet tonight. The usual joking, arguments, even the bitching, have taken a back seat to thoughts of boys we lost today, and wondering what they are cooking up for tomorrow's mission. Things are getting rough all over.

MONDAY 3 April 44.

The boys were up early this morning. We counted them as they took off. Thirty-three of them, and thirty-three came back. The formation looked good as it came over and the ships peeled off. The last ship wasn't on the ground yet when the rumor came around that they had run into fighter opposition and that there were injured aboard. The boys had their two ounces of "Old Overhalt." Some didn't drink, but there were others that saw to it that there were no refunds to the Medics. Results of today's mission - fair.

Still no news about Rogers and crew. It still doesn't seem possible that those boys will not be at the mail room tonight. Sundeen's wife has one child and one on the way. That's rough!

A lazy day today. The eager ones are working on their new homes or are playing poker, while others, like the old sack too well.

Seems good to walk on dry earth for a change. Time for us to have more rain.

Order out now that all guns have to be taken to armament and inspected once a week. Guess that Saturday's inspection was a real circus. The colonel didn't seem to think so though. At "present arms" Capt. James hands his to the Colonel.

The boys marched or walked ten miles as penalty for not turning in ammunition as ordered.

Apparently, some of the replacement crews aren't happy in their new homes. Stick around men - you haven't seen anything yet.

WEDNESDAY 12 April 44.

Dear Mr. Anthony,

I have a problem. A short time ago I had to leave my wife. She treated me unmercifully and some mornings she would force me to stay in bed until I was able to get out. I still have those awful dreams at night. Do you think that it would be safe to return to a wife like that?

Our boys finally did it to Zagreb. This "window" stuff is really something. Flak was very inaccurate though plentiful. All ships returned safely. It was a relief. Zagreb looked like a rough target. Photos showed excellent results.

Rumors tonight of a big league mission tomorrow: time will tell. It must be too. Ordnance loading up planes with 500 lb. RDX-Comp. B. and they don't usually use those on hospitals.

New crews joining Group report large number of B-29s at Marrakech. Hard to believe that they flew from Topeka, Kansas (I believe that's some place in the States) to Marrakech - nonstop. Cruise 240-250 at 50,000 feet? Think of that! More than one in our outfit that would give a left nut to be on one of them. No flak, fighter opposition, no oxygen mask, no nothing.

THURSDAY 13 April 44.

Thirteen may be an unlucky number. It looked that way when they dragged us out of bed at 5:00 AM to eat breakfast. What a breakfast: one Italian, one soldier, and pancakes. Target-Budapest. Wow! Nope! It was not a very promising start for the 13th. Everyone tried to be casual and calm, but, it was easy to see that this was really big. Budapest on the beautiful Blue Danube. They can't do this to us! We haven't had our fifteen "milk runs" yet. An aircraft manufacturing area (Chaplin Dodds really pulled for us this morning) and damn fool luck - we reached the target - unloaded and staggered home. Everyone breathed a sigh of relief after we left the flak and swarm of

fighters. "Window" and P-38s had done it again. We lost one plane. Flak over target was like a blanket; wild and yet awful. P-38s chalked up a couple more victories. The sky was black with planes. That sigh of relief was short lived. We hit just about every damned flak area except on on the way to our home base. That one area was about a hundred miles off course. They slipped the finger to us at Metkovic and almost blasted us out of the sky - 10,000 feet anyhow.

One ship crashed on landing: a tire flat, forty or more flak holes, etc., etc.. Home was never like this. Out first real initiation. Fools for luck.

A commendation from Wing on Yesterday's target and an excellent photo record of today's results removing many doubts and taking the edge from the chewing due us.

FRIDAY 14 April 44.

No flying today. Big critique at group. Yesterday's mission was given a good airing. Opinions were voiced on flying over flak areas instead of around them. Photos on yesterday's Budapest raid were shown. Rumor of another big mission tomorrow.

SATURDAY 15 April 44.

Today was really a bad day for the outfit. Bucharest; the target - reputedly a toughie. Fighter escort failed to show up when our group went into the area. The blanket of flak thrown up at us was wild and ineffective - thanks to "Window". This time our boys were caught napping. A formation of ME-109s (nine or ten in strength of numbers) came in at the group: two ME-109s actually attacked the formation. It is needless to say that we always seem to learn the hard way. The fighter attack came from the front and one burst caught Col. Crowder's lead ship forward and in the general area of the flight deck. That was enough. It is probable that both the Colonel and Lt. Lindley (flying co-pilot) were hit, and the ship went out of control. Witnesses say that fire in bomb bay made the bays red hot - probably fire caused by gasoline running down into them from a punctured gasoline tank. Part of elevators and tail assembly fell away, and after a few wild gyrations the ship was last seen falling down through the overcast. It is claimed that three chutes were seen to emerge from the plane before it disappeared - taking with it out own Capt. Holmes and Lt. Barlow. The 761st lost two planes and crews to the ME-109s before the slaughter ended.

Bombing was done through overcast and results were not observed. The boys are tired, a bit upset, and noticeably jittery for the first time. Who wouldn't be?

We can't easily afford to let this get us down. We are deeply involved in this dirty business. How should a person react to an

incident of this sort? There will be those who can't take much of it. Can they be judged for it?

It is odd and remarkable that anything as simple as a few sheets of metal foil can make so efficiently useless the tremendous powers of radar. It would be impossible to estimate the amount of men and planes saved by its use. In our way of thinking it is both an offensive and defensive weapon.

Wing arrived enforce for a purge. All in all it was a bad day for us.

SUNDAY 16 April 44.

A new day, a new start. Our target for today, Turnu Severin, was briefed as being one of the last of the undamaged targets on our list; being bombed in direct support of the Russian Army - who are approximately three hundred miles distance from the target. We were given limited information as to defense capabilities and we took off expecting the worst. It was a bit nerve-racking, expecting that which we didn't get. No flak, no fighters over the target and little flying away from the area.

Colonel Harrison gave combat crews a pep talk in regards to enemy fighter opposition at briefing this morning while Maj. Campbell used all his West Point discipline to keep from biting away all his (Maj. Campbell's) finger nails. Col. Harrison's talk was very effective and on the way back from the target area one of the gunners bagged a P-51 which had been flying escort to us for an hour and a half. Good shooting??? So you want to be a fighter pilot?

Remarks: Today's target photos show many bombs in the Danube, but, never-the-less - target was hit thoroughly.

MONDAY 17 April 44.

Briefed mission - Belgrade. "Weather". Badger wasn't exactly optimistic - and neither were we - but not for the same reasons. It wasn't exactly a "milk run." The sky was filled with planes; bomber and fighter groups. We had a perfect target - but never reached it. Thirty minutes from our I.P. we turned around because of bad weather over the target. Too bad that we couldn't have dumped our load as briefed, but, we did dump them in the ocean and stirred up a lot of fish no doubt. Upon reaching our base we were detained out on the line for the ironical purpose of having a bit of aircraft recognition. Wing and Air Force were slightly P.O. about the P-51 we bagged yesterday. The P-51 didn't show up until after we had gone back to the area - but he then put on a real show. Personally, I think that the gunner ought to get a medal for hitting anything that travels that fast. Hope that those P-51 boys don't ever really get sore at us.

TUESDAY 18 April 44.

Stand down order today. Back to the sack - or Bari.

WEDNESDAY 19 April 44.

Missioned briefed - Triest - cancelled. Practice formation and bombing for some crews.

New plan for group. They hope it will ease the tension that has been growing lately. Calisthenics class; close order drill (were you ever a cadet?). Inspection - every other day that a crew does not fly. One free day out of four and possibilities of a three-day pass. Looks good on paper.

Lt. T. D. Morris was to have been formally presented with the Soldier's Medal today. They will save it as a good excuse to keep us on the field the next day that we have free.

Officer's mess begins to take shape.

We begin to be mosquito conscious. Boys are rigging up mosquito bars. Nothing much happening around here and we would like to keep it that way.

THURSDAY 20 April 44.

Another day today and the month is practically gone. The mission planned for us was to Castel Maggiors. We were lead ship and, flying in her: Stover, Bishop, Campbell and Pointer. Supposed to rendezvous with two other groups who were to fall in behind and follow us to an I.P. near Bologna and then to our individual targets. Things started off as usual and we never did get together....saw groups scattered all over on the way up.

DR'ed up the Adriatic and hit a little north (five miles-no drift various altitude-not bad at all.) Primary, secondary and tertiary were found covered. I guess there wasn't anything for them to do, but fly around in search of a place worthwhile bombing.

On the way down the coast, two nice bridges at Fano were no more, after our planes flew by. Photos show a good job was done.

FRIDAY 21 April 44.

No mission, no changes, developments.

SATURDAY 22 April 44.

We're really turning the missions out now, but today called for a different kind of a formation. There was nothing to do but loaf around till noon and then get climbing into our class "As". We had a presentation of Air Medals. The thought of shaving and dressing was too much, but everyone looked spick and span. A happy day for some of

these boys. Guess we all like to receive little shining medals and colorful ribbons. After this was over some of the boys went to town while others waited for evening chow and wrote home.

SUNDAY 23 April 44.

Who plans these targets anyway...well there is a job to be done, and it is Wiener Neustadt. All planes took off and cut the field with a good formation and farewell. The coffee and doughnuts hit the spot upon their return, but sorry to say there were a few of our pals missing at this snack. Yep, some darn nice fellows at that, whom we don't expect to see again soon; Swazey, Smith, Potje, Fowler, Huber, Pointer, Wilson and Acheson. Let us hope they are alive anyway.

MONDAY 24 April 44.

Mission called off today. It will be a little rest of nerves for those visiting yesterday's hot spot (target). Wiener Neustadt is no fun.

Mosquito nets have been ordered up by the 30th and a pile of good lumber has been delivered to supply. Guess the boys will have to dust off their carpenter's skill once more and get it busy on the netting frames. Always something isn't it.

Not too much of an exciting day...Anyhow who wants excitement when there is a comfortable sack, a batch of letters to answer or one of Lt. Gongloff's new library books to read.

TUESDAY 25 April 44.

Understand there is no mission again today or should I say another "Bombardier's Holiday".

Saw Capt. James over at our new basketball court trying his skill at tossing the ball into the net. I do not think he knows anyone was watching, but there sure was a contented look on his face when the ball went into the net.

Sports activities are getting strong in the Squadron with a bit of competition arising. Hear we have a baseball team now.

Two ideal volley ball courts have been added, one in the B.O.Q and one in the EM's section. From the way it looks they really appreciate the sports and make use of them every day.

A sports bulletin had been erected on the outside of the mess hall being pretty convenient for the boys to observe the scores and coming events.

WEDNESDAY 26 April 44.

What is this, no mission again today. "Bombardier's Holiday"?????
"Bombardier's Vacation". No new developments or changes.

THURSDAY 27 April 44.

No mission and not many changes. A few orders for strict inspection of arms and a more severe tent quarters and area inspection.

Horseshoe pitching has been added to our sports activity highlights. One truck load of bricks has been piled up by the EM's mess. It looks like they are finally going to enjoy the comforts of eating and sitting in a mess hall like the 760th.

FRIDAY 28 April 44.

Well, this marks the fifth day without a mission. Most of the boys had lectures to go to at group. Armament lectures were said to be quite interesting with the various new bombs described to them.

Our friend, the P-38 man was around again today whizzing back and forth above our roof. Something tells me that might be Capt. James at the controls...that "cowboy". The P-38 pilot and James are good friends.

Wayne Hickey returned from Bari hospital today also. His leg is OK but is still going to Capri for a rest until he is completely well.

SATURDAY 29 April 44.

We finally got off to another mission and a long one at that...Toulon, France. Many of the fellows were pretty exhausted and tired after this one. Some did not return right away due to landing at Corsica and Naples to refuel. Unfortunately, one of the 762nd's crews had to bail out ten miles before reaching the base in attempting to stretch their gas supply.

From what I hear around the tent there's plenty of feminine attraction drawing all the boys up to the theatre tonight..."As Thousands Cheer".

SUNDAY 30 April 44.

We are under way with another mission...Castel Maggiore again...should be a milk run. Understand we get only one credit for the Toulon raid.

So far, and without any doubt, there is a small town sprouting up here in this area. Houses are being built every day. In one section of the camp, a pole was put up with a sign..."Pine Street". Maybe there will be an Italian city here some day we can claim to have originated.

761st Bombardment Squadron (H)

FRIDAY 1 April 44.

What was to have been the third mission was called off after briefing due to cold front moving in just before takeoff.

The officer's mess line was halted at the door before entering, for about thirty minutes by Lt. Col Harrison, who is in charge of the building of the new Officer's mess and club. There had been some nails taken out of the boards which had been leveled for the formation the previous night, and the Colonel was very anxious to find the culprit. (no one admitted guilt.)

SUNDAY 2 April 44.

The third mission was flown. Cloudy weather prevented the dropping of the bombs on the primary target and Mostar, the secondary target, was the victim. Of the thirty-two planes scheduled, twenty-nine attacked the target. Heavy flak brought down one of the ships with a direct hit. No losses were sustained by this squadron. Comments began pouring in from all directions as to the effectiveness of flak from the nervous, excited crews. It seems flak has been underestimated.

MONDAY 3 April 44.

Target of the fourth mission, Knin. A neat pattern of bombs was dropped on the target. Again, our squadron's losses were nil.

WEDNESDAY 5 April 44.

A column of ugly, black smoke at the end of the runway marked the day of the fifth mission. One of the planes of the group crashed on take off and burned. Two others collided in mid-air at the assembly point totaling three ships as losses for the day. No losses to our squadron.

THURSDAY 6 April 44.

A feeling of tension came over the combat crews as they were briefed on the airdrome at Zagreb, Yugoslavia. This would be a rough target. Here they could expect enemy fighters for the first time. Maybe not all would return. Nine crews from the 761st took off with the formation—only seven came back over the mountain and landed. Each ship noted while in the traffic pattern, it was discovered that the Squadron Commander, Major Robert L. Spear, flying with Flight Commander, James Crossey was missing. The other missing aircraft had been piloted by 1st Lt. Fred B. Smith, Flight Commander of the "D" flight. The interrogation soon told the story. The mission had been unsuccessful. The primary and the alternate targets were overcast and no bombs were dropped. On the route back Lt. Smith, in the last ship of the formation, had slowly lost altitude and speed until he disappeared. When it became apparent that Lt. Smith was about to ditch

his a/c, Major Spear turned back to give Air-Sea Rescue procedure to the straggler. Major Spear arrived on the scene just as the tail of the ditched plane was going under. His radio operator began immediately to send the position (just off the coast of Bisevo Isle) to Air-Sea Rescue Division, 15th Air Force. Nine survivors could be counted but no rubber dinghy could be seen. Major Spear immediately dropped his life rafts. As the rafts broke loose from the plane, they became entangled with the radio antennae and the tail. When the rafts finally came free from the ship, it was discovered that all radio antennae had been destroyed and the empennage badly damaged. Major Spear continued to circle the scene of the accident until he was relieved by a Spitfire. He then returned to the base with a account of what had happened. Soon after his landing, a message was received which reported that seven survivors had been picked up.

FRIDAY 7 April 44.

The seventh mission was stopped by a plane from another squadron which crashed on the runway, ripping it up and preventing further take off by the other planes.

SATURDAY 8 April 44.

Again, the weather stopped a mission after briefing. Lt. Smith and remaining part of crew returned from Bari. Our first replacement crew came in today.

SUNDAY 9 April 44.

Easter Sunday. A foggy, gloomy morning. There was a briefing, as usual, but immediately after the mission was called off. The trip up to Group was not in vain, however, for "I Dood IT" starring Red Skelton was shown for all who wished to remain. The weather remained cold and misty all day.

TUESDAY 11 April 44.

The mission was called off after a well delivered briefing. In the afternoon the group participated in a training mission.

WEDNESDAY 12 April 44.

After the third briefing on Zagreb by Lt. Palmer the planes took off on schedule. Lt. Tuten was an early return. Interrogation after return of those participating revealed target well covered, very little flak and no fighters.

THURSDAY 13 April 44.

Nine planes from our squadron took off for Bucharest. One of these, piloted by Capt. James Crossey, returned early; the remaining eight got over the target. It was a good bomb pattern and the target

was well covered. Flak was encountered in four places and was found to be intense and accurate over the target itself. Only six of these planes that got over the target returned that day; one was lost and the other was "delayed enroute". Annabelle, piloted by Lt. Frideaux, had an engine catch fire in the target area and began to lag. The ship was last seen losing altitude in Eastern Yugoslavia. It was being given protection by P-38s.

The other ship, piloted by Captain Anderson, Squadron Operations Officer, stopped in Bari. Over the target a burst of flak had come through the window hitting the photographer; the man was blinded and immediate medical attention necessitated this setting down. Subsequently, this photographer, Sergeant Mulhern from the 760th Squadron, was awarded the Air Medal and the Order of the Purple Heart. Despite the total loss of sight, even the eyes themselves, he is said to be taking it all in an optimistic manner.

Lt. Bell's plane had a tire shot out and came in with a crash landing on the runway. No one was seriously hurt. Lt. Ling, bombardier, sprained a wrist in making a hasty exit and the tail gunner was taken to the hospital for shock.

FRIDAY 14 April 44.

The mission was scratched because of bad weather.

Captain Anderson returned from Bari with the first detailed report of the injury sustained by Photographer Mulhern.

Two replacement crews reported.

On the sunny side, Captain Boubena, our widely-and-well known Medical Officer, moved into a new house today. They are comfortably situated with new conveniences, even a bar in corner of the living room!

SATURDAY 15 April 44.

A bad day for the Squadron and the Group. The mission went off as briefed, our squadron sending nine planes. Major Spear and Lt. Hiles returned early. The highlighted report of the six that completed the mission was the destruction of Colonel Crowder's plane. It had been attacked by an FW-190 in the vicinity of the target. Three chutes were seen to open. But there was no report of anyone seen to bail out of the plane piloted by Lt. Boone. Pilot Suttan, with new replacement crew, turned back short of the target and has not been reported since.

SUNDAY 16 April 44.

A nice spring day and a mission to the Rumanian border city of Turnu Severin. No known enemy fighters were seen; however, three ships did shoot down an unidentified that came in close. It was later

thought to be a P-51. From the reports the target was well covered. Very little flak was seen. The Group sustained no losses. Captain Crossey returned early with an engine out.

MONDAY 17 April 44.

The planes were back early due to bad weather over the target.

A P-51 was landed on the field to provide a visual lesson in recognition to any gunners that might in the future be apt to confuse this with any enemy fighter.

Lt. Szozezan passed around a box of candy that he thought belonged to a friend. His best friend told him, however, it was his own that had just come in, but it was too late to save the candy.

TUESDAY 18 April 44.

No mission. But bad news was received from Lt. Col. Harrison. He directed that combat crews on their days off would be given calisthenics and close order drill.

THURSDAY 20 April 44.

Mission to north Italy. We had up nine planes. Very little flak.

FRIDAY 21 April 44.

Mission to Yugoslavia. All planes of the Group returned except one from another squadron. Our crews considered the flak light, excepting Lt. Fielder. A projectile penetrated their plane just back of the wing and came out on the other side leaving two holes approximately 8 to 10 inches in diameter. No one was injured.

SUNDAY 23 April 44.

Wiener Neustadt is today's target, the particular objective being the enemy airplanes on the ground. Ten planes took off; three early returns. Other planes encountered little opposition and sustained no losses.

FRIDAY 28 April 44.

Today's story is the story of the past four or five days: Mission called off after briefing.

SATURDAY 29 April 44.

The great French naval base at Toulon is our target for this day. One of our ten planes failed to return today. Lt. Larr went into Naples. One late return, Lt. Hojanski, stopped and refueled at a base in Sardinia.

SUNDAY 30 April 44.

Mission to northern Italy. All came back safely except Captain Anderson who came in to Foggia with one engine afire. One crew member had become panicked and bailed out over enemy territory. Lt. Larr returned from yesterday's mission.

Now the camp is a Real-Estate Agent's Dream! Throughout the officers and the enlisted men's tent areas, construction of all kinds is at a peak. Small houses, large houses, and medium sized houses are being built.

The building boom started about four weeks ago when Colonel Harrison chided the group officers for their lackadaisical and lazy acceptance of existing living conditions. He urged them to better themselves and improve their tents.

His remarks were like fire to timber. Mass construction commenced. In a few short weeks the camp area has completely changed in appearance. From a bivouac of pyramidal tents the area has now become a small village of tufa block and tile houses.

With Colonel Harrison's sanction the Squadron transportation section was besieged daily with requests for trucks to haul tufa blocks and tile.

Tufa is a native stone; the blocks resemble a soft sandstone and are almost white in color. They are about 18" x 12" and weigh about eighty pounds. A quarry near Gravins has supplied a large quantity.

A house 24' x 16' required about 800 tufa blocks each of which had to be loaded by hand, but this did not stop the domestic minded men of the 761st. The fact that all material had to be hauled after dark was but one obstacle that had to be overcome. Native contractors and laborers had to be found and hired, no existent lumber and nails had to be procured and cement, lime and sand also had to be found.

Once the building was completed the inhabitants began a mad chase about the surrounding towns and villages hunting for furniture, windows, doors and various assortments of incidentals necessary to make a home of the shells of tufa.

To date some sixteen houses are complete and many more are under construction. Those who do not feel compelled to build have added extensions and floors to their tents to make them a little more livable.

Many of the proud house owners have mashed toes and fingers from dropped tufa blocks but they have improved state of mind, which the field manuals call morale.