

February 1944

[Transcriber's note: Some entries are truncated. Especially the opening lists of wounded in action, distinguished actions, etc. Please see the original document for the full details.]

War Diary, 487th Bombardment Squadron, 340th Bombardment Group

Prepared by: Sgt. James P. Shanley and Cpl. Richard C. Hurley, 487th BS.

2. Individuals appearing in photographs included in this war diary:

- a. Holzman, Warrington, Chandler, Peterson, Gammage, O'Neill
- b. Casey, Miles, Pitonyak, Collman, Parsons, Hague
- c. Carter, Conwill, Custer, Larson, Walsh, Prichard, Kenney, Winebrenner, Melia, Smith, Crupp
- d. Gould, Metz, Lynch, Cooper, Oliver, Coyle
- e. Dutchick, Goodrich, Keister, Gould, Badgett, O'Neill, Schreiner, Coyle, Lynch.
- f. Glenn, McBride, Barankovich, Ellman.
- g. Grantham, Highland, Johnston, Grossman, Horwitz.
- h. Gellman, Miles, Hurney, Parsons

I. Losses in Action

J.W. Boston
C.H. Chandler
R.B. Alexander
W. Liebe
W. Isaacowitz
P.A. Rupert

Ray J. Rosato
John J. Weber

J. Distinguished Themselves in Action

Curtis R. Keogh
Leslie M. Lewis
Casimir C. Klujsza

1st

Stand-down all morning until a stand-down as declared shortly after noon.....A huge steak dinner with all the trimmings was scheduled for the noon meal with Col. Jones and several Red Cross girls as the guests of honor. However, the dinner was postponed until the evening and the steaks were held over. Judging from the continuous length of the chow line the meal was a success.....Pay day was held today rather than the 31st due to the distance between here and the Finance office. The customary card and crap games followed leaving some with plenty which is always outnumbered by those left holding the well known "bag." Local Vino shops were crowded this evening until all hours with singing G.I.'s.....Enlisted men and officers played a double header soft ball game today. Enlisted men won both games, 7 to 6 and 2 to 1. All were thoroughly exhausted after this first game of the season.....M/Sgt. Lynch, better known as "Pappy" is representing the Veterans of Foreign Wars and already claims writing 72 applications in this squadron alone.....It's a unanimous opinion that the blonde Hildigarde of the Red Cross unit could choose the cot under which to park her shoes, but dammit, she won't. She is not to be confused with the lovely Hildigarde of American night life fame.....No dispute about who wins the "honor" this month for having lost his pay fastest. S/Sgt. Bill Dutchick wins hands down with only a 15 minute period of grace.....

2nd

Twelve ships and crews took off at 11:20 today with the road junction at Marion, Italy as their target. The two ton bomb load was dropped from 11000' at 1240 hours with uncanny accuracy. 90% hits were observed in the target area. Ack-ack was heavy, intense and moderately accurate, but no ships were holed and all returned safely to the base.....A party of men went on a trip to Caserta and had the opportunity of visiting the Allied Headquarters stationed in the Royal Palace. Due to restriction the entire Palace was not open for inspection, but all the boys were impressed with what they did see....Orders are being taken for the squadron insignia which which at long last is coming into its own. Everyone is interested in displaying his identity and can't wait to see the finished product.....Fresh meat stew for dinner today and roast beef for supper. Sure was a meaty cow Lt. Samuels butchered and all agree that a few more should be purchased. Everyone's morale is much higher when the food is good.....All the newly acquired athletic equipment is getting a work out these days. The squadron street is the favorite scene for tossing around the foot ball and at almost any time of the day we see a number of the boys practicing up.....Our A.P.O. was changed again and all are hoping that it speeds up the deliveries as letters from home have been few and far between since Xmas....."Ghost Breakers" with Bob Hope was the picture at the movies. Bob is one of the favorites and whether the story is good or bad it makes no difference.....Rumor once more says we might go to the Pacific Theater. Most of the boys think the possibilities are slight and give it no more thought. After a year overseas, transfer to another theater of war would take the heart out of the whole gang as the good old U.S.A. is our goal when the Jerries decide to call it quits.....

3rd

Crews were alerted early in the morning for the fist mission but due to the weather conditions Group briefing was called off until 1146 hours at which time a stand-down was declared. The stand-down had no sooner been announced and everybody was heading out in different directions. Vehicles are at a premium every day but a total impossibility on a missionless day....."Madame Butterfly" at the San Carlo kept thirty enlisted men and a number [...]

[Transcriber's note: Page 4 containing the rest of the entry for the 3rd, all of the 4th and the first part of the 5th is missing from the record.]

5th

(cont'd)

[...] but after hearing that the Germans were pushing our front line troops around it was obvious that air support was needed although weather conditions wouldn't permit aerial efficiency. Several days of good flying weather should send them back beyond Rome.....A tent and area inspection was held this morning by Maj. Parsons and the 1st Sgt. - no restrictions evolved so all must have been satisfactory.....Another big P.X. ration kept five men busy until after six o'clock tonite. Chow and hot coffee was saved for the workers and after being seated in the mess-hall, some complained of sugaring their coffee too thoroughly. Upon investigation it was discovered that the syrup for tomorrow mornings pancakes was the coffee substitute.....Sgt. Stanley Markov received a telegram from S/Sgt. Louis Elinoff with a U.S. return. Elinoff had been an assistant crew chief with the 487th almost since activation, but an extreme ulcer condition got the bet of him in Catania and he left for a general hospital destination America.....Rumor now has it that we follow the 12th Group by February 28th.....2nd Lt. Dale J. Wallace transferred to the 12th Bombardment Group and 1st Lt. Curtis Davis, also S/Sgt. Taylor left us for the 12th Air Force Service Command today.....The bunch going to Vesuvius this afternoon missed the guide at Pugliano through a misunderstanding and attempted the trip up the mountain by truck. Some report that the funicular was running while others insist otherwise. However, it resulted in a good days exercise which even improved the flavor of C-rations upon their return...Late reports on today's inspection find one mans bed completely out of order – Cpl. Melia is on the serving detail until February 15th.....

6th

An early morning mission was scheduled, but due to a heavy cloud coverage, postponed until 14:10 at which time twelve planes and crews took off to bomb a road junction at Frascati, Italy. The formation was over the target at 1533 hours and dropped their bombs on the junction with a fair degree of accuracy. the pattern started short of the junction and crossed the junction with smoke and dust obscuring exact observations, but hits on the junction were evident. Ack-ack was heavy, moderate and fairly accurate, but two slightly holed ships was the only damage.....S/Sgts John E. Blume and Arsene H. Vervacke were today awarded the Purple Heart for injuries sustained in crash landing of January 30th.....A new squadron detail roster was posted today. C.Q. is now on duty for 24 ours at a stretch, starting at 12:00 noon and being relieved on the following day at the same time. Buck Sgts as well as Staffs will now pull this “arduous” task. The general consensus of opinion is that while it is necessary for a man to be on hand during the nite and early morning hours in case of an emergency, the balance of the time is spent only in trying to keep out of the way of the “busy” orderly room staff....Another change in the guard situation is the “roving in a jeep” guard. Two men in a jeep patrolling the dispersal area for five ours at a clip. A pretty good idea to conserve shoe leather and waste gas.....Men on the line who were formerly excused from almost all details excepting guard, are now taking their turns in serving the chow.....Congratulations to Sgt. Ralph Hoti and S/Sgt. Pinneo. Their good work has been recognized and they're to be made crew chiefs of the tow new ships expected shortly.....T/Sgt. Ceo. W. Laiten, “call me Ward” - holds the record for engine change. He changed his last one in 12 hours of actual working time, which is outstanding considering the equipment he has to work with.....

7th

Cisterna di Roma was the first target of the day with twelve ships and crews of the 487th participating in the raid. At 1010 hours a 48,000 bomb load was dropped from 10500' with utmost accuracy. The bomb pattern covered the southwestern part of the town thoroughly, extending across a railway bridge with several direct hits on the bridge itself. Ack-ack was heavy, inaccurate and moderate. All planes returned safely to the base. Mission number two had as its target the marshaling yards at Viterbo, Italy with seven of our ships taking part. Bombs were believed to have pierced the target area, but due to dust and smoke created by other formations, crews found it difficult to observe the exact pattern. After turning off the target our formation was attacked by what was believed to have been a ME 109. However, it did no damage and was last seen leading a couple of Spits northward. No ack-ack was encountered and the planes returned undamaged.....M/Sgt. "Pappy" Lynch finally blew his top about his men being pulled for all kinds of details. He and the 1st Sgt. had words about the situation when "Pappy" asked for a couple of clerks from the Orderly Room to help crew an airplane.....S/Sgts John O. Fabian and Bernard A. Zucker joined the squadron today after a number of combat mission with the 12th Group. Apparently their tour was so near completion that it was hardly worth while for them to accompany the Group to its secret destination.....Officers P.X. with a large variety of items was about the only happening of the day.....
"Jack Ass Mail" was repeated at the movies tonite.....

8th

Again today the town of Cisterna di Roma felt the weight of a 487th eleven ship formation. A 48,000 lb bomb load was dropped with an excellent degree of accuracy at 1332 hours with the exception of a few scattered hits along the road leading north to Cori. The remainder devastated the northwestern part of town. Ack-ack was scattered, heavy and inaccurate although two ships were holed. No one injured.....Sgt. Greg Moore did a pastel portrait for one of the local belles and received a hand worked linen table mat in return which he is rightfully proud of.....Everyone who heard "Rigoletto" last week was so pleased with the performance that they're asking for a repetition.....Two trucks loaded with coal were delivered to the squadron, however it was not any time before it could be put to good use.....Col. Jones presented Air Medals and Clusters with little ceremony out on the end of the taxi strip this morning. It was a 487th affair with 487th men receiving awards and 487th guard of honor.....Chow was scheduled from four to five-twenty tonite so that all enlisted personnel could make the meeting called by Col. Jones for 5:30 P.M. For most of the boys it their first glimpse of the Group Commander. He discussed the efficiency of the Group, complimented the men on the line for keeping our planes in the air 100%, warned against the deadly venereal disease rampant in this country. All told he gave a fine address and impressed everyone with his sincerity as well as his evident personality.....2nd Lt. Barlett L. Harper was transferred to the hospital today after being confined for sometime....."Betty Grable" displayed her shapely bit of femininity at the movies tonite in "Song of the Islands".....

9th

Troop concentrations at PP's F-881391 to F-890380 were the target for twelve of our shops and crews today. The formation was over the target at 1424 hours and dropped their bomb load successfully on the designated area. Ack-ack was heavy, intense and accurate, holing 6 of our ships. 7V piloted by Lt. Foster had its brakes and flaps shot out and 7M piloted by Lt. Puckett was relieved of its hydraulic lines. Both ships returned safely to the field and made successful emergency landings. There were no casualties....."Madame Butterfly" at the San Carlo Provided entertainment for eighteen of the fellows today.....Lt. Rosenberg is a frequent visitor at our new donut kitchen. Is it the donuts or the feminine

pulchritude that attracts him?.....Sgt. E. F. Shallenkamp who has been in the hospital for sometime was today transferred out of the squadron. "Ed" has been with the outfit from time of activation and will be missed by all, particularly his many comrades in the Armament section.....The following new combat crews arrived in the squadron today: 1st Lt. Thomas J. Doyle, 2nd Lt. Harry P. Naruszewicz, 1st Lt. Robert B. Alexander, S/Sgt. Paul A. Rupert, S/Sgt. Liebe Woodrow and Sgt. William Isaacowitz.....A sizeable amount of mail came in today, including some Xmas packages which were apparently lying around in some remote spot since the early part of December....."Song of the Island" was again shown at the movies tonite.....

10th

A beautiful morning with no apparent reason for a stand-down until the wind shifted and brought forth a deluge of rain lasting all afternoon and evening. It was a good thing that our excursion to Pompeii was scheduled for the morning or the few who signed up would have reneged in the face of a downpour. However, they beat the rain back after a fine morning in the ruins.....The usual vehicle shortage occurred immediately after the stand-down was announced. Towns most frequently visited on such an occasion are Napoli (on official business), Pompeii, Torre Annunziata and those not fortunate enough to get a vehicle content themselves with the local vino emporiums in Poggiomarino.....Lt. Rosenberg, Lt. Mayer, Lt. McCabe, S/Sgt. Micks and T/Sgt. Wynne left for Naples today with their final destination – THE CONTINENTAL LIMITS, after completing their combat tour. Lt. Mayer was so excited getting everything together that he forgot his orders at the last minute and a messenger chased all the way to Naples after him with the precious documents.....S/Sgt. Fleming put his "day off" to good advantage by visiting our convalescents in the hospital. He reports S/Sgt. Blume as being well enough to bitch although he has every reason to with his arms and leg in a cast. Cpl. Nelson is ready to come home but swears he'd leave the tonsils in if he had to go through it again and Cpl. Runyon is still bedridden in a cast, after his flying leap out of a moving jeep.....Maj. Armistead returned from Catania today in time to ground some more combat crew members at the end of their tour.....Cpl Ken Haddock is discovering the possibilities of social life in Italy. He was a guest at a dinner party given by his laundress and spent a very enjoyable evening – no cause for his pretty red-headed wife to worry though as the oldest daughter is but 13 years. Unreeling at the theatre tonite was "A Tale of Two Cities" which was a good picture in its day but unfortunately its day has long since past.....

11th

Heavy rains continued throughout the night and this morning. Troops at the front are badly in need of our support and in spite of the unfavorable weather, combat crews were on the alert until 12:30 when they were called for briefing. Rain, thunder, lightning and a downpour of hail stones made takeoff an impossibility and cancellation of the mission and a stand-down for the rest of the day was declared. Such days are depressing and most everyone sticks close to his "sack," although a number braved the elements to attend a performance of "Andrea Chenier" at the San Carlo Opera House.....Cpl. Nelson picked a bad day to return from the hospital, but nevertheless happy to rejoin his comrades.....The Generator in the squadron area which breaks down with regularity, did a complete fade-out early today and left us without lights practically all morning. However, the Service Group came to our rescue as usual, and it is now in working order at least for a time.....It couldn't happen anyplace but in the Air Corps. Two T/Sgts., Bob Copeland and Alfred "Newt" Bunn were both on the serving line in the mess-hall today where any Pvt. could say "Easy on the gravy" and they'd have to grin and bear it.....

12th

Twelve of our ships took off at 1033 hours this morning to bomb a road and railroad junction at Compoleone, Italy. Capacity bomb load was dropped directly on the target area from 9400'. 100% hits were recorded on the road, railway junction and station. Ack-ack was heavy, intense and accurate, holing eleven of our ships and knocking on out over the target. The ship was last seen in distress with one 'chute opening, although other formation report seeing all six 'chutes in the air upon leaving the target area. Time and time alone will assure us of the fate of our absent comrades. The ship was crewed by: 1st Lt. J.W. Boston, pilot; 2nd Lt. C. H. Chandler, co-pilot; 1st Lt. R. B. Alexander, bombardier; Sgt. W. Liebe, radio-gunner, Sgt. W. Isaacowitz, gunner and S/Sgt. P. A. Rupert, tail-gunner.....Fourteen men from the squadron left at 9:30 A.M. intending to take the Funicular up to Vesuvius, but upon arrival at the station found that the storm has curtailed all trips up to the volcano. After departing the question for some little time they decided to take the truck up as far as she'd go and walk the remainder of the way. Italian railroads are certainly nothing to write home about as this seems to be the case regularly. However, all seemed to enjoy the healthy hike in spite of complete exhaustion upon return. Donuts and hot coffee were served by our Red Cross unit after the tiresome tour. Lt. Linthicum got half way up but was forced to turn back when his leather soles refused to hold him in a vertical position. Capt. Bugbee admits an abundance of mountain climbing which will last him a good two years. Cpl. Bartkus will have a weighty package on the way home in a few days judging from the quantity of lava rock he brought back. He regretted that the snow couldn't be mailed along with the rocks to make everything complete.....Someone in the Cooks tent located a corny fiddle and music of the barn dance variety was heard coming from their tent. Enthusiasm wasn't great as most of the boys favor sophisticated swing.....The officers club threw a big dance tonite with gals, liquor and colored jive band which accounted for the dressed up appearance throughout the squadron. Cpl. Fred "Fearless" Reck earned his nickname today as far as all are concerned. Half an hour after the planes returned from today's mission, minus one ship and reporting flak as more accurate and deadly than anything to date he asked for permission to become a gunner on a combat crew. He must be determined to get home one way or another.....

13th

Supplies and M/T [Motor Transport i.e. trucks] south of Rome received a terrific bombardment from twelve of our ships this morning at 0945 hours when 45 x 1000 lb bombs were released from 11200'. Four or five large explosions emitting black smoke were observed on terrain covered by our bombs in the target area. No fight opposition was encountered, but ack-ack was heavy, intense and accurate. 7M (Tuff Stuff) received a direct hit in the bomb bay and was seen to land on the beach a blazing inferno. The fate of the crew: T/O C. R. Keogh, pilot; 2nd Lt. L. M. Lewis, co-pilot; 2nd Lt. C. C. Klujsza, bombardier; T/Sgt. R. J. Rosato, radio-gunner; S/Sgt. J J. Weber, gunner; S/Sgt. D. A. Click, tail-gunner, is unknown.....Two nurses from the Naples area were seen in the squadron area. Their primary purpose was to visit Capt Birmingham.....Col. Jones was also a visitor to the squadron, but no meeting was called. However, Maj. Parsons relayed his message that the entire group would shortly be equipped with new planes. A good break for combat crews and maintenance men alike.....Communication men took a truck into Torre Annunziata tonite, a custom which is becoming a habit with them. A good meal, multa vino and a bevy of beautiful women is said to be the reason. Cpl. "Shorty" Hausmann claims a love match in the town and the strange thing is that the girl still professes Virginity.....The dispensary posted a bulletin board notice "Will V.D. be one of your souvenirs?" Quite apropos as it is feared that many of the Italian Signorina's would willingly leave it among our souvenirs.....Crime does not pay is S/Sgt. Harasavich's motto from now on. He recently acquired a pair of shoes from supply by some underhanded method and now that one of our Eyetie friends has stolen the foot hear, Harry is up the

creek. He can't report the robbery as questions might prove embarrassing.....
"Parachute Battalion" was the movie thriller tonite.....

14th

Perugia marshaling yards, at 1012 hours felt the impact of 15x1000 and 6x500 lb bombs dropped by six 487th ships with precision accuracy. Bomb pattern fell across marshaling yards starting at the buildings in the center of the yards and extending across the tracks. Ack-ack was heavy, intense and accurate although only one ship was holed. One enemy twin engine aircraft was sighted over Perugia A/D, but upon being fired on by one of our gunners turned away.....2nd Lt. Lewis, 2nd Lt. Klujsza and T/O Keogh who bailed out of their crippled ship on mission of yesterday, returned to the fold today none the worse after their harrowing experience. All were picked up by a destroyer after swimming around in the cold water for an hour. S/Sgt. Click, tail-gunner of the crew is in the hospital. No word has been received on T/Sgt. Rosato and S/Sgt. Weber who were also in the plane at the time.....Valentine Day this year held no appeal – lacking the customary spirit with its satin covered, heart shaped boxes and the absence of the lovely ladies to be the recipients, but much mention was made of the fact that one year ago today we boarded the S.S. West Point – destination unknown.....Five combat crew members were feeling quite gay after consuming the pint o imported from the States whiskey, which thy received upon completion of their 55th mission "generously" donated by Maj. Armistead, M.D.....The first vehicle inspection ever held in the squadron took place today by representatives of the 19th Service Group who appeared satisfied with the excellent work done by our motor pool staff.....2nd Lt. Roland D. Curley, 2nd Lt. James L. Williams, F/O Edward R. Deere, S/Sgt. Henry J. McClernon, Sgt. John T. Raschetz and Sgt. Leonard R. Robinson arrived to strengthen our combat crew status....."Honolulu Lu" starring Leo Carillo was the "distraction" st the movies tonite.....

15th

The Abbey on Monte Cassino, which the Germans were shrewdly using as a Fortress was the target for six of our ships today. The formation was over the target at 1059 hours, forming a good pattern and dropped their 23x1000 bombs with excellent results, although several bombs fell short of the target and landed on the slopes of the monastery. Several explosions and large fires were observed emitting from the building. Ack-ack was heavy, slight and inaccurate. All ships and crews returned safely to the base.....A new portable Victrola, which Sgt. Stellato happened upon on on of his many excursions was purchased for the Day Room. Its a neat little Italian made job and no doubt will get much use – here's hoping it can "take" it.....T/Sgt. Pitonyak and Peterson have completed their combat tour and are celebrating their good fortune via the "bottle," which both say is now their best friend.....Cpl. McBride suffered an embarrassing moment today. While driving the weapons carrier on some mission he became annoyed at the driver of an Eyetie sedan and upon passing the sedan he put forth language unbecoming a member of the Air Force – much to his discomfort a shiny gold star adorned the shoulder of one passenger. Cpl. McBride will from now on, stop, look and listen.....In spite of much unfavorable criticism "Honolulu Lu" was again unreeled at the movies tonite.....

16th

Six ships took off at 0920 to bomb the marshaling yards at Orte, Italy, but failing to meet their escort returned to the base with all but 2x1000 bombs which were jettisoned in the sea. At 1330 hours nine of our ships and crews took off to plaster the marshaling yards at Campoleone, but due to a very heavy cloud coverage the target was completely obscured and the six ships of the first formation held their bombs fearing that they might endanger our own troops. The remaining three ships made up the lead

element of the last formation which dropped their bombs north of the target, possibly hitting the road leading north from the target. Cloud coverage obscured observations to any accurate degree. Ack-ack was heavy, intense and accurate, holing five of our ships. All ships and crews returned safely to the base.....After completion of a successful tour of combat S/Sgts. R. S. Berry and c. W. Sentlingar are homeward bound.....S/Sgt Lepley is back at work today after a sojourn in the hospital.....New combat crew members joined the squadron in abundance today coming from the 321st and 12th Bomb Groups while others are fresh from the States. New members are: S/Sgts. J. T. Ferraro, T. B. Read; Sgts. R. E. Gerhardt, H. C. Hunt, J. W. Ikner, Cpls. B. B. Burton, and O. O. Stokes....The 1st Sgt. found difficulty in quartering the men and distributed them evenly in all available tents and rooms. In fact he even called S-2 to inquire as to whether S/Sgt. Snaper had room-mates with which to discuss his ulcers.....Promotions today were the cause for all the gaiety throughout the evening. Among the officers Lt. Hague made captain and Capt. Schreiner his majority. Enlisted men to become T/Sgts. were: Casey, Gammage, Grantham, Henderson, Floyd, Wood and Mathurin. The shock was apparently too great for Gammage and he went to the hospital. Those to make Staff were: Iwan, Longwedel, Holzman and R. L. Johnson..... Sgt. Bernstein almost wept as his two weeks of labor on the shower burned to a crisp. Fortunately no one was bathing when the gasoline stove burst into flame devouring all wood accessories. however, Bornstein feels that he can repair it in time for hot showers tomorrow.....Group Special Service sent down ten tickets for the musicale "It's a Date" at the Air Corps Theatre in Naples. All ten fortunates like the show.....Our own little theatre presented a picture that must have been knocking around Europe since the last war, "Friendly Enemies" with World War I favorite Slim Summerville.....

17th

At 10:15 six of our ships took off to bomb supplies and M/T [Motor Transport i.e. trucks] beyond the bomb line at: PP's F-917494 and F-923490. Due to a complete cloud coverage visibility was nil and all bombs were brought back. A second mission had been figured on, but under the circumstances it was impossible and a stand-down for the rest of the day was declared.....S/Sgt. Taylor returned from a three day pass in Naples. His greatest thrill was in seeing an American woman in civilian clothes which was accomplished at the WAC mess hall where K.P.'s wore civies. No doubt they lacked the glamor credited to American women under the unfavorable circumstances.....The squadron acquired a piano today which almost completes the music shop effect in the Day Room. A plan for securing other musical instruments is now under way and if successful, a squadron band will be organized.....A little diversion was added to the opera today attended by 30 of our men. Cavallerio Rusticana was the short opera with two ballets, "Bolero and Dance of the Hours." All criticism was favorable and everyone seemed to enjoy the performance.....Pork chops for dinner today really hit the spot. Only complaint is that there was only one per man.....Mail is picking up here of late in fact we're getting it in bundles – old stuff....."Jane Eyre" in its new version starring Orsen Wells and Joan Fontaine played to a satisfied crowd at the movies tonite.....

18th

Today the target for six of our ships was M/T [Motor Transport i.e. trucks], supplies and troops at PP F-679557. Shortly after takeoff one ship, 7S returned to the base due to mechanical failure. The remaining ships were over the target at 1001 hours and dropped their bombs with a fair degree of accuracy. All bombs were dropped in the target area, but fell just short of an to the southeast of aiming point. One building in the target area just south of the aiming point was observed to be on fire. No ack-ack or fighter opposition was encountered and all ships and crews returned home safely.....The Rest camp on the Isle of Capri has been reopened after being "off limits" for more than a month due to

the Typhus epidemic and several combat crew members and a few of the ground personnel departed for a few days well earned rest.....Sgt. Liphardt has apparently won the heart of his laundress. We hear she placed his photograph in a "reserved" spot of her treasured family album.....A Catholic Memorial Service for all lost 340th Group personnel was held this morning at 10:30 in one of the local churches. Poor management was responsible for the lacking congregation. Nobody was aware of the fact and ninety-five percent are still unaware that it ever took place. Members of all faiths were invited to attend. The church which was heavily draped in deep mourning and displayed an American Flag covered catafalque. It was too bad that the Group didn't make a better showing although it was through no fault of their own that they didn't.....Congratulations are in order for Roger L. Johnson who regained his Staff rating. Next time he gets "tight" maybe he'll know enough to keep away from "trucks"....."Dutch" Huyser took his first extended leave today since he's been overseas – 3 days at Capri. Mike Tarkany and Harry Harasavich also got in on the same deal....."Jane Eyre" was repeated to a capacity crowd at the movies tonite.....

19th

Two missions today. First flight of six planes took off at 0835 to bomb supplies and troop concentrations at PP's F-890340, 893336, 899349 and 900338. The formation was over the designated area at 0950 hours and dropped their bombs with fair success. One large explosion was observed in the target area. Unidentified planes believed to be enemy dive bombers were observed over beach at Anzio, apparently being fired upon by our A/A guns. Ack-ack was heavy, intense and inaccurate. No ships were holed and planes and crews returned safely.....Second mission was in the air at 1423 hours with supplies, troop concentrations and M/T at Carroceta, Italy, as the target for six of our ships. At 1525 hours the formation planted their bombs in the desired spot causing many fires and explosions. No ack-ack or other enemy opposition was encountered. Planes and crews returned to the base intact from the "milk run".....Sgt. Jack L. Parks, engineer-gunner, departed today for his new position with the XII Bomber Command....."Jock" Duchaineau was a sorry looking soldier this morning after his "over-nite" visit to Naples. Too much action, little man?.....M/Sgt. "Pappy" Lynch blew his top when he was passing out the "Why Not Prostitute" circulars today and found one of the crew chiefs entertaining a member of the oldest profession in his tent.....T/Sgt. Paul Hofman is very busy these days keeping his ship in commission so that he can "pito" up the missions. He now leads the squadron with a total of 90 on "Rum-Dum," and at the rate he's going, he'll soon lead the group.....A group of the boys today paid a visit to Caserta. If the returning hour is any indication of a good time – Caserta must have a lot to offer in the way of entertainment.....

20th

Six shops and crews took off at 0915 to bomb ammunition and supply dumps at PP's F-890340, 899349, 903338, 893336. Shortly after takeoff two of our planes returned to the field due to mechanical failure, but the remaining four proceeded to the target and dropped their bombs at 0951 hours. due to the fact that our lead plane with navigator and the only photo of the target given to the squadron had to return to the base, it was necessary for the bombardier of another ship to take over and he had no photograph of the target. This bombardier believed that he hit northeast of the target on the north side of the railway track. However, other observers in the crews were of the opinion that our bombs fell alongside the highway on the right side, but well north of the target area on same highway about 500 yds. north. Our pattern caused an explosion and fire was seen to emit from same. Ack-ack was heavy, intense and moderately accurate. Two of our ships were slightly holed, but all returned safely to their home field.....Six ships and crews were off again at 1355 hours to destroy supplies and ammunition close to the bomb line. The target was reached at 1438 hours, but due to a very heavy

cloud coverage the formation held its bombs because of the great possibility of endangering our troops. No ack-ack or other enemy opposition was encountered and planes with their bomb load and crews intact arrived safely back to the base.....Cpl. Roy McKinney and T/Sgt. Holmstrom returned from the hospital resolved to be “good” boys from now on.....F/O's Griffiths, Over & McLaughlin after completing their combat tour, left this morning for the Zone of the Interior and rehabilitation.....A meeting of all section-heads was called this afternoon and while the matters discussed were of a confidential nature, it was disclosed that all sections will submit a report on amount of space, etc. required for shipping their equipment to where & why – that's the secret, but time will tell.....S/Sgt. Wilbur Snaper our S-2 section-chief left today for North Africa and a 5 day course in Aircraft Recognition. A short course indeed, but anything “Wilbur” can't learn throughly in 5 days is not worth knowing.....”High Explosives” was the “current” attraction at the movies tonite.....

21st

Stand-down for the entire Group was declared last nite. Apparently the reason was to hold the three classes in Aircraft Recognition scheduled for all combat crew and S-2 personnel at the Group briefing quarters. This rather shattered rumors of our going to Burma as there wasn't one single Japanese Aircraft in evidence throughout the lectures.....Rumors are fast and furious as to our destination, but England seems to be leading the latrine information at present. It's true that time alone will tell although it will be a pretty sad story.....Mr. Robinson, the Group Red Cross representative was down to the squadron today making final arrangements to supply the donuts for our squadron banquet tomorrow nite. He inquired as to the moral tone of the entertainment – the girls will not be present to pass out the donuts.....Sgts. Powell and Stellato went on a mission to Naples in search of the “lovelies” who are to add zest to the show. With Powell's loud talk and Stellato's knowledge of the language they should make some good contacts.....Since the piano has become a part of the day-room, Cpl. Pabis has been spending a lot of time trying to pick up his lost technique.....Sgt. Greg Moore made a test hop with Lt. Hauser today and came back with everything but what he had eaten for the last few days. From his bed this evening he professed a good time – we don't believe it.....S/Sgt. Leslie Cruze was pre-celebrating the squadron party tonite. At 10 o'clock he was very “umbriago” as the natives say, and as talkative as an old maid on a back fence.....

22nd

Foligno road and rail junction was the target for six of our ships today. They were over the target at 1134 hours dropping their bombs with only a fair degree of accuracy. The pattern landed east of the choke point starting just beyond the railroad and extended on and along the road leading east from the choke point. Our formation encountered no ack-ack and there were no casualties.....All day was spent in preparation for the “ONE YEAR OVERSEAS PARTY.” It was planned to start at 5:00 P.M. following a spaghetti dinner which was excellent. However, the entertainment, all but the band, failed to show up and a few of the G.I.'s volunteered to do their bit. By this time everybody was feeling their drinks and the hill-billy renditions could barely be heard. T/Sgt. Wood got up to lead the band and by the time the number was over Sgt. Wood had his clothes off to the amusement of all. The “girls” from Torre Annunziata arrived later and did their bit towards entertaining the boys minus costumes. They were definitely more vulgar than risqué. However, everyone seemed to enjoy themselves especially Sgt. Wood's performance. 1st Sgt. Parkins was master of ceremonies. Col. Jones was guest of honor..... Group guard is starting again and now has five of our men. Why the Group has never had a guard detachment assigned to the organization has always been a puzzle. Pulling men from their regular duties doesn't tend to raise the efficiency, but does have a definite tendency towards lowering the morale of all concerned.....So strong was the Vino tonight that it had practically the entire

Communications section singing merrily at the wee hours to the accompaniment of Sgt. Prichard's violin.....Tensest moment of the evening was when Grover Cooper, very intoxicated, changed his mind about fighting Capt. Coyle and decided instead to “goose” Major Johnson, Group Material Officer. Fortunately, the Major took it all in fun.....Bill Dutchick was in Naples today on “official business,” to celebrate his wedding anniversary – the second one in a row without his wife. He'll be around tomorrow morning drinking black coffee, no doubt.....The G.I. show “Hey Rookies” is playing at the Group theatre tonite and tomorrow evening for a repeat performance.....

23rd

Mission scheduled this morning was called off at Group briefing due to heavy weather. It was a gloomy, dull morning with intermittent showers throughout the day – no good for operational activities on the front.....A stand-down brought forth more aircraft recognition classes to the distaste of all concerned.....Nobody felt any too good this morning after last nite's orgy. 1st Sgt. Parkins said that the women performers provided him with the best sex lecture he ever had. All have definitely decided that they've had enough partying to last them for sometime.....Lt. A. J. King was transferred back to Group on paper which creates no difference in the Squadron because we saw so little of him as S-2 section head during his brief stay.....T/Sgt. Joe Walsh is on the Isle of Capri for a few days rest and doesn't know that he is now a Master. The Communications section chief has been sweating it out long enough now so it shouldn't be too great shock.....Details were down at the old Tomato factory all day cleaning up after last night's celebration. That's the only trouble with G.I. affairs – the policing detail that always follows.....Lt. Tasker, Squadron Supply and Motor Pool Officer is one of our most profound mail enthusiasts. In civilian life Lt. Tasker was a Mortician and his brother continues to send obituaries from the home town paper. It's hard to figure out whether he's counting the money taken in or lost on the deal.....”Road to Morocco” played at the movie tonite for about the 12th time since we've been overseas.....Mike Tarkany played “King for a Day” for just about one minute when Major Schreiner insisted upon changing hats with Mike and then snapped to attention, saluting “Major Tarkany.” All this, of course, took place while under the influence of intoxicating beverages at the party last nite.....

24th

At 1013 hours six planes of the 487th squadron took off to bomb the Airdrome at Fabrica, Italy. It was a little hazy over the target, but crews reported a good bomb pattern covering the southwest portion of east landing area which was the target for this squadron. The pattern was believed to have covered some of the aircraft observed on the ground. Ack-ack was slight and inaccurate. There were no casualties.....Major Armistead is seen daily practicing his Italian lingo while sitting in the ambulance in front of the dispensary. It was first thought that he was practicing facial contortions, but later proved to be just over enthusiasm.....S/Sgt. Al Paradis returned from Capri tonite with a new lease on life. The main reason for his broad smile was the wonderful bed, excellent food, and the feeling thorough relaxation. He admits that the bed took up one afternoon that should have been spent viewing the Blue Grotto.....Capt. Bugbee returned from Catania with more of those delectable blood oranges. They go like hot-cakes at the squadron P.X.....A rumor is spreading that the boys will have to fly over fifty missions which isn't going over too big.....Rumor has it also that the 12th Group is now in England and replacing its ground personnel, - Music to the ears of all.....Again at the movie tonite was “Road to Morocco.”

25th

A heavy rainfall all day, continuing throughout the nite, kept everyone who had no other business in their respective quarters. A very depressing day, but spirits were lifted with two mail calls – one at noon and another at 6 o'clock. A good many received packages containing much sought after edibles from the good old U.S.A. and while the greater number were in transit for a few months, their contents were devoured with much satisfaction.....In spite of the inclement weather, a group of the boys attended the opera in Naples. "Pagliacci" was the main feature with the "Bolero" as an added attraction. The opera was only fair and the Bolero absolutely "stinko." The dancers so far witnessed at the famous opera house can in no way be compared to the graceful artists performing on stages in our own country.....Carl Heitzman made a noble experiment last nite. He didn't have anything edible in the tent excepting a can of meat & beans to feed his newly acquired dog, so he fed her the G.I. ration only to discover the reaction was the same as from a human who eats beans – the dog spent the nite out in a pup tent.....Cpl. Balawedjer is back on the line as an A.M. after serving in a number of capacities other than his specialty, since our days at Sfax.....Sgt. Hetzner is sleeping very comfortably these nites with his head resting on a pillow thoughtfully presented by one of the local belles. The same Belle has also given Hetzner a few trinkets to send home to his "Mama." The friendship is purely platonic as the girl's husband is also a good friend of said Sgts....."The Amazing Mr. Williams" was presented at the movies tonite. A good picture and throughly enjoyed, although it was seen by most for the second time.....

26th

Today was another gloomy, depressing, rainy day and a stand-down was declared early in the morning. Combat crew members took advantage of the past few non-operational days by catching up on their sleep and ground personnel who had no other duties passed the uneventful day by reading, writing home and of course getting in a little "sack" time.....The boys on the line are preparing the basketball court, but unfavorable weather halted the proceedings for the time being. The next few days should find the game in full swing as all are particularly anxious to engage in the favorite sport.....The motor pool has become a favorite lounging spot since it was learned that they mysteriously acquired a barrel of Vino. Tom Bowden says "At last we're getting on the ball around here, but we should find out the donors name & address so the barrel can be refilled at regular intervals".....There was no movie as the theatre was reserved by the British to celebrate a special occasion.....

27th

Combat Crews were alerted at 6:50 this morning, but the mission was postponed at Group briefing due to a heavy cloud coverage. They were on stand-by until noon at which time a heavy and continuous downpour made it necessary to again declare a stand-down for the rest of the day.....Sgts. Clarkson, Casey and Bradley returned from an extended stay on the Isle of Capri. They left the squadron with a seven day pass but upon expiration of that time they "accidentally" miss the boat and couldn't catch another one for four more days. All were much impressed by the meals, conveniences etc. offered on the Isle and were sorry that they finally had to get out, but nevertheless grateful for the extra days spent in the pleasant surroundings. S/Sgt. Lawrence C. Lambert and S/Sgt. James D. Saunders are new members assigned to the squadron as of this date. However, Sgt. Saunders is on DS with the 12th Bomber Command and we haven't had the pleasure of meeting him in person.....Our mess-hall supply tent was broken into sometime after dark and relieved of a quantity of Flour and Meat – tow items which in these times are hard to procure. The Provost Marshall is hot on the tail of the culprit and if caught with the goods, will be severely dealt with.....S/Sgt. George Barankovich missed his plane

coming back from Malta and was stranded in the best Robinson Crusoe manner, except that we don't think he had a "Man-Friday" more than likely it was a "Girl-Friday," and for the week-end too....."The Amazing Mr. Williams" was repeated at the theatre tonite to a small group, due possibly to the bad weather.....

28th

Mission today for six of our planes and crews was a landing ground at Canino, Italy. The formation was over the designated area at 1210 hours, but due to cloud coverage it was impossible to observe the complete bomb pattern. It is believed that some hits were obtained in the north area bounding the dispersal area and also the north landing strip. Ack-ack was heavy, moderate and accurate over the target, but no ships were holed. However, on the way home, the formation encountered a heavy and accurate barrage about three miles south of Gaeta which slightly holed two planes and inflicted a severe cut on the head of S/Sgt. Crosby, radio-gunner.....A/A guns on the field opened up at 2000 hours tonite and had everyone scurrying for cover in anticipation of the the bombs to be dropped in the immediate vicinity. However, it turned out to be only practice firing – much to the disgust of some who are eager for excitement, and a relief for the more timid members of our group.....2nd Lt. O'Neill, after completing his combat tour, left bag & baggage on the first leg of his trip back to the United States and the waiting arms of a certain school teacher in Vermont....."Lady Takes A Chance" starring Jean Arthur and John Wayne was the picture shown at the movies tonite. An excellent picture that proved very entertaining and quite a change from those shown previously this month.....

29th

Bad weather once again made a scheduled early morning mission impossible. Intermittent rains all morning caused a stand-down at 12:30, but shortly thereafter the skies cleared and it was decided to take advantage of the brief respite and let our enemy know we were still around. Consequently, six of our planes and crews took off at 1550 hours to bomb the area north of Cisterna, Italy. at PP F-99360. The formation dropped their bomb load on the designated area at 1638 hours. Our bombs fell on the Cisterna-Velletri road immediately south of the target area and extended north through the target area. Ack-ack was heavy, intense and accurate, holing five of our ships. All planes and crews returned safely to the base.....The new outdoor basketball court is bringing out some potential stars – Charlie Truex, Harold Huffman and Al Spader show particularly good form. About the only thing the court has brought out in most of us is those stiff muscles.....T/Sgt. "Teddy" Handzel got that well deserved promotion to Crew Chief. He supervises the crew on #442 and is very happy with his appointment.....T/Sgt. Horwitz is pretty sure of that California cutie since he learned that all her luggage has been monogrammed "N.T.H." - in anticipation.....Ralph Hoff's proudest possession, his plane, has been officially named "#1 OK," which is exactly the usual status of his charge.....Baked Virginia Ham for dinner today resulted in many favorable comments on the vast improvement of our meals lately, although there wasn't enough for everyone and late-comers received the old standby "Spam"....."Lady Takes A Chance" was repeated at the movies tonite to a capacity audience in spite of the bad weather.....

Aircraft and personnel highlighted in photos included in this war diary:

Page 18:
Tuff Stuff

S/Sgt. Holzman
T/Sgt. Warrington
2nd Lt. Chandler
T/Sgt. Peterson
T/Sgt. Gammage
Lt. O'Neill

Page 19:

Rum Dum

T/Sgt. Casey
Lt. Miles
T/Sgt. Pitonyak
Lt. Gellman
Major Parsons
Capt. Hague

Page 20:

Rum Dum

Lt. Gellman
Lt. Miles
T/Sgt. Hurney
Major Parsons

Page 21:

Communications Crew

T/Sgt. Carter
Cpl. Conwill
Sgt. Custer
S/Sgt. Larsen
M/Sgt. Walsh
Sgt. Prichard
S/Sgt. Kenney
Lt. Winebrenner
Cpl. Melia
Sgt. J. A. Smith
Cpl. Grupp

Page 22:

M/Sgt. Gould
M/Sgt. Metz
M/Sgt. Lynch
M/Sgt. Cooper
Lt. Oliver
Capt. Coyle

Page 23:

Engineering Office Photograph

S/Sgt. Dutchick
Sgt. Goodrich
Sgt. Keister
M/Sgt. Gould
Lt. Badgett
Lt. O'Neill
Major Schreiner
Capt. Coyle
M/Sgt. Lynch

Page 24:

Tare Sugar

Cpl. Glenn
Cpl. McBride
S/Sgt. Barankovich
Cpl. Ellman

Page 25:

Rosie

T/Sgt. Grantham
Cpl. Highland
T/Sgt. Johnston
Sgt. Grossman
S/Sgt. Horwitz

