

August 1942 – August 1943

[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

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F. Campaigns:

1. Tunisian Campaign

Period of participation: March, 1943, to the capitulation of Axis Forces in North Africa.

Purpose: To give direct tactical support to the British 8th Army by bombing troop concentrations, installations, and avenues of retreat, thus aiding directly in the destruction of Axis military forces in North Africa.

2. Campaign against Italian Islands in the Mediterranean (Pantelleria and Sicily)

Period of participation: May, 1943, to capitulation of both islands.

Purpose: To destroy defense installations on the Island of Pantelleria. To prepare the way for and to give tactical support to forces invading Sicily, and to block the enemy's retreat and destroy his armies.

3. Campaign against the mainland of Italy

Period of participation: The first and only mission flown against the mainland of Italy in this period, ending August 31, 1943 was flown on August 30, 1943, and constituted a bombing attack on the town of Marina di Catanzaro.

Purpose: To reduce the enemy's capabilities for defending himself when the invasion of his stronghold should begin.

G. Battles (Missions)

April 12, 1943 - 1st Lt. James L. Flack and 1st Lt. James S. Johnson rode as co-pilots in planes of the 83rd Squadron (12th Bomb Gp), participating in a 12th - 340th bombing mission, to become the first men of the 487th to see combat.

April 19, 1943 - 1st Lt. James L. Flack and entire crew participated in a combat mission with planes of the 12th and 340th Groups.

April 23, 1943 – 1st. Lt. James L. Flack and crew and 1st Lt. James S. Johnson and crew participated in a 12th -340th bombing raid on Soliman A/D, Tunisia. Lt. Johnson's plane and crew were lost.

April 25, 1943 – Major Cyrus K. Whittington, Commanding Officer 487th Squadron, rode as pilot in a 489th Squadron ship, with 489th crew. His ship collided with another over the field. All Crew personnel were killed.

May 4, 1943: Combat crews and partial combat crews of the 487th Squadron participated with personnel and planes of the 489th Squadron in a 36-ship raid on Zagouan, Tunisia.

May 6, 1943: Mission No. 1: One plane and 2 crews of the 487th Squadron participated in a 36-ship bombing mission against supply dumps and troop concentrations at Furna and Massicault, Tunisia. Several pilots also rode as copilots with the 489th Squadron. Captain Donald J. Marcan, commanding officer 487th Squadron, rode in a ship which was shot down in flames.

Mission No. 2: One crew, with 489th pilot, participated in a raid on St. Cyprien, Tunisia. One 487th pilot rode as co-pilot in a 489th ship.

May 8, 1943 – Mission No. 1: Three crews participated in a raid on Pantelleria L/G. Second mission : Five crews participated in a raid on Pantelleria harbor.

May 9, 1943 – Five ships and 3 crews participated in a raid on Pantelleria L/G.

May 10, 1943 – Mission No. 1: Three crews participated in a raid on Pantelleria L/G. Second mission: Five crews participated in a raid on Pantelleria harbor.

May 11, 1943 – Three crews participated in raid on gun emplacements at Djebel El Krera, Tunisia.

May 12, 1943 – Three crews and planes participated in a raid on gun emplacements and troops North of Enfidaville, Tunisia.

May 30, 1943 – Troop concentrations on Pantelleria. (6 planes)

June 6, 1943 – Gun installations on Pantelleria (6 planes)

June 7, 1943 – Airfield at Pantelleria (6 planes)

June 8, 1943 - Gun installations on Pantelleria (6 planes)

June 10, 1943 - Gun installations on Pantelleria (6 planes)

June 11, 1943 - Gun installations on Pantelleria (7 planes)

July 3, 1943 – Comiso A/D, Sicily (9 planes)

July 4, 1943 – Comiso A/D, Sicily (6 planes)

July 5, 1943 - First mission: Sciacco A/D, Sicily (3 planes)
Second mission: Comiso A/D, Sicily (9 planes)

July 6, 1943 - Comiso A/D, Sicily (13 planes)

July 7, 1943 – Comiso A/D, Sicily (12 planes)

July 8, 1943 – Comiso A/D, Sicily (13 planes)

July 11, 1943 – Trapani/Milo A/D, Sicily (11 planes)

July 13, 1943 – Town of Termini/Imerese, Sicily (night) (9 planes)

July 14, 1943 – Town of Paterno (12 planes)

July 15, 1943 – Town of Paterno (12 planes)

July 16, 1943 – Town of Valguarnera (12 Planes)

July 17, 1943 – Town of Catania (9 planes)

July 19, 1943 – Town of Randazzo, Sicily (12 planes)

August 1, 1943 – Roads near Bronte, Sicily (12 planes)

August 2, 1943 – Town of Randazzo, Sicily (12 planes)

August 4, 1943 – Southern exits of Bronte, Sicily (6 planes)

August 6, 1943 - 1st mission: Troops South of Adrano (11 planes)
2nd mission: Motor Transport N. of Biancavilla (1 plane)
3rd mission: Town of Randazzo (8 planes)

August 7, 1943 - 1st mission: Town of Randazzo (12 planes)
2nd mission: Town of Randazzo (1 plane)

August 9, 1943 – Road Junction near Divieto, Sicily (12 planes)

August 10, 1943 - 1st mission: Town of Randazzo (1 plane)
2nd mission: Town of Randazzo (2 planes)

August 11, 1943 - 1st mission: Town of Randazzo (12 planes)
2nd mission: Town of Randazzo (1 plane)

August 12, 1943 - 1st mission: Town of Novara, Sicily (12 planes)
2nd mission: Roads at Patti, Sicily (1 plane)

August 13, 1943 - 1st mission: Town of Falcone, Sicily (1 plane)
2nd mission: Beaches South of Messina (4 planes)

August 14, 1943 – Enemy concentrations at Gesso, Sicily (11 planes)

August 15, 1943 – Gun emplacements South of Divieto (12 planes)

August 16, 1943 – Beaches North of Messina near Torre de Faro (12 planes)

August 30, 1943 – Town of Marina di Catanzoro, Italy (12 planes)

H. Commanding Officers in Important Engagements

1. Major Cyrus A. Whittington

On Easter Sunday, April 25, 1943, at Sfaz el Maou L/G, Tunisia, pilot in a Mitchell Bomber (B-25) of the 489th Bomb Sq. The others of the crew were members of the 489th Bomb Sq. Th this time the 487th Bomb Sq. was new to combat and this mission was Major Whittington's third in combat, all flown with other Squadrons. On take-off, Major Whittington's plane and another of the 489th Squadron collided, with full bomb load, most of which exploded. The entire personnel of both planes, including Major Whittington, were killed. All bodies were recovered and buried with military honors in the cemetery in the city of Sfax, Tunisia. Memorial Day honors (My 30th, 1943) were paid to these and other dead of the 340th Group.

Major Whittington was regarded as a superlative commander.

Captain Donald J. Marcan, a veteran pilot of the 12th Bomb Group who had a short while before been transferred tot he 487th Squadron as operations officer, was chosen to succeed Major Whittington as Commanding Officer. On May 6, 1943, Captain Marcan rode as co-pilot in a 487th ship piloted by Colonel William C. Mills, Commanding Officer of the 340th Bomb Gp. Take-off was at 0615 hours from Sfax el Maou L/G, Tunisia, and the target was supply dumps and troop concentrations at Furna and Massicault, Tunisia. As Colonel Mills' ship came off the target, it received a direct hit from the intense anti-aircraft fire. It was seen to go down in flames. To date, little official news has been received regarding the tragedy, but it is definite that Captain Marcan bailed out successfully, although one of his hands was either badly injured or wholly severed, probably by contact with a propeller. He was taken by the Germans and placed in a hospital near Tunis, where he was left when the Axis forces retreated to Cap Bon. He has never returned to the Squadron.

Although Captain Marcan was with the 487th Bomb Sq. for only a short time, his friendliness and his very evident interest in the Squadron were building for him the foundations of a deep regard for him among officers and men as a commanding officer.

Major Charles E. Murray was chosen to succeed Captain Marcan as Commanding Officer of the 487th Squadron. During his tenure of approximately two months, after which he was elevated to the position of the 340th Bomb Group Executive Officer, Major Murry flew the following missions as Commanding Officer of the 487th Squadron:

June 8, 1943: Target – Gun positions on the island of Pantelleria

July 6, 1943: Target – Comiso A/D, Sicily

He has flown other missions with the Squadron since assuming his duties with 340th Group Headquarters.

Major Murray was the first American pilot in the Middle East. He has been overseas more than two years. Major Murray's extraordinary technical familiarity with bombing planes undoubtedly contributed much to the Squadron's paramount maintenance record.

Succeeding Major Murray as Commanding Officer, Captain Lewis F. Parsons has participated in the following combat missions of the 487th Bomb Squadron:

Pantelleria
Djebel El Krera
Sciacca
Comiso
Termini/Imerese
Paterno
Bronte
Adrano
Divieto
Novara
Marina di Catanzaro

I. Losses in Action

February 18, 1943

Lt. Frances X. Tehan
F/O Robert Lytle
1st Lt. Robert Crowell
M/Sgt. Jess Brazell
T/Sgt. James Hughbanks
S/Sgt. Russell Hinchman
M/Sgt. Richard Hanson

February 26, 1943

F/O Lester Long
Edwin Welcome
1st Lt. Jo Davidson
S/Sgt. John Roth
T/Sgt. George Cummings
S/Sgt. Athel Pate
T/Sgt. Carleton Budd

April 23, 1943

1st Lt. James S. Johnson
1st Lt. William B. Hille
1st Lt. Joseph F. Schooley
T/Sgt. George B. French
S/Sgt. Spencer

April 25, 1943

Major Cyrus A. Whittington

May 6, 1943

S/Sgt. Russell E. McGuire

T/Sgt. Gordon W. Warren bailed out, was hospitalized, is reported to have been evacuated to the United States. Captain Donald J. Marcan bailed out, was captured and hospitalized by the enemy, was freed by allied occupation of Tunis, and has been evacuated to the United States.

May 30, 1943

T/Sgt. Ted Bernstein

On this mission 1st Lt. Edward J. Cunningham, bombardier, was seriously injured, was hospitalized in Tunisia, and subsequently was evacuated to the United States. 1st Lt. Ray I. Sherbourne and 1st Lt. Charles P. MacCabe were treated for shock and minor injuries and were returned shortly, with S/Sgt. Roland S. Berry, gunner, to the Squadron.

July 13, 1943

2nd Lt. Elmer L. Baran, Pilot; 2nd Lt. Warren H. Lewis, copilot; 1st Lt. Stanley P. Matthews, bombardier; S/Sgt. Ira Wade, gunner; T/Sgt. John W. Fox, radio operator.

July 15, 1943

Sgt. Lyttleton E. Chance

This plane was hit by flak and made a belly-landing in friendly territory. Sgt. Chance was killed in the landing. All other crew members returned safely to the Squadron within a few days.

August 16, 1943

Captain James L. Flack, pilot; 1st Lt. Jonathan Leete, co-pilot; 1st Lt. Sidney C. Ormsbee, bombardier, S/Sgt. Eugene F. Hobart, gunner.

On this mission S/Sgt. Robert L. Goulding, radioman, successfully bailed out and returned to his organization.

J. Former and Present Members who have distinguished themselves in action:

Lambert, Marshall E.
Parsons, Lewis F.
Rodgers, Bobby
Schreiner, Henry J.
Brown, William T.
Cunningham, Edward j.
Emslie, William A.
Fonda, Willard C.
Garrett, Claude L. Jr.
Hague, Harold H.
Henderson, Horace L.
Hollis, John T. Jr.
Howle, Benjamin S.
Ipera, Orlando
Loysen Alton J.
McCabe, Charles P.
Peterson, Robert N.
[missing text] serial no. 0-664714
[missing text] serial no. ?-726692
[missing text] serial no. 0-791873
Warnock, Arthur R.
White, John W.
Wilkerson, Harold H.
Willhite, Homer H.
Wrede, Henry F. Jr.
Anderson, Harley H.
Bell, Kenneth L.
Black, John C.
Cerutti, Robert L.
Cox, Lee R.
Gavin, Edward F.
Hover, Arthur G.
Mayer, Robert A.
O'Neill, James F.
Rosenberg, Maurice Z.
Simenitzky, John
Wolkoff, Eugene M.
Griffiths, Melvin W.
Over, Jeremiah. R.
Sterling, Harold M.
Katherman, Ivin L. Jr.
Lynch, Marion M
Berninger, Robert S.
Campbell, Dennie
Driscoll, Paul E.
Furey, Robert D.
Guolding, Robert L.

Grillo, Dominic
Kinsinger, Edgar L.
Longman, Harold S.
Mancini, Leo F.
Pinion, William J.
Wynne, Joseph P.
Berry, Roland S.
Bilodeau, Raymond J.
Birkley, Herbert I.
Crane, Nathan J.
Dillingham, Henry e.
Durie, William E.
Dzialo, Stanley
Hall, Frederick L.
Hickman, Spencer O.
Jones, Harold L.
Kachelriess, John d.
Morgan, Jackson V.
Zona, Martin F.
Reilly, Edward J.

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