

765<sup>TH</sup> BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)

WFF/jdk

461<sup>ST</sup> BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)

Office of the Combat Intelligence Officer

APO 520, NY, NY

31 May 1944

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

After missing the first day of the month, we flew our first mission of the month on the second of May. The target was Parma, Italy, and adverse weather prevented all of the ships from hitting the target; however, the mission is not indicative of the work our Squadron did this month.

Our first good bombing started on the fifth of the month, when we plastered the Marshalling Yards at Ploesti, Romania. The target was heavily protected with AA guns and almost all of our ships had holes in them when they returned. The officers celebrated with a party in their club, and the music was supplied by a local GI band.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of this month at approximately 0445, Ship #22 caught fire on the ground and blew up with nine hundred pound bombs on it. Fortunately all the men on the line had enough time to get out of the way, and no one was hurt. Parts of what was left of the ship were scattered around the field for a half a mile, and the hole left in the parking revetment was about fifteen feet deep. There wasn't a part of the ship left that was recognizable. One of the engines flew across the taxi strip and landed on a ship parked in another revetment. Part of the landing gear landed near the Control Tower almost a half a mile away.

On May the 10<sup>th</sup> after our bombers returned from a tough mission to Wiener Neustadt, Austria, a plane from the 767<sup>th</sup> blew a tire on landing and the pilot lost control, ending up in the field next to the runway, with two of the engines burning. Captain Nathan, our Squadron Flight Surgeon, with the aid of Captain Goree, C.S. of the 764<sup>th</sup> climbed inside the burning ship and got one of the crew members out who was pinned beneath the command deck.

No mission was flown the 21<sup>st</sup> of this month; however, we were all called down to the Group Theatre to hear a report of the Groups Standing. We were all very much pleased to find that the 461<sup>st</sup> Bombardment Group was first in the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force, as shown by statistics of bomb hits within a thousand feet of the target. Colonel Glantzberg went on to say that all this would not be possible without the cooperation of all concerned. This Squadron has pledged to do everything possible to keep up the standing of the Group to this degree and will extend every effort to improve.

On the morning after the mission to Plembino, Italy, ship #21 failed to return. The ship's crew is as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. W. P. Bennett; 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. W. W. Peterson; 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. N. W. Owen; 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. W. B. Barlett; S/Sgt. C. G. Boronso; T/Sgt. O. W. Barzeorf; S/Sgt. D. Frebulfor; S/Sgt. B. O. Ivy; S/Sgt. J. W. Evans; and S/Sgt. W. G. Warner. The ship was last seen about 20 miles off the coast of Italy, after it signaled that it was leaving the formation. Air and sea rescue workers tried for two days to find some trace of the

missing ship but were unsuccessful.

This month we were able to send two crews for a well-deserved rest to the isle of Capri for a weeks rest, also 5 officers were sent to Bari for the same purpose.

On the last day of the month our mission was Ploesti, Romania. Take off time was around 0530, and all of our ships, except "Loading Lady" returned by 1400. The last time "Loading Lady" was seen, was 30 minutes after she had gone over the target. By this time she was in Yugoslavia, but was leaking gas badly. It appeared that she had been hit in one of her tanks, and didn't have a chance to make it back home. We can only hope that they are all safe. A list of the crew is as follows: 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Samuel E. Norris; 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Edwin (NMI) Equman; 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Everett C. Kamps; 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Edmund F. Stefenson; S/Sgt. Arthur J. Bindrin; S/Sgt. Glen F. Kolpoin; S/Sgt. Jefferson K. Varrall, Jr.; S/Sgt. Bufort H. Cullor; S/Sgt. Joseph S. Curtin; S/Sgt. Harry F. Kandori.

During the month 20 combat missions were flown. 3 planes were lost in combat, and one was lost due to an explosion. 20 men are on our reports as missing in action. Captian Nathan, Sqd. Flight Surgeon, was recommended for the soldiers medal. 4 enemy aircraft were shot down by our gunners. 7 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt.'s were promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Lt., and one Flight Officer to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. We had an average of 8.7 ships over the target per mission, and 12 missions which we participated in were scored Good, Excellent or Superior.

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EXTRACTS FROM THE SQUADRON HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF MAY

May 1. There was no mission today.

May 2. The first mission of the month of May was flown today. Severe weather prevented all of our ships from hitting the target. This was mission #17. All of our ships returned.

May 3. The crews were briefed for a mission today, however the mission was called off. The target was to be Ploesti, Romania.

May 4. The Group flew a practice mission today.

May 5.

May 6. Mission #19 was flown today. The target was the Marshalling Yards at Ploesti, Romania. Our planes took off at approximately xxxx, and all returned around xxxx. No flak or fighters were encountered on the trip. From observations and photos, the Bombardiers had a perfect bomb pattern.

May 7. **Record unreadable**

May 8. **Record unreadable**

May 9. **Record unreadable**

May 10. **Record unreadable**

May 11. All ships were kept on the ground today to prepare for the mission tomorrow.

May 12. **Record unreadable**

May 13. **Record unreadable**

May 14. **Record unreadable**

May 15. No mission was flown today.

May 16. No combat mission was flown today. **Record unreadable**

May 17. **Record unreadable**

May 18. **Record unreadable**

May 19. **Record unreadable**

May 20. **Record unreadable**

May 21. **Record unreadable**

May 22. **Record unreadable**

May 23. **Record unreadable**

May 24. **Record unreadable**

May 25. **Record unreadable**

May 26. **Record unreadable**

May 27. **Record unreadable**

May 28. **Record unreadable**

May 29. **Record unreadable**

May 30. **Record unreadable**

May 31. **Record unreadable**