

e. CALPAIGNS: Operations continued over Italy, otherwise no additions.

f. COMMANDING OFFICERS IN IMPORTANT ENGAGEMENTS: No additions.

g. LOSSES IN ACTION:

1. 1st. Lt. Robert D. Lundberg, bailed out East of Rome, Italy, 11 November 1943, seen to land safely and run from plane.

h. MEMBERS WHO HAVE DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES IN ACTION.

1. Capt. Michael R. Yannell, who completed his tour of duty consisting of 80 combat missions, on 8 December 1943, the first A-36A pilot to complete his tour of duty, was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross personally by General Henry Arnold, at Romigliano Airfield, Italy, in the presence of Group and Squadron officers, and Generals Spaatz, Cannon and House, after a brilliant flying career, with two enemy aircraft victories to his credit.

2. 1st. Lt. Robert J. Frisbey, who was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for bravery and achievement in aerial flight.

3. 1st. Lt. Alfred R. Bolch, awarded the Purple Heart for injuries suffered while on combat mission.

4. 1st. Lt. Robert R. Hood, awarded a cluster to the Purple Heart, for additional injury while in line of duty.

5. 1st. Lt. Maurice W. Griffin, completed 80 missions and his tour of duty.

6. 1st. Lt. Walter L. Gibson, completed 80 missions and his tour of duty.

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tion fuses on the north end of our airfield. Our ordnance officer removed them, and there were no casualties. The concussion from the falling bombs in Naples could easily be felt here, six or seven miles away. The big guns near our apartment shot at the German raiders numerous times, and made considerable noise. These air raids seem to be terrifically frightening to the natives who get in air raid shelters promptly. About half of our own men take shelter and the other half stand outside and watch the fireworks. Many don't even bother to put on their helmets. Occasionally one can hear the stray shrapnel whiz close by during these raids, but thus far we have had no injuries.

- 6 Two missions, both of which were very successful, were run today. The weather is continuously threatening. The activities up on the front seem to have bogged down and our forces are not moving ahead as rapidly as they were. Many reports indicate that the Germans are moving a lot more personnel into Northern and Central Italy for a determined stand, including a lot of Goering's crack Panzer troops.
- 7 One mission flown today, bombing movements along the Gagliano River. Our enlisted men have an Italian photographer in the basement of our apartment, whom they keep busy developing their films. This activity is more or less sub rosa and probably violative of the censorship regulations, but most of the pictures the fellows take are of a personal and non-military nature. The photographer takes fairly good portraits and the boys are busy getting "shot" for pictures to send home for Christmas. A few Christmas packages have already started to arrive, and a lot of the men have packed trinkets and presents for which they were generally overcharged by the natives here, for mailing back home.
- 8 The colors on the slopes of Mt. Vesuvius are changing and starting at the top it has taken on a dark brown hue, which is slowly moving down the crater into the valley below. Occasional dead leaves are falling from the trees, but there is no real sign of winter here as yet, except the chilly mornings and some ground fog. The natives still walk around barefoot. The road to and from Naples is crowded with military vehicles, native trucks and hundreds of native carts. The native trucks are loaded with human cargo to the point where one wonders how the axles and springs hold up.
- 9 Two missions flown today. Due to the comparative inactivity of the squadron on account of inclement weather, the enlisted men and officers are taking advantage of the lull to go to Naples. The officers may stay at the 86th Group hotel, which is the Albergo Lago Maggiore. There is no restriction on the place, and the officers who care to, take Italian girls into the hotel and stay all night with them. There is a shower in the hotel, and the rooms and linen are fairly clean and acceptable. There has been some trouble in the cases where some of the officers have left their bed partners in the morn-

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ings and gone to the fields. These girls who are left in the rooms insist on stealing the linen and other articles in the rooms.

- 10 One rhubarb mission South of Rome into the center of Italy was flown today, with good results. The natives are beginning to knock holes in the wire fence around the field. There are colored troops stationed at all the gates, but this does not seem to do any good in keeping the natives out. They insist on getting into the field where they either beg or steal tin cans, bomb covers, gasoline and oil.
- 11 Lt. Lundberg, on a mission South of Rome, had his plane hit by small arms fire, and he bailed out in enemy territory. He was seen to land safely and run with his parachute for cover. However, the spot where he bailed out was infested with German anti-aircraft units, and he was probably taken prisoner immediately. Today was Armistice Day, but with the majority of the personnel it passed unnoticed. Large convoys of men and materiel are still passing northward through Fomigliano and Acerra. Early this morning a huge naval convoy of 50 or 60 ships steamed into Naples Harbor, which seems to be already crowded with boats.
- 12 In the only mission flown today, Lt. Hansen bagged a German JU-88, and Lts. Koeltz, Fox and McClean, between them, bagged another, which raises our squadron score to 14 planes destroyed in flight, without loss to our own squadron. Twelve of more FW-190s raided our airdrome today, dropping numerous anti-personnel bombs which injured a few personnel, damaged a F-38 and a transport, and riddled a few tents. There was one of the raiders shot down by anti-aircraft fire. The raid came at British tea time, and a lot of the British who man the ack-ack on our field, failed to get the covers off the guns before the raiders were gone. Some of the bombs dropped are still lying on the field unexploded. There was an air alert tonight, but nothing happened. The 525th squadron lost another pilot today.
- 13 One mission only today. Lts. Griffin and Gibson, who had previously gone to Tunis to appear before the Medical Board preparatory to going home, returned today, stating that the Board was of the opinion they could fly another 10 or 15 missions before completing their tour of duty.
- 14 It rained most of the day, and consequently no missions flown.
- 15 Rain again today and no missions. Lt. Chandler got back from Capri where he has visited a few days.
- 16 Lts. (now Capt.) Dorris and Orr arrived back from Cairo. Capt. Dorris had a lot of strange tales to tell about Kenya Colony, Khartoum, lion hunts, and eager and promiscuous women. He stated

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that the people there were enthusiastic about the few Americans who get down there; that there is a United States training command flight into this country which he believes to be useful only to protect Pan American post-war air routes; that the U. S. sells gas to the British in this area for 10¢ a gallon, and buys it back for \$1.70; that there are huge numbers of military vehicles and wag troops in the vicinity, and that the whites who are called into service may satisfy the English requirements by sending a wag who may be his personal servant, consequently there being large numbers of young civilians out of uniform.

- 20 No activity from our field on the 17, 18 and 19, on account of rain. None again today for the same reason. There is a sea of mud all around us. The 525th Squadron and Group Headquarters moved here from Serretelle.
- 21 Stand down again today on account of rain. Our enlisted men have a fine club in one of the basement rooms of our apartment, flush with fine furniture that they brought with them from Barcellona, Sicily, and complete with up to date bar. Pop Grice is in charge of the club, which is exclusively for enlisted men. We had a turkey dinner today, with all the trimmings, including dressing and giblet gravy, together with pumpkin pie.
- 22 One mission of twelve ships flown today, bombing the docks at Civitavecchia. Lt. Willard left today to assume new responsibilities as Engineering Officer of the 33rd Group near Capua.
- 23 No missions flown today on account of rain.
- 24 One mission flown today in bad weather with an overcast. At the target at S. Pietro the formation found a hole in the clouds and in the process of going down were jumped by Spitfires, resulting in complete failure and part of the ships bringing their bombs back.
- 25 Thanksgiving Day today, and the Squadron had turkey for dinner, complete with dressing. In the afternoon, Air Marshall Cunningham visited the Group and talked to the pilots. He stated that the 27th & 80th Groups had done a grand job, and that they were to be commended. Also, that the ground troops were stalemated and had to now look to the Air Corps to loosen up the enemy, and that our groups were the most valuable asset the forces had for this work. He stated that the Spitfires, who had up to now been the "prima donnas" of the air would have to come down and do some bombing and strafing, and that they were being processed for this work in missions over Yugoslavia. He further commented that there were to be 1000 four engine bombers in Italy by March 1st, and that Germany was going to get 12,000 tons of bombs daily, and that the bombing of Germany was not only to assist in destroying from the present 7% up to 20% of their war industry, but to discourage any attempt at warfare 25 years from now.

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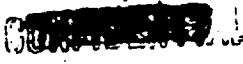
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- 26 There was a heavy air raid in Naples this evening. A number of the fellows were in town when it started around six o'clock. The tracers made a red curtain in the sky, and the shrapnel falling on the stone streets looked like fireflies. A Colonel who flew from Foggia to Caserta told them that a large plane filled with high ranking German officers had landed there for re-fueling, on their way to a conference, presumably with Allied leaders. Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin are reported to be in Cairo for a conference. The Squadron flew one mission today.
- 28 Pilots from the 525th Squadron, who were down at Montecorvino, told us that an ME-210 landed there, and that the two German pilots stepped out and told the personnel at the field that they could have the plane - that they were through with the war. The sun shone all day today for the first time in many days. Two outstanding missions were flown today, doing terrific damage to the enemy. Lt. Yannell came home with flak holes in his wing, and Lt. McClintock flew through a high tension telephone line, damaging the spinner and wings of his plane, requiring it to be taken to the service squadron for repairs.
- 29 On the only mission flown, Lt. Wright got lost in bad weather and finally landed his plane at a small grassy field near Benevento. He landed safely. The plane will probably be grounded there for some time. We just got word that Lt. Hill, who went home a few weeks ago, is to be married on December 4th.
- 30 Another highly successful mission was flown today in support of the ground troops that have been stalemated not far from Venafro, opening what appears to be a determined drive on Rome. Many of the men in the squadron have spent a good deal of time in Naples the past month, and tell strange tales about the place. The most common complaint is that the Italians persist in upping prices, knowing the willingness of the American soldier to spend. Naples appears to be an unique city in many respects. The women seem to be unconscious of any sex morality, and hundreds of moppets and old and middle aged men constantly approach the soldiers soliciting business for a "signorinna". Small brothels are to be found all over town. Singularly enough, our squadron has had but one case of venereal disease since we have been in Italy, which speaks highly of our men. One can see anything on the Neapolitan balconies from crawling bambinos to chickens and the people have a novel delivery system, lowering baskets on ropes to the streets below, where they make small purchases from street vendors. Cameos, fountain pens, highly colored bedspreads and dictionaries have taken the place of leather wallets which we found in Africa. Many fatalities take place on the streets of Naples due to the heavy traffic. The people still seem to be underfed, and still walk around with practically nothing on in the coldest of weather. The airrome is a sea of mud.

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- 1 One mission was flown after several days of inactivity. 16 planes took part in aid of ground troops, bombing and strafing enemy troop concentrations and gun emplacements near Rocca, Italy. There have been rumors of changes in the group and the various squadrons.
- 2 Two missions were flown in aid of ground troops who are making a determined push in the Verniro area, where there has been a stalemate for some time due to mud and bad weather and perhaps the appearance of larger concentrations of enemy materiel and personnel on this so-called "winter front". Col. Yancey Tarrant, popular Group Executive Officer, was transferred to the 64th Fighter Wing today, while on leave in Cairo, raising considerable speculation as to future policy and personnel of the group and the squadrons.
- 3 Col. Robert C. Paul, group commanding officer, was transferred to the XII Air Support Command, being succeeded by Lt. Col. Harold E. Kofahl. One two plane mission was flown by Lt. Yannell and Capt. Dorris on an armed reconnaissance mission near Cassino. Lt. Yannell came back with flak in his plane. The weather continues to be poor and the field continues to be muddy.
- 4 No missions flown today on account of bad weather. There are the usual first of the month poker and black jack games going on in the area with a lot of money changing hands. After about a week, most of the players are eliminated and the money is concentrated down into a few hands. Roosevelt and Churchill are said to be in Cairo for a conference. It is also reported that Von Ribbentrop has flown there. Col. Kofahl took over command of the Group. Our own commanding officer, Maj. Glenn A. Stell, who has commanded since we were at Korba, Tunisia, Africa, after the death of Capt. Reginald D. Winter on July 10th, 1943, has been transferred to the Group and will act as Operations Officer. Maj. Marsh, formerly a pilot of the 527th Squadron, and possessor of the Distinguished Flying Cross, has been named Maj. Stell's successor. Most of the pilots already know him and he seems to be well respected in the Squadron.
- 5 The group officers had a party at the hotel in Naples, in honor of Col. Paul and Col. Kofahl. Lts. Fite, Forster and Beebe were assigned to the Squadron. Two missions were flown today, one of which was dropping food to stranded troops on a hill near the front line.
- 6 Three missions dropping food to front line troops were flown today. The Group held its first Special Courts Martial since it was organized, today, in the Officer's Mess Hall of our Squadron. Lt. Col. Kofahl, who was President of the Court Martial, was disqualified since he had become commanding officer of the Group, and therefore, the reviewing authority, and he was substituted by Maj. Charles Cassidy.

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