

CHAPTER XVII - THE RULE OF WEATHER: UNCERTAIN - JANUARY 1945

(A) Narrative History

The narrative story of the 461st Bombardment Group (H) for the month of January 1945 can be quickly told. It was another month of many combat crews and too few combat airplanes. It was a long month of rain, snow, driving winds, and seas of mud. It was a month of stand-downs, of bigger and better bond raffles, of growing importance of the Group Band, and of various types of staff meetings. Members of both the air and the ground echelons tried to keep their impatience, caused by the bad weather, partially under control by closely following the reduction of the German bulge on the Western Front in the Ardennes by the United Nations Armies, and the rapid advance of the Russian Armies across Poland and Hungary. The Russian drive was of special interest because the Russians either captured or eliminated five of the hottest targets left to the Fifteenth Air Force and the Group: The synthetic oil refineries at Blechhammer North, Blechhammer South, and Odertal in Germany; Oswiecim, Poland; and at Moravska Ostrava, Czechoslovakia.

(B) Operations

The bad weather of January was the worst in which the Group has operated since its arrival in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations. As compared to the fifteen missions in October, nineteen in November, and seventeen in December, the Group flew but eight missions during the month of January. A total of fifteen non-effective missions were planned during the month. Almost all of these were briefed and “scrubbed”. The missions were curtailed in number due both to the location and the kind of weather that prevailed in January.

During the Spring and Summer months of 1944 the 461st Group had bombed targets in the following countries: France, Italy, Austria, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Roumania, Yugoslavia, and Greece. In 1944 when the weather was bad over the Alps, the Apennines, or the Dinaric Alps, the Group could operate nearly every day by hitting targets either east or west of bad weather over these mountains. By January of 1945, however, Northern Italy, Austria, and Germany, together with very limited areas in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia, constituted the only area left for strategic bombing within range of the Fifteenth Air Force. Thus it happened that when the weather was bad during the month at the Base, over the mountains, or at the target, the Group was compelled to stand down.

At his press conference in Rome on 2 February 1945, the Commanding General of the Mediterranean Army Air Force, Lieutenant General Ira C. Eaker, said, “If there is any one rule about weather, it is its uncertainty”. Under date of 18 January 1945 the Fifteenth Air Force issued a monograph entitled “Operational Employment of Lone Wolf Tactics”.

In this monograph can be found an illustrated non-technical discussion of the weather conditions that influence the operations of the groups in the Air Force.

NEW CREWS

A total of twenty-four new crews were received during the month.

Paragraph 1 of Group Special Orders No. 2, dated 2 January 1945, reads as follows: "Having been asgd to this Gp PAC VO CG 15AF, 31 Dec 44, the fol named combat crew personnel are further asgd to squadrons as indicated, eff 31 Dec 44":

764th Squadron

1st Lt. Guy W. Lively and crew

765th Squadron

2nd Lt. Cornelius H. Brady and crew

2nd Lt. Hohnson S. Miller and crew

766th Squadron

2nd Lt. Raymond L. Coleman and crew

2nd Lt. Claude D. Fernstein and crew

767th Squadron

2nd Lt. Robert P. Bogner and crew

2nd Lt. Charles D. McGinnis and crew

Paragraph 1 of Group Special Orders No 4, dated 7 January 1945, reads as follows: "Having been asgd to this Gp PAC VO CG 15AF, 7 Jan 45, the fol named personnel are further asgd to squadrons as indicated, eff 7 Jan 45":

764th Squadron

2nd Lt. Marvin W. Rathfelder and crew

765th Squadron

2nd Lt. Ernest L. Skinner and crew

2nd Lt. Leonard S. Wojtkowiak and crew

766th Squadron

2nd Lt. Charles T. Courtney and crew

767th Squadron

2nd Lt. Donald L. Ryan and crew

Paragraph 1 of Group Special Orders No 5, dated 8 January 1945, reads as follows: "Having been asgd to this Gp PAC VO CG 15AF, 6 Jan 45, the fol named personnel are further asgd to squadrons as indicated, eff 6 Jan 45":

764th Squadron

2nd Lt. Warren E. Petty and crew

765th Squadron

2nd Lt. Donald W. Michaelis and crew

766th Squadron

2nd Lt. Conrad E. Mahlum and crew

767th Squadron

2nd Lt. Harlow R. Huchzermeier and crew

Paragraph 1 of Group Special Orders No 13, dated 20 January 1945, reads as follows: "Having been asgd to this GP VO CG 15AF, 19 Jan 45, the fol named personnel are further asgd to the 767th Bomb Sq, eff 19 Jan 45":

2nd Lt. William P. Hettinger, Jr. and crew

Paragraph 5 of Group Special Orders No 15, dated 20 January 1945, reads as follows: "Having been asgd to this GP VO CG 15AF, 18 Jan 45, the fol named personnel are further asgd to the 765th Bomb Sq, eff 18 Jan 45":

2nd Lt. LeRoy M. Nayes and crew

Paragraph 7 of Group Special Orders No 15, dated 23 January 1945, reads as follows: "Having been asgd to this Gp PAC VO CG 15AF, 22 Jan 45, the fol named combat crew personnel are further asgd to squadrons as indicated, eff 22 Jan 45":

765th Squadron

2nd Lt. Robert L. Brewster and crew

767th Squadron

2nd Lt. George T. Henry and crew

Paragraph 1 of Group Special Orders No 18, dated 27 January 1945, reads as follows: "Having been asgd to this Gp PAC VO CG 15AF, 26 Jan 45, the fol named combat crew personnel are further asgd to squadrons as indicated, eff 26 Jan 45":

764th Squadron

2nd Lt. Roger S. Ross and crew

766th Squadron

2nd Lt. John C. Bontempo and crew

Paragraph 1 of Group Special Orders No 19, dated 29 January 1945, reads as follows: "Having been asgd to this Gp PAC Par 2, SO 25, Hq 22nd Repl Bn, dtd 26 Jan 45, the fol named combat crew personnel are further asgd to squadrons as indicated, eff 28 Jan 45":

765th Squadron

F/O Walter Baran, Jr. and crew

766th Squadron

2nd Lt. Howard J. Barcus and crew

MISSIONS

Mission No. 159, 4 January 1945 - Trento North Marshalling Yard, Italy

The first mission of the month of January was a four-flight formation that was led by Captain Veiluva on 4 January. The target was the North Marshalling Yard at Trento, Italy, which is located on the railroad connecting Verona and the Brenner Pass. The target was bombed visually for a score of 25 per cent. There were no enemy fighters and for some unexplainable reason not as much flak as had been anticipated. The main pattern of the bombs fell on the east side of the marshalling yard with some hits in the partially filled yard and some on the South choke point.

Mission No. 160, 5 January 1945 - Zagreb East Sidings, Yugoslavia

On 5 January 1945 the Group Air Inspector, Captain Trommershausser, got his first assignment as a Group formation leader. The target was the East Sidings of the marshalling yard at Zagreb, Yugoslavia. On take-off the planes in the four-flight formation worked their way up individually through a solid stratocumulus cloud layer and assembled on top for the mission. As had been the case for many months, the crews had been briefed to bomb targets in Yugoslavia only by the visual method. When the formation arrived at Zagreb they found their target covered by a nine-tenths layer of

clouds. After four unsuccessful bomb runs they abandoned the target and returned their bombs to Base.

Mission No. 161, 8 January 1945 - Klagenfurt Marshalling Yard, Austria

Mission No. 161, which was flown on the 8th of the month, was a briefed pathfinder four flight formation led by Lt. Colonel Lawhon with the South Main Marshalling Yard at Linz, Austria, as the primary target. At the keypoint the formation was compelled to make a 360-degree circle to get above the high cirrus. In the target area the solid deck of cirrus was so high that the formation could not get above it for a bomb run. After abandoning the primary target, Lt. Colonel Lawhon attempted an attack on the first alternate target, the marshalling yard at Graz, Austria, but there, too, the high cirrus prevented close formation flying. At Klagenfurt, Austria, the formation finally dropped its bombs on the marshalling yard through a solid undercast with unobserved results. The plane flown by 2nd Lt. Thomas R. Wiley became separated from the formation and failed to return from this mission.

**Mission No. 162, 9 January 1945 - Vienna South Ordnance Depot, Austria
(Cancelled)**

**Mission No. 162, 10 January 1945 - Regensburg Oil Storage, Germany
(Cancelled)**

**Mission No. 162, 12 January 1945 - Regensburg Oil Storage, Germany
(Cancelled)**

**Mission No. 162, 13 January 1945 - Linz Main Marshalling Yard, Austria, and
Bolzano Main Marshalling Yard, Italy (Cancelled)**

**Mission No. 162, 14 January 1945 - Vienna Southeast Railroad Targets, Austria
(Cancelled)**

Mission No. 162, 15 January 1945 - Treviso Marshalling Yard, Italy

A whole week passed before the Group was able to fly Mission No 162. Finally, on the 15th of the month, Major Poole led another four-flight formation in a visual attack on the marshalling yard at Treviso, Italy. Many of the bombs dropped short but others fell in the target area for a score of 32.1 per cent. There was not too much flak at the target but it was extremely accurate. As a result, eight of the twenty-three planes over the target were hit and one man was wounded.

**Mission No. 163, 16 January 1945 - Regensburg Oil Storage, Germany
(Cancelled)**

Mission No. 163, 19 January 1945 - Brod Railroad Bridge, Yugoslavia

On the 19th of the month Major Mixson led a three-flight formation in an attack on the railroad bridge across the Sava River at Brod, Yugoslavia. Despite the fact that some of the bombs were over, there was a solid concentration and direct hits on the target. The mission was scored at 43 per cent, the highest average for visual bombing obtained during the month of January. Again the enemy flak in Yugoslavia was extremely accurate though not too intense. The flak caused a fire in the nose of the lead plane that compelled the 764th Squadron Navigator, 1st Lt. Robert A. MacDiarmid; the Squadron Bombardier, 1st Lt. Robert A Herold; and the nose turret navigator, 1st Lt. John F. Chaklos to abandon the plane near the target. The first fire was eventually extinguished and Major Mixson and his pilot, Lt. Parsonson, returned it to the Base. Nine other planes in the formation were damaged by flak and two men were wounded.

Mission No. 164, 20 January 1945 - Linz Main Marshalling Yard, Austria

For mission No. 164 Captain Roberts drew the assignment of leading what turned out to be the roughest mission of the month of January. The target was the North Main Marshalling Yard at Linz, Austria. For purposes of destroying rolling stock in the yard, 100 pound general purpose bombs were used. With only four-tenths cloud coverage at the target the flak was extremely intense, accurate, and heavy. Twenty-one of the twenty-five airplanes over the target were hit. Two of these were extremely hard hit and exploded before they could completely roll out of the formation on the bomb run. These explosions spread the formation with the result that the bombs were scattered over a comparatively large area at the extreme northern end of the marshalling yard. The two planes lost were flown by 2nd Lt. Joseph M O'Neal and 2nd Lt. James R. Yancey. Four other combat crew members were wounded on this mission.

**Mission No. 165, 21 January 1945 - Vienna Railroad Work Shops, Austria
(Cancelled)**

**Mission No. 165, 22 January 1945 - Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Austria, and
Fortezza Marshalling Yard, Italy (Cancelled)**

**Mission No. 165, 23 January 1945 - Korneuburg Oil Refinery, Vienna, Austria,
and Fortezza Marshalling Yard, Italy (Cancelled)**

**Mission No. 165, 25 January 1945 - Linz South Main Marsahlling Yard, Austria
(Cancelled)**

**Mission No. 165, 26 January 1945 - Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Austria
(Cancelled)**

**Mission No. 165, 27 January 1945 - Linz South Main Marsahlling Yard,
Austria, and Verona Torto Nuova Marshalling Yard, Italy (Cancelled)**

**Mission No. 165, 28 January 1945 - Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Austria, and
Linz South Main Marsahlling Yard, Austria (Cancelled)**

Mission No. 165, 29 January 1945 - Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Austria, and Trento North Marshalling Yard, Italy (Cancelled)

Mission No. 165, 30 January 1945 - Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Austria, and Trento North Marshalling Yard, Italy (Cancelled)

Mission No. 165, 31 January 1945 - Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Austria

Ten briefings were conducted during the last third of the month of January before Mission No. 165 was finally flown. On the last day of the month, Lt. Colonel Hardy led the Red Force in a three-flight formation on a pathfinder attack on the oil refinery at Moosbierbaum, Austria. The mission went very well until the time of the bomb run. On the bomb run Lt. Holmes, the mickey operator, had the target in his scope but lost it when the formation was forced off the heading of the bomb run by another Group. He was unable to pick up the target again on a second attempted attack on the target. Most of the bombs were returned to the Base.

The plane flown by 2nd Lt. Edward K. Delano ran out of gas and was compelled to ditch not too far off the coast of Yugoslavia on the return route. Those killed were the pilot and 2nd Lt. Frank P. Hower, 2nd Lt. John O. Ungethuen, S/Sgt. Raymond H. Steelman, Cpl. Richard J. Gomez, and Pfc. William M Gross. After having been soaked in the cold January waters of the Adriatic, the following members of the crew got aboard a life raft where they remained for twenty-two hours before being picked up: Cpl. Robert C. Neel, Cpl. William F. Nourse, Cpl. Wallace D. Olsen, and Cpl. Carl B. Peterson. For nine members of this crew this was their third mission, but S/Sgt. Steelman would have completed his tour of duty on the mission had he lived.

Mission No. 166, 31 January 1945 - Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery, Austria

Major Baker led the Blue Force in a second attack on the Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery on 31 January. His three-flight formation dropped its bombs by the pathfinder method with unobserved results.

A graph showing the comparative standings in bombing accuracy of the 21 groups in the Air Force is not available for January. The Group, however, rated 10th with an average score of 33.2.

Messages and Commendations

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

1 January 1945

SUBJECT: New Year's Message

TO: Commanding Generals, Air Forces and Major AAF Commands

Director, Air Technical Service Command
Commanding Generals and Commanding Officers, Independent AAF
Activities
Commanding Generals, All Air Forces and AAF Commands in Theaters of
Operations

1. We of the AAF have good reason to be proud of our achievements during the past year, which marks the true coming of age of air power. New chapters in military history and theory have been written across the skies, and our long hard years of research, development, procurement, and training have been more than justified in action by our men and planes.

2. Today's remnants of the once powerful Luftwaffe can scarcely remember the time when they flew supreme over their own and conquered lands; and the Japanese Air Force is being taught the lesson of American Superiority. The outer walls of Hitler's vaunted Fortress Europe have been breached by our blows; today the Nazi soldier at the front looks around him at the chaos caused by the devastating attacks of our tactical aircraft and sees behind him at home the dusty wreckage of German industries and communications. In the South Pacific we have hammered the Jap on base after base along the way to Tokyo until today our forces stand at the gates of Manila. Within the last two months the island heart of the Japanese Empire has only begun to feel the power of our B-29's.

3. Our successes in the air, however, have not been limited to the purely destructive ones of modern war; we have been building for the peace as well. The Air Transport Command has but shown us the possibilities of air communications and has accumulated valuable experience for the better days to come. In operational theaters, the I Troop Carrier Command has done tirelessly and well the work of carrying fighting men both to and from the battlefields. And the vast China theater is entirely dependent for its daily growing supplies on the men flying over the Hump.

4. Those at home have contributed greatly to the performance of their comrades overseas. The procurement of supplies, the work of maintenance, the unending research; the selection and training of personnel, and the provision of replacements; the many special sections and services whose difficult and painstaking tasks so often go unnoticed in final results; the valuable seasoning experience provided for combat crews by our continental air forces; all these are vital factors in the splendid work of the AAF overseas.

5. The practical test of operational experience in the field, both abroad and at home, has resulted in the improvement of many methods of procedure, weapons and equipment, and the improvised development of many ideas, techniques or new applications of material and weapons provided. I am vitally interested in receiving at this Headquarters and such ideas so that we may put them to work and disseminate them to other commands. These new ideas can play a large part in giving to the AAF the greatest possible striking power.

6. Gratifying as the results of the past year's labors have been, we must not think that our job is done. The toughness of the enemy's fiber may be judged by the beating he has stood up under thus far. He will take considerably more. Our resolve for the year to come must be to hit him harder and harder, faster and faster, until his strength is finally broken.

7. As we enter the New Year, I want to extend my good wishes to all members of your command, and to encourage you in your determination to attain even greater successes than in 1944.

H.H. ARNOLD
Commanding General, Army Air Forces

HQ Fifteenth AF, 11 Jan 1945

FROM: CG, 49TH BOMB WING (H) 0-11100A

TO: CO, 461ST Bomb Gp (H)

Following message received from Twining cit XVAF A234 personal command message following is message received from Eaker.

"After reviewing the operational summaries of your strategic air force for 1944, I believe there is no organization fighting the enemy which has greater cause for pride in its accomplishments. Your leaders have been aggressive, your combat crews have been courageous, and your maintenance and support personnel have been industrious.

"Please extend to every member of your command my congratulations and great pride in their 1944 accomplishments and say that I wish ardently for each one of them continued success and safety in the New Year."

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE

Office of the Commanding General

APO 520

201.22

9 January 1945

SUBJECT: Commendation

TO: See Distribution

1. The Commanding General, Army Air Force, has sent the following message that I am pleased to pass to all units of this Air Force.

"The activities of the Fifteenth Air Force during the past year have had far-reaching effects and have contributed greatly to the world-wide successes of the AAF.

“The strategic attacks against the German aircraft industry carried out by your planes have visibly hastened the collapse of the Luftwaffe. The destruction of Eastern European oil reserves has been felt throughout the German air and ground forces alike. The shuttle run to Russian bases taught the enemy that no corner of Europe was safe from our attack.

“In the year to come we are looking forward to even greater triumphs by the Fifteenth. Though all your hard-won victories, I want you to know that you and every member of your Command carry with you my very best wishes for 1945.”

2. It is desired that this communication be brought to the attention of all personnel.

N.F. TWINING
Major General, USA
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520 U S ARMY

201.22

31 January 1945

SUBJECT: Commendation

TO: All Units This Command

1. The following letter from General H.H. Arnold to Lieutenant General Ira C. Eaker, Commanding General, Army Air Forces, Mediterranean Theater of Operations, is quoted for your information:

“You are well aware how great the successes of the AAF have been during the past year, and I congratulate you on your outstanding share in them.

“The powerful attacks against the enemy’s oil reserves in Eastern Europe have done much to cripple his mobility against our ground forces, to say nothing of the effect on his aviation. The continual pounding of his communications in the Balkans and in supplies where he needed them most, or to withdraw when he was hard pressed. The softening-up of the coastal defenses of Southern France before invasion, and the subsequent attacks against German communications in the same area were of inestimable aid to the rapid progress of our ground forces.

“As we close in on Germany, your blows will become heavier and heavier; we at home envy MAAF its chance to share so greatly in the victory. You and your entire Command have my most cordial good wishes for the New Year.”

2. Lieutenant General Eaker's letter to Major General Twining in further reference to the accomplishments of our Strategic Air Force is quoted herewith:

“As you appreciate, I believe, I have always made it clear to the higher headquarters and to the world at large, through the press, that I credited the Fifteenth Air Force, its Commander, staff and fine constituent Wings and Groups, for the remarkable achievements on the strategic side insofar as American forces are concerned in this theater. I shall always continue that policy.

“I would, therefore, like you to tell your commanders and staffs that General Arnold's commendation really belongs to them. I have had occasion many times in the past year, officially and publicly, to commend Wings, Groups and Squadrons of your organization, and the Air Force as well, for its outstanding achievements. I join with General Arnold in a year-end commendation for your overall effort, which is unsurpassed by any strategic air force anywhere in the world.”

3. It is the desire of the Commanding General that these expressions of commendation from both General Arnold and Lieutenant General Eaker be brought to the attention of all personnel of your Command together with his personal commendation and appreciation for your cooperation and efforts without which, such accomplishments could not have been possible.

By command of MAJOR GENERAL TWINING:

R.K. TAYLOR
Colonel, GSC
Chief of Staff

MISSING IN ACTION

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Home Town</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Mission Target</u>
2 nd Lt.	Thomas R. Wiley	Stamford, Tex.	8 Jan 45	Linz
2 nd Lt.	Wellington A. Gillis	Malden, Mass.	8 Jan 45	Linz
F/O	Bernard R. Goldstein	Las Vegas, Nev.	8 Jan 45	Linz
F/O	Bernard H. Hershkowitz	Newark, N.J.	8 Jan 45	Linz
Cpl.	Roy L. Noble	Elliott, Pa.	8 Jan 45	Linz
Cpl.	Robert D. Norris	Kansas City, Mo.	8 Jan 45	Linz
Cpl.	Clarence L. Gilmer	Hubard, Ore.	8 Jan 45	Linz
Cpl.	James A. Glasson, Jr.	Taft, Tex.	8 Jan 45	Linz
Sgt.	Forrest M. Bentz	Sinking Springs, Pa.	8 Jan 45	Linz

Sgt.	Oliver I. Snow	Freeport, Maine	8 Jan 45	Linz
1 st Lt.	Robert A. Herold	Cleveland, Ohio	19 Jan 45	Brod
1 st Lt.	Robert A. MacDiarmid	Simi, Calif.	19 Jan 45	Brod
1 st Lt.	John F. Chaklos	Detroit, Mich.	19 Jan 45	Brod
2 nd Lt.	Joseph M. O'Neal	Buckley, W. Va.	20 Jan 45	Linz
2 nd Lt.	Roderick E. Rothe	Green Bay, Wis.	20 Jan 45	Linz
1 st Lt.	Donald S. Teller	Kansas City, Mo.	20 Jan 45	Linz
2 nd Lt.	Norman E. Knoke	Chicago, Ill.	20 Jan 45	Linz
T/Sgt.	Donald M. Martin	Effingham, Ill.	20 Jan 45	Linz
Sgt.	Francis T. Keenan	Chicago, Ill.	20 Jan 45	Linz
Cpl.	Gino F. Rossini	Chicago, Ill.	20 Jan 45	Linz
Cpl.	Thomas R. Ellis	Farrell, Pa.	20 Jan 45	Linz
Pfc.	Harry Nowosilski	Chester, Pa.	20 Jan 45	Linz
Cpl.	Burton F. Mitchell, Jr.	Mt. Holly, N.C.	20 Jan 45	Linz
2 nd Lt.	James R. Yancey	Lexington, Ky.	20 Jan 45	Linz
2 nd Lt.	August M. Albergts	Rochester, N.Y.	20 Jan 45	Linz
F/O	John H. Krueger	Minneapolis, Minn.	20 Jan 45	Linz
F/O	George (NMI) Raino	Denver, Colo.	20 Jan 45	Linz
Cpl.	Fred A. Helwig, Jr.	River Forest, Ill.	20 Jan 45	Linz
Cpl.	Anthony J. Monaco	Long Island, N.Y.	20 Jan 45	Linz
Cpl.	Arthur M. Harris, Jr.	Durham, N.C.	20 Jan 45	Linz
Cpl.	Robert H. Gibbs	Evansville, Wis.	20 Jan 45	Linz
Cpl.	George L. McRae	Melrose, Mass.	20 Jan 45	Linz
Cpl.	Joseph W. Morrell	Roan Mt., Tenn.	20 Jan 45	Linz
Cpl.	Lloyd E. Kenyon	Jefferson, Okla.	20 Jan 45	Linz

(C) Photo Section

The enclosed photographs accompany this History for the month.

(D) Special Accounts

a. Promotions

Officers

- 24 December 1944 - Marion C. Mixson, 764th Squadron Commander, from Captain to Major.
- 7 January 1945 - Jack Pogue, Assistant Group Engineering Officer, from First Lieutenant to Captain.
- 10 January 1945 - Charles R. Phillips, 766th Squadron Commander, from Captain to Major.
- 10 January 1945 - Frank M. Poole, 767th Squadron Commander, from Captain to Major.
- 24 January 1945 - Robert K. Baker, 765th Squadron Commander, from Captain to Major.
- 26 January 1945 - Brooks A. Lawhon, Commanding Officer, from Lieutenant Colonel to Colonel.⁽²⁾

Enlisted Men

<u>MOS</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>
542	Gerard V. Smith	S Sgt to T Sgt.
940	James Van Nostrand	S Sgt to T Sgt.
938	Andrew W. Poznecki	S Sgt to T Sgt.

b. Missing in Action Reports

(Prisoners of War)

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>MIA Date</u>	<u>Target</u>
Sgt.	D.T. Leatherman, Jr.	4 October 1944	Munich
Sgt.	Regis P. Mannion	4 October 1944	Munich

(Returned to Duty)

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>MIA Date</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Returned Date</u>
1 st Lt.	Clarence P. Marshall	15/12/44	Linz	5 January 45
Cpl.	Guy V. Bosso	17/12/44	Odertal	14 January 45
1 st Lt.	Charles V. Lang, Jr.	17/12/44	Odertal	14 January 45
2 nd Lt.	Oliver Maggard, Jr.	17/12/44	Odertal	14 January 45
Cpl.	Lon N. Reed, Jr.	17/12/44	Odertal	14 January 45
Cpl.	Arthur W. Bettinger	20/11/44	Blechhammer	18 January 45
2 nd Lt.	Bates Boles	20/11/44	Blechhammer	18 January 45
Cpl.	Joe R. Bryant	20/11/44	Blechhammer	18 January 45
F/O	William C. Hart	20/11/44	Blechhammer	18 January 45
Sgt.	Albert G. Hill	15/12/44	Linz	18 January 45
Cpl.	Dewey E. Large	20/11/44	Blechhammer	18 January 45

⁽²⁾ See Appendage No 2, Chapter XVII, Page 3

Cpl.	James J. Martino	15/12/44	Linz	18 January 45
2 nd Lt.	Leroy M Naves	15/12/44	Linz	18 January 45
Cpl.	Robert L. Scanlon	20/11/44	Blechhammer	18 January 45
S Sgt.	Dorance R. Shaffer	20/11/44	Blechhammer	18 January 45
S Sgt.	Jan E. Wroclawski	15/12/44	Linz	18 January 45
2 nd Lt.	Arthur L. Hughes	20/11/44	Blechhammer	19 January 45
Cpl.	Wayne W. Boyce	20/11/44	Blechhammer	21 January 45
Cpl.	Douglas Meifert	20/11/44	Blechhammer	21 January 45
2 nd Lt.	Leonard W. Wager	20/11/44	Blechhammer	21 January 45

(Officially Declared Dead)

<u>Rand</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Home Town</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Mission Target</u>
S Sgt.	Joseph A. Brnetich	Newberry, Mich.	12/7/44	Nimes
2 nd Lt.	Richard V. Dargie	Malden, Mass.	12/7/44	Nimes
2 nd Lt.	Frank I. Denstad	Salt Lake City, Utah	12/7/44	Nimes
1 st Lt.	Richard S. Farcett	Amherst Mass.	12/7/44	Nimes
2 nd Lt.	Walter J. Graham	New York, N.Y.	12/7/44	Nimes
S Sgt.	Leonard S. Johnson	Berkeley, Calif.	12/7/44	Nimes
S Sgt.	Duane J. Lantow	Lyon, Kans.	12/7/44	Nimes
Sgt.	Percy A. Peterson	Osseo, Wis.	19/11/44	Vienna
1 st Lt.	Eugene P. Ford	New Derry, Pa.	17/12/44	Odertal
1 st Lt.	Russell C. Landry	Tucson, Ariz.	17/12/44	Odertal
T Sgt.	Charles E. Priest	Hazelton, Kans.	17/12/44	Odertal
F/O	Seymour J. Tenner	Newark, N.J.	22/1/45	Linz

(Hospitalized Wounded and Injured in Action)

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Date Hospitalized</u>	<u>Date Returned</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
2 nd Lt.	John P. Keilman	11 Dec 44	4 Jan 45	
1 st Lt.	Vincent O. Ecklund	17 Dec 44	1 Jan 45	
Sgt.	Walter L. Franks	17 Dec 44		Trfd to 26 th GH
F/O	Bernard Pulk, Jr.	29 Dec 44	25 Jan 45	
Cpl.	Bertrand A. Benedict	20 Jan 45		

c. Awards and Decorations

General Orders No. 231, Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, dated 15 January 1945:

Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross

Jay M. Garner, 0-709564, First Lieutenant, 766th Bombardment Squadron, Pilot, Austria, 11 December 1944. Residence at appointment: Chico, California.

General Orders No. 234, Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, dated 15 January 1945:

Award of Oak Leaf Cluster for the Distinguished Flying Cross

Brooks A. Lawhon, o-397652, Lieutenant Colonel, Headquarters 461st Bombardment Group (H), Pilot, Germany, 18 December 1944. Residence at appointment: Tacoma, Washington.

General Orders No. 255, Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, dated 16 January 1945:

Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross

James Van Norstrand, 35514153, Staff Sergeant, 765th Bombardment Squadron, Photographer, Roumania, 17 August 1944. Residence at enlistment: Cleveland, Ohio.

General Orders No. 11, Headquarters Mediterranean Theater of Operations, dated 17 January 1945:

Award of Legion of Merit

Francis M. Wheeler, 39311909, Sergeant, Headquarters Detachment, 461st Bombardment Group, for services in Italy from 1 July to 31 December 1944. Entered service from Portland, Oregon.

General Orders No. 12, Headquarters Mediterranean Theater of Operations, dated 17 January 1945:

Award of Legion of Merit

Joseph W. Doody, 15075668, Master Sergeant, 764th Bombardment Squadron, for services in Italy from 11 March to 11 November 1944. Entered service from Alliance, Ohio.

General Orders No. 279, Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, dated 18 January 1945:

Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross

Richard M. Gustafson, 0-772171, First Lieutenant, 766th Bombardment Squadron, Bombardier, Italy, 29 December 1944. Residence at appointment: La Grange, Illinois.

William A. Lecuyer, 0-717560, First Lieutenant, 766th Bombardment Squadron, Bombardier, Italy, 12 October 1944. Residence at appointment: Trenton, Massachusetts.

Lee J. Moremen, 0-711777, First Lieutenant, 766th Bombardment Squadron, Pilot, Austria, 22 August 1944. Residence at appointment: Seattle, Washington.

Davis J. Thomas, 0-766970, First Lieutenant, 766th Bombardment Squadron, Pilot, Austria, 23 August 1944. Residence at appointment: Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

Thomas M. Connolly, Jr., 11128066, Technical Sergeant, 766th Bombardment Squadron, Engineer- Gunner, Austria, 19 November 1944. Residence at appointment: Boston, Massachusetts.

Award of Oak Leaf Cluster for the Distinguished Flying Cross

Leon F. Churchhill, 0-668704, First Lieutenant, 766th Bombardment Squadron, Bombardier, Italy, 28 December 1944. Residence at appointment: Phillipsburg, Kansas.

General Orders No. 337, Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, dated 23 January 1945:

Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross

Eugene W. Brock, 0-723566, First Lieutenant, 766th Bombardment Squadron, Navigator, Austria, 17 November 1944. Residence at appointment: Salem, Indiana.

Howard R. Frank, 0-555654, First Lieutenant, 766th Bombardment Squadron, Pilot, Germany, 18 December 1944. Residence at appointment: Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Robert P. Loverin, 0-707293, First Lieutenant, 766th Bombardment Squadron, Radar Operator, Germany, 19 December 1944. Residence at appointment: Talcottville, Connecticut.

Arthur E. Farnham, Jr., 0-820979, Second Lieutenant, 766th Bombardment Squadron, Pilot, Austria, 19 November 1944. Residence at appointment: Needham, Massachusetts.

Francis H. Pierce, 0-1540470, Second Lieutenant, 766th Bombardment Squadron, Navigator, Germany, 23 October 1944. Residence at appointment: Max Meadow, Virginia.

General Orders No. 373, Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, dated 25 January 1945:

Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross

Floyd C. Stockton, 0-699871, Captain, 767th Bombardment Squadron, Pilot, Yugoslavia, 7 November 1944. Residence at appointment: Fort Cobb, Oklahoma.

William Paradise, 0-755748, First Lieutenant, 764th Bombardment Squadron, Pilot, Roumania, 22 July 1944. Residence at appointment: Staten Island, New York.

George R. Podwolsky, 0-819602, First Lieutenant, 767th Bombardment Squadron, Pilot, Germany, 7 August 1944. Residence at appointment: New York, N.Y.

Award of the Bronze Star from August 1944 through January 1945

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Orgn</u>	<u>15AF G.O.</u>	<u>Date</u>
M Sgt.	Lawrence J. Brehmer	767 th Sq	2619	17 Aug 44

M Sgt.	Marvin D. Bryer	765 th Sq	3639	26 Sept 44
M Sgt.	James L. Hardee	764 th Sq	3639	26 Sept 44
M Sgt.	Henry M. Jones	764 th Sq	3639	26 Sept 44
M Sgt.	Clifford L. Marsen	765 th Sq	3639	26 Sept 44
M Sgt.	Charles A. Lindauer	764 th Sq	3639	26 Sept 44
M Sgt.	Frank (NMI) Martinus	765 th Sq	3639	26 Sept 44
M Sgt.	Earl G. Rice	765 th Sq	3639	26 Sept 44
M Sgt.	George E. Chase, Jr.	765 th Sq	3801	5 Oct 44
T Sgt.	George W. Brown	765 th Sq	3801	5 Oct 44
M Sgt.	Cedric A. Reitnauer	767 th Sq	3973	16 Oct 44
T Sgt.	George Stancate	767 th Sq	3973	16 Oct 44
S Sgt.	Edward J. Szczypta	767 th Sq	3973	16 Oct 44
CWO	Harold J. Seberle	767 th Sq	3973	16 Oct 44
M Sgt.	Harry E. Hoermann	767 th Sq	3973	16 Oct 44
M Sgt.	Robert D. Calhoun	767 th Sq	3975	16 Oct 44
S Sgt.	Butler G. Fletcher	767 th Sq	3975	16 Oct 44
M Sgt.	George M. Dinnetz	767 th Sq	3975	16 Oct 44
T Sgt.	James R. Leach	767 th Sq	3975	16 Oct 44
Captain	Alfred M. Huber	767 th Sq	3975	16 Oct 44
T Sgt.	Ellis D. Blades	767 th Sq	4042	19 Oct 44
Captain	Harry P. Sheafe	767 th Sq	4132	24 Oct 44
M Sgt.	John F. Douglas	767 th Sq	4132	24 Oct 44
M Sgt.	Jacob J. Genuardi	765 th Sq	4168	26 Oct 44
S Sgt.	Carmen J. Capporelli	767 th Sq	4471	13 Nov 44
S Sgt.	Herbert S. McDonald	767 th Sq	4471	13 Nov 44
S Sgt.	Paul H. Ballard	767 th Sq	4471	13 Nov 44
T Sgt.	Lawrence F. Kuhn	765 th Sq	4723	27 Nov 44
T Sgt.	Gail G. Kopp	765 th Sq	4851	4 Dec 44
M Sgt.	Lloyd O. Hipps	764 th Sq	4966	12 Dec 44
M Sgt.	William H. Christie	764 th Sq	407	28 Jan 45
M Sgt.	Robert M. Martinez	764 th Sq	407	28 Jan 45
T Sgt.	Aubrey F. Holland	764 th Sq	407	28 Jan 45

d. Changes in Personnel

Mention should have been made in the December 1944 History of the replacement of Mr. Norman T. Boggs by Mr. Henry L. Janeway as the American Red Cross Field Representative with the Group. (See paragraph 8 of Group Special Orders No. 161, dated 7 December 1944.) Mr. Boggs was transferred to the Florence Area.

Paragraph 5 of Group Special Orders No. 6, dated 9 January 1945, officially records the honorable discharge of First Sergeant John E. Pegg from the United States Army to accept a battle appointment as Second Lieutenant. From the time of the organization of the 461st Group until the date of his commission, Sergeant Pegg had been the First Sergeant of the 765th Squadron. He became the second enlisted man in this organization to receive a battle commission. Paragraph 12 of Group Special Orders No. 12, dated 19

January 1945, transferred First Sergeant Ray L. Seaton from Headquarters of the Group to replace 2nd Lt. Pegg in Squadron 765.

On January 17th, Chief Warrant Office Fred C. Medau, Group Technical Inspector, was transferred from the Group to the 26th General Hospital for return to the United States. No immediate successor was named to him as Technical Inspector. (Authority: AFAC Par. 3, 20 15, Hq 26th Genl Hosp 303, US Army, dtd 15 Jan 45, the fol named personnel are reld fr asgd to squadrons as indicated and are trfd in gr to Det of Pnts, 26th Genl Hosp, eff 15 Jan 45: CWO Fred C. Medau, W-2123965.

Mr. Medau was replaced as Secretary-Treasurer of the Headquarters Officers' Club by Captain Thomas M. Couch. A few days later Captain Couch was also designated Custodian of Headquarters Officers' Club Fund.

Captain James F. Albert and Captain Alexander Robbins left the Group on 17 January 1945 to return to the United States. Both of these officers had been transferred into the Group during the summer months, where Captain Albert had served as the Assistant Group S-2 and Captain Robbins as the Assistant Communications Officer. Captain Albert left the Group after 28 ½ months of foreign service in the North African and Mediterranean Theaters, and Captain Robbins after 26 months in the same theaters.⁽³⁾

Captain Robbins was not replaced by another officer, but 1st Lt. Fred F. Hill was transferred from the 764th Squadron to become the Assistant Group S-2. See paragraph 10, Group Special Orders No. 10, dated 4 November 1944.

Paragraph 6 of Group Special Orders No. 12 dated 19 January 1945, placed 2nd Lt. John H. Boyd on detached service to Headquarters from the 765th Squadron and designated him Assistant Air Inspector to Captain Trommershausser.

On January 21st, Captain Jack Pogue, Engineering Officer of the 765th Squadron, was transferred to Group Headquarters to assist the Group Engineering Officer, Major Henry M. Hudson. (See paragraph 5 of Group Special Orders No. 14, dated 21 January 1945.) Captain Pogue was replaced in the 765th Squadron by 1st Lt. Raymond C. Whitlock.

For many months after arriving overseas the Group had had but one bomb sight maintenance officer, 2nd Lt. James W. Donnel. Paragraph 6 of Group Special Orders No. 15, dated 23 January 1945, in no way affected Lt. Donnel's duties but did transfer him from Squadron 767 to Headquarters.

On January 26th, 1st Lt. Ralph H. Layne, a Navigator on a crew in Squadron 766, was placed on detached service from that Squadron to Group Headquarters to become a liaison officer for the Group with Company M of the 21st Engineers who were reconditioning the landing strips, the taxi strips, and the hard stands on the field. (See paragraph 13 of Group Special Orders No. 17, dated 26 January 1945.)

⁽³⁾ See Appendage No. 3, Chapter XVII, Page 4.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

	<u>JANUARY</u>					<u>CUMULATIVE</u>				
	764TH	765TH	766TH	767TH	GROUP	764TH	765TH	766TH	767TH	GROUP
SORTIES										
NO. AIRCRAFT AIRBORNE	50	49	50	47	196	1220	1229	1200	1265	4914
LESS NON-EFFECTIVE SORTIES	20	12	12	21	65	243	265	270	272	1050
NO. EFFECTIVE SORTIES	30	37	38	26	131	977	964	930	993	3864
% AIRBORNE EFFECTIVE	60%	76%	76%	55%	67%	80%	78%	78%	78%	79%
AVE. NO. ACFT. AIRBORNE PER MISSION	6.3	6.1	6.3	5.9	24.6	7.3	7.4	7.2	7.6	29.5
EARLY RETURNS										
MECHANICAL FAILURES	4	4	2	3	13	87	92	108	102	389
PERSONNEL FAILURES	1	1	1	2	5	7	6	11	19	43
WEATHER	0	0	1	1	2	64	69	69	56	258
% AIRBORNE RETURNING EARLY	10	10	8	13	10	13	14	16	13	14
BOMB TONNAGE										
NO. AIRBORNE	89	87	90	84	350	2441	2466	2392	2525	9824
DROPPED OVER TARGET	51	66	64	46	227	1958	1979	1875	1983	7795
% AIRBORNE DROPPED O/T	57%	76%	71%	55%	65%	80%	80%	78%	79%	79%
VICTORIES										
DESTROYED	0	0	0	0	0	34	54	25	16	129
PROBABLES	0	0	0	0	0	8	16	8	12	44
DAMAGED	0	0	0	0	0	4	6	5	1	16
VICTORIES PER LOSS	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	2.0	0.9	0.7	1.3
VICTORIES PER 100 SORTIES	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.5	5.6	2.6	1.6	3.0
LOSSES										
TO ANTI-AIRCRAFT	0	1	1	0	2	11	10	11	6	38
TO ENEMY AIRCRAFT	0	0	0	0	0	7	9	7	9	32
OTHER COMBAT LOSSES	1	1	0	2	4	2	7	10	8	27
TOTAL	1	2	1	2	6	20	26	28	23	97
TO A/A PER 100 SORTIES	0	0.5	0.5	0	1	1.1	1	1.2	0.6	1
TO E/A PER 100 SORTIES	0	0	0	0	0	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.9
FLYING TIME										
COMBAT HOURS FLOWN	344	323	342	324	1333	8594	8375	8075	8500	33544
NON-COMBAT HOURS FLOWN	241	227	234	183	885	2311	2323	1895	2038	8567
TOTAL	585	550	576	507	2218	10905	10698	9970	10538	42111
HRS. PER OPER. ACFT	52	59	61	50	55	97	102	94	98	98
HRS. PER OPER. CREW	24	24	26	22	24	64	63	62	65	64
COMBAT HRS. PER OPER. CREW	14	14	16	14	14	51	49	50	52	51
AIRCRAFT										
AVERAGE NO. ASSIGNED	12.8	11.9	11.9	13.4	50.0	14.5	14	13.2	12.5	54.2
AVERAGE NO. OPERATIONAL	11.2	9.4	9.5	10.1	40.2	11.3	10.5	10.6	10.8	43.2
% OPERATIONAL	88	79	80	75	80	78	75	80	86	80
NO. EFFECTIVE SORTIES PER ACFT. ASGD.	2.3	3.1	3.2	1.9	2.6	67	69	71	79	71
CREWS										
AVERAGE NO. ASSIGNED	26	26	25	26	103	19.6	20.3	19	18.7	77.6
AVERAGE NO. OPERATIONAL	24	23	22	23	92	17	17.1	16	16.2	66.3
% OPERATIONAL	92	88	88	88	89	87	84	84	87	85
NO. EFFECTIVE SORTIES PER CREW ASGD.	1.1	1.4	1.5	1.0	1.3	50	47	50	53	50

461ST BOMB GP (H) MISSION SUMMARY JANUARY 1945

MISS NO	DATE	TARGET	1 ST ATTACK UNIT LEADERS	1 ST ATTACK UNIT DEP LEADERS	2 ND ATTACK UNIT	A/C TO	BRLY RTNS	A/C OT	SOBT	TONS DRPT ON B	% IN 1000	WEATHE R AT JGT	AA	E A/C SEEN	CLAIMS	A/C DMGD	A/C RTN	A/C LOST	MIA	CASUALTY	RATING	REMARKS
159	1-4-45	TREVISO WY, ITALY	CAPT VILVIA CAPT GARRETT LT PARSONSON LT HEROLD LT LITTELL LT MACDARMID LT ROMANOWICZ	CAPT MACDOUGALL LT PARSONSON LT GOODFRIEND LT MESSERSCHMIDT LT DALEY LT LEVIN	LT WIEBERSDOERF LT HACKER LT MURER LT CARROLL	26	1	25	25	500RDX	25%	CAVU	MH	0	0	3	25	0	0	0	GOOD	
160	1-5-45	ZAGRES EAST YUGOSLAVIA	CAPT TROMSHAUER LT PARSONSON LT JOHNSON LT KASSLER LT POLK LT PAMASISOTOPoulos	CAPT BAKER LT GOODFRIEND LT SULLIVAN LT METZER LT STEMHAUSER LT HOLMES	LT WALSH LT CARROLL LT ROSENTHAL LT LEGGIO LT LENBERGER LT CAREY	28	1	27	3427	0.500RDX	NON E	9/10	MH	0	0	0	27	0	0	0	NO RATING	
161	1-8-45	KLAGENFURT WY, AUSTRIA	LT COL LAWTON CAPT THIER LT COLLIER LT BRONK LT WILSON LT PHALEN	CAPT PHILLIPS CAPT SHAW LT COLLIER LT KASE LT DRIENZE LT CARROLL	LT MILLER LT SAUR LT SAUR LT KASE LT ROSSULEZ	28	4	23	3424	41.75 500RDX	PFF	10/10	0	0	0	3	23	1	10	0	NO RATING	FLAK AT VENICE
162	1-15-45	TREVISO WY, ITALY	MAJ FOOLE CAPT LUBERKE LT WHITE LT MOONER LT BOTTEGLIA LT HOLMES	CAPT TROMSHAUER LT ARENTS LT AMOS LT MOONER LT CAREY	CAPT GRAY LT SUMMERS LT DRETH LT DEAT LT KEATY LT ROMANOWICZ	28	5	23	3123	37.5 500RDX	NO SCOR E	CAVU	MAH	5	0	0	23	0	0	1	NO RATING	
163	1-19-45	BROD ER BRIDGE, YUGOSLAVIA	MAJ MASON LT PARSONSON LT HEROLD LT MACDARMID LT ROMANOWICZ	CAPT MACDOUGALL LT SAUR LT GOODFRIEND LT KASE LT LEVIN LT MASON	LT COL LAWTON LT YETTER LT LEGUYER LT LAYNE LT DRIENZ	21	0	21	3221	37.5 500RDX	6%	CAVU	MAH	0	0	10	21	0	3	2	EXCELLE NT	
164	1-20-45	LINZ NORTH MAIN WY, AUSTRIA	CAPT ROBERTS LT JOHNSON LT TOOTH LT KASSLER LT PAMASISOTOPoulos	CAPT BAKER LT WOODRUFF LT SULLIVAN LT METZER LT POLK LT PHALEN	LT BOYER LT DEAN LT PEARIS LT SMITH LT HOLMES	26	3	25	2925	39.6 100 GP	NO SCOR E	4/10	LAH	0	0	19	25	2	20	4	NO RATING	
165	1-31-45	MOOSHERBAU MOUL REFINERY, AUSTRIA	CAPT LUBERKE CAPT LUBERKE LT WHITE LT PLATZ LT BOTTEGLIA LT HOLMES	CAPT HESS LT SAUR CAPT KOONIS LT KASE LT FREDEBUCKS LT LEVIN	LT HESS LT SAUR CAPT KOONIS LT KASE LT FREDEBUCKS LT LEVIN	19	2	17	3417	0.500 GP	PFF	10/10	SAH	0	0	0	16	1	0	6 KILLED	NO RATING	RED FORCE
166	1-31-45	MOOSHERBAU REFINERY, AUSTRIA	MAJ BAKER LT PARSONSON LT SULLIVAN LT KASSLER LT POLK LT PAMASISOTOPoulos	CAPT MACDOUGALL LT GOODFRIEND LT JOHNSON LT PLUMMER LT BOWEN LT WILLIAMS	CAPT HACKSTON LT HADDRECH LT HESS LT JAMES LT CARROLL	17	3	14	2514	22.25 500RDX	PFF	10/10	SH	4	0	0	14	0	0	0	NO RATING	BLUE FORCE

Weather Considerations

Base, route and target weather prevailing in Fifteenth Air Force operating areas during late fall, winter and early spring have definite local characteristics. Southeastern Italian bases have operational weather about seventy-five percent of the time but, unfortunately, some of the most unfavorable base weather occurs frequently at a time when target weather is good. When a frontal system passes over South German target areas from the northwest, the locality becomes operational, but the routes and bases become poor. Often, by the time the bases improve, a second storm on the same frontal system is approaching the target area making it non-operational. Although frontal weather is at its peak during these months, the cloudiness associated with it is of short duration. Bases experience lowest ceilings and greatest rainfall when a low-pressure area is centered over the Southern Balkans or Adriatic, and a high-pressure area is situated north of the Alps. This condition brings very strong northerly winds to Southeastern Italy, producing very poor flying weather at bases and on lower routes while flying conditions are good north of the Alps. This situation usually persists for a period of two to four days. Persistent low-pressure areas over other parts of the Central Mediterranean also bring prolonged poor weather to bases, but with higher ceilings and smaller amounts of rain.

The most important factor contributing to unfavorable operating weather in winter as well as during summer is the influence on meteorological conditions introduced by the Apennines, Alps, and Dinaric Alps. But for them, route conditions would usually be good when target conditions are good. These mountains greatly affect the height and extent of cloud systems. Air currents, more or less horizontal over level land and oceans, acquire a marked vertical component in passing over mountains. This is the original of the vertical type cloud system so prevalent in this section of Europe. Vertical wind velocity components over the mountains increase the extent of cloud decks and make them continuous to high levels, with turbulence extending even above cloud tops. The height to which mountains increase disturb the airflow varies with the speed of the wind, but extends normally two to three times as high as the mountains. When encountering stratiform or horizontal type cloud systems, it is possible to fly between cloud layers merging. Vertical type cloud systems, continuous and turbulent to high levels, cannot be penetrated by formations of heavily loaded aircraft. Normal operations over South European mountains can succeed only when winds over them are light or air masses are stable and dry.

Mountains surrounding or lying adjacent to target areas also have considerable influence on target weather. Over some Fifteenth Air Force targets, when certain wind directions prevail, the weather resulting from these conditions is similar to that experienced over continental plain areas devoid of bold topographical features. However, in most instances, the greater portion of out target weather is affected strongly by mountains. Favorable weather conditions occasionally prevail over targets north of the Alps when a down-slope wind caused by a northerly flow from the Mediterranean sweeps over the mountain crests causing cloud breaks in the lee. This condition is, however,

always associated with degenerating route conditions that are concomitant with cloud build-ups on the South Alpine slopes.

During the winter months, most favorable operational conditions are associated with two types of meteorological phenomena: one, the encroachment of a frontal condition into Western Europe, and the other, the presence of a continental high pressure area over Western Czechoslovakia. Because of a situation of the South-central European mountain systems, frontal conditions which produce southerly or southwesterly winds in Germany, Austria and Hungary produce ahead of them ideal operational conditions. It is extremely difficult, however, for this Air Force to take advantage of these conditions affording only a fleeting opportunity to put them to advantageous use. A more static situation, making possible normal operations for more than one or two successive days, exists in the instance of the continental high-pressure area. Only stratiform low cloud and fog in the target areas are associated with this condition.

The frequent passage of frontal systems and their strong reaction to South European topographic features causes the chief restriction to normal heavy bomber operations of the Fifteenth Air Force during the winter months. Storms moving in from the Atlantic from northwest to southeast proceed rapidly across the British Isles, France, the Low Countries, and Western Germany, their speed decreases and they almost come to a standstill, causing unfavorable flying weather for extended periods. It is often the case that portions of storms, centered north of the Alps, spill over into the Apennines, or in the Adriatic, held static by the Apennines and Dinarics. Unfavorable route and base conditions always accompany this situation.

Of those three weather areas – base, route and target – which must be considered when executing normal heavy bomber operations, this Air Force is troubled most frequently by route weather over mountainous areas. Target weather is the second most frequent deterrent to our operations and base weather causes relatively few stand-downs.

Weather conditions that favor Lone Wolf operations usually occur when a frontal system lies along the Alps and extends past the Carpathians, up through Poland. Analysis of weather conditions shows that weather which is too bad for normal operations may be, on the other hand, too good for Lone Wolf operations. Weather conditions at base and enroute may be so unfavorable as to prevent normal operations; yet the target may be clear, thus prohibiting Lone Wolf operations. For penetration by single aircraft into fighter-defended areas, the sky coverage in these areas should be 10/10 at bombing altitude. These conditions are as unique as is totally clear weather. Single sortie aircraft can be dispatched only when weather conditions are such as to give protection to bombers, yet which are not so severe as to cause losses due to icing and turbulence.

APPENDAGES
Chapter XVII, Page 3

APPENDAGE No. 2

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE
APO 520 US ARMY

SPECIAL ORDERS
NUMBER 26

26 January 1945

EXTRACT

Paragraph 15 by direction of the President and pursuant to authority contained in Circular 141, Headquarters MTOUSA, dated 23 November 1944, as amended, the following officers having clearly demonstrated their fitness for promotion by outstanding performance in actual combat, are temporarily promoted in the Army of the United States to grades indicated, effective this date. Date of rank is date of this order unless otherwise indicated after name. These promotions unless sooner terminated, terminate automatically at the expiration of the emergency and six months thereafter, at which time the officers will revert to their permanent grade. No oath of office or acceptance is required. In accordance with the provisions of Public Law 746, 77th Congress, promotion is deemed to have been accepted as of date of this order, and under the provisions of the same law, officers are entitled to receive pay and allowances of the higher grade from such date.

Lt Col to Col

Brooks A. Lawhon 0397652 AC

By order of Major General TWINING:

/s/ R.K. TAYLOR
Colonel, GSC,
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

/s/ GERALD N. FRANK
Lieutenant Colonel, AC
Acting Adjutant General.

CERTIFIED TRUE EXTRACT COPY:

LEIGH M. LOTT
Major, Air Corps.

APPENDAGES
Chapter XVII, Page 4

APPENDAGE NO. 3

HEADQUARTERS
461st Bombardment Group (H) AAF

SPECIAL ORDERS

APO 520, c/o PM, NY, NY,

NUMBER 12

19 January 1945.

EXTRACT

11. PAC Ltr 0, Hq 15AF, GO/LBA/ljc-1, dtd 15 Jan 45, the fol named Off, Hq 461st Bomb Gp, are hereby placed on TDY to 7th Repl Depot for an indefinite period. TCNT. TDN. 61-000 P-432-02 A 212/50705. Upon completion of TDY the fol named Off will return to his proper orgn. Necessary records will accompany individual. Reimbursement for periods of travel and/or TDY within this theater is not authorized. (Eff 16 Jan 45).

CAPT (9301 ALBERT, JAMES F., 0-336221	CAPT (0503) ROBINS, ALEXANDER, 0-854201
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By order of Lieutenant Colonel LAWHON:

/s/ R. FOSTER SCOTT,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

OFFICIAL:

/s/ RICHARD B. RUSSEY
WOJC, USA
Assistant Adjutant.

CERTIFIED TRUE EXTRACT COPY:

LEIGH M. LOTT
Major, Air Corps.