

765<sup>TH</sup> BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)  
461<sup>ST</sup> BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)  
Office of the Combat Intelligence Officer

WFF/jdk

APO 520, NY, NY  
30 November 1944

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

The month of November was one of the nicer months, as far as weather is concerned, and it was more or less in our favor for the bombing of the fortress Europe. Eighteen of the scheduled missions were accomplished. Twelve of these were single missions, and three were double target missions. November 5 was a double mission. Seven of our aircraft struck at Vienna, Austria, and the target being oil supply, bombing by PFF. Two other aircraft hit Sarajevo, Yugoslavia, but because of the overcast were forced to return with their bombs. November 17 was also a twin mission, in which nine of our squadron Liberators attacked the oil center, Blechhammer, Germany. The results were unobserved, but believed that explosions fell short of the target. Two other of our Liberators hit the oil refineries in Vienna, Austria. They bombed by PFF, and the effectiveness of the bombing could not be observed. During this months operations we flew our first night mission and results could not be determined. Night navigation, and take offs and landings were practiced on several occasions. During the later part of the month the enemy had time to strengthen their defenses, because the weather was very poor and stand-downs prevailed.

One of the highlights that we are proud to place in this month's Squadron Historical Summary is the fact that on November 6 we had the pleasure of having among us General Twining, commanding general of the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force. Aerial activity took second place that day. General Twining presented the group with its first War Department Citation for its outstanding bombardment attack on Ploesti, Roumania that took place July 5, 1944. An Air Force band was on hand and the men passed in review before the General.

Two separate missions were flown again on this date. Our efforts and bombs that cause the destruction were aimed at the oil refineries in Vienna, Austria. Two out of the seven Liberators returned because of malfunction, but the other five broke through to the target. The results were unobserved because of the undercast. They reported that flak had been heavier than it had previously ever been. Four other Liberators headed for Bolzano, Italy, to attack power stations. Results were reported to be good, although cloud formations made accurate observations impossible.

Lt. Col. Hardy, our new commanding officer, spoke to the enlisted men on two separate occasions. The topics which were covered were Squadron Discipline, Saluting of Officers in town as well as in the area, Promotion Policy, the construction of a new Enlisted Men's Service Club, and other projects to be commenced in the future. The winterization of tents is just about complete, and the men are approaching being closer to the comforts of home.

A big help to boost the men's morale was the receiving of Christmas packages. Xmas seemed to come early for the men, for they had packages galore and still coming in strong. PX rations were

good, and the men were also able to purchase Christmas cards. Another aid for the morale was a couple of USO productions at the group theater. The picture shows at the squadron theater were also good and we went through the month without any malfunctions of the camera. The medics are having a tough break this month because several men have been taken ill with diphtheria and were sent to the 34<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital.

Something new was tried in combat this month. One pathfinder from the 765<sup>th</sup> along with one each of the other squadrons took off on a bombing mission to Klagenfurt, Germany. Several men left for home to make a transcription of a radio script to be broadcasted in the United States. It was to be part of the program to encourage people to subscribe to the 6<sup>th</sup> War Bond Drive.

This month brought several promotions to the squadron. Lts. Dietrich, Ecklund, Kelleher, Landry, McGrath, Turner, Wilson, and Woodruff donned new silver 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Bars. 23 enlisted men were promoted to S/Sgt; 35 to Sgt; 11 to Cpl.; and 6 were awarded a chevron. The officers donned blouses for a party in their club. A band from the 43<sup>rd</sup> Service Group provided the entertainment. Lt. Cody returned to the squadron after a special course of instruction in the States qualifying him to assume the duties of Squadron Gunnery Officer. A B-24 L Liberator, the first of this type model assigned to the squadron joined our fleet of airplanes. The engineering department was notified that four of the squadron's planes were to be transferred to the Wing. The selected ships were worked upon immediately and put into the best possible condition. Lt. Norris who had been transferred to an ATC unit because of an injury in the leg did not permit him to fly a B-24 came out on orders for the D.F.C.

In a raid over Munich, Germany, Lt. Welton and his crew failed to return from the attack. He was last seen crossing the Alps. Sgt. Norcross, cured of yellow jaundice, was discharged from the hospital. Cpl. Pardue was badly burned when his truck caught on fire. He was sent to the hospital. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Tyson was assigned to the organization to assume the duties of supply officer. Capt. Baker is once again Operations Officer and Capt. Gray is his assistant.

The serving of food in the enlisted men's mess hall was greatly improved and facilitated by the installation of a steam table beneath the pans of food on the serving line. This prevents the food from getting cold between the time it leaves the stoves in the kitchen and the moment it is placed in the mess kits of the men. Lights made their appearance at each end of the engineering department streets giving the area a metropolitan look. The men of the organization turned in their summer issues of clothing to the supply room. Each man was awarded or issued his War Department Citation ribbon and an additional 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force shoulder patch.

Eleven squadron planes loaded with fragmentation bombs took off to bomb Villafranco airdrome in northern Italy. It was the first non-PFF mission in many a day and the results of the bombing could be clearly observed. F/O Laksar, who had been suspended from flying duty by the 15<sup>th</sup> AF Evaluation Board, was transferred from the squadron to an MP unit.

The activities of the 765<sup>th</sup> squadron came to pass, but the spirit of the men has been raised to a new high. Thanksgiving played a great role in building the morale of the men. Each and every one had something to be thankful for on that day, thankful that they were still alive, others because they completed their missions and were going home, but the hope that was in their hearts was that of an early victory. The Thanksgiving feast was one of the best that could be

prepared under the existing conditions. There was plenty of turkey for everyone and the food was well prepared. Tablecloths garnished the tables and the men ate out of plates. A photographer was on hand and pictures were taken of the dinner. Most of the men were seen coming out with a bulging stomach. Now the celebration was over, plans for another mission were in the kettle over the fire, but the men were ready for they were beginning to feel the holiday spirit. These were the things the men were thankful for and the hopes they had on their first Thanksgiving overseas.

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EXTRACTS FROM THE SQUADRON HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

November 1. Seven squadron aircraft took off to bomb an ordinance depot in Vienna. One ship returned early with a landing gear malfunction. The rest went on to the target only to find it covered with clouds. Consequently confusion reigned, the ships became separated, and the bombs were dropped wherever the opportunity afforded. If any damage was caused it was purely coincidental. Lt. Bloxom went into a spin over the target, managed to pull out of it and dropped his bombs in the heart of Vienna. A lengthy promotion list appeared on the bulletin board. 23 promotions to S/Sgt; 35 to Sgt; 11 to Col. And 6 were awarded a chevron. Lts Dietrich, Echlund, Kelleher, Landry, McGrath, Turner, Wilson and Woodruff donned new silver 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Bars. M/Sgts Genuardi and Larson left for Rome to make a transcription of a radio script to be broadcasted in the United States. It was to be part of the program to encourage people to subscribe to the 6<sup>th</sup> War Bond Drive.

November 2. No combat mission was scheduled on this date. Maj. Hoermann left the squadron to assume the command of the squadron in the 461<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group. Capt. Mixson took over the duties of Operations Officer of the organization. Capt. Sage, having completed 50 missions in this theater, departed for a permanent change of station to the United States. Lt. Hughes' crew joined the squadron. The orderly room moved into temporary quarters in the rooms back of the S-2 office. Sgts Mezera, Perlipiano, Steinberg, Cpl Abramson, and Lt. Turner entered the 34<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital.

November 3. Something new in combat was tried on this date. One pathfinder from the 765<sup>th</sup> along with one from each of the other squadrons took off on a bombing mission to Klagenfurt, Germany. Seven other crews participated in a training mission. The officers donned blouses for a party in their club. A band from the 43<sup>rd</sup> Service Group provided the entertainment.

November 4. The Fatherland itself was the target the bombing mission of this date. A marshalling yard at Augsburg, Germany was attacked by formations of Liberators led by pathfinder aircraft. The explosives were unleashed through a heavy overcast and the results could not be ascertained. This mission marked the first use of delayed action bombs by the squadron. A generous quota of PX rations was sold to the men. A program of G.I. Shorts were shown on the squadron screen.

November 5. Two separate missions took place on this date. Seven squadron aircraft again set out to reduce Germany's diminishing oil supply by attacking Vienna, Austria. Bombing was done by pathfinder through a 10/10 undercast and results could not be observed. Two other Liberators from the organization were scheduled to visit a marshalling yard at Sarajevo, Yugoslavia but a complete coverage of clouds over the target forced them to return with their

bombs. Lts Ford and Lightbody returned to the squadron after completing a 30-day furlough to the States. Sgt. Steinberg and Cpl. Kane were discharged from the 34<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital.

November 6. Aerial activity took second place in the news of the squadron on this date. At 1100, General Twining, commanding general of the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force, landed at the base in a shiny silver C-47 to present the group with its first War Department citation for its outstanding bombardment attack on Ploesti, Rumania on July 15<sup>th</sup>. The men passed in review before the general with the Air Force band. Two separate missions were flown on this date. The major effort was directed against a Vienna oil refinery. They bombed by PFF, but because of the undercast were unable to completely determine the results. Four other ships went to Bolzano, Italy to attack the power station there. Results were good. Lt. Cassna's crew departed for a week of relaxation on the Isle of Capri. Cpls Wilks and Shamshak and Pfc Jamail filled the San Spirito quote for the week. Sgt. Parlapiano returned from the 34<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital. "Col. Comrades" was showing on the screen.

November 7. Mission #130 was flown to a marshalling yard at Ali Pasin Most, Yugoslavia. Fair results were reported. A squadron detail was started and various departments must furnish a quota of men to work on a construction project to better the appearance and to improve living quarters. Lt. Toth was placed on DS with Group Headquarters. He is to assume the duty of Group Navigator because Capt. Prien who recently completed his 50<sup>th</sup> mission returned to the States. The greatest number of packages from home arrived and was distributed to the men.

November 8. A mission was originally schedule for this date, but was cancelled during the night. For the second straight day a record-breaking number of packages arrived. Christmas seems to be coming early to this squadron. "Ladies Courageous" was playing at the squadron theater. Pvts Kastenber and Netishen were released from confinement in the 15<sup>th</sup> AF stockade and returned to duty in this squadron. We were flashed that Franklin D. Roosevelt had been re-elected for another term as president of the United States.

November 9. A practice mission took place on this date. Emphasis was placed on formation flying and bombing, but the bombing phase of the flight was never accomplished. Lights made their appearance at each end of the engineering department streets giving the area quite a metropolitan look. Sgt. Lester Anderson entered the 34<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital. More packages from home and the men are beginning to feel the holiday spirit. Sgt. Tidd, remaining member of Lt. Schweisberger's crew, departed en route to the States.

November 10. A mission was scheduled but a stand down was called before take off. Lt. Cody returned to the squadron after a special course of instruction in the States qualifying to assume the duties of squadron Gunnery Officer and relieving Capt. Gray of this responsibility. "Marriage is a Private Affair" was shown on the squadron screen.

November 11. Two bombing missions were scheduled on this date. The one to Linz, Austria was particularly partially carried out. The men reached the objective but the adverse weather forced them to salvo their bombs over the city itself. The ships scheduled to bomb a railroad bridge in northern Italy didn't even get off the ground.

November 12. Lt Monie was transferred from the organization to the Allied Control Commission. The serving of food in the enlisted men's mess hall was greatly improved and facilitated by the installation of a steam table beneath the pans of food in the serving line. Capt. Mixson left the organization to assume as Operations Officer of the 764<sup>th</sup> Bomb Sqdn. Capt. Baker once again became Operations Officer of the Sqdn, and Capt. Gray his assistant. PX rations including Christmas cards were sold to the men. Sgt. Norcross, cured of yellow jaundice, was discharged from the hospital. Cpl Abramson also returned to duty. "Seven Days Ashore" was shown on the screen.

November 13. It was the same old story, the scheduled mission to Vienna, Austria was cancelled after two aircrafts had taken off from the field. Sgts Lewandowski and Turner and Cpls Coate and Sheetz, were selected for a week of relaxation at San Spirito. Lt Decker and Lt Williams departed on DS to Bari to attend a school offering instruction in mission planning. A B-24 L, the first of this type model Liberator assigned to the squadron, joined our fleet of airplanes.

November 14. Once again squadron fliers were briefed to attack a strategic enemy installation in Vienna, Austria and once again the adverse flying weather caused the flight to be cancelled before take off. A practice mission was flown in the afternoon. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Tyson was assigned to the organization to assume the duties of Supply Officer. Sgt. Shinn entered the 91<sup>st</sup> Station Hospital in Foggia. "Rosie The Riveter" shown on the screen.

November 15. One airplane from each Sqdn. participated in a bombing mission to Innsbruck, Austria. It was a costly flight for our crew failed to return. No information at all as to the fate of this crew has reached the squadron.

November 16. The target for this date's mission was Munich, Germany. However something went wrong and the bombs were dropped nowhere near the objective. All seven ships returned safely. The men of the organization began turning in their mosquito nets and khaki trousers and caps to the supply room. Each man was issued his War Department citation ribbon and an additional 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force shoulder patch. Lt Johnson, bombardier who had been sent to the U.S. on rotation, returned to the squadron. Cpl Sasvay entered the 34<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital. "Minstrel Man" was showing at the squadron theater.

November 17. On this date, the 765<sup>th</sup> Bomb Sqdn. Participated in a twin mission. The main attacking force of nine Sqdn aircraft traveled many miles for another crack at Germany's oil center of Blechhammer. There were two early returns and the rest went on to the target and dropped their bombs. Results were unobserved but it is believed that the explosives fell short of their mark. Two other Sqdn. Planes attacked a Vienna oil refinery. Bombing there also was by PFF and the effectiveness of the mission could not be determined. Capt. Malita, Lt. Bloxom, and T/Sgt Mai were all smiles as they said "so long" to friends prior to departing from the squadron en route to the U.S. Cpl Arsi and Sgt Wroclawski entered the 34<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital.

November 18. Eleven squadron planes loaded with fragmentation bombs took off to drop their explosives on the important Villafranco airdrome in northern Italy. It was the first non-PFF mission in many a day and results of the bombing could be observed clearly. There was a good pattern of bomb hits, and enemy opposition was very slight. All the Italian workers were rounded

up and herded into the dispensary for shots. Christmas packages arrived and would be distributed and were distributed to the men. Cpl Pritch was sent to the 34<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital.

November 19. Seven squadron planes flew on mission #137 to a Vienna oil refinery. Bombing was done through an undercast and the explosives were dropped on the lead PFF plane. Results unobserved. All crews and ships returned safely. Col Hardy announced the following changes in assignment of duty to officers: Lt Whitlock was released from duty as assistant engineering officer and designated Supply Officer and Transportation Officer. It was the G.I.'s turn to stand in line for shots on this date. F/O Lakser, who had been suspended from flying duty by the 15<sup>th</sup> AF, Flying Evaluation Board, was transferred from this squadron to an MP unit. Lts Decker and Williams returned from a mission planning course in Air Force Hq. in Bari. Lts Burleson and Dusell went on DS for similar training. More packages from home were distributed to the men. M/Sgt Chase entered the 34<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital.

November 20. Seven squadron planes took off to attack Blechhammer, Germany. The bombs were dropped with much accuracy and the crews claimed the target to be well hit. Later photographs confirmed these claims. Lt. Norris, who had been transferred another unit because his injured leg would not permit him to fly a B-24, came up on orders for the D.F.C. The engineering department was notified that four of the squadron's planes were to be transferred to Wing. The selected ships were immediately worked upon and put into the best condition. "Three Men in White" was showing on the screen of the squadron theater.

November 21. Three squadron planes participated in mission #139 directed against enemy troop concentrations and a motor convoy in Yugoslavia. The welcome news that Lt. Hughes and his entire crew were safe on Vis was received by the operations office. Lt Netzer was appointed squadron navigator.

November 22. Seven squadron airplanes unleashed tone of explosives on a marshalling yard at Munich, Germany on this date. The formation was led by PFF airplanes and the results were unobserved. Lt Welton in ship #36 failed to return from the attack. He was last seen returning over the Alps. "The Great Moment" showing at the Squadron Theater.

November 23. A combat mission was originally scheduled for this date, but of course it was cancelled during the night. This is Thanksgiving, and of course Turkey, was the main talk around the squadron, and we got it. Both the officers' and enlisted men's mess department personnel, prepared a super meal for the Thanksgiving feast of the squadron. In the EM's mess hall the tables were covered with tablecloths, and the men ate out of blue plates. A hill-billy band was provided to entertain the men while they were enjoying their turkey. A photographer was present and photos were taken of the men celebrating their first Thanksgiving on foreign soil.

November 24. A one plane per squadron pathfinder mission was scheduled for the morning of this date but it was later cancelled. The day marked another first, for the 461<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group. The organization flew its first night mission. Results of the mission could not be observed. Col Hardy spoke to the enlisted men prior to the picture show in the EM mess hall. Topics covered squadron discipline, saluting of officers, duties of NCOs, policing of tents, promotion policy, the plans for the EM's Service Club, and other projects to be commenced in the future. The film presented was Pat O'Brien in "The Iron Major".

November 25. No combat mission was scheduled for this date. Concern was beginning to be felt for Lt. Hughes and the men of his crew. They were reported to have landed on the island of Vis while returning from a mission to Blechhammer, Germany on Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>. However, their continued failure to return to the squadron or contact it in some manner has cast suspicion on the accuracy of this information. Lt. Tyson and S/Sgt Dane entered the 34<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital. Pvt Gagne, who was assigned to the organization only recently, was carried on the morning report as AWOL.

November 26. Stand down for today. Group operations contradicted the previous report concerning the whereabouts of Lt. Hughes and his crew, originally said to have landed on the Isle of Vis, later information places them in Yugoslavia. Cpl. Pardue was badly burned when his gas truck caught on fire. He was sent to the hospital. Cpl. Bradford also entered the hospital. Chances are being sold in the squadron to give a boost to the 6<sup>th</sup> War Loan drive. Generous Bond prices are to be given. The raffle will take place Saturday night Dec 2, before the show. "The Navy Way" is playing the Squadron theater.

November 27. The mission originally scheduled for today was called off while the men were standing by their ships, only to be scheduled a few minutes later and called off once again almost immediately.

November 28. Stand down for today. T/Sgt Brown went to the 34<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital. Pvt Daniel, returned to duty within the squadron after being confined to the 15<sup>th</sup> AF stockade.

November 29. Another stand down for today, weather condition terrible. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Dubal, Sgt Phillips and Cpl Arsi were sent today to the 34<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital.

November 30. Another Stand Down, the weather is sure in the enemy's favor these days. There are four new crews that have arrived from the states and are assigned to this squadron. Cpl Baker has been promoted to the rank of Sergeant. S/Sgts Mosiman, Zeisler and Sgt Craig have been sent to the hospital.