

VOL. 1, NUMBER 3

449th BOMB GROUP (H)

FEBRUARY 24, 1945

449th Completes 200th Mission

Group CO Lauds Service Units

"Yes, I fear that in spite of our well trained Crews technically skilled specialists, and our superior equipment, without the constant assistance of the service units attached to the group, our record would be far short of the 200 mark."

Thus, in a few words, our 449th Commander, Lt. Col. Jack L. Randolph, has summed up the extent members of the group recognize the invaluable assistance of the various service units on the field. For the men of the 449th realize that with out the cooperation of these seldom publicized outfits, our efforts would be for naught.

To the 1627th Base Ordnance lies the vast undertaking of supplying the necessary tonnage of munitions with out which our efforts would be in vain, along with the numerous other duties assigned to ordnance.

The 1917th Aviation transportation squadron has earned its niche in the successful completion of our 200 missions, for with out their facilities and devotion to duty 24 hours a day our success would have been nil.

In the 348th Service Squadron we have recognized the true value of specialist technicians, for there was at no time a too difficult job to be repaired be it a riddled plane that limped home from enemy action, or a hurried call for a special job of carpentry.

To the vigilance of the 909th headquarters squadron we owe our lack of worry in the fear of depredation with or without the instigation of the enemy.

Wing Commander Congratulates Group

The following is a letter received from Brigadier General Hugo P. Rush, veteran commander of the 47th Wing:

"It is with no little pleasure that I congratulate the 449th Group on the completion of 200 missions as a tactical unit of the 47th Wing. Your organization's history since coming to Italy has been replete with fine achievements and co-operation that is playing a vital part in the successful fulfillment of our common task—the destruction of our enemy and his machines of war."

"The fact that the 449th Group in its first year of combat has been awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation twice for extraordinary achievements, is of particular pride to the Wing Commander."

"To all the personnel who did their part in contributing to the Group's successful record, I extend my sincere congratulations and appreciation."

HUGO P. RUSH
Brigadier General
Air Corps."

MIRACULOUS MICKEY

Our own 449th Bomb Group was a pioneer in "Mickey," the sensational radar device which "sees" thru darkness, clouds, and artificial smoke. One of the most important developments of the war, "Mickey," as the airmen call it, has been guarded as zealously as the American bomb sight. It was "Mickey" which did the job on many of our 200 missions.

The completion of 200 missions marks an outstanding milestone in the history of the 449th Heavy Bombardment Group. To all the members who make up this unit, it is with pride that we can review our achievements and know that all had an integral part in the making of history.

When demands were issued that the enemy's Luftwaffe must be destroyed early in 1944, not merely by shooting from the sky Nazi fighters in operations at the time, but the systematic destruction of the air, craft factories and industrial plants no matter how remotely connected—

'Group Should Feel Proud' -- Randolph



Men of the 449th:

Thirteen months ago the 449th Bombardment Group embarked upon its combat career. At that time the enemy held all of Central Europe and maintained a great air force with which to oppose attacks upon his fortress. The Flying Horsemen became part of the newly organized 15th Air Force which set out to destroy the enemy's communication lines, his oil plants, his aircraft factories and his Air Force. During this thirteen month period the Group has flown over 200 missions against the enemy and is now prepared to

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Group's Gallantry Rewarded by Citations

The 449th Bombardment group received its first Distinguished Unit Citation July 9, 1944, for its outstanding performances against the enemy over Bucharest, Roumania.

The group flew maximum effort that eventful day toward the target, its purpose was to destroy all rail facilities in the city, and demolish the Nazi Air Force in the air. Prior to take off all personnel of the group labored to insure a successful mission.

Winging their way to Bucharest 449th became separated from the other sections of the air force due to extremely adverse weather conditions. This group continued on with extraordinary gallantry to the target. With added misfortune the fighter escort was unable to fly cover due to limited range.

Entering enemy territory our planes were attacked by over a hundred fighters. The crews joined in battle with the enemy achieving one objective of the day and this sky duel lasted one hour and a half with our gunners blasting with their 50 Cal. against the Nazi's cannons, rocket guns, air bombs, machine guns and flak. While still engaged in deadly combat this group heroically bombed its target and inflicted terrific damage to the rail facilities, succeeding in its second objective of the day.

The returning planes were credited officially with destroying 40 enemy planes, with 13 probables and 6 damaged, while losing 7 of our liberators.

Over Ploesti, Roumania, the 449th

Bomb Group achieved its second Distinguished Unit Citation on July 9, 1944. During the sustained activities against the Axis oil centers, this group was ordered to destroy the second largest oil refinery in the Balkans; The Conco. dia Vega Oil Refinery at Ploesti.

The enemy's effectiveness in the use of smoke screens deprived the other groups of their accuracy, so it became all important that we should destroy this source of oil. With unflinching skill and courage our planes weathered it through very heavy screens of anti-aircraft fire, and though the target was invisible the group employed the use of radar, successfully hitting the target and completely destroyed this mammoth refinery as of further use to the Germans.

With the smashing of the Luftwaffe came demands that this group was to participate in the all out effort to deprive and destroy all source of fuel to the Axis. "Ploesti Bound" became a byword and soon the 449th was roaming the skys pulverizing synthetic oil refineries from Bleckheim to Munich, on to Vienna and Ploesti—resulting after months of hammering that the German's 1944 output decreased by 60% in comparison to what it was in 1943.

This unit also was active and highly successful in the complete destruction of rail facilities, the destruction of airbases and submarine pens, and participated in the all out effort in nullifying the heavy gun emplacements of Toulon prior to the invasion on D-Day in Southern France.

The 449th won two Distinguished Unit Citations during our first year of combat—the first was for an attack on the railway facilities at Bucharest, Roumania. During this mission the group had its largest bag of Nazi fighters; 40 ME-109s, FW-190s and JU 88s fell victims to our gunners. We lost 7 planes to the 140 enemy interceptors and the anti-aircraft fire. It was a small percentage considering our 28 planes were

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Cinema Americana

Films for the week of 26 February 1945 are as follows:

"Gambler's Choice"—certainly not the critic's. Stay home and read a good book. Chester Morris, Nancy Kelly and Russell Hayden help to make things dull. "Christmas Holiday"—starring Deanna Durbin and Gene Kelly. "Minstrel Man"—a low budget film which stars Benny Fields and Gladys George.

GAB

Published for and by the GIs of the 449th

APO 520 c/o Postmaster, New York, N. Y.

Publications Officer
Editor
Associate Editor
Managing Editor

Lt. Charles J. Crowe
Cpl. Victor C. Balzarini
Sgt. Scott R. Brewer
S/Sgt. Fred E. Clever

Vol. 1, Number 3

The Editor GABS

Recently, as you will find evidence elsewhere in this paper, we completed our 200th mission against the enemy. For the last month, members of the GAB Staff have been planning a special anniversary number to commemorate this outstanding operational record. There were many discussions as to how the material should be presented. These eight pages are the result of those discussions and hard work. We hope you enjoy and appreciate our efforts, and we only ask that you judge our issue, not on the basis of news content, but upon how well we have chronicled YOUR activities over the last 14 months.

Due to Base censorship we were unable to print a number of desirable articles -- a chronological list of the missions and certain escape stories.

449th Men Earn 5,459 Decorations

While compiling over 200 missions, men of the 449th have also acquired 5,459 personal decorations. Air Medals have been awarded more than any other citation. The 4,907 Air Medals (including Oak Leaf Clusters) represent the bulk of the awards. To date 179 Purple Hearts, 27 Soldier's Medals, 36 Bronze Star, 261 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 42 Silver Stars, five Legion of Merits and two Distinguished Service Crosses, the nation's second highest award, have been made to men of the group.

Lt. Gerald S. Witt and Capt. John B. Wright were the recipients of the DSC (the former posthumously).

LEGION OF MERIT

M/Sgt Dominic G. Cafarelli, Lt. Col. Wade M. Fleischer, Major George M. Howard, Lt. Richard C. Noel Jr., Lt. Frederick C. McNulty.

SILVER STAR

Lt. Robert C. Anderson, Lt. Bernard F. Armstrong, Lt. John E. Asbury, Lt. Vivian Baxter, Lt. Merlyn L. Beischer, Lt. Col. George H. Blase, Lt. Bruce R. Brian, S/Stg. Adolph M. Commers, Lt. Frank A. Cooper, Lt. Harry B. Crisman, Capt. Henry P. Rinch, Col. Thomas J. Gent Jr., Lt. Ralph P. Gentry, Lt. Samuel Goldenburg, T/Sgt Robert A. Heylum, S/Sgt Marvin C. Hunt, S/Sgt Joseph R. Ieraci, Lt. Robert J. Knapp, Capt. Norman L. Kohmescher, S/Sgt Robert K. Kruse, S/Sgt Edward Kwit, T/Sgt Kenneth A. Leonardi, T/Sgt Willard C. Livingston, Lt. Henry J. MacInvalle Jr., Lt. Elmer C. Meade, Lt. Alfred C. Morton, T/Sgt James O'Neal, Lt. David A. Rasbach, Lt. Ralph A. Rude, S/Sgt Edward J. Shnurstein, T/Sgt Donald W. Schwartz, Lt. Bernard V. Sermersheim, T/Sgt Sheldon S. Silverman, Lt. Henry N. Silvers Jr., Lt. Col. Arthur B. Swan, S/Sgt Harold L. Tombre, Lt. Col. William A. Tope, Lt. Stanley C. Trivett, T/Sgt Wayne A. Walther, T/Sgt Robert E. Whiteside, Lt. Elie M. Williams, S/Sgt Donald D. Zumwalt.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

Holders of DFC are Lt. Jack M. Abbott, Sgt. Leonard R. Adler, T/Sgt Frederick E. Albright, Capt. Raymond R. Aldrich, Lt. Louis Alexander, Lt. William C. Alexander, Colonel Darr H. Alkire, Lt. James G. Allen Jr., Major William C. Allen, Lt. Olaf A. Anderson, T/Sgt John E. Aulner Jr., Capt. George F. Babits, Lt. William L. Bache Jr., Lt. Bernard L. Ball, S/Sgt Kenan A. Barrett, Lt. John B. Beam, Lt. Robert F. S. Bischer Jr., S/Sgt Joseph F. Beaulieu, T/Sgt Robert C. Behrens, Capt. Jess C. Bennett, Capt. Lloyd M. Bentsen, S/Sgt Robert C. Best, S/Sgt Paul S. Biggart, Lt. Willard F. Bills, T/Sgt Eli G. Bird, T/Sgt Jack W. Black, Lt. James S. Black, Lt. Lester H. Blackwell, Lt. Richard C. Blaisdell, Lt. A. O. Blanton, Lt. Col. George H. Blase, Lt. Norman E. Blomgren, Capt. William P. Bolt, Lt. Robert S. Boren, Lt. Gilbert Bradley, S/Sgt John D. Brady, Lt. Robert N. Brady, S/Sgt Reginald W. Brown, Lt. James H. Burger, Lt. Ross L. Bush, Lt. Henrion P. Buser, T/Sgt Oliver E. Cameron, Lt. Duffey A. Carter, Lt. Harry M. Carter, S/Sgt Benny E. Cellilli, S/Sgt Clyde C. Chafin, T/Sgt Glenard O. Chapman, Major Tedo R. Christian Jr., Lt. Carleton C. Clabaugh, S/Sgt Donald Clark, S/Sgt Joseph F. Clark, T/Sgt Richard T. Clark, S/Sgt Andrew Clem, S/Sgt Herbert R. Clements, Lt. Wallace A. Coburn, Lt. Benjamin F. Coffey Jr., Lt. James C. Conroy, Sgt. John T. Conwell, Lt. Paul D. Corkill, Lt. Francis L. Creighton, Capt. J. Thomas Cunningham, T/Sgt Richard J. Daignault, Capt. Raymond J. Daugherty, Lt. Leroy L. Davidson, Lt. Leland A. Davis, Lt. Edward G. Deren, Lt. George I. Ditzfazy, Lt. Clyde E. Driggers, Lt. Ambrose F. Dudley, Lt. Joseph N. Dunfee, Lt. Robert D. Easters, Lt. Donald S. Eaton, Lt. Kenneth E. Ebersole, Capt. Costney R. Egan, Lt.

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MAKE SENSE!



Col. Alkire

Group Cagers Lose In Overtime Tilt

The 449th, 47th Wing basketball champs, were ousted from the running for the 15th Air Force championship Wednesday, Feb. 14 at the 98th Bomb Group gym when they fell before the quintet from the 332nd Fighter Squadron in an overtime period 52-51.

The Flying Horses built up a commanding halftime lead of 28-17 on the shooting of Al Prieto and Bill Kor but blew it in the closing quarters and the score at the end of the regulation playing time was 45-45.

In the five-minute extra period the Fighter five chucked in seven points and the Bomber quintet was one short. The winners were paced in the scoring column by Forward M. C. Long who tallied 17 markers. Prieto contributed 18 for the losers and Kor counted 14.

Col. Fleischer Begins 3rd Year Overseas

Lt. Col. Wade M. Fleischer, Salem, Va., veteran of foreign service since Dec. 21, 1942, has ably carried the duties of Group Executive Officer, with wisdom gained by the practical experience of his past affiliations.

A graduate of Blackstone University, Ill., with a LLB degree, he later attended Georgetown Uni., Wash., D. C., taking a Post Graduates course.

He became group adjutant of the 376th Bomb Group, March 14, 1943, through the intensive campaigns of North African and the Mediterranean. Early in January 1944 Col. Fleischer assumed his present post with the 449th Group.

He has been awarded the Legion of Merit, the Soldier's Medal, and the Distinguished Unit Badge with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters.

ATTENTION

At the present time
GAB is restricted.

Until such time that it is approved by the censors, its passage thru the mails is prohibited.

Colonel Darr H. Alkire, became commandant of the 449th Bombardment Group July 30, 1943. He came to this group from an assignment as chief of Staff at the First Bomber Command then located at Biggs Field, El Paso, Texas. It was obvious from the outset that he intended to realize an ambition-to lead a group into combat.

His credo was always, "Make sense," Col. Alkire was a colorful character. He worked hard, flew hard and played hard. He was a strict disciplinarian and brooked no excuses, but fought for his men, specially through out the days of Almagordo, N.M., and Brunning, Neb. He knew his assignment and also the duties comprising the many departments which make for a successful group. His biting tongue concealed a deep affection for his men and amongst his enlisted men there was a deep feeling of respect for "the Old Man." He knew what they were to face, he had no illusions about what might be the outcome if fate frowned, and it was a proud Col. who returned from Topeka, Kansas, to personally thank the thousand men of the ground echelon, for he personally recognized the fact it was through their effort a fighting machine was molded and only through tireless efforts in the struggle to come would this group achieve its goal.

During the month of January 1944 his true leadership came to the fore; it is there we remember him sweating out chow lines with us all, regardless how damp and cold-- or miserable the food, for he shared alike be it good or bad, come hell or high water.

As a combat leader he had no peer and his only fault if it may be called as such, he wanted to fly them all. He flew 12 out of the first nineteen and it was over Aviano that fate dealt our leader his last mission. Consternation struck us all, but a spontaneous tribute was paid him when the general comment through out the base was "I'll bet the Jerries are regretting already that they ever captured the Colonel."

Good Luck Darr Alkire! When the liberating armies set you and other gallant airmen free from your prison camps we only ask that you do not pass us by.

Group Adjutant Began Army Career As EM

Major James C. Petersen, group adjutant, has been with the group since date of activation, May 1, 1943. The bulk of the paper work involved in the extensive training program required in order to clear the group for foreign service was vested in his competent hands and through his efforts the Group has been able to maintain an exceedingly high administrative record of efficiency in the 47th Wing.

Major Petersen has worked up to his present position, the hard way through the ranks, having enlisted April 13, 1941, served as an enlisted man up to August 5, 1942, at which time he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant after three months training at Miami OCS.

Prior to his assignment with this group he served as Adjutant with the 39th Bomb Group, Tucson, Arizona.

717th

RAMBLINGS

DID YOU KNOW

Our present C. O. Major Shelby McArthur flew as first pilot with Col. Darr H. Alkire over Mostar, Jan. 8, 1944. S/Sgt John Curr was first to complete his missions. Classy Chassis was first to complete 50 missions without an early return in the group. T/Sgt F. Greenhalgh ex-ordnance chief was the only man in the squadron to volunteer for the paratroopers, now is a platoon leader fighting in Belgium. Transportation averages 30,000 miles per month. The squadron's enlisted men have proven themselves one of the most efficient to come overseas, statistics prove it. Col. Alkire flew Lurching Urchin over Aviano when enemy flak told; now all of the crew are P. O. Ws. Lt. R. Anderson and his crew received all the outrageous treatment you might have read about, by Bulgarians before they were freed by the Russians. A 105 M.M. shell smashed into '43 exploding between waist gunners T/Sgt English and T/Sgt Milon with no damage to either but a 9 ft. section out of the midsection of the ship. This squadron has participated in the destruction of the Luftwaffe industry during early '44 was one of the main cogs in the devastating attacks on the Nazi oil source, making 11 missions over Ploesti (all synthetic oil refineries within range, hit Bleckheimer day and night, our planes initiating night precision bombing... Three of our operations officers, Lt. Col. Arthur Swan, Major Harold R. Loughran, and Major Lloyd Benson became squadron C.Os. in the group. Our squadron area was formerly a class 4 munition dump, mainly dangerous American, English, German and Italian munitions, Capt. John B. Wright on his last mission though seriously wounded and his co-pilot fatally wounded over the target brought his crew and plane back safely, receiving the D.S.C., our nation's second highest award. This makes him the only living member of the group to attain this honor. Capt. Edwin B. Gammell, squadron medic, not only has treated men in a crashed plane with ships taking off a few feet above the smashed Lib, but various sick calls included pets, proving himself a humanitarian. Janka is the only original 1st Sgt. still in the group. Capt. Wm. E. Reynolds was first officer and PFC Walter J. Kramarczyk the first enlisted man to be eligible for rotation with 24 months continuous service overseas. T/Sgt Robert R. Crimmings was one of the few to pass the W/O exams in administration. Both the E.M. and Officer's Clubs are among the finest in the group. We have three men who experienced Tojo's sneak, Dec 7, 1941, M/Sgt Marion Turner, T/Sgts Joe Wood and John English. (Turner has flown over 130 missions against the Japs). Capt. J. I. Reznik, group navigator, S/Sgt. Ray Copley, gunner, and Major McArthur are all original crew members still on operational status. T/Sgt Herbert Reeve has completed 75 missions with this squadron and is still active as chief gunnery instructor. We still hold the lowest buzz job flown on this field. The turret men have sel-

MAJORS SASS, McARTHUR HAVE COMMANDED VERNON SQUADRON

Our Squadron Commander have proven themselves worthy leaders throughout the past 200 missions not only in combat where they been to Regensburg, Munich, Ploesti, Toulon, Steyr and numerous others; but in the multiple duties involved in such a command.

Major Edward J. Sass Jr., who became squadron commander at its activation in Tucson, carried the burden of O. T. U. training, with the result that no serious injury was sustained by the personnel through its final phases. He received his Captain's bars prior to leaving the states, later after several months of combat attained his majority.

At the completion of his 50 missions, Major Sass was transferred to Group Headquarters where he became group training officer. He recently has been assigned to the AAF Sub Commission of the Allied Control of Italy.

He has been awarded the D.F.C. and the Air Medal with 4 Oak Leaf Clusters. Also has been authorized the Distinguished Unit Citation

Balge with one Oak Leaf Cluster.

Major Shelby MacArthur became squadron C. O. following the transfer of Major Sass. He carried on the tradition of leadership set by his predecessor along with a few innovations of his own. Carrying the squadron to top honors in its many duties.

He is one of the few men remaining of the combat echelon who arrived as an advanced unit on Dec. 21, 1943, at that time he was assigned to the 719th squadron where he flew the group's first mission with Col. Alkire over Mostar, Yugoslavia.

MacArthur then was transferred to the 716th to become their operations officer; Shortly after he stepped further up the ladder by being appointed commanding officer of the 717th.

He received the D. F. C. for his gallantry over Steyr, Austria when the luftwaffe was smashed. He also has received the Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters, and also The Distinguished Unit Badge with one oak cluster.

Cadets Change Commanders Twice

Reeve Holds Group Mission Record, Tallies 75

A glutton for flying the enemy's skyways seems to prevail within T/Sgt. Herbert G. Reeve, La Salle, Ill., who holds the group record in the number of missions while a member of this group. Reeve has completed 75 missions over enemy installations with out returning to the Zone of the Interior.

He arrived early in March, 1944 as a replacement, flying as an armorer gunner over such targets as Styer, Bucharest, Ploesti and numerous others, when enemy fighters along with flak were hazards to be reckoned with.

Upon completing his fifty missions with nary a scratch but many near misses, became gunnery instructor and flew the perils of the gunnery range for several months. Soon the monotonous grind with out thrills palled on him. For he listened to fellow gunners relate the anecdotes of the day's mission and soon became eager to be a part of it again. He found himself volunteering for an additional 25 missions as an aerial photographer. Reeve completed these with the same nonchalance that typified his every day routine. Upon finishing his 75 mission he followed his usual pattern and refused a trip home and became his squadron gunnery instructor. His only comment is, "Might as well fly here as elsewhere," which does make sense in a way.

dom been stumped. by mechanical difficulty, right Mac? We have handled the most tonnage of bomb in this group. Our outfit leads the group in effective sorties 1943, have sent 1640 ships out on missions, lead the group with the least percentage of early returns, 5.1%. Sgt Wm. Duke is responsible for the fine carpentry work in the squadron area yes, BUT FOR A WEE BIT OF TARNISH WE HAVE HAD A FINE SILVER LINING IN OUR OVERSEAS CLOUD.

Since its activation in May 1943, only twice have the Commanding Officers of the 716th Boml Sq. changed.

Maj. "Smilin" Jack Silverstein, ex-hotel desk clerk and the initial CO, led the fightin' 716th thru phase training and commanded the still green squadron during her first 109 missions against the enemy. He directed the "Cadets" when they were going thru their most glorious and truly toughest period. He CO'd the squadron on the tragic Regensburg raids and the citation missions over Bucharest and the Concordia Oil Refinery. In August 1943, missions completed, he returned to the states, later becoming Operations Officer of the Army Air Base at Tonapah, Nevada.

Early in August of 44, Maj. Charles E. Harton (then Capt.) transferred from the 719th to take over the duties as CO of the 716th. A tall, blonde, North Carolinian from Charlotte, he ably and effectively assumed command. Cheerful, unassuming, indeed unique, Maj. Harton was instantly at home in his new surroundings. Whereas Maj. Silverstein had seasoned crews under his command, Maj. Harton found his combat personnel to be almost totally replacements who had not the benefit of being trained as a Squadron unit. He successfully tutored the squadron thru 69 attacks over enemy territory before completing his combat tour. For his outstanding professional ability and leadership on the Budapest raid of June 26, 44, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. In honor and remembrance of Maj. Harton, a separate area of the squadron is now known as Harton Heights.

The present commander, Maj. Lloyd M. Bentsan Jr., moved into the pilot's seat and grasped the 716th "stick," just as the squadron celebrated its first year overseas. No stranger to the 716th, altho being transferred in from the 717th, for he was a member of the 16th during the latter part of July and the early days of August 44. While as-

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It was a cold, wet Italy that confronted the small handful of advance ground echelon and the flight echelon of the 716th when they arrived to commence operations against the enemy. Faced with the task of keeping fifteen planes in the air both ground and crew men pitched in.

Eight combat missions were accomplished under such adverse conditions before the ground crews themselves arrived. Every man on the field was busy during those eight trips over enemy territory. Loading, repairing, maintaining, guarding and flying the ships were all in a day's (and night's) work those first days. More often than not the crews returned from one mission only to start immediately preparing for the next. Oft-times without sleep the crew-men would finish loading bombs, refueling, repairing, of checking the ship just before time for take off on the next mission.

Finally, the ground echelon arrived, bringing sorely needed tools, equipment and men. Sleeping on the cold stone corridor floors of the Group building the first night, they awoke to find no brick barracks or even tents awaiting them. Each man shifted for himself, building shacks of sheets of tin and baggage racks or living in bomb shelters or pup tents.

The first squadron kitchen was a small lean-to consisting of six sheets of corrugated tin. The mess hall was located in a vineyard with tables of planks resting on barrels and winter winds chilling the steaming coffee and permeating the bones of the men.

Then in February 44, fortune smiled upon them and they were ordered to move to an area vacated by a Night Fighter outfit. Wood barracks, stone buildings, a motor pool and all. Morale increased by leaps and bounds. Squadron welders soon had double-deck metal beds in production and the nights of tossing on cold floors and ground were over. Gradually as their ingenuity grasped each problem and solved it, the squadron area took shape and maximum comfort was attained.

Then in November, the catastrophic fire leveled four of the five barracks. Rebuilding projects occupied spare hours for several weeks as the area rose from the ashes to become once again a comfortable home for the men of the 716th. Many times the squadron has been commended for the appearance of the area and of the quarters of its personnel.

Thru the 200 missions flown by the squadron, the combat crew men of the 716th have consistently excelled in the performance of their duties. Ample proof is found of their quality when one appraises the record they have accumulated during the past fourteen months. The gunners are proud of their own and their crew's score in numbers of fighters shot down. The many combat crew men of the 716th who have been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Silver Star or the Legion of Merit and the ground personnel who have been presented the Soldier's Medal or Bronze Star are further examples of the high standards of professional skill and courage.

GIBBERISH

By Sgt. Dan Morrison

TODAY this column will diverge from the usual "Gibberish", and confine itself strictly to facts about the 449th Bomb Group. It is believed that the following anecdotes are unknown to the majority of the personnel of the group and so we bring them to you in this, our 200 mission issue.

DURING THE PAST year quite a number of our boys were delivered from prison camps located in Ploesti and Bucharest and the stories they had to tell were sometimes, but not often, amusing. Such as the Nazi-controlled Roumanian officials who wore very large gold belt buckles. It seems that they had been warned that American airmen sighted on those buckles, so when our boys would pay a little air visit, these same officials would unstrap their belts and hide them, thinking our bombers would be unable to hit the target.

THEN THERE WAS the one about the time when we were bombing Bucharest and the Nazis were looking for the nearest German fox hole. Ten German soldiers spotted an open sewer hole and piled into it and were immediately followed by one of our 500 pound bombs. Precision bombing?

OR THE TIME that the Germans captured one of our bombsights but they did not know how to operate it. So they called in one of their prisoners, a 449th Bombardier, and ordered him to show them how. He agreed and proceeded to take the bombsight completely apart. After spreading the parts (about 7,000 of them) all over the place he saluted sharply and told the Nazis that he wouldn't put it together again.

AND THE TIME the Russians entered Bucharest and a tankful of Russians piled into a restaurant and after finishing their meal started walking out without paying. The owner protested quite loudly but the Russians said "We don't pay for anything. Haven't we just captured this place?" And they marched proudly out the door and into their tank. The owner rushed out of his place shouting "Help, Help, Police." So the Russians calmly backed up their tank and drove it right through the restaurant. Now we know why the Germans keep retreating.

ON THE OTHER hand there was the story about one of the 717th boys who had to bail out over Bucharest and when he landed he had 113 wounds. Yes, 113 wounds. The Nazis picked him up and brought him to the place marked "Next batch to be buried." However, some of the prisoners took care of him and patched him up pretty efficiently. As a result he is alive today and itching to get back in the fight as soon as he recuperates in the U. S. A.

ONE OF OUR Intelligence boys was interrogating a crew during the early part of 1944 and one of the questions asked was "Did you encounter any flak?" The reply "Sure we did and plenty of it right over Bari." It seems the pilot had forgotten his briefing instructions and was almost shot down over Bari, which at that time was not taking any chances with any type plane.

THE ABOVE WILL give you an idea of some of the incidents which brightened the hours of some of us in the past year. Let us hope they do the same for you.

Wright Earns DSC Over Vienna

Captain John B. Wright, leading the 717th over Vienna, brought "Miss-N-Moan", on the bomb run when suddenly a barrage of flak blanketed his plane, ripping out vital instruments, smashing the nose of the ship, knocking out No. 2 and 3 engines. During this barrage his co-pilot, Lt. Robert W. Eaton, was fatally injured, and Capt. Wright suffered gaping holes in left arm and side, but kept his flight intact dropping the bombs on the target. He then called S/Sgt. Brady his tail gunner to assist him in place of his co-pilot.

During the return flight he was agony but still refused morphine and

at times flew the ship in a semi-conscious condition. Not knowing his co-pilot was beyond help, he notified his crew that he was going to try to land at a friendly field. Though his ship was riddled and two of his engines were out he disregarded his own wounds and heroically set the plane down with no further damage to his crew, himself collapsing when Miss-N-Moan rolled to a stop.

For this epic flight Capt. Wright was honored with the Distinguished Service Cross, our nation's second ranking award. Capt. Wright remains the only living member of our group to receive this distinguished honor.

A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE GROUP

1. Original Sgt Majors
2. Control tower
3. Our Libs in flight
4. Preparation of briefing maps in S 2
5. USO honey, Fausta Bentini
6. Repairing a flak riddled tail
7. Major Lincoln, Col. Blase, Gen. Rush, Col. Fleisher
8. Red Cross doughnut time
9. Pretty contortionist with Jack Haley show
10. General Twining at our Bucharest citation
11. Bomb strike
12. Squadron conflagration
13. Same squadron as it looks today
14. Precision bombing
15. 718th squadron library
16. Headquarters volley ball game
17. Orientation battle progress maps in S-2 lobby
18. Jack Haley
19. More bomb strikes
20. Mud, Nuf said
21. Loading frag bombs
22. One of the rest camps
23. No photo but a vote of thanks to Tiny Florsheim and the group Photo boys for a swell job
24. Rhapsody in blue premiere
25. Color guard at the group's Ploesti citation
26. Our choice for a plane jane
27. Over the Alps
28. Interrogating crew after mission
29. And some more bomb strikes
30. Joe E. Brown with Thad, one of our Photo boys
31. Guard checking a trip ticket
32. Mud (ugh) continued
33. 348th Service Squadron men at work
34. Roubia, another USO long low whistle
35. That well known FLAK
36. Shell torn 43
37. 1627th men on the job
38. Libs heading home

Facts and Figures

For this special 200-Mission issue, this column is serving as a clearing house for the facts and figures, culled from all Departments comprising the group. In these data our 13 months of operations are revealed in a new light-- not only information of a technical nature, but also little odds and ends, all important, yet too little noticed.

During our first 13 months:

About 6,000 sorties were flown.

Gas consumed on operational flights alone equaled the capacity of three good-sized tankers, enough to displace in weight a battleship the size of the Texas plus a destroyer thrown in for good measure.

Air mileage covered was over 8,000,000.

There were 22,908,000 pounds of bombs dropped on enemy targets, with railroad installations and communications absorbing the lion's share.

Our gunners scored 200 victories in the air, the ratio of wins to losses being 8 to 1 in our favor.

Mechanics' note: There were 600 engine changes accomplished.

S-1 used up over 5,000 reams of paper (2,500,000 sheets).

There were over 6,000 medals and awards for valor (of course, Air Medals and clusters figured for over 5,500) including two DSCs.

Non buono note: There were about a hundred courts martials, ten of them bring General fortresses.

Mail and Chow Hounds, please note, so you'll do less barking: There were approximately 2,700,000 meals dished out, the total weight of which equaled the capacity of fifty 40 and 8's (box cars to you).

The 449th's third commander overseas, Lt. Col. Jack L. Randolph, has been serving since October 26. A Regular Army soldier, he has been in uniform since 1931.

Over 3,000,000 letters were received during this period, 70,000 packages and close to 150,000 newspapers.

Outgoing mail breakdown: There were over a million and a half letters plus 40,000 parcels sent home (would you like to be a censor, knowing this?)

Training Notes: Jam Handy, since starting operations, has run enough film through its machine to stretch from the base to Regensburg.

Over a million rounds of a 50 cal. shells have been used in the training of new crews.

Here's a special note for your fellows who worry yourselves about the national debt:

Did you know that over 3,000,000 dollars has been paid to members of the group during the past 13 months?

What cigarette shortage are you talking about?

The PX has distributed over 1,120,000 packs of butt. Over 2,000,000 miles have been covered by the transportation boys of the group or the equivalent of 80 trips around the world.

Approximately 6,000 publicity items were sent home to newspapers.

This column took longer to write than you might think.

Group Checked Enemy Advance at Anzio

Another red letter day for the 449th Bomb Group was Jan. 22, 1944, when its big bombers came to the aid of our hard pressed troops who were battling for every inch of ground but found themselves against numerically superior enemy hordes, forcing them toward the beach and its precious foothold at Anzio.

Our planes were called upon to alter the situation if humanly possible. They roared north to bomb the coastal road at Te. racina, Italy, and the adjoining hillsides. Disregarding the intense flak they bombed with such pinpoint accuracy that the broken up highway and land slides

tumbling from the hillsides, caused by the devastating missiles, stopped the Nazi armored forces from advancing to check the beach head.

It was with pride the men received notice at a later date commending their cooperation and accuracy for destroying the enemy's chances at Anzio.

The AC defines an "ace" as "one who shoots down five or more enemy aircraft," and so the definition 449th Gunner, S/Sgt. F. A. Crumbaugh of the 716th, Crumbaugh became an "ace" when he downed 6 Nazi planes last spring.

718th

EAGLE TALK

Two hundred missions ago is a long time... and many bombs have been dropped... Things have happened... sometimes fast sometimes not so fast... The 718th, a finished product of the A.A.F., left the good old USA to become a spark in the big flame and has been burning its way toward V day for the past fourteen months. All departments of the 718th have, like the other squadrons, experienced many trials and tribulations and it is with jealous pride that we look back with a feeling of a job well done. Each department has had its highlights and all have gone toward the making of a smooth running machine; therefore, the spotlight cannot rest upon a single department or person. For this reason we have selected the means of reminiscing with the belief that more of what has gone before may be covered in this manner.

JUMBLED MEMORIES

The day we arrived cold, hungry and with foot long hangovers... Our first night in the grove... Welch and his makeshift kitchen... The long chow line under a blanket of stars at god knows what hour in the morning... Those nightly urinations when the frost was on the vine and the damn dampness was damp... Doc Conway's warnings about utilizing the area when some were lucky to even make it past the door... Smitty and his whistle... Early morning briefings and long hours of labor at night... The "EYETIES" along the track selling "PURPLE DEATH," lamps, eggs, nuts and oranges... The issue of an additional blanket but still cold as the well known weldigger's buttocks... Our first casualty... 606... Machine gun Worthington and his fifteen paratroopers... Lt. Bullis' famous midnight dash on our first red alert... The day tragedy struck with a heavy hand... 605, 217, 730 blasted from the blue and only a few chutes seen to open... Followed the next day by the loss of Col. Alkire... 19 missions in 23 days.

REMEMBER ?

Palm Sunday and "YE-OLDE RUGGED CURSE"... John Black and his circus... WOODSCHOPPER and the LOVELY HEADS... Jim Wade and his 100 octave "BOOM-BOOM"... The BY-FONG CLUB... The four nights in succession when Jerry flew over... When Kilpalla fell in the well... When Capt. Chudyk took over the line... DeHass coming home natural with O'Hara helping him... BIG NOISE FROM KENTUCKY, RACY TOMATO and QUEEN BEE... The night the squadron club opened... The time Joe Schwartz mistook Major Ogden for Saffia.

BUIE

MAJOR ALLEN, FOURTH TO SERVE AS 719th COMMANDING OFFICER

Editor-Gunner Makes His Own News

When an editor makes his own news, perhaps it's like a man biting a dog, but if such is the truth, Staff Sgt. Fred E. Clever, of the GAB staff, did it the hard way getting himself injured by flak on the Group's mission to Zagreb last week.

Clever's plane, from the 718th squadron, had just deposited its bombs on the target when Clever involuntarily made himself newsworthy. A piece of flak, roughly two inches in diameter, whizzed past the bombardier, knocking off his helmet in its flight and then buzzed towards Clever's nose turret position.

The gunner editor was looking at the ozone, contemplating another safe trip home, his face pressed close to the turret glass. The flak fragment came so close to his face that it left scratches on his right cheek, and expended itself in whistling out of the turret window, leaving a sizable hole in its wake.

Outside of a scare—naturally—and a face which gave every indication of being scratched by a sharp-clawed cat, Clever was none the worse for his experience.

(Editor's Note: This item was scooped out at the interrogation of crews and was in no way instigated, suggested or otherwise fathered by the aforesaid Clever, who would rather forget it all. His wife might have other ideas about the scratched face.)

Cadets Change..

con't. from page 3

signed to the 717th his unusual leadership and ability proved his worth as he soon was designated as a flight commander and promoted to the grade of Captain. A quiet, imperturbable Texan, his very manner solicits the respect of the personnel under his command. Thus far over 25 sorties over Nazi installations have been made by the 716th under his experienced leadership. Maj. Bentsen also has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, his for extraordinary professional skill and devotion to duty while on a mission over St. Valentines on 16 Oct. 44.

Three COs Have Led 718th

The 16th Day of August, 1944 was an ill-fated one for the men of the 718th for the squadron's first commanding officer, Major William Nosker, gave his life in the invasion of Southern France on that day. While flying as an instructor pilot with the 98th Bomb Group, the B-24 in which he was flying crashed and every man aboard lost.

Major Nosker was a former All-American guard for Ohio University and an all around athlete — a popular leader, well liked by both the enlisted men and by his fellow officer.

His wife resides with his brother, Robert Nosker, who has just recently arrived in this theater of war as a co-pilot on a 777th squadron liberation.

During the previous July, Major Rexford E. Tompkins had succeeded Major Nosker as commanding officer and the squadron continued to pro-

gress along its usual "ALL OUT LINE." Major Tompkins is a native Pennsylvanian. He joined the squadron back in Bruning, Nebraska as Operations Officer, succeeding Captain Reirson at that post. After completing his tour of duty, he became an Assistant to the Assistant of Staff 15th Air Force.

Major Charles E. Jordan, our present CO, arrived from the states in September and took charge of the squadron on October 18. Born in Brooklyn and reared in Pittsburgh, Major Jordan has more or less lived the life of a nomad. At present his wife is residing in Dumont, New Jersey with their two children, one of whom was born after the Major assumed charge of the 718th. Through his affable manner and unquestionable fairness he is held in esteem by his men and bids fair to become the most popular commanding officer the squadron has yet had.

Considering the short intervals that former commanding officers performed their duty in the 719th Bomb Squadron, Major Allen has practically equalled the months in command. His aggressiveness and intimate concern for the personnel along with his colorful manner of performance has rated considerable attention.

Prior to his entry into the Army, Major Allen held a civilian Pilots License, for the years 1939 to 1941. He received his commission as 2nd Lieutenant in the Reserve August 16, 1942, completing 4 engine transition training at Maxwell Field, Alabama. He was promoted to the grade of Major, February 19, 1944.

The 719th Squadron's Orientation Study Hall under the guidance of Captain Raymond B. Nelson, squadron adjutant and orientation officer, and Cpl. Joseph Stephens, orientation NCO, made its initial debut this week.

719th

BUT DEFINITELY

You all remember the S.S. Harvard—nightly strolls around the deck as ship plodded its course slowly and quietly—the Rock of Gibraltar. The eager faces expressed as you scrambled from below deck to gaze at the isle of Capri—Warlike feeling influenced by the numerous explosions while docked in the harbor of Naples—the unforgettable marble floors at the staging area accompanied by the wierd groans and snoring tunes of 449ers cramped in the open-air rooms—Ooh my back! The colorful indians who slept on the floor above and who violated all the rules of "etiquette" all ova the building. Connosieurs of crabs—Sgt Tiny Florheim directing a symphony of lost voices in "My Coney Island Rose" as the Indians sat down in a circle on the floor having a bull session. Usual expression used "35 miles from the front" Everyone talked about spaghetti—Capt Raymond B. Nelson, (Adjutant) and S/Sgt Jessie (well done) Pope introduced the Italian Lira that afternoon.

The convoy to the base under the direction of Major Rabedeau, exec officer, with Lt. Cromwell driving "lead truck" — K rations knocking the hell out of sensitive stomachs—Arrival at the field—MUD everywhere—Raining like hell—The urge to pack up and go home—The flowing streams passing through our tents as the "rains came." No stoves—just your unmentionables to keep you warm.

The sweating out of chow lines for hours at a time with various rank no differ-ounce—Orderly room set up in clerks living quarters—Mess Sgt Goulart serving his customers in his open-air diner—Original crews flying daily missions, and setting up their tents in spare time—rough. The colorful Capt Gentry, Lt Fergus, Capt Meade, Woodie and Capt Polink, former operations officer who bailed out over Ploesti and returned in that greatly publicized "Escape From Bucharest."

That sorrowful day when five of our ships did not return—That one summer night when a plane exploded with its bombs and rocked the entire area into foxholes—Time really made some changes too much to get all in print—Lt Grommon on DS to the states for gunnery purposes. That likeable Lt. St Johns, bomb-sight officer transferring to the paratroopers because life was too easy—Bomb loading at night Enlisted man's club finally becoming a reality—A new mess hall—officer's club everything booming with activity—719th really activated—Lt Col Swan trid to MTOUSA headquarters—1st Sgt Wiess completes missions, now an avn cadet New crews—some going some coming—Capt Hicks engineering officer succeeded by Lt Norwood—Lt Anderson trid to another wing. The former baldheaded Archer of ordnance now at 450th—Dec 5th remembered by all ground crew members as a sad day when M/Sgt Parrish and Sgt Nosse crushed to death in an accident. The first 200 missions stores up many memories for one to speak about in the 719th—rough were the days endured by all. What is accomplished now took effort and time. Sgt. Walter Nixon

Strong Spokes Make a Strong Wheel

(Editor's Note -- Due to lack of time and space we regret that we can not list a chronological account due to each section and name all members of each staff be they enlisted men or commissioned officers, past and present.)

The completion of the group's 200 missions has been accomplished only through the effort and cooperation of every department in the group.

The engineering department has earned sincere commendation from the General Staff many times for their excellent efficiency in returning and repairing planes so that this group always maintained maximum effort. Captains Bolton, Cope, Chudyk, Hicks, Norwood and their complete staffs may well be proud of their record.

To operations and their complex assignments with out which the missions could not have been accomplished, Lt. Col. Knox, Major Babits, Captains Johnson, Bosworth, Pulley, McKee and their respective personnel, the group's success owes much.

Communications, which started from scratch and kept pace with the rapid improvement of radio and its sensitive counterparts, along with its many other duties to numerous to mention, reflects great credit upon Capt. Donovan, Jones, Kessler, Valdez, Sherman and their competent crews of technicians.

Indirectly responsible for the target's destruction due to the lethal cargo flown by our liberators, is Ordnance, comprised of bomb specialists and weapons mechanics who have not only given the enemy complete blast affect through their knowledge of H.E., but achieved a remarkable feat during the past many months by not having a single accident due to the mishandling of these tons of destruction. Capt. Runkle, Lts. Dunn, Brown, McNulty, Hake and all their ordnance men may well be proud.

The intricate structure of the plane's turrets and protective armament and the placing of bombs in bays, has been armament's work.

Combat men have owed their safety to the turret specialists and armorers when enemy planes were roaming the skies. Capts. Cline, White, Kreps, Beckley, Lt. Barbour and the night owls of armament are but other spokes in the 449th wheel.

The medics have always been unfarily considered holders of cushy jobs in the army, but again our group personnel have maintained the high standard featured by other branches of the armed forces. Medical sections have proven their courage beyond a doubt, to cite an instance -- when a plane crashed D-Day of southern France, the medics were on the scene and amidst thousands of gallons of high octane gas roaring into an inferno and exploding bombs, they entered this hell and rescued a survivor. They fly combat missions and have suffered losses. All this and sick calls too. Major Petterson, Capts. Scott, Cammell, Conway, Badami and their staffs have been the main factor of our physical well being.

Many men which have become chief factors in the success of the group and without which this unit could not have existed as an organized outfit: Deputy Group C. O. Lt. Col. Edward L. Van Allen; Squadron Executive Officers, Majors Fichte, Yandle, Ogden and Rabideau; The group chaplain, Capt. Thos. J. McNamara; Mr. George M. Kennedy of the ARC; The men in the orderly rooms; To the men who have daily fed and sustained us, for theirs was no easy task in the bleak months following our arrival. All transportation units who are on call 24 hours a day and manage to keep all vehicles in running condition are not spectacular in their efforts but are a vertebrae in the backbone of that which harassed the enemy from the air. To S-2 and the Photo section along with Headquarters (the hub round which all squadrons must revolve), to the officers and Enlisted men, the group is definitely a symbol of your astuteness. Strong spokes make a strong wheel.

The Saga of Pistol Packin' Mama

Her guns knocked out, one by one, two engines disabled, the Liberator bomber "Pistol Packin' Mama" kept firing until she had written a flaming valedictory across German skies. The saga of her crew has been hailed as a record aerial feat of the war. The gallant crew knocked 15 Nazi planes out of the sky in one engagement. As befits her name, Pistol Packin' Mama went down fighting, but only after she had fought off every enemy attack and carried her crew to friendly territory.

The date was February 25 of last year and the target was Regensburg, site of Nazi aircraft factories. Set upon by swarms of enemy fighters and hit by rockets and cannon-firing enemy planes, she, nonetheless, flew on to the assigned target-an aircraft factory. Her bombardier loosed explosives which destroyed enemy planes in the making. Then, escorted by another Liberator which shot down 3 more tormentors, "Pistol Packin'

Mama" headed for home, but couldn't quite make it and her crew was forced to bail out.

This is her honor roll crew: Pilot: 2nd Lt. GILBERT F. BRADLEY; co-pilot: 2nd Lt. ANSON F. HUGHES; navigator: 2nd Lt. JOSEPH P. McMENTEMEN; bombardier: 1st Lt. KENNETH E. EBERSOLE; gunners: S/Sgt. HERBERT R. CLEMENTS, S/Sgt. IRVING J. MILLS, T/Sgt. ROLAND J. PRESCHER, T/Sgt. JOSEPH W. MONTAGNA, PAUL S. BIGGART, FRANKLIN A. CRUBAUGH.

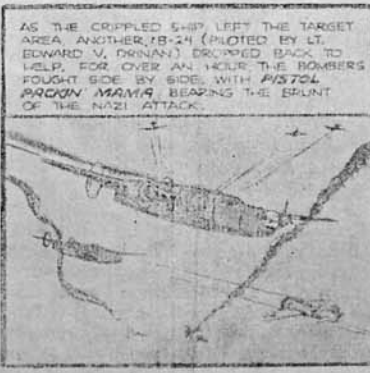
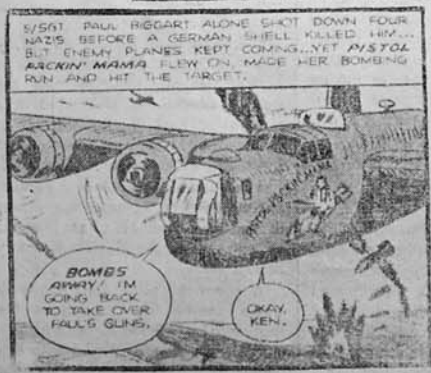
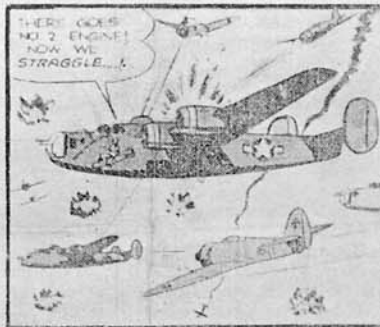
And this is what "Pistol Packin' Mama" and her boys went thru on that fateful day: Approaching the target the bomber was set upon by rocket and cannon firing fighter. Below, Nazi anti-aircraft batteries sent up a curtain of steel. No. 2 engine was disabled, the bomber lost speed and enemy fighters were closing in hungrily on the straggler for the kill. But the guns of

the Lib blazed away with all they had. Biggart methodically picked off 3 Ju 88's and one Me 210 as the bomber started her run over the target. A Nazi shell pierced Biggart's compartment and he was killed. In a matter of seconds another shell exploded inside the plane under Clements' seat. It knocked out Clements' guns and the turret operating system. Then Prescher was hit. All the while Mills fought off a score of enemy planes. He was holding his own until another shell disabled the tail turret hydraulic system. A machine gun bullet pierced Mills' coveralls and struck the door. Undaunted, Mills left the disabled turret and took up Prescher's unmanned gun in the waist. After dropping his bombs, Lt. Ebersole manned Biggart's gun. Montagna leaned down from his top turret to check his ammunition. At that moment an enemy shell tore away half the turret dome -- where Montagna's

head had been the instant before. Another shell struck the ball turret elevation gear. Miraculously it didn't explode, but disabled the automatic mechanism in the turret -- the last one in operation -- but Grubaugh kept firing away by operating the turret manually.

A Liberator piloted by 1st Lt. EDWARD V. DRINAN had completed its run, and observing that "Pistol Packin' Mama" was in trouble dropped back to offer what protection he could. The two bombers fought side-by-side for more than hour with enemy planes swooping down like buzzards for the kill. Then the heroic bomber's number 1 engine gave out. Limping along on only 2 engines "Pistol Packin' Mama" lost altitude rapidly, but by now she was over friendly territory. There her crew was forced to bail out. Moments later "Pistol Packin' Mama" died like the great lady she was.

S
A
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449th Men Earn 5,459 Decorations

Continued from page 2

Frank E. Elliot Jr., Lt. Richard Engelhardt, T/Sgt John H. English, Sgt George Epreman, S/Sgt Byron F. Erwin, Lt. Julius Fabian, Lt. Ray R. Faust Jr., Lt. Harford Fees, T/Sgt Arthur A. Ferraro, Capt Henry P. Finch, Lt. Michael R. Fiordaliso, T/Sgt Richard J. Foley, Lt. Joe B. Foster, Capt Felix C. Fowler, Lt. William M. Fredberg, Lt. William F. Froebig, Lt. Chester D. Gage, Sgt. Angelo Galletta, Colonel Thomas J. Gent, Jr., T/Sgt Earl P. Gorman, Capt Martin E. Gormley, Lt. Bryce Gray Jr., Capt Herbert W. Greenhalg Jr., S/Sgt Franklin A. Grubagh, Sgt Thomas R. Guinan, T/Sgt Raymond W. Guinn, S/Sgt Thomas T. Huger, Lt. John Halvorsen, Lt. Alphonse F. Hanley, Lt. George W. Harlan Jr., Lt. George Hartman, Lt. Paul R. Harper, Lt. Robert C. Hartman, Capt Charles E. Harton, Lt. Floyd H. Haywood Jr., T/Sgt Wilburn M. Henley, Lt. Harold F. Henry, T/Sgt George H. Higgins, Major George M. Howard, Lt. William H. Hoyt, Lt. Anson F. Hughes, S/Sgt Marvin C. Hunt, Lt. Joseph R. Hydar, Lt. Albert H. Isaacs, Lt. Vincent K. Isgrigg, Lt. Marvin Ivers, Lt. Arthur C. Jacoby, Lt. Victor B. Jensen, Lt. Hila K. Johnson, Lt. Wilson H. Jones, Lt. Kenneth E. Kaplar, S/Sgt Albin C. Karlik, Lt. Manuel Kauffman, Lt. Robert A. Kennelly, Lt. Cecil E. Kinerd, Lt. Kenneth E. Kinsinger, Lt. Arnold Kohler, Capt Norman L. Kohmescher, Lt. Edward M. Kolek, Lt. Stephen Kuspit, S/Sgt Thomas Lambie, Sgt Walter J. Larcombe, S/Sgt Cornelius A. Lauve, Lt. Norman L. Lawrence, T/Sgt John Ledbetter, Lt. Robert L. Levenson, Lt. Justin S. Levy, Lt. Donald P. Liddycoat, Major Dale Lincoln, Major Harold R. Loughran, Lt. Harry Mahoney, Capt Frank W. Meark, Lt. Galon H. Mallory, Lt. Bertram Mann, Lt. Raymond A. Mann, Lt. William K. Mann, Capt Herbert D. Martin, Lt. George P. Mason, S/Sgt. Ivan Maynard, Major Shelby McArthur, Lt. Lawrence R. McCool, Lt. Robert R. McGlasson, Lt. William F. McGrath, Lt. Earl McLeod, Lt. Joseph F. McMenimen, T/Sgt Lloyd R. McNeil, Lt. Elmer C. Meade, Lt. Ernest P. Mellor, Lt. Marvin J. Messenger, S/Sgt Clarence L. Mezo, S/Sgt Donald E. Miller, Lt. John J. Miller, Lt. John W. Miller, Lt. Robert K. Miller, Lt. Edward D. Mills, S/Sgt Irving J. Mills, T/Sgt William Milon, Capt. James W. Minow, Lt. Alexander B. Molmar, T/Sgt Joseph W. Montagna, Lt. Alfred C. Morton, Lt. Warren F. Mugler, Lt. Morton R. Naftulin, Sgt Louis M. Newland, Lt. Raymond E. Nicholson, S/Sgt Einar O. Niklason, T/Sgt Thoralf N. Nilson, Lt. Richard C. Noel Jr., Major William C. Nosker Major Paul R. Nugent, Lt. Harold A. Oien, Lt. William S. Oliver, Lt. John W. Olson, Lt. Hward E. Orgera, S/Sgt Robert K. Parsons, Capt Stephen Pater, T/Sgt Milton Peisher, Lt. Anthony Perdicas, Lt. Harold Perkins, Capt William R. Perks, Lt. Baryl Peterson, Lt. John P. Phacock, Lt. Gordon E. Powers, S/Sgt Roland J. Presbher, T/Sgt Joseph F. Price, Sgt Jesse W. Priest, Lt. Col Jack L. Randolph, T/Sgt Herbert G. Reeve, S/Sgt Andrew E. Reis, Lt. Cornelius A. Reisdorf, Frank J. Rezk, Cpt. Joseph I. Reznick, Lt. Glenn E. Rogers, Lt. Norman C. Rogers, Lt. Arnold Ross, Lt. Marvin T. Ross, Lt. Martin S. Rouse, Lt. Paul J. Russell, Lt. Vernon M. Samuelson, S/Sgt Walter C. Sanders, S/Sgt Nick Santos, Major J. Sass, S/Sgt Charles J. Schroer, Lt. Jack C. Schulz, Lt. Jerry F. Scroggs, Lt. John E. Scroggs, S/Sgt Lester E. Seebeck, S/Sgt William W. Sheldon, Capt Richard S. Shlomberg, Lt. Henry C. Siewright, Lt. Walter Siewert, S/Sgt William A. Simmerman, T/Sgt Ben B. Smith, Lt. Lloyd J. Smith Jr., S/Sgt Vernon L. Smith, Lt. Robert E. Sondeen, T/Sgt Isaac M. Spence, Lt. Ray C. Staley, Lt. Stanley A. Steineamp, Lt. Harold A. Strack, T/Sgt James I. Stuart, Lt. Robert D. Sundorf, Lt. Col Arthur B. Swan, T/Sgt John Szalinski, Lt. Frank Temchulls Jr., Lt. James S. Thomas, Major Rextord E. Tompkins, Major William A. Tope, Capt Floyd H. Trogdon, Lt. Thomas N. Turner, Capt Donald P. Ulman, T/Sgt Edgar R. Van Keuren, Capt Cornelius G. Van Schoor, T/Sgt Frank E. Visciglia, S/Sgt John S. Walters, Lt. Wallis L. Webb, Lt. Howard K. White, Lt. Andrew C. Widness, Lt. Carl W. Wiles, Capt Robert L. Willding, S/Sgt Robert W. Williams, Capt John W. Wood Jr., Joseph E. Zink.

SOLDIER'S MEDAL

Sgt Malcolm. O. Adams, S/Sgt J. C. Alexander, Sgt John R. Allen, Sgt Sherman F. Ashby, Capt William H. Conway, Sgt Emil M. Donato, S/Sgt Sherman W. Dreiszson, Lt. Joseph N. Dunfee, S/Sgt Louis E. Fritz, Lt. Robert L. Gettens, Cpl Wallace S. Huegel, Cpl Herman Ingram, Pfc Edward G. Lutek, Cpl Alton P. Lee, T/Sgt Charles W. Manion, Cpl Ralph A. Marifano, T/Sgt Richard E. Marshall, Sgt Milo E. McDowell, T/Sgt Bartholomew Peloso, Lt. William R. Perks, Lt. Edward A. Rabbitt, T/Sgt Richard L. Rutledge, Pfc Joseph C. Saccone, T/Sgt Sebastian P. Salestro, Capt Earl S. Scott, Sgt Anthony J. Senatore, S/Sgt Carroll Smith.

BRONZE STAR

M/Sgt Bill Baker, Major Edward A. Bartlett, Pvt Victor U. Bayers, Lt. Otis J. Bolton, T/Sgt Henry M. Bordin, M/Sgt Mart B. Bowen Jr., M/Sgt William G. Braden, T/Sgt Melvin S. Cook, M/Sgt Milton B. Coon, Capt Eddie A. Cope, Lt. Charles J. Crowe, Lt. Edward V. Drinan, M/Sgt A. P. DuPont, T/Sgt Edward Forrest, M/Sgt Paul F. Floyd, Lt. Glen B. Hake, M/Sgt Charles M. Herzog, Capt Howard W. Hicks Jr., M/Sgt Morris P. Johnson, M/Sgt Bernard Kessler, T/Sgt Victor R. Krick, T/Sgt Terry J. Lavergne, T/Sgt Melvin W. Littleton, Capt Chester F. Lorillard, T/Sgt Loren W. Massey, M/Sgt Harry E. May, M/Sgt William D. Parrish, Sgt Charles W. Putnam, T/Sgt George F. Rothenburg, M/Sgt Donald R. Sharff, T/Sgt Alfred H. Sildar, M/Sgt William F. Treadway, T/Sgt Nunzio Tripaldi, M/Sgt Earl O. Vian, Lt. Hollie A. Wilkes, Sgt Joseph H. Yengst.

COLONEL GENT, GROUP CO DURING CITATION ATTACKS



Col. Gent

Completes 200...

con't. from page 1

the only ships to go over the target and with no fighter escort.

The second unit citation was awarded for the destruction of the Concordia Vega oil refinery the second largest in the Balkans. As our attacking forces flew over Ploesti the heavy smoke screen and clouds of flak bursts, plus fighter opposition caused other units to seek alternate targets. The 449th stayed on its course and dropped its bombs without visual aid on the refinery with exceptional, devastating accuracy, writing off the largest refinery left to Ploesti. Three bombers were lost due to anti-aircraft fire.

The 449th has had three commanding officers during its illustrious stay in Italy. The first was Col. Darr H. Alkire who brought the group to Italy and went down a fighting leader over Aviano and later was reported a prisoner of war. Second to command the group was Col. Thomas J. Gent Jr., now on detached service, and the current commanding officer, is Lt. Col. Jack L. Randolph.

The group has had many interesting experiences but one that will remain uppermost in our minds will be the condition of the base when we took over, it was almost unbelievable to think a B-24 could take off. They did, and repeated the task day by day until a suitable runway was built. Remarkable as it may seem, there was never a serious accident under those conditions.

Group Should Feel Proud...

con't. from page 1

administer the final blows to the remainder of his holding.

Every member of the Group, past, present and future should feel justifiable pride in the achievements of the Flying Horsemen, who have brought home to the enemy the full meaning of total war. With victory within our grasp we will endeavor to continue our record breaking attacks upon our targets and equal if not surpass our past performances.

JACK L. RANDOLPH,
LT. COL., AIR CORPS,
COMMANDING

Lt. Col. Jack L. Randolph, the third of the 449th's overseas commanding officers, has been in charge since October 26. He first joined the group on June 20 and served as deputy commander and air inspector prior to assuming command. A native of California, Col. Randolph was graduated from Porter-

Colonel Thomas J. Gent, Jr., the group's second commanding officer, now on detached service back home, assumed command of the 449th on Feb. 2, 1944. He was our leader during the action filled days of last spring and summer, personally leading the missions to Ploesti and Bucharest, for which our Distinguished Unit Citations were awarded.

A career soldier, Col. Gent was born at Mt. Vernon, N. Y., on March 12, 1911. He graduated from the National Preparatory School in 1930 and from West Point, where he participated in track, fencing, squash and swimming, with the class of June, 1935. He won his wings at Randolph Field, Tex., in 1936, after which he commenced a long and illustrious career as a pilot and administrative officer.

He was aide to Major Gen. George H. Brett, commander of the USAAF in the Caribbean, based at Panama, from 1936 to 1939, and then served as executive officer of the Victorville, Calif., Army Air Base. He was later Assistant A-3 of the West Coast Training Command and executive to the Assistant Secretary of War for Air.

A graduate of the Royal Air Force Empire Central Flying School, Col. Gent commanded the 302nd Bomb Group at Clovis, N. Mex., and Langley Field, Va., prior to coming overseas.

His decorations include the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross with one Oak Leaf Cluster and the Air Medal with three clusters.

Col. Gent's wife, the former Jeanne Godshall, California's woman's champion rodeo star, lives at the C Bar G Ranch, Victorville, Calif.

ARC Runs Snack Bar

Two American Red Cross ladies, Kitty Kitchell and Lillian O'Brien, who both hail from New York City, have recently taken over the supervision of the thriving port city snack bar. Sgt. Marvin Stewart will continue as manager.

One of the three rooms comprising the cafe has been given over to a lounge where visiting GIs can write letters or read magazines. The feminine touch—in the form of curtains, etc.—will soon be apparent, promises the ARC.

ville High School and Porterville Junior College. He entered the Regular Army in July, 1931, and has had continuous service since that date. He was in the first class instituted at Randolph Field, Tex., and won his pilot's wings at Kelly Field, Tex., in June, 1932.

Col. Randolph served for many years at Luke Field, Hawaii, and in that romantic place married the former Cherie A. D'Arcy, now a resident of Fort Worth, Tex. From 1932 to 1941 he was stationed at Luke and at Hamilton Field, Calif.

His last assignment before coming overseas was as commanding officer of Tyndall Field, Fla., as Director of Training at the Flexible Gunnery School there.

A command pilot, Col. Randolph wears among his decorations the Distinguished Flying Cross with one cluster and the Air Medal with two bronze oak leaf clusters. He has flown 39 missions to date.