

416th Bombardment Group (L)



669th Bombardment Squadron (L)

History

**5 February 1943 to 31 October
1945**



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February, 1943

669th BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)

SUBJECT: HISTORICAL DATA

TO : COMMANDING GENERAL, ARMY AIR FORCES

The 669th Bombardment Squadron Light was activated as one of the four component Squadrons of the 416th Bombardment Group Light on 5 February, 1943, without personnel, at Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma. The authority for the organization of this Squadron is found in General Orders #3, Headquarters Army Air Base, Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma, dated 4 February, 1943.

The original transfer of personnel was made on 15 February 1943. Sixtyeight (68) Enlisted Men for the 51st Bomb Sq (L) of the 46th Bomb Gp (L) and Capt. Raymond T. Schlanser were assigned to the Squadron in Special Orders #46. The first Group Special Order relieved Capt. Schlanser of command and appointed Captain Robert F. Price Commanding Officer. Eleven other Officers were assigned to the Squadron by this same Special Order.

Until 15 February, all personnel were attached to their parent organization for duty, rations, and quarters. On that date, however, the 46th Bomb Gp (L) moved to the North side of Will Rogers Field, leaving the South side to be occupied by the 416th Bomb Gp (L).

Squadron Order #1 was signed on February 15th by Capt. Price. It assigned some of the Officers to Squadron duties. They were:

Adjutant and Mess Officer-----Capt. Lewis C. Dull
Armament and Chemical Officer-----2d Lt. William L. Ewbanks
Communication Officer-----2d Lt. Joseph R. Allen
Engineering and Tech. Supply Officer-----2d Lt. August T. Rini
Intelligence and Public Relations Officer-Capt. William B. Cleves
Supply and Transportation Officer-----2d Lt. Carl M. Holbert

Squadron Orders #2, 27 February, 1943, appointed 2d Lt. Jackson L. Marks the Squadron Special Services Officer and Postal Officer.

March, 1943

The organization at last was well located and comfortably housed. It was at first a small organization, laying a foundation for the problems of administration and operations in the future. Slowly, personnel and equipment were acquired. By the end of March our strength consisted of the 140 Officers and Enlisted Men.

There was much valuable training during these early days, most of it under the auspices of the 46th Bomb Group, and in their classrooms. Pilots were attached to the 46th Bomb Group for transition flying, since the first two planes did not arrive until 11 May, one B-25C and one A-20B. Pilots had complete ground school training in such subjects as code, link trainer, fish recognition, operation and maintenance of the A-20 and B-25, air navigation, radio, and instrument procedure; these classes continued for five hours a day. Likewise, the Intelligence personnel had one hour of school each day.

In a schedule of Squadron activities published on 15 March, a period was set aside each day for Close Order Drill and Physical Training. This training enabled the men to keep alert and to profit from a program offered by an Operational Training Unit such as ours.

The Squadron participated in the Weekly Ceremonial Reviews. A physical fitness test was conducted during the third week in May. The organization, on 21 May, proceeded on a Group bivouac, marching to the bivouac area, pitching shelter halves, eating, and marching back to the cantonment area.

On 16 March, the first group of Aerial Gunners became eligible to be placed on flying status. The transfer of Capt. Cleves and Lt. Rini to the 46th Bomb Group necessitated further changes in the Squadron duty assignments.

April, 1943

Training continued during the month of April. All personnel were required to attend an Anti-Incendiary Demonstration and an Anti-Gas Demonstration given by a Mobile Chemical Warfare Training Unit. Ground crews were becoming better acquainted with the mechanics and the operation of the planes, and were given authority to start and warm up, and taxi the planes.

A roster of the Officers in the Squadron was published on the 8th of April. It contained fifteen names:

Capt. Robert F. Price
2d Lt. Joseph R. Allen
2d Lt. Ray M. Cuberly
2d Lt. William E. Ewbank
2d Lt. Carl M. Holbert
2d Lt. Jackson L. Marks

Capt. Lewis C. Dull
2d Lt. Robert M. Cook
2d Lt. William Deanley
2d Lt. Howard J. Hildebrandt
2d Lt. Meredith J. Huff
2d Lt. Robert L. Hoald

the prospect of a better Base to carry on our real work caused us all to look forward to our new home expectantly.

The second phase of our existence began in the attractive surroundings of the Army Air Base at Lake Charles, Louisiana. The large cream-colored barracks, the large green lawns, the flower gardens, and finally the pleasant welcome of our new hosts impressed all of us. Although almost four months had slipped by since that first day when men started to say that they were from the 669th, the Squadron had little equipment and few facilities, although we were at T/O strength when we arrived at L.C.A.A.B. with 305 Officers and Enlisted Men.

The new Base, however, offered much to us in the way of new equipment and added facilities. Although the Squadron only possessed five planes at the time, promise of additional planes made the availability of this equipment and added facilities our greatest need. We were therefore assigned a hanger to be shared with the 671st Bomb Sq (L). Operations, Intelligence, Tech Supply, Engineering, Armament, and Ordnance all had offices in the Hanger.

An elaborate training program was set up by the Group. The usual ground school courses were conducted. The lack of planes meant that pilots had to spend many hours in the Link Trainer. The Squadron itself conducted courses for men who had not had their basic training. The emphasis on training of the ground crews was placed on knowing the A-20 and B-25 thoroughly.

June, 1943

The month of June went by with only one Squadron bivouac, and that on the last day of the month. The men returned after a 6 1/2 mile march and bivouac. They emphasized orderly road marching, camouflage discipline, and messing under field conditions. One Field Day was held in which the Squadron demonstrated its superiority in the field of athletics by coming out No.1. In the Group Softball League, however, our Giants and Cardinals appeared to be just two other teams.

By the end of June everyone was well aware of the recreational facilities on the Base and in town. A Base movie, a Group recreational hall, a Library, a Squadron Day Room that was the model day room on the Base, athletic fields, and a boxing ring were some of the things on the Base itself. In the city was a pleasant U.S.O. club, tennis courts, a library, theatres, and then, of course, those night spots such as the "Palms" and "Batt Gormleys". The Officers found the Officer's Club a pleasant place to relax at the end of the day.

July, 1943

We had acquired considerable overstrength, however during the month of June, and by 7 July, we had 404 Officers and Enlisted Men.

To begin the month, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th of July were set aside as Insurance, Allotment and Bond Days. The usual garrison duties continued throughout the month. Flying training improved with the acquisition of more planes. The heat of the Louisiana Summer slowed the intensity of all training. Perhaps the toughest job of the month was the 12-mile march and bivouac on the

26th. The Group Field Day was again won by the men of our Squadron. The Softball Leagues continued but we were far from champions in either league.

On the 23rd a list of names was published of men who were to constitute 25% of the cadre of the 418th Bomb Group (L). These men continued to be a part of our Squadron, however.

Approval was received on the 28th for the Squadron Aircraft marking, "Sure-Shot Sully".

August, 1943

Our strength on 1 August, 1943, was 38 Officers and 393 Enlisted Men. On the first day, too, orders were received activating the 418th Bomb Group (L). The personnel were assigned on the 12th from the 416th and its Squadrons. Part of this cadre left immediately for a three weeks course at AAFSAT, Orlando, Fla.

Ordnance was interested in getting all men qualified in the Carbine. As a result a range was secured and all men were required to qualify.

The Squadron was not as successful in the monthly Group Field Day. We finished in third place.

The usual garrison duties were carried on during the month of August. All personnel participated in a 6-mile hike and bivouac on the 27th. Flying training continued slowly because of the scarcity of planes and the overabundance of Pilots.

September, 1943

It was in the month of September that the status of the Squadron was changed from an Operational Training Unit to a Tactical Unit. News of this change on 7 September boosted the spirits of all men to a high peak. Training in the Squadron was continued with greater zeal. A Bombardier-Navigators school was conducted. Part of the Enlisted Men attended Intelligence School. The flying Personnel concentrated on Low Altitude missions. Ordnance and Armament Sections attended training classes.

The personnel, both Officer and Enlisted, was changing constantly. Within a few days after we became a tactical unit, the newly activated 418th Bomb Group (L) was deactivated. As a result, its personnel was added to that of our own Group. It became necessary to have men spread throughout the barracks area in order to find adequate housing. Each day, however, a few of the overages were transferred to other units. An all-time high was reached on the 18th when the Squadron consisted of 522 Officers and Enlisted Men.

New faces were seen in the different Sections. Capt. Dull, Lt. Ewbanks, Lt. Lancelotti left the Orderly room. Lt. Marks and Lt. Weismann took their places. Lt. Locke became S-2, replacing Lt. Klein. Lt. Earth and Lt. Hoppe came into the Squadron as Assistant Intelligence Officers. Lt. Clayton R. Foster was Supply and Transportation Officer. Lt. Sheffy McBroom became the new Communications

Officer when Lt. Shikore was transferred. Lt. Hall and Lt. Simms became the Ordnance and Armament Officers on the 10th. Flying personnel was also shifted around until only a few familiar faces remained- Lts. Huff, Sommers, Peck, MacManus, Morton, and Shainberg. Among the newcomers were four West Pointers. They were: Lts. Street, Boukamp, Renth (son of Col. Renth), and Lt. Gullion (son of Maj. Gen. Gullion). Lt. William H. Palin, Bombardier-Navigator, and Lt. Thomas L. Van Over, Assistant Operations Officer, were added to our permanent strength.

During the month the Third Bomber Command and the 56th Bomb Training Wing conducted inspections. Weaknesses were found, but generally both inspections were satisfactory.

Although the figures won't hear them out, all 669th men will agree that they were far superior to their competitors in the Squadron athletic competition held on the 27th. The struggle was hard and close, but the 668th Bomber Sq (L) managed to nose out our forces for first place.

The big excitement of the month was the Hurricane alert. On the 16th all planes that could be flown took off from the Field for Will Rogers Field and Muskegee. Those who stayed behind had visions of terrible disaster. The days passed slowly, each one becoming less menacing. On the 21st, flying in perfect formation all the planes returned to find the Field as safe and unharmed as ever.

October, 1943

The month of October was a month of increased activity. Our strength was 38 Officers and 469 Enlisted Men, on the first day of the month. Section personnel became comparatively stable in the latter half of the month. It was on the 13th that the permanent personnel was decided on. Lt. Kenneth Earth was made Train Commander of the troop train that took the overages to their new station. This transfer brought the Squadron to its T/O strength, plus 2% of overages. Thoughts of training permanent personnel caused Section heads to strive to train their men to the highest degree. Each section set up its own training program and followed it diligently. One-third of the Squadron attended a 3rd A.F. Mobile Camouflage School. Classes were conducted in an area four miles north of the Field, formerly used for a bivouac area. Orientation and S.M.I. lectures were given to the Enlisted Men. All combat crew members attended recognition courses conducted by the Group. Throughout the month Low and Medium Altitude missions were flown. Weather was fair so that there was some night flying. The Ordnance Section was busy getting as many men as possible qualified in required weapons. The Engineering Section was proud of the best record in the Group for the flying hours of planes.

Again inspections were made of all our departments. The 56th Wing made their inspection from the 5th to the 8th. Inspectors from the Group checked the Squadron on the 15th and 16th. All the discrepancies formerly noted had been corrected. We were still striving for the comment, "very satisfactory".

Unfortunate accidents marred a record that had been closely approximating a perfect one. On the first day of October, Lt. Walter C. Morris and his two gunners, Sergeant Everette L. Bass and Sergeant Hughes M. Braud, crashed into

the Gulf of Mexico. None of the bodies were recovered. The cause of the accident is unknown. On the 10th, while flying cover for our Convoy to Gillis Airfield, the plane flown by Lt. Robert F. Kempernlte, with Lt. John W. Wisdon, his Bombardier-Navigator, collided in mid-air with a plane from the 671st Squadron. The occupants of both planes were killed. The cause is unknown. On the 23rd, Lt. Wilfred Siggs was involved in the last of the unfortunate series. This time there was no personal injury. Slight damage to the plane resulted when the left landing gear buckled as the plane touched the ground at the home Field.

With the arrival of a new Commanding Officer to the Group, Colonel Harold L. Mace, at about the middle of the month, new personnel could be expected. Major Walter Farmer came into our Squadron to replace Capt. Price as Squadron Commander. Capt. Price became the Operations Officer. Capt. Harold A. Radetsky was transferred from the Squadron into the Group to be Assistant Air Support Officer. The Squadron Flight Leaders were named on the 31st.

As part of the training to ready the Squadron for combat duty, an evacuation and bivouac to Gillis Airfield took place on 10 October. A running log of the bivouac was kept.

November, 1943

The first day of November was an eventful one. It was on that day that the 416th Bomb Group (L) transferred from Lake Charles to the Army Air Field at Laurel, Miss.

An advance party under Lt. Frank M. Hoppe flew to the new base during the afternoon and evening of 31 October. At 1915, 1 November, the motor convoy that carried the remainder of the Group arrived at the new Base. Word of the movement had been given to the Squadrons at 0915, 30 October. A program of packing was discussed at a Squadron meeting that afternoon. By midnight of the 31st, all of the impedimenta were loaded, ready for movement. The vehicles were lined up in convoy order. The zero hour had been set for 0400 on 1 November. When the 668th Bomb Squadron was unable to take its scheduled place at the head of the convoy, the 669th was able to move right up so that at exactly 0400 the convoy moved off. Periodic stops were made along the way for the men to rest. The convoy stopped just east of Baton Rouge to refuel.

The early part of the movement was made in dense fog. It was almost noon before the sun managed to win in its fight against the fog. But even the sun couldn't warm those bodies well chilled by the brisk wind. Nor was there any hot food to warm them.

There was one thought in the minds of all the men as the convoy arrived at the gates of the Laurel Army Air Base. Oddly enough, there were few questions asked about the new Base. What was almost a universal question on their lips was, "When do we eat?" The food on the convoy consisted of two sandwiches per man and one apple. Breakfast had been eaten at midnight of the evening before.

The advance party made up of men from Engineering, Armament, Ordnance, the Orderly Room, and other departments became cooks for one night, and fed a dinner of cold cuts, salad, and hot coffee to an appreciative group of men. When all appetites had been appeased, the men were assigned to barracks according to

their type of work. Five barracks were assigned to the Squadron. The men were glad to get into their beds after the long, hard journey.

Despite the bad fog in the morning, the Squadron made a successful trip. There were no accidents to our men or vehicles.

The morning of the 2nd was devoted to locating the Sections and setting up equipment. In the afternoon all Sections of the Squadron were ready to carry on their duties. The planes were dispersed on the western side of the N-S runway. The Engineering Section was set up in that area.

Also in the morning of the 2nd the entire mess section along with its equipment left for maneuvers at Pollock, La. The maneuvers were conducted from the 2nd to the 15th in conjunction with the armored troops from Camp Polk, La. Our planes operated with the Blue Forces. Low and Medium attack missions were flown, day and night formations were used, and air-ground recognition was practiced. The personnel changed frequently so that the ground personnel as well as the combat crews had a opportunity to engage in the maneuvers.

On the 6th, five planes flown by Lt. Siggs, Lt. Renth, Lt. Land, Lt. Sommers, and Lt. McDonald, with one Bombardier-Navigator, Lt. Palin, left L.A.A.F. for a tour of five Army camps throughout the country. Sufficient personnel accompanied the planes to provide the necessary maintainance. The tour took them to Fort Benning, Fort Knox, Fort Riley, Fort Sill, and Camp Hood. At each Camp a convincing display of Low Altitude tactics was presented before the eyes of thousands of ground troops.

The only casualty on the entire trip was Lt. Demun. He was hit by one of the blades of his propeller while preparing to take off at Will Rogers Field. He received a cut on the scalp that confined him to the Hospital for four days. He had been sent to Fort Riley to replace Lt. Sommers who was to leave on the 19th to attend a Camouflage School at Walterboro, N.C. Lt. Demun flew his own plane back to Laurel on the 22nd. The other men and planes returned on the 25th.

Plans were drawn up with an end to operate under conditions more closely approximating field conditions. All training was directed toward that end. Ranges were secured at Hancock and Pachuta to be used for medium altitude bombing, skip bombing, and for gas attacks. Live demolition bombs were used several times rather than the usual practice bombs. The weather at L.A.A.F. was very bad for night flying. Trips to Shreveport were necessary so that the needed night flying could be done from that Field.

Further training was the bivouac in the area west of the Field. The bivouac started on the 9th. The Officers and Enlisted Men lived in pyramidal tents which contained six cots. A comforter was supplied each man to supplement his two blankets. A few of the craftier ones managed to draw stoves from Supply. The days were clear and bright, but cold. Trees that had at first furnished good camouflage were soon chopped down and thrown on fires whose smoke could be seen curling upwards from all four bivouac areas. The nights seemed impossibly cold. At first a few less rugged souls decided to seek the comparative comforts of their barracks and B.O.Q.'s. A bed check and a few inquiring words from the Squadron Commander soon caused all the weaker ones to sleep in the bivouac area. Everyone ate from his mess kit the food that was cooked at the 670th Bomb Squadron Field Kitchen-our own mess was still operating at Pollock, La.

At 0800 on the morning of the 16th, the Group broke camp. The men returned to live in the barracks and B.O.Q's. Operations, Intelligence, Communications, Engineering, and Tech Supply remained in the bivouac area. All other Sections return to their original locations.

Captain Van Allen Randall and Captain Finley MacGillivray were transferred into the Squadron on the 16th.

Training continued along many other lines. Lt. Dolphus Whitten left at the end of October to attend a one month's course at Cook's and Baker's School at Fort Benning, Ga. On the 19th of November, Lt. Sommers returned from the tour of Army Camps to attend the Camouflage School at Walterboro, N.C. for two weeks. On the 13th, Lt. Weismann left to attend a month's course at the Administrative Inspectors School at Denver, Colo. All Squadron Officers and Enlisted Men attended courses in Chemical Warfare and First Aid. S.M.I. lectures were given by the Intelligence Section. The Ordnance Section continued to work with the men at the ranges to get all Squadron personnel qualified in a required weapon. The Communications Section installed field telephones and trained its men in their use and operation. Several men attended a Base Driver's school and obtained licenses. Two night convoys were conducted in which our drivers participated.

Inspections occupied the minds of all men during the month. On the 7th, General Parker made an inspection with a 3rd Air Force staff. On the 12th, the Group inspectors made a tour of all the Squadrons. From the 22nd to the 25th, the III Bomber Command made an inspection. This was the big inspection of the month. It brought out many weaknesses. Immediate steps were taken to correct all discrepancies.

Changes in personnel again disrupted the Squadron. Major Farmer became the Group Operations Officer and Major Clarence Martin became Squadron Commanding Officer, this occurred on 4 November. After an overseas physical examination, on the 22nd, Maj. Martin and Capt. Randall were disqualified for overseas duty. Major Martin left the group on the 29th and was replaced by Capt. Price, who became acting Squadron Commander. Capt. MacGillivray left with Maj. Martin. A change in the T/O meant that the Intelligence Section had to lose one Officer. Lt. Earth was transferred out of that Section to MacDill Field on the 21st. With Lt. Marks on leave, Lt. Weismann on D.S., and with other duties too numerous to mention, Capt. Randall who had become Squadron Executive Officer on the 15th called Lt. Hoppe into the Orderly Room to become Acting Assistant Adjutant until December 8th.

Thanksgiving Day on the 25th was a day of rest for the Squadron. Some of the Sections operated for a couple of hours in the morning in order to complete records held over from the previous day. Lt. Whitten and his mess personnel outdid themselves. It was already a generally known fact that the 669th had the best Mess Hall in the Group. It was definitely proven on Thanksgiving Day. Squadron Officers were invited to dine with the Enlisted Men. Most of them readily accepted the gracious invitation. However, the news spread and some of the Officers from Group Headquarters wandered over to partake of the delicious food. The food was plentiful and excellent, as well.

December, 1943

There was a feeling of uncertainty prevalent when the month of December rolled around. Uncertainty as to the adequacy of our training; uncertainty as to what could be taken along or needed when we did get notice of overseas duty; uncertainty as to squadron personnel. Major Martin had left, and Captain Price was acting commanding officer. Who would lead us in Combat?

The last question was answered on the 4th of December when Major Murdoch W. Campbell was transferred into the squadron as commanding officer from Headquarters, Morris Field, North Carolina. Major Campbell, whose home is in Chicago, was 29 years old. He had attended Northwestern University for 2 1/2 years studying mechanical engineering. Entering the Air Corps as a cadet in December, 1939, he received his commission as a single engine pilot on August 30, 1940. He served in the Panama Canal and the Antilles Air Command from October, 1940, until October, 1943. By doing transition flying, Major Campbell obtained his twin-engine pilot's rating. He was also rated as a D/R Navigator in January, 1941, and an expert aerial gunner in March of 1943.

Two days before Major Campbell arrived, Lieutenants Leonard R. McBride and Thomas J. Leonard were transferred out of the Squadron to the 670th Bombardment Squadron. On the 10th, Lt Harold H. Johnson, bombardier-navigator, was transferred into the 46th Bomb Group at Morris Field, N.C. Two days later, Captain Van Allen Randall was transferred into the same Group. With the transfer of Captain Randall, Lt Jackson Marks became Squadron Executive Officer, and Lt Herman Weisman, who was away at Administrative Inspectors' School at Denver, Colorado, became Squadron Adjutant. During the month, Lt John Andrews attended an Aviation School of Medicine at Randolph Field, Texas. Lts Peck, Morton, MacManus, Sommers, and Stewart were promoted to the rank of First Lieutenants.

We got through a III Bomber Command Inspection on the 13th and 14th and prepared ourselves for the POM team inspection, from the 16th to the 19th, the make or break inspection that would send us overseas or back into training again. We passed the POM team hurdle with an excellent rating.

Recreation was given a small place in our program at Laurel. Facilities were very limited. The enlisted men chose the Laurel USO. The officers had the Officers' Club and its Saturday night dances. To end the old year, the Squadron held a beer party at the Mess Hall. It proved to be the final party that the Squadron would hold before it landed on foreign soil.

The last few days of the month were spent in preparation for an overseas movement. Equipment was packed and crated, or turned into Post Quartermaster Stores. On the 28th, all officers and enlisted men were restricted to the Base. We could not receive visitors, nor could we make phone calls off the Base on anything but official business.

Throughout the month, an attempt was made to give every officer and enlisted man who had not had a furlough or leave since July 1, at least a few days off. Men were given overseas physical examinations. Clothing and personal equipment was constantly being inspected.

January, 1944

By two o'clock on New Years Day, it was goodbye to Laurel as the Squadron

boarded a train headed for destination unknown. Major Campbell was train commander. After 2 1/2 days of riding, we arrived at Camp Shanks, N.Y., at 0300 in the morning of January 3. We stepped off the train into a couple of inches of wet, slushy snow. It didn't take long before a few heads were hit by flying snow balls. The Northerners bragged about the fresh and pure Northern air, while the Southerners complained bitterly about wet feet. After a long, hard hike, we finally arrived at our barracks and sank half-frozen into hurriedly made-up bunks.

When we had completed the regular staging area routine, we began to realize that we were just outside the Big City. Men, whose mail was being censored for the first time, found many things to write about after each 12 hour pass into New York City. Although it was a hardship after an overnight pass, we took 8 mile hikes every other day and practiced "abandon ship" procedure, climbing down from a high platform on a rope ladder.

With suddenness, the Group was alerted on the 13th. It meant that men were confined to their barracks. Officers had to take formations of them to the P.X., the movies, etc. On the 16th, an Advance Echelon made up of Squadron Bombardier-Navigators left to make the necessary preparations at the P.O.E. The remainder of the Squadron left Camp Shanks on the following day and proceeded by train and ferry-boat to the Port of Embarkation and the U.S.A.T. Colombie. At 1400, January 18th, we steamed away from the dock toward England.

The trip was conducted under ideal conditions, with no alerts, and a minimum of seasickness. Movies in the officers' dining room, the shows "This is It," and "A Crock of Ship" combined with books, games, etc., kept the minds of the men off the journey itself. We debarked in the evening of the 31st and spent the rest of the night and most of the next day on a train headed for our new station at Wethersfield.

February, 1944

Our train pulled into Sibyl-Castle Hedingham Station at 1430, 1 February 1944, A motor convoy was waiting to drive us to our new Base just outside the town of Wethersfield, Essex. The Base, still in the hands of the RAF, was new and well dispersed. Our men were spread throughout three widely separated areas. The barracks were low Nissen huts with very little heat. The weather was generally damp and cold, but an occasional sunny day brought visions of more pleasant ones.

We were all somewhat disappointed at first because the planes that we had expected to be on the line ready were not there. There was one lone plane on the field. On the 10th of the month the first A-20-G-25 received by the Group was assigned to the Squadron. From then on the assignment of planes was quite frequent.

The Ninth Air Force policy of deemphasizing the Squadrons and emphasizing the Group brought many changes. Squadron personnel were appointed to the Group for special duty.

The following changes were made:

Lt. Marks	Group and Station Administrative Inspector
Lt. McBroom	Communications Training Officer
Lt. Hoppe	Group and Station Public Relations Officer
Lt. Whitten	Station EM Mess Officer

Other changes in personnel were brought about by changing circumstances. Captain Price received his promotion to Major and a few days later relieved Major Towles as Commander of the 668th Squadron. Captain Robert A. Clark was relieved as Group Training Officer and assigned to the Squadron as Operations Officer. Several replacement crews were assigned to the Squadron, including 1st Lt. Robert L. Burton, 1st Lt. Joseph S. Connor, 2nd Lt. Harry E. Hewes, S/Sgt Harold E. Boyer, and S/Sgt. Joseph P. Kasper.

Many of the personnel were away from the Base attending various schools and others were traveling over the United Kingdom procuring supplies and equipment which had not been available on the Base.

As the month of February came to an end, Lts. Hall, McBroom, Simms, and Hoppe were promoted to First Lieutenant. On the last day of the month the Squadron consisted of 39 Officers and 262 Enlisted Men.

March, 1944

The training that had been gained in February stood the Group in good stead when March rolled around. Although training continued in March, it was on a much smaller scale, for, to the joy of everyone the Group became operational.

Divisionary attacks were flown over the channel on the first two days of March. The first combat mission took off on the third to attack the Poix Airdrome in France. The formation was recalled, because of the lack of fighter escort, when it reached the French coast. The following five crews participated in the first attack:

Major Campbell	A-20B	41-9377	S/Sgt. Shields
			S/Sgt. Epps
Lt. Shainberg	A-20G	43-9226	S/Sgt. Bresnak
			S/Sgt. Cope
Lt. Siggs	A-20G	43-9751	S/Sgt Radlich
			Pfc Nicks
Lt. Demun	A-20G	43-9202	Sgt. Rosenstein
			Sgt. Carney
Capt. Clark	A-20G	43-9673	S/Sgt. Bergeron
			S/Sgt. Kelton
			Sgt. Colosimo

Of the nine missions flown by the Group during the month of March, our

Squadron furnished crews for seven and flew 55 sorties.

Major Campbell with Lt. Kupits as Bombardier-Navigator led the second Box of the formation that went out on the 6th. Lack of fighter escort caused the planes to return after they had reached the Coast. Lt. Col. Ford led the first box and Major Campbell was deputy leader on the 26th. The target, a Noball or rocket installation at Vasqueritte, France was bombed with excellent concentration. This was the last mission for the month of March. During the month we had attacked two types of target - Airfields and Noball targets, the Noballs being Number one on the priority list.

Lt. Van Over was transferred from the Squadron to the Group to act as Group Personal Equipment Officer. Lt. Burton who had been grounded as a Pilot replaced Lt. Van Over as Asst. Squadron Operations Officer. Lts. Harold L. Sommers and Robert L. Behlmer were appointed as members of a permanent board to flight check the instrument flying proficiency of all rated pilots assigned or attached to the Group.

April, 1944

The bad weather that hampered our operations in March threatened to cancel our April activities. For the first nine days not a mission was flown, but when the first mission took off on the morning of the tenth, it began one of the most intensive periods of flying in the history of the Ninth Air Force. The Group flew 24 missions in April. Some of our Squadron personnel flew on each of them. Our crews flew 194 sorties.

That first April mission was a costly one for the Squadron. Of the ten of our planes that took off, two never returned. One plane flown by Lt Marion Street crash-landed at Bradwell Bay. His two gunners bailed out when he decided to bring the plane down. It was an excellent job of flying. None of the crew was injured, but the plane was utterly destroyed. Lt Arthur A. Raines and his two gunners, S/Sgt Jack C. Nielson and S/Sgt Glenn J. Bender, were last seen shortly after leaving the target area in the Pas de Calais. They were losing altitude. They are listed as "Missing in Action."

A day of cloudy weather, on the 24th, broke a string of bombing days at six. A mission took off, however, and was recalled before it had reached the coast. While going through the overcast, Lt Arthur A. McDonald lost control of his plane. He went into a dive and lost a wing. He managed to pull the plane out of the dive, and, before he hit the ground, he maneuvered in a last heroic effort to avoid crashing in the midst of a crowded city district. The plane crashed in the only open area in the vicinity, the bombs exploding on impact. The crew, Lt McDonald, S/Sgt LeRoy Barnard, and S/Sgt Joseph J. Shields were killed.

In the afternoon of the 30th, the Busigny marshalling yards were attacked with excellent results. The plane piloted by Lt Edward J. Renth, Jr., was damaged by flak and one engine was knocked out. He lost altitude and made a hair-raising trip across France at low-level on one engine. Hitting an obstruction on the landing strip of an auxiliary field on the south England coast, the plane was damaged beyond repair. Lt Renth and his gunners, S/Sgt Orlando O. LaNave and S/Sgt Everett T. Epps escaped without any personal injury. The bombing was the best that we had done. A congratulatory telegram was received from General

Anderson, commanding officer of the IX Bomber Command on the mission.

Some of our crews were chosen to fly on Window missions with B-26 Marauders. The A-20's would precede the B-26's over the target, drop the window, and "scoot" for home. It was on one of these window missions that Lt Patrick F.E. MacManus got separated from the other planes. Coming down through the overcast, he circled what he thought was an English airfield. Some tracers were fired at his plane and at first were taken for flares. Lt MacManus lowered his landing gear and prepared to land when he realized that he was about to land on an airfield on the Cherbourg Peninsula. He quickly sized up his position and headed toward England.

During the month, Major Campbell with Lt Palin as his Bombardier-Navigator led three boxes. Captain Huff with Lt Kupits as Bombardier-Navigator led one box.

Personnel was fairly stable during the month. Lt Simms was hospitalized. First Lieutenant Edmond V. Hond, Jr., joined the squadron, taking over Lt Simms' duties as armament officer. T/Sgt Kent was transferred into Group Headquarters and T/Sgt Steven A. Corwin replaced him as communications section chief.

A beer party was held by the Enlisted Men on the Base during the month. A G.I. band from a neighboring field provided music for dancing. The Aero Club was opened, furnishing added facilities for entertainment, refreshments and relaxation. A dance and party were held for the Group at the Officers Club on the 14th. It was well attended by 669th Officers.

There were several promotions during the month. Lieutenants Whitten, DeMun, Jones, Palin and Siggs were promoted to the rank of First Lieutenants.

Our strength at the end of April was 37 officers and 262 enlisted men.

May, 1944

669TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)

The fast pace that was set during the month of April continued on into the month of May. Comparatively good weather gladdened all of our hearts. It meant not only good flying weather, it also meant that at last we would be warmed a bit by good sunshine. With an extra hour of daylight due to the double Summer time, it was light outside until almost eleven o'clock at night. Everyone found some sort of relaxation and entertainment. There was a twilight Softball League in which we had an Officer's and an Enlisted Men's team. Often after work you could see men bicycling down the English country lanes. The Base theatre and the new Aero Club offered fine entertainment on the Base. Liberty run trucks took the men into Braintree. On their days off many men visited London and Cambridge and other places.

For the first time the Squadron occupied a site of its own on the 8th. The new site, originally intended to be used as a W.A.A.F. site, had been completed but a few days before we moved into it. Everyone took pride in the new area and tried to keep it the finest looking site on the Base.

Many new faces were seen around the Squadron area. They were the new combat crews. Among them were:

2d Lt. William F. Tripp, Jr.	2d Lt. Andre J. Vleghals
2d Lt. Earl R. Hayter	2d Lt. Hiram F. Clark
2d Lt. Jack F. Smith	2d Lt. Charles Church
S/Sgt. Donald F. Mallory	S/Sgt. James O. Scott
S/Sgt. Richard G. Holloway	S/Sgt. Peter P. Maciulewicz
S/Sgt. Herbert R. Shatzer	Sgt. Howard C. Rodgers
Sgt. James E. Van Duyne	Sgt. Constantine Vafiadis
Sgt. Frank M. Melchior	Sgt. Ralph C. Hoffman
Sgt. Clay E. Young	Sgt. Roger W. Rice
Sgt. Claredon F. Floyd	Sgt. John W. Sabadosh

One of our most experienced gunners, and one who had long been a member of our Squadron was transferred to another outfit on the 29th of May. He was Staff Sergeant Charles Q. Norton.

Some promotions came through during the month. Lt. Campbell Locke, Jr. was promoted to the rank of Captain. Lieutenants Robert L. Behlmer, Peter Dontas, and Willard H. Land became First Lieutenants.

The 669th was greatly responsible for the success of the Group in its May operations. Major Campbell, with Lt. Palin, B-N, seven times led formations during the month. Capt. Clark, with Lt. Jones, B-N, led seven boxes.

The All-669th show, led by Major Campbell and Capt. Clark, in the afternoon of the 20th, was a show that featured some of the best bombing that the Group has done. The target was the Cormeilles-on-Vexin Airdrome. The results were excellent, with concentrations of bombs blanketing five blast shelters, destroying three of them. Two others received direct hits and near misses.

On the 9th, Major Campbell led a formation against the Aerschot Marshalling Yards deep in Belgium. The engine turntable was severely damaged. A 3-bay workshop and an 8-bay building were partially destroyed. Forty-five cars were destroyed and all tracks opposite the turntable were blocked by a large crater.

Four days later, the Campbell-Palin team did it again scoring excellent results against the Beauvais/Tille Airdrome.

Leading the 410th Bomb Gp (L) in on the Noball target at Behan, Major Campbell and Lt. Palin managed to suspend the installation with well-placed hits. This was on the 28th.

Major Price, now with the 668th Bomb Sq (L), led a formation against an important coastal defense battery at Benerville on the 19th. Weather interfered with his bombing so that he could make no attack. Lt. Jones, flying with Capt. Clark in the lead ship of the second box, managed to get a fleeting glance at the target through a tiny break in the clouds. He released his bombs and caused untold damage to the delicate installations.

We seemed to be headed for a whole month of operations without a loss, when on the 27th all hell broke loose. In an attack on the Amiens Marshalling Yard, both Lt. Allen W. Gullion's and Lt. Harry E. Hewes' planes were hit by flak in the target area. Lt. Gullion's plane caught on fire, and three chutes were seen

to come out of it and open up. With him were S/Sgt. Grady F. Cope and S/Sgt. Gerald F. Coffey, his gunners. The plane flown by Lt. Hewes was seen to drop out of formation, losing altitude. This happened shortly after leaving the target area. No reports were ever received on him. With him were his two gunners, S/Sgt. Harold E. Boyer and S/Sgt. Joseph F. Kasper. All six crewmen are listed as "Missing in Action".

These are but a few of the highlights of the 30 missions that comprised the month's operations. Each mission was filled with thrills, for the intensity and accuracy of the Nazi flak was ever increasing. The work of the Engineering department was outstanding. They worked hard and long to keep the planes in the air every day of this pre-invasion offensive.

The strength of the Squadron on the last day of the month was:

41 Officers 370 Enlisted Men.

June, 1944

669TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)

SUBJECT : HISTORICAL DATA,
TO : COMMANDING GENERAL, ARMY AIR FORCES.

THE invasion fever ran high when the month of June rolled around. Especially when everyone was restricted to the Base on the 3rd. And it was not long after when the news blurted out over the radios that our troops had at last landed on the shores of Normandy. From midnight of the 5th, a steady drone from the planes overhead heralded the landings that began on the 6th.

The Group flew three missions in June prior to D-Day. The first, on the 2nd of June, was one of those all-669th shows. The two boxes were led by Major Campbell and Lt. Sommers, with Lt. Palin and Lt. McQuade the Bombardier-Navigators. When PRU planes photofrased [photographed] the target, a Noball at Gorenfloss, after our attack, they found that our bombs had suspended it temporarily. This was the second successive Noball target that the Campbell-Palin team had suspended.

On D-Day, the Group went out in strength in the morning in an attack on road junctions in Argentan. Fifteen of our crews were on this mission. They were:

BOX I----FLIGHT III

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 4. Lt. T Boukamp | 5. Lt A J Vleghels |
| Sgt C Vafiadis | Sgt R W Rice |
| Sgt R C Hoffman | Sgt C E Young |
| 6. Lt J E Connor | Spare-- Lt E J Renth |
| Sgt H C Rodgers | S/Sgt O D LaNave |
| Sgt J E Van Duyne | S/Sgt F M Citty |

BOX II----FLIGHT I

2. Lt H L Sommers

Lt R J McQuade
S/Sgt H E Kelton
S/Sgt A E Bergeron

FLIGHT III

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 4. Lt P F E MacManus | 5. Lt W H Land |
| S/Sgt J L Rogers | S/Sgt S F Alden |
| S/Sgt G I Flieschman | S/Sgt R L Ballinger |
| 6. Lt C Church | |
| S/Sgt H E Shatzer | |
| S/Sgt P P Maciulewicz | |

BOX III-----FLIGHT I

2. Capt M J Huff
Lt J Kupits
S/Sgt J B Thompson
S/Sgt H F Hatch

FLIGHT II

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Lt R L Morton | 4. Lt M S Street |
| Sgt J W Sabadosh | S/Sgt C A Prindle |
| Sgt C F Floyd | S/Sgt F T Epps |
| 2. Lt E E DeMun | 5. Lt E R Hayter |
| S/Sgt M Rosenstein | Sgt F E Melchoir |
| S/Sgt H O Carney | S/Sgt R G Holloway |
| 3. Lt P Dontas | 6. Lt W F Tripp |
| S/Sgt A L Nielsen | Sgt J O Scott |
| S/Sgt W E Fields | S/Sgt D F Mallory |

The mission was uneventful except for the view of the shoreline as the boats fought up to the beaches.

In the late afternoon, three boxes of fourteen planes went in to attack the marshalling yards at Serqueux. Maj. Campbell and Maj. Clark, with Lts. Palin and Jones, B-N, led the second and third boxes. From the moment that the planes hit the enemy coast, and until they left it, they were caught in a terrifying cross-fire from light and heavy guns. The attack was made from 3,000 feet. Only the superb evasive action of the leaders enabled the planes to get back home with as few losses as we did sustain. Maj. Campbell's plane was hit before it even reached the target. By displaying skill and courage that was an inspiration to the men he led, he guided the planes over the target to help lay a good concentration of bombs in the target area. Unable to stay in formation, he broke away and was forced down. As the crews reported it, he kept his plane under control and appeared to make a normal landing in an open field in France. Two other planes were hit at the same time and were lost--one of which was flown by Lt. Church of our Squadron. He was last seen leaving the target area in trouble. Several crews reported seeing a big explosion in a woods nearby that might have been his plane. Thirteen of our crews flew on this mission. Two of our gunners, S/Sgt R J Colosimo and S/Sgt N Radlich, flew with Lt Col T R Ford.

BOX II-----Flight I

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Major M.J. Campbell
Lt Wm. H. Palin
S/Sgt J.B. Thompson
S/Sgt H.L. Hatch | 4. Lt H.E. Clark
Sgt J.W. Sabadosh
Sgt C.F. Floyd |
| 2. Lt N.V. Shainberg
Sgt R.W. Rice
Sgt C.E. Young | 5. Lt R.L. Bahlmer
T/Sgt W.E. Kelly
S/Sgt W.G. Ferguson |
| 3. Lt E.E. DeMun
S/Sgt M. J. Rosenstein
S/Sgt H.O. Carney | |

Flight II

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Lt R.J. Morton
S/Sgt J.L. Rogers
S/Sgt G.L. Fleischmann | 2. Lt W.H. Land
S/Sgt S.F. Alden
S/Sgt R.L. Ballinger |
| 3. Lt Peter Dontas
S/Sgt A.L. Nielsen
S/Sgt W.E. Fields | |

Flight III

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Lt Wm. A. Peck
S/Sgt A.E. Bergeron
S/Sgt H.E. Kelton | 2. Lt J.F. Smith
Sgt C. Vafiadis
Sgt R.C. Hoffman |
| 3. Lt C. Church
S/Sgt H.E. Shatzer
S/Sgt P.P. Maciulewicz | |

Box III-----Flight I

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Major Robert A. Clark
Lt C.W. Jones
Sgt J.C. Scott
S/Sgt D.F. Mallory | 2. Lt J.S. Connor
Sgt H.C. Rodgers
Sgt J.E. Van Duyne |
|---|---|

On the 13th, Lt Sommers, Lt McQuade, B-N, led a box in an attack on a road junction at St Sauvier le Vicomte. The attack was made at 6500 feet.

Major Clark led a formation on the following day that completely demolished the road intersections at Aunay-sur-Idon [Aunay-sur-Odon]. Lt Jones, B-N, was to be congratulated on the job.

When Cherbourg continued to resist, General Bradley called on the Ninth Air Force to crack it open. Captain Huff, with Lt Kupits, B-N, led the second box in the attack on the 22nd. The fall of Cherbourg shortly afterwards is proof enough of the effectiveness of the bombing.

On the last day of the month, Major Clark led a box in an attack on road centers in Thury-Harcourt. A technique that had been newly employed in A-20s was used, PFF or Pathfinder, for blind bombing.

Some of our crews flew on each of the 24 missions that were flown by the Group during the month of June.

With the unfortunate and regrettable loss of our commanding officer, Major Campbell, on D-Day, our squadron was again without a leader. Lt Colonel Aylesworth came into the squadron from Group on the 8th as C.O. We had all known Colonel Aylesworth since his arrival in the Group back in October, 1943, and welcomed him into our squadron. His first opportunity to talk to the men came on the 9th when the Group was alerted in anticipation of a German parachute attack. He explained the alert and issued orders on the uniform to be worn during that time. The 669th was the first unit to don its fighting clothes. After 48 hours, the alert was lifted. That same afternoon, the squadron joined other Base personnel in Hanger #1 to hear Colonel Mace and Colonel Backus address the group.

Both Colonels praised the work of our Group highly. Colonel Mace especially emphasized the bravery shown by Major Campbell in leading his formation over the target despite the fact that he could not stay aloft much longer.

A POM team inspection took place on the 20th. The squadron was found to be in excellent shape. The discrepancies that were noted were very few.

The continuous influx of combat crews continued. During the month, Lts Pentilla, Walter L.; Poundstone, Leo L; Robertson, Reece B; Allan, Julian F. Jr.; and Hall, Edwin P., all pilots, and Lts James Madenfort, William J. Lytle, and William L. Smith, bombardier-navigators, joined the organization. Lt Arthur E. Simms was transferred as was Captain Campbell Kocke Jr., who went to the S-2 section of the 97th Combat Wing. Lt Frank M. Hoppe was appointed squadron historical officer.

Two officers were promoted during the month....Captain Robert A. Clark got his majority and Lt Norman V. Shainberg was made first lieutenant. As the end of the month rolled around, 46 officers and 287 enlisted men were assigned to the organization.

Toward the end of the month, a new T/O was published which brought major changes in operations, intelligence, communications, and armament. It was not effective immediately, however, so that no rearranging of personnel was yet needed. Exhibit #39-B

The invasion was progressing and the 669th continued to play an important part in its success.

The communications section under Lt McBroom rigged up a portable radio testing set that could be taken out to the planes for doing first echelon maintenance at the plane without removing the set. Exhibit #39-C, D and E.

July, 1944

669TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)

SUBJECT: Historical Data, July Installment,

TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

July had arrived and we had been in the E.T.O. almost six months. It seemed that Squadron personnel would be stable for a while with the exception of the new combat crews that continued to come into the Squadron. We were wrong, however, for there were many changes. On the 2nd, Captain Campbell Locke was transferred to the 97th Combat Wing, and Lt. Sidney Luria came into the Squadron from the 670th Bomb Sq (L) to replace him as the Intelligence Officer. On the following day, Lt. Col. Theodore R. Aylesworth was transferred back into Group as Deputy Group Commander. Major John G. Napier, who had been one of the original members of the Group and had been formerly C.O. of the 668th Bomb Sq (L), Group Training Officer, and Assistant Group Operations Officer, came into the Squadron and assumed command. Captain Garland Murphy, the Squadron Flight Surgeon, was temporarily assigned to General Hospital No. 1 for treatment on the 11th--Major Conen took over his duties during his absence. First Lieutenant William R. Smith, a Bombardier-Navigator, left the Squadron on the 12th to join a B-26 Marauder Group. Second Lieutenant Donald L. Moore came into the Squadron to replace him on the following day.

During the month Lt. Earl DeMun was appointed Flight Commander of "E" Flight and Lt. Norman V. Shainberg, Flight Commander of "F" Flight. Captain Herman J. Weisman was appointed Squadron Administrative Inspector. A well-deserved promotion that we had all looked for long came to 1st Lieutenant Harold L. Sommers on the 10th when he was made Captain.

Once again misfortune tagged at our heels. On the 11th, while flying in a routine formation training flight, Lt. Walter L. Pentilla was killed. At 1,000 feet, one engine cut out. The plane dove into the ground. He died while being taken to the Hospital. Although he had been with the Squadron only a short time, those of us who had met him soon learned to like the stocky, blond-headed Pilot. He was our only loss during the month.

Although we had lost only one crew-member during the month, our crews had flown on some of their toughest missions. The Group flew twenty-two missions in July, and our crews flew on all of them. Though only on three occasions did men of our Squadron lead boxes, several times when bombing was done by flights of sixes, our Bombardiers had an opportunity to do some individual work.

On the fifth, Captain Sommers, with Lt. McQuade, B-N, led the second box of planes on a mission to destroy a Noball headquarters housed in a chateau at Merlemont. It was a flak-filled mission in which 23 planes received battle damage. When PFF equipment failed, Lt. McQuade had to bomb visually. The results of the mission were very satisfactory causing severe damage or possible destruction to the chateau.

On the 23rd, the Evreux railroad bridge was attacked. There was a 10/10th cloud cover over the target and PFF was used. Major Clark, Lt. Jones, B-N, led the formation in the lead plane of the second box. The results could not be observed.

Another all-669th show went on on the 31st. Major Clark, Lt. Jones, B-N, and Captain Huff, Lt. Kupits, B-N, led the two boxes in an attack on the all-important Mantes-Gassicourt railroad bridge. The target was obscured by a 10/10th cloud cover. They headed for an alternate target, a railroad junction at Lisieux. Although he had only a 15-second bomb run due to clouds, Lt. Jones

dropped, the bombs falling across the tracks and in the factory area. The hole in the clouds was so small that Lt. Kupits in the second box was unable to see the target to bomb.

Just before the month slipped by, orders were received which awarded the SILVER STAR medal to Major Campbell for his gallantry and skill on D-Day. Exhibit # 40 The combat crews continues to earn more and more Air Medals, Oak Leaf Clusters, and Purple Hearts. Exhibits #41-47 & 47-A A Bronze Starr was added to our E.T.O. ribbon for our part icipation in the air offensive against Europe. Exhibit #48

The Squadron funds became somewhat depleted along about the first part of the month when the Squadron had a most successful party in the Station Beer Hall. "Joe Bananas and his Bunch" furnished the music. Young ladies from nearby towns were the dancing partners.

August, 1944

669th Bombardment Squadron (L)
416th Bombardment Group (L)
Office of the Commanding Officer

SUBJECT : Historical Data (August and September 1944 installments).
TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

The changes in personnel that occured [occurred] within the Group during August were the most drastic in the history of the Group. The effects from theses [these] changes were felt within our own Squadron. On the 10th, Major Clark left the Squadron to become the Assistant Group Operations Officer. His duties as Squadron Operations Officer were passed on to Captain Sommers. Lt. Behlmer was appointed Assistant Operations Officer. The changes in Group which brought these local changes about were the transfer of Colonel Mace to the command of the 98th Combat Bomb Wing. Lieutenant Colonel T. R. Aylesworth replaced him as the Group Commanding Officer. Lieutenant Colonel Farmer who had been Deputy Group Commander was lost on a mission on 6 August. He was succeeded by Major Meng.

Some new Squadron officers were appointed during the month as well. These included the appointment of Lt. Boukamp as Assistant Squadron Executive Officer; Lt. E.P. Hall, Assistant Soldier's Voting Officer; and Capt. Sommers, Squadron Tactical Inspector. Capt. Murphy rejoined the Squadron on the 10th from the hospital.

On the 9th, Second Lieutenant James R. Nichols, a Bombardier-Navigator, was assigned to the Squadron. He began to fly with Lt. Greene as a new bombing team. On the 22nd, three new pilots were assigned: 1st Lt. E.L. Miller, 2d Lt. J.D. Smith, and 2d Lt. M.W. Dubose. At the end of the month a check on the strength of the Squadron found us with 50 officers and 303 enlisted men. Lt. Greene had joined the Squadron with Captain Hulse and Lt. Conte-a bombing team that had already led boxes.

The month had been a costly one for our Squadron. On the 8th, the Group attacked the railroad junction at Frevent. Flak centered on the first flight of

the first box, led by Major Clark, Lt. Jones, B-N, was intense and accurate. Lt. Shainberg's plane was hit. It was last seen headed towards our lines, losing altitude. One or two crews reported seeing it crash. No chutes were seen to emerge. Lt. Shainberg and his gunners, Sgt. J.D. Dugan and Sgt. L.B. Curtis, are listed as MIA. Another plane out of that first flight also went down. The plane caught fire when it was hit shortly after leaving the target. A wing broke off and then the plane exploded. Lt. Dontas was the pilot, and Staff Sergeants A.L. Nielsen and W.E. Fields were the gunners. One chute was seen to come out of the plane. The crew is also listed as MIA. On the 30th, eight days after he had joined the Squadron, Lt. John D. Smith was killed. Lt. E.L. Miller was leading a two-plane routine training, navigational-formation flight. Lt. Smith was on his right wing. Apparently trying to cross under Lt. Miller's plane, Lt. Smith hit the other plane, cutting the tail off at the turret. Lt. Miller immediately jettisoned his hatch and parachuted to safety. Lt. Smith's plane, however, went into a flat spin and crashed. Lt. Smith was interred in the Cambridge American Military Cemetery, Cambridge, England.

Our crews flew on all of the 23 missions flown by the Group. The [They] continued to earn Air Medals and Oak Leaf Clusters. Some received Purple Hearts, as well. Seven crew chiefs were awarded the Bronze Star Medal for having kept their planes in such fine condition that they were able to participate in 50 missions without an abortion, the result of a mechanical failure. They were: Technical Sergeants William H. Dyk, Cleo W. Frandsen, Elmer Moore, Elmer W. Mullins, Frederick L. Stemmler, Harry C. Wilaman, and Marvin P. Winkle, and Charles V. Blanchard.

The missions that were flown during the month were of extreme importance in driving the Germans back toward their own border. Our attacks were primarily directed toward the cutting of enemy supply and communications lines. This served two purposes-- it kept the German front line troops from getting supplies to keep up a concentrated defensive fight against our ground troops. Secondly, it helped to cut off avenues of escape for the troops that were being pushed back continuously, or encircled.

Bombing during the month was done mostly by flights of sixes. It proved very effective. On almost every mission at least one of our Bombardiers had an opportunity to lay his bombs on enemy targets. Their skill helped to make the Group's bombing record the second best in the whole IX Bomber Command. Here is a short review of some of the missions in which some of the crews participated.

The first mission of the month, No. 111, was flown on the second of August. A successful attack was made on an ammunition dump at Caudebec. Captains Huff and Morton led the two flights from our Squadron.

The next mission, on the 4th, was an attack on the Beauvais marshalling yard. All through lines and choke points were severed by several direct hits. Major Napier, Lt. Madenfort, B-N, led a flight.

Capt. Huff, Lt. Kupits, B-N, led one of the most successful missions of the month in the morning of the 5th. The target was the Compiègne/Marigny marshalling yard. Thru traffic was impossible when direct hits chewed up the lines from one end of the yards to the other. Major Napier again led a flight.

That afternoon, Capt Morton led a flight in an attack on the Laigle railroad bridge. The bridge and its approaches were hit, making it unserviceable.

The sixth was another two-mission day. In the morning, Major Napier led the second box of a formation attacking the last remaining bridge across the Seine river at Oissel. Capt. Huff was a flight leader. Lt. DeMun, Lt. McQuade, led the window flight. Bad weather forced the formation to return from the target area. The same crews returned in the afternoon to attack the same target. On the bomb run, Lt. Madenfort was hit in the face by flak so that Major Napier's flight did not bomb. Capt. Huff's flight, however, scored an excellent. The flak was intense and four planes were lost. Severe battle damage forced Lt. Blomgren to crash land at Tangmere -- none of the crew was injured. Lt. Jack F. Smith also crash landed at Tangmere due to flak damage. His brakes were shot out, and, when his plane nosed in at the end of the runway, it was washed out. None of the crew was injured. Exhibits #50 and 51.

On the 8th, Major Clark, Lt. Jones, B-N, led a formation in an attack on the Frevent marshalling yards. The results were excellent; the lines being made unserviceable. Flak was intense and accurate for that first flight. The two planes mentioned earlier were shot down, both from our Squadron.

That afternoon the radar installations in the Bois du Pierre were the targets. Again the results ranged from good to excellent, the bombs hitting around the chateau probably destroying or damaging it. Major Napier, Lt. Madenfort, B-N, and Capt. Huff, Lt. Kupits, B-N, led the second and third flights of the first box. Just one of those things happened, though, and although it looked like our bombs hit their mark, photo reconnaissance showed no evident damage to the installations.

As a result, our target on the morning of the 9th was the same radar installation. Capt. Hulse, Lt. Conte, B-N, led a flight with good results. Some bombs were believed to have fallen directly on the desired MPI. Lt. Hiram Clark was forced to land at Ridgewell when one engine, hit by flak, failed on the return trip.

Leading the second and third flights of the second box that afternoon, Capt. Huff and Capt. Hulse helped blast the Chauny railroad bridge, making it unserviceable.

In the morning of the 10th, Capt Huff led the first box of a formation attacking the Foret du Roumare ammunition dump. The weather over the target was bad, however, so that no bombs were dropped. That afternoon bad weather caused our planes to bring their bombs back from an attack on the La Londe de Louge ammunition dump. Capt. Huff and Capt Morton led the two boxes.

Capt Hulse was deputy leader on a successful PFF mission to the Foret du Roumare ammunition dump on the 11th.

That afternoon Capt Hulse and Capt Morton led two flights of a formation that attacked the St. Malo gun defenses. Lt. Conte, Capt. Hulse's B-N, did a superior job of bombing with a circular error of a little more than 100 feet. The Infantry sent congratulations on the splendid aid we had given them.

Points along the highway from La Ferte Mace to Ecouche, used by the fleeing Germans, were bombed on the 12th. Capt. Morton led a flight. Lt. MacManus was forced down in Normandy when he had trouble with his right engine. He later flew the plane back to the Base.

Flying their 10th mission in six days, our crews took off on the 13th to bomb choke points in the Lisieux area to cut off German escape routes from the Falaise Gap. Capt. Hulse led the second box and Lt. DeMun, Lt. McQuade, B-N, led one of its flights. Their results were good.

Two of the tree [three] boxes that attacked the fuel dump in the Foret de Chantilly on the 15th were led by Capt. Hulse and Major Napier, Lt. Jones, B-N. The planes, employing area bombing, dropped 500-lb. fragmentation bombs with good results. Lt. Greene, with Lt. Nichols, a new B-N, flew on Capt. Hulse's wing. Lt. DeMun led the works in the window ship.

A successful PFF attack on the Montfort Sur Risle bridge on the 17th found Capt. Morton flying as deputy in the lead box.

A full week passed before our planes became airborne again on a mission. On the 25th, the siege of Brest began, and our planes dropped their bombs on gun positions in the Brest area. Major Napier, leading a flight, scored a "good"; Lt. DeMun, Lt. McQuade, B-N, scored an "excellent", with his flight.

An improvement in the weather allowed us to fly two missions again on the 26th. The first, against the Compiegne-Clairoix fuel tanks. It was a superb job of bombing. Capt. Huff, leading a flight, scored an "excellent", causing violent explosions and large fires which probably destroyed the tanks.

The afternoon of the same day found the Rouen ferrying area our target. Tons of German equipment was lined up waiting to be shuttled across the Seine before our troops completely cut them off. Weather again saved the Germans when poor visibility, haze, and cloud cover prevented all but one flight from bombing. Capt. Morton and Lt. DeMun, flight leaders, were forced to return their bombs. Some flak was encountered and Lt. A.J. Vleghels was forced to land in Normandy because of flak damage. Lt. Vleghels received minor wounds; the gunners were uninjured.

On the 28th, the last mission of the month was an All-669th show with Capt. Huff leading the first box; Capt Morton, the second. The target was the Doulens fuel dump. Photo reconnaissance showed a concentration of craters across the target severely damaging the installations.

General Eisenhower issued a statement to all military personnel on the 14th. It was read to all over the Tannoy system on the 15th. Exhibit #52

With the movement of our Group imminent, a practise [practice] move was contemplated with the aim in mind of increasing the efficiency of the organization when we would actually move. On the 21st and the 22nd, the Advance Echelon carried out its practise [practice] move. The bad weather made a bivouac impractical, but the rest of the move went off in good order. On the 29th and 30th, the Rear Echelon made a similar move although no personnel other than the drivers participated. Exhibits #53 and 54

The Billy Conn show appeared on the Base on the 5th, and everyone had a chance to see the chap who decided to slug it out with Joe Louis for the World's Heavyweight Championship in action. The bouts were held in Hangar #1. Lt. DeMun took the fighter up for a short hop in the nose of a "J". Exhibits #55 and 56 & 56-A

The "Air Offensive, Europe" was completed on 5 June 1944, and the campaign, "Western Europe", begun. Battle participation for this phase entitled us to the award which was made on the 24th of August. All personnel assigned or attached to the Group or its Squadrons between 6 June 1944 and 24 August 1944 were authorized to wear a battle star on the European-African-Middle Eastern Theatre Ribbon. Exhibit # 57

September, 1944

SEPTEMBER 1944

Toward the end of August a movement of the Group became more imminent. By the first of September everything was in a state of readiness. The war was progressing so rapidly, however, that it was necessary for us to get a base east [east] of Paris if we were to gain much by a move. Engineers, working at top speed, and bomb disposal units finally prepared a former Luftwaffe airfield near Melun, southeast of Paris, about 115 miles from the Front.

On the 15th of September, the Advance Echelon of the Squadron left the Squadron area at 0700. The duffel bags and equipment was loaded into the vehicles either the evening before or even earlier. We boarded trucks which took us to Sible-Hedingham. There we boarded a train for Eastleigh, a suburb of Southampton. After living in tents and eating C-rations, we boarded the "Lady of Mann" on the 17th to cross the Channel. About 0900 on the 18th, we got our first glimpse of Far Shore. The boat anchored near Isigny, and we awaited orders to disembark. At 1400 we stepped onto a landing craft. By the time the craft approached the beachhead, the tide had gone out. We stayed on the craft until 1945 hours when the tide came in. Then we started on a seven-mile hike to encampment where we pitched our tents. The heavy packs, the cobblestone roads, the dust, the heat, and then finally rain made the trip a difficult one.

The next afternoon found us resuming our travels. This step in our journey took us, by truck, to an RCD at Catz, near bombed out Carentan. Hidden back off the roads, it was a pleasant spot. Tents were pitched on each side of a company street, and the men cleaned up and shaved. We left this delightful spot the next afternoon and rode to airstrip A-13, near Isigny.

After sleeping alongside the landing strip that night, the 669th boarded C-47's and flew to the new Base, Station A-55 at Villa Roche, four-miles north of Melan [Melun]. Everyone had a chance to view the bombed cities, the scenes of tank battles, the main transportation arteries called "Red-ball Highways", and beautiful Paris. We arrived on the 21st, the first unit on the new field.

Capt. Marks, in charge of the Advance Echelon, chose living sites. A mess hall was set up. The men looked around the area to see the ruins left by the hurriedly departing Germans.

The truck convoy arrived a day later with Capt. Stewart in command. The Air and Rear Echelons flew to the new Base on the 23rd in A-20's and C-47's.

The new Base was in shambles. The runways, however, were repaired and most of the taxi-strips useable. We occupied the southeastern corner of the Base with the 43rd Air Depot Group. A couple of old barns were still standing and were

soon occupied by Armament, Communications, and Supply. Squad tents were used for living quarters.

On the morning of the 24th, one day after the Air Echelon arrived, a Field Order for a mission was received. Although the mission was scrubbed, the Squadron was established well enough to have been able to carry on operations.

Lt. Connor, S/Sgt. Alden, and Cpl. Gottlieb put their heads together and dreamed up "Ye Olde Stable". It was an old barn that they cleaned up and repaired to be used for movies and other entertainment. It was by far the best in the Group.

Now for some of the other happenings during the month. On the 5th, Sgt. J.E. Hay, who had been listed as MIA returned. As the days passed, Lt. Palin, S/Sgt. Boyer, and S/Sgt. J.D. Dugan also returned from MIA. They were later transferred to return to the States. Word was received that the following men were now Prisoners of War:

Major Murdoch W. Campbell
S/Sgt. Peter P. Maciulewicz
S/Sgt. Herbert E. Shatzer
S/Sgt. James B. Thompson

Lt. Donald W. Elliot was transferred to a Liason Squadron operating from France.

Many promotions were received by the members of the organization. Among them:

to Captain: Robert J. Morton
Sydney A. Luria
William A. Peck
Charles H. Stewart, Jr.
to First Lieutenant:
Hiram B. Clark
Reece B. Robertson
Jack F. Smith
William F. Tripp
Andre J. Vlegghels

An unfortunate accident on the 24th robbed the Squadron of one of its finest young men. Technical Sergeant Richard L. Haptonstall, a crew chief, was helping to change an airplane engine when the engine fell on him. It crushed his chest, and he died within a short time. A Memorial Service was held for him with Chaplain Penticoff officiating on Sunday morning, 8 October.

One of the original members of the Squadron was transferred to the 668th Bomb Squadron. He was Master Sergeant Raymond M. Slifko of the Engineering Section.

Throughout the month of September, weather limited our operations. Only 16 missions were flown by the Group.

The first mission, No 134, was flown on the first day of the month. Major Napier, Lt. Jones, B-N, was a flight leader in this attack on gun positions at

Brest. Bad weather forced the bombers to bring their bombs back.

Again in the morning of the 3rd, the bombers failed to bomb because of weather. The target was Brest. Capt. Huff and Capt. Hulse were flight leaders. That afternoon only 12 planes could drop on another attack on Brest. Capt. Peck, Lt. Madenfort, B-N, led one of the flights that bombed with fair results.

An All-669th show on the 5th provided the best bombing of the month to date. Capt. Huff and Capt. Hulse were the successful box leaders. Their bombs probably destroyed the buildings and caused severe damage to the strongpoint.

On the morning of the 6th, Brest was again attacked. Capt. Morton, Lt. Moore, B-N, scored one of the five excellents, that were earned by the Group. That afternoon the weather closed in as the formation again approached a target at Brest. Only three flights were able to bomb although they dropped down to as low as 4,500 feet. Capt. Huff, leading a flight, made six bomb runs but was unable to drop because of the poor visibility. Lt. Greene, Lt. Nichols, B-N, scored a "good" in their first mission as a flight leader.

A vital German strongpoint at Nancy was attacked on the 10th. Capt. Peck, leading a flight, helped knock it out by scoring an "excellent".

A communications center at Metz which was probably the control center for that whole sector of the front was attacked on the 11th. Capt. Hulse and Major Napier led the boxes. Results ranged from good to excellent.

The first time we or any Ninth Air Force bombers ever attacked targets in Germany was on the 12th when the 416th hit St. Wendel in Germany. Weather was very bad. Lt. Greene, Lt. Nichols, B-N, managed to drop, hitting a marshalling yard at Ottweiler, just south of the target.

That afternoon, Capt. Morton and Capt. Peck were flight leaders on the most nearly perfect mission flown by the Group. All six flights scored "excellent". The target was an artillery position at Chaligny in the Forêt de Haye. A statement from a G.L.O. news summary read, "Ground units report the bombing of the 9th Bombardment Division on the Forêt de Haye on 12 September was so effective the Germans in the area marched out with their hands in the air and [and] surrendered. American ground troops had to fire practically no shots to effect the surrender."

The last mission flown by the Group from its base in England was flown on the 16th. The target was the viaduct, railroad, and road over Bergen op Zoom in Holland. The attack was launched to strengthen Allied positions northwest of Antwerp, to eliminate a German avenue of escape, and to soften the area for the great airborne attack to follow on the next day. Capt. Huff and Capt. Morton led the two boxes. Capt. Huff's flight scored an excellent on a perfect bomb run despite intense, accurate heavy flak fire at the target. Capt. Morton chose to hold his bombs when he was forced to alter his course to avoid a collision with another flight rather than release them on too short a bomb run and miss the target [target]. Lt. A.J. Vleghels' plane was hit on the bomb run and was thought to have gone down in the southeastern corner of Oosterschelde Bay. One engine was burning badly. Two chutes were [were] seen drifting toward land. His gunners were S/Sgt. Roger W. Rice and S/Sgt. Clay E. Young. Lt. H.B. Clark's plane was hit on the propeller dome causing oil to leak out. The pilot left the formation, feathered the prop, and continued on through flak centered on his

plane which was losing altitude on its single engine. When he neared Antwerp, he instructed his gunners to bail out. They did so successfully and returned to the base a day later. Lt. Clark, expecting the plane's one engine to fail soon headed toward the beachhead. When he attempted to land, he discovered that his hydraulic system was out. He crash-landed the plane near Caen, escaping unscathed himself.

The first mission from the new base in France was flown on the 27th. Bad weather prevented any bombing, however.

On the 29th, the warehouse and marshalling yard at Bitburg was attacked. Only 17 planes dropped but their results were excellent. Capt. Morton, leading a flight, was unable to drop because of weather. Phot [Photo] reconnaissance showed the warehouse and yard completely destroyed. Exhibit #58 Lt. Boukamp's plane was hit by the intense flak that defended the target. Both engines were hit and were on fire. The plane broke away from the formation in a gentle glide, but the plane was still under control, heading southwest, 8 miles southwest of the target. No chutes were seen. His gunners were Staff Sergeants Russell J. Colosimo and Jeong S. Wing. All three of them had almost completed their tours of duty.

The last mission of the month, on that afternoon, was an attack on the Julich marshalling yards. Haze, 9/10th cloud cover, and almost as much flak covered the target. Capt. Huff and Major Napier led the boxes. Results were unobserved. Flak knocked down three planes and killed a gunner in a fourth, but none of the losses were from our Squadron.

On the 30th, we received more concrete evidence of what was in store for us in the future. Sixteen A-26's the Air Force's newest and fastest medium bombers landed on the Base. Four of them were assigned to our Squadron and training in them was to begin immediately -- both ground and air training.

Squadron strength on the last day of September was 55 officers and 307 enlisted men.

October, 1944

669TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th Bombardment Group (L)
Office of the Commanding Officer

SUBJECT: Squadron History (October 1944 installment)
TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

The first of October found us having occupied our new Base for a little more than a week. In that one week, however, much progress was made in rebuilding our area. Rather than rebuilding the area, I should say creating. For there was once nothing but rubble and broken beams, now it was being cleared away and new structures were being erected from the scrap lumber. The mess halls, the theatre, the floors in the tents all helped make our lives more comfortable. Lt. Reese B. Robertson, appointed Squadron Mud Control Officer, did a fine job laying walks around the area to control the mud.

The outstanding event of the month was the training program set up for the conversion to the A-26 Invader. Weather was a great factor in the program. Originally set up to take about a month to convert, bad weather kept the planes on the ground for days at a time. When our Squadron was assigned the planes on the 30th, a slight break in the weather and dawn-to-dusk flying enabled us to convert in the record time of 5 days. The Group was completely converted by the 5th of November - after 35 days of training.

Many new crews were transferred into the Squadron during the month. Our strength on the last day was 64 officers and 304 enlisted men. The thing that most of the men looked forward to was the day when they would return to the States. After having completed 65 missions, seventeen crew members had their wishes realized when they left on the 8th and the 27th for the Zone of the Interior. They were:

1st. Lt. Willard H. Land
1st. Lt. Joseph S. Connor
1st. Lt. Wilfred C. Siggs
S/Sgt. Orlando D. LaNave
" William G. Ferguson
" Nathan Radlich
" Foster M. Citty
" Sterling F. Alden
" Amos E. Bergeron
" Herman O. Carney
" William J. Kelly
" John L. Rogers, Jr.
" Harvey E. Kelton
" Morton Rosenstein
" Roger W. Nicks
" Robert L. Ballinger
" Charles A. Prindle

There were no losses in the Squadron due to accidents or combat during the month.

Several promotions were received, among them: to Captain -- Captain McBroom, Capt. Bond, and Capt. Stebbins; to First Lieutenant Jack Blomgren, Earl Hayter, and Leo Poundstone.

The Table of Organization 1-137, dated 28 March 1944, became effective on 10 October 1944. The Squadron was reorganized under the new T/O. The overages, however, remained in the Squadron.

When Lt. Conner left for the States, the work of Special Services in the Squadron fell in the laps of Corporal Gottlieb and Staff Sergeant Hoffman. Later one of the new pilots, Lt. Martin, was put in charge of the work. A beer party started off the program for the month. The communications section supplied a radio so that the men could hear the broadcast of the Navy-Notre Dame football game. "Joe Banana and his Bunch" supplied the entertainment for several swing sessions. On the 23rd, the Day Room was opened in the rear of "Ye Olde Stable". After the movie, there was a "jam" session with coffee and doughnuts served. A collection taken on pay-day supplied the funds to buy the doughnuts and coffee from the Aero Club. They were served once or twice a week after movies or a jam session. A grand fireplace was built; a ping-pong table secured; and Lt. Foster

found a warehouse full of comfortable furniture to enhance the value of the Day Room. Movies continued to be held in the Squadron theatre on Monday and Friday nights.

Only one inspection was made of the Group in October, but it was a very satisfactory one. A technical inspection was held on the 18th and 19th by an inspecting team from the 9th Bombardment Division. The last paragraph of their report read, "The efficiency rating of the Group, based on the general condition of the technical equipment and the technical administration in all sections, is Superior." The Squadron had again shown up well in the inspection. Inspections were made by the Group during the month, however. On each one, the Squadron was rated "Excellent".

Crewman from the 669th were found on every loading list for the month. While the other Squadrons were checking out on the A-26 Invader, we had to furnish extra crews to complete the formations.

The attack of our armies had brought us up to the Siegfried Line. When we reached the German frontier, the fighting reached its greatest intensity. The role of the 9th Bombardment Division was confined to attacking targets in the immediate path of the attacking ground forces.

The first two missions of the month, of the 2nd and 3rd, were futile. Cloud cover prevented any attack. On the 6th, however, Captain Peck, Lt. Madenfort, B-N, led their flight through moderate flak that protected the target to score good results on the Duren Marshalling yards. Heavy damage was inflicted.

The next day, 669th men led the two boxes that attacked the Trier warehouses, Captain Huff, Lt. Kupits, B-N, and Captain Morton, Lt. Moore, B-N. The results were excellent. Six warehouses were completely destroyed, and four were heavily damaged.

A day later, on the 6th, the defended town of Linnich, Germany was the target. In the event the target could not be seen, the bombardiers were instructed to release one minute after the E.T.A. over the target. Only one flight picked out the target. Major Napier, Lt. Jones, B-N, leading a flight, released his bombs according to instructions. Results were unobserved, however.

On the 12th, our formation suffered considerable battle damage from the moderate to intense accurate flak surrounding the town of Langerwehe, the target. Only two flights were able to bomb because of smoke and haze. As a result we were sent back after the same town on the next day. This time the same flak was thrown up, but the bombing was better. Although there was no photo coverage of Lt. Greene's flight, the crews said that Lt. Nichols, his Bombardier, laid them in the target for good to excellent results. Captain Huff did not drop because of the cloud cover.

Only nine missions were flown by the Group during the month. Of these bombs were dropped only five times.

The scarcity of missions slowed down the granting of awards. The combat crews did continue to earn Air Medals, Oak Leaf Clusters, and Purple Hearts. Four crew chiefs received recognition for crewing their planes through 50 missions without an abortion from a mechanical failure. They were Technical Sergeants Wade H. Butcher, Hugo A. Gehrels, Horace L. Joyner, and Maholn E.

Seese, Jr.

November, 1944

669TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th Bombardment Group (L)
Office of the Commanding Officer

SUBJECT: Squadron History (November 1944 installment)
TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

With the month of November rolling around, it became more apparent that the days of the Havocs were numbered. The first week of November marked the completion of the task of converting to the A-26 Invader. All the Havocs, with the exception of a few of the glassed-nosed models, were flown to England. The pilots returned with our first assignment of Invaders on the 7th. Within two days, the acceptance checks were completed and we were ready to operate with the new plane. Our group was to be the first to fly the Invaders operationally in any combat theatre.

Although the training planes and Mobile Training Unit had left by the 11th, our own training was far from complete. Many new pilots were assigned to the Squadron. Every available minute of flying weather had to be utilized to get these men checked out on the plane. Few, if any of them, had even seen the A-26 before they arrived on the Base. Pilots were not the only ones who had to be trained, however. The new gun turrets with the latest fire-control mechanism was something entirely strange to most of the gunners and turret mechanics. This meant that they would have to be thoroughly trained before they would be allowed to touch the guns. Communications, engineering, armament, and ordnance were all in need of training to learn the differences between the Havoc and the Invader.

Poor weather which has slowed down our operations almost since D-day, favored us somewhat at this time by allowing us to continue our training without slowing down for a mission.

As the Squadron became more settled on the Base, morale improved. Squadron Special services continued doing a fine job furnishing entertainment here on the field. One of the highlights in their events for November was the 9th Air Force Service Command show on the 12th held in "Ye Olde Stable". A 12-piece orchestra, "The Continentals", and several good acts by the all-G.I. cast scored a big hit with the audience. Movies continued twice weekly. Swing sessions with coffee and doughnuts proved very popular. The Day Room, the best in the Group, was a popular spot for a pleasant evening. A radio was added so that the men could now hear their favorite programs.

An inspection was made by the Group inspectors during the month. The condition of the Squadron was excellent. General Anderson, when he visited the Base on the 27th for an award ceremony, stopped at our Squadron. Although his stay was short, he expressed his satisfaction with the condition of the Squadron as a whole.

First Lieutenants Edward J. Renth and Marion S. Street were both presented the DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS during the ceremonies held on the Base on the

27th. General Anderson made the presentations. Others of our crews continued to receive Air Medals and Oak Leaf Clusters. It happened that noone was awarded the PURPLE HEART during the month.

A Squadron order, published on 1 November, redesignated officers to specific duties.

It was learned during the month that First Lieutenants Norman V. Shainberg and Harry E. Hewes and Staff Sergeant Layford B. Curtis were Prisoners of War. Although Lt. Hewes is listed now as POW officially, some members of the Squadron have heard that he is now in England. He lost a leg, amputated by the Germans when he was seriously wounded. Captain Meredith J. Huff and Staff Sergeant Everett T. Epps, after having completed their tours of duty, returned to the Zone of the Interior on the 27th. With the addition of some new personnel, the Squadron's strength on the last day of the month was 64 officers and 303 enlisted men.

Only five missions were flown during the month of November. Exactly one month after the last mission in October, the Group took off on the 17th to fly their first mission in the A-26 Invaders. The target was the supply dump at Hagenau, Germany. Captain Huff, Lt. Kupits, B-N, was chosen to lead the second box on this all-important mission for the new planes. Captain Hulse, Lt. Conte, B-N, led a flight in the first box. Both of the 669th Bombardiers scored "excellents". Extensive damage was inflicted on buildings warehouses, the railroad, and bridges.

The following day, the 18th, Lt. Greene, Lt. Nichols, B-N, led a flight in an attack on the Breisach railroad bridge. Although their bombs did not destroy the bridge, they damaged the approach so badly that the line was now unserviceable. Captain Peck, Lt. Madenfort, B-N, had trouble with the bombsight releasing the bombs on three attempts over the target. They finally decided to make a run on the town of Gebweiler. The bombs were released this time with excellent results. It was through this town that the 6th Army Group made its advance a couple of days later.

In the morning of the 19th, Captain Hulse led a box in an all-out effort against troop concentrations at Merzig. Lt. Greene led a flight. The results brought a commendation from Generals Vandenberg and Anderson.

That afternoon Captain Huff and Captain Peck led the two boxes that took off to attack an ammunition dump at Landau. A solid bank of clouds just east of Nancy forced the formation to abandon the mission. The planes landed in total darkness. Captain Huff flew his 65th mission on this attack to complete his tour of duty.

Ten days later the Group flew its fifth mission of the month. No attack could be made on the assigned target at Mariamweiler because of an 8/10th cloud cover. Captain Hulse led a flight on this mission which encountered moderate to intense flak enroute and moderate flak over the target.

Checking back on the 158 missions flown by the Group since the beginning of our operations on 3 March 1944, the Squadron flew 1506 sorties.

December, 1944

669TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th Bombardment Group (L)
Office of the Commanding Officer

SUBJECT : Historical Data (December 1944 installment)
TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces

Regardless of where men might be or what their circumstances are, they will always get a special thrill when they tear the November sheet off their calendar and find the word, "December". Yes, here at Station A-55 it was no different. One could hear stories in every tent and on the flight line about another Christmas that had been memorable. Mail call was looked forward to with added anticipation for some little card or gift that would be symbolic of the season. Of course a few last minute shoppers were frantically trying to rush gifts back to the States when already the mail boats were filled to overflowing.

The fruit cakes and cookies were stored in the larder on the afternoon of the 25th, for the usual magnificent Christmas Day Turkey dinner was ready to be served. There were some new and unfamiliar faces who walked into the "Olde Stable" to enjoy the feast spread out on white tablecloths and eaten while "Joe Bananas and his Bunch" played soft music in the background. Among them were: Captain Dufault, First Lieutenant Steed, Second Lieutenant B.A. Smith, Flight Officer Swap, Staff Sergeant Vorce, Corporals Gilbert, Hopfner, Santandrea, Richards, Wilson, and Mediniotis. And some of the familiar faces were missing: First Lieutenant Claude W. Jones (transferred to 386th Bomb Group); Second Lieutenants Berger, Nichols, and Wyche (transferred to 410th Bomb Group); Staff Sergeants Colbert, Fleischmann, Hoffman, Rodgers, Allred, Ochaba, Vafiadis, Perkins, Van Duyn, and Webb, Captain MacManus, and Lieutenant Madenfort (transferred to the Zone of Interior) On the 24th, Lieutenant Reece B. Robertson and Staff Sergeant M.W. Cheney were lost on a combat mission and are now MIA. On Christmas morning, on another costly mission, Lieutenant K.W. Kehoe and Corporal R.F. Graham were lost and are also MIA. On the 28th two other men departed for the Zone of Interior: Staff Sergeants Scott, Melchior, and Mallory. Corporal Hamel was also assigned to the Squadron making "Joe Bananas" band an all-669th outfit.

A few promotions came through during the month. Major Napier was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel; Captain Marks, to Major; Lieutenants DeMun and MacManus to Captain; and Second Lieutenants Allen, DuBose, Kehoe, and Sorrels, to First Lieutenant.

Lieutenant W.J. Greene was made a flight commander when Captain MacManus completed his tour of duty.

Lieutenant Colonel Napier, Staff Sergeant Donnelly, and Staff Sergeant Kruger were the first men in the Squadron to be sent to the Front as part of a new program instituted in the Ninth Air Force. Combat crews and Intelligence Officers were to visit the Front for a period of seven days to get a first-hand view of the War from the groundman's point of view. At the same time it was possible for the men on the ground to become better acquainted with some of the problems of air warfare.

On the 16th of December, the German Armies broke loose in the area of the Ardennes forest, defended jointly by our First and Third Armies. Within a few days they had won back many miles of ground that had been taken by us after months of hard and costly fighting. Immediately the Base was alerted and all leaves and passes were cancelled. The men donned their field dress, including [included] gas masks, helmets, and small arms with ammunition. The drive became so serious that at one time the Group was put on a six-hour alert, ready to evacuate the Base. Shortly after midnight on the 26th, the men forsook their warm beds and scrambled for shelter in their foxholes when a "Jerry" plane dove out of a cloudy sky and strafed as he made a pass at the field. No one in the Squadron was injured, but all were very annoyed. Again on New Years Eve a lone plane circled the field. The noise of the bombs hitting railroad tracks in the town of Coubert, 4 miles north of the field made the men scatter for the safety of their foxholes. Although there were other alerts, no further attacks were made. A parachutists scare was met by an alerted Group, armed to the teeth with its planes securely guarded.

On the 11th a House Military Affairs sub-committee visited the Base. The committee, made up of about 25 Congressmen and women, among them Mrs. Clara Booth Luce, was touring the E.T.O. with an end to understanding more closely the conditions under which our men were fighting. After an inspection of the headquarters area, they crawled into their staff cars and toured the Squadron areas. We had readied our area for them. To our disappointment, they did not stop but continued on through the area. The rainy day had discouraged any thoughts of stopping.

The Inspector General of the 9th Bombardment Division conducted an inspection on the 12th and 13th. The Squadron showed up very well and was rated as "Superior". It was our first complete administrative inspection since last Spring. A preliminary inspection by the Group administrative inspector, Major Marks, found few discrepancies and rated us "Excellent".

The usual entertainment was provided by Special Services such as movies and Camp shows. Corporal Gottlieb, an extremely capable pianist, began a piano class and found several adept pupils. An Enlisted Men's and an Officer's dance and party were held shortly after Christmas at the Officer's Club. Feminine guests from surrounding towns were invited to attend.

Captain R.J. Morton and Lieutenant W.H. Land were awarded DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSSES. General Anderson presented the decoration to Captain Morton. Many other crewmen received Air Medals.

Word was received that Staff Sergeant W.E. Fields was now a Prisoner of War.

Sixteen missions were flown by the Group during the month of December. Our crews participated in all of the attacks. Most of the missions were led by B-26 Marauders using Pathfinder equipment, however, on six occasions, our Bombardiers did have an opportunity to do some individual work.

On the 23rd, the highway bridge over the Saar River at Saarburg was attacked. Captain DeMun, Lt. McQuade, B-N, and Captain Stebbins, Lt. Calloway, B-N, both scored excellent results on the target, while leading flights. The bombs completely destroyed the bridge which had borne many tons of equipment going to the troops advancing in their Ardennes breakthrough.

That afternoon the defended town of Waxweiler was attacked. Due to the haste in which the mission was planned, insufficient time for preparation, and meager target material, Lieutenant Moore, Captain Morton's B-N, leading the first box, made an error in navigation and bombed a marshalling yard at the outskirts of Arlon, behind our own troops. Captain Hulse, Lieutenant Conte, B-N, leading the second box, went on in to bomb the primary target with excellent results.

On the 24th, a communications center at Zulpich was attacked. Lieutenant Cornell, Lieutenant Enman, B-N, leading a flight scored a "Superior", doing a fine job of bombing. Lieutenant Miller, Lieutenant Jack Conner, B-N, also lead a flight, but, due to their violent evasive action, there were no photographs of their bombing. Crew members rated their work as excellent. One plane, flown by Lieutenant Reece B. Robertson with Sergeant Cheney as gunner, was hit while on the bomb run. Despite the serious injury to his plane, Lieutenant Robertson continued on over the target with his flight. On the turn-off, his plane began to burn. The plane broke away from the formation in a glide and was seen to crash just over the bomb-line. Crews reported one chute emerging from the plane. Both Lieutenant Robertson and Sergeant Cheney are listed as MIA.

Christmas Day arrived, but there was no "Peace on Earth" for the enemy. Two missions were flown by the Group.

In the morning a road junction in the center of the town of Munstereifel was attacked. Only one flight was able to pick up the target, but they scored superior results, cutting the roads and blocking others when the surrounding buildings were destroyed by the bombs. Captain Stebbins, Lieutenant Calloway, B-N, leading a flight, bombed the town of Krimm with superior results, severely damaging a marshalling yard and cutting a highway. Lieutenant Blomgren, Lieutenant G.G. Johnson, B-N, bombed the town of Kronenburgerhutte when they could not locate the primary target. They severely damaged the main highway and nearby buildings. On the bomb run Lieutenant K.W. Kehoe's plane was hit by flak. Although the plane was burning, he continued on to the target and dropped his bombs with his flight. The plane broke away from the formation and went down burning; it crashed just before it reached the bomb-line. No chutes were seen. Lieutenant Kehoe and his gunner, Corporal R.F. Graham, are listed as MIA. The flak ranged from moderate accurate to intense accurate on the bomb run and over the target. Almost half of the formation suffered battle damage. The plane flown by Lieutenant W.J. Greene, on his 65th mission, was hit by flak in the right engine on the bomb run. He stayed with the formation, dropping his bombs on the target. By superior flying, despite injuries to his face from broken glass from a shattered windshield, he brought the plane back to a friendly base where he crash-landed it. His observer, Lieutenant J.L. Britt, was also wounded in the face by glass. Both Lieutenant Greene and Lieutenant Britt were awarded the PURPLE HEART.

In the afternoon of the same day, our planes took off to bomb another well-defended target, a railroad junction at Hillesheim, Germany. The formation encountered intense accurate heavy flak from the moment it crossed the bomb line until it came out. Again half of the planes in the formation suffered battle damage. Lieutenant McQuade, Captain DeMun's B-N, was unable to identify the primary target and chose a road junction in the town of Pelm. The bombs scored excellent results. Lieutenant Cornell's B-N, Lieutenant Enman, also chose another target, the town of Feusdorf, which he bombed with telling results. Although two planes were lost, neither was from our Squadron.

The vitally important Eller railroad bridge was attacked on the 27th. Captian Hulse, Lieutenant Conte, B-N, led the formation and scored excellent results. Captain Stebbins, Lieutenant Calloway, B-N, leading the second box, scored superior results. Yet with all of this superb bombing, photo reconnaissance later showed the bridge still standing. The bombs had straddled the structure. Oddly enough on such an important target, there was no flak.

Those last few mission in December had been mighty costly to both our Squadron and to the Group, but our attacks had slowed the German drive so that by the last day of the year, it was evident that it had already lost its momentum.

January, 1945

669TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th Bombardment Group (L)
Office of the Commanding Officer

SUBJECT : Historical Data (January 1945 installment)
TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

It did not seem possible that already we were coming into a new year. To many of us, it seemed like a little more than yesterday that we had left Laurel, Mississippi four [for] our final stop before we were to sail for England. And yet it was true--just one year ago we had left Laurel. A lot had happened in that one year. We had succeeded [succeeded] in getting our troops up onto the Normandy beaches; we had seen our troops race across France in record-breaking time; we had moved again, to a Base on the Continent; and now we were entering on the final stages of the campaign, to take Germany itself.

Those last few cold, wintry days of December 1944 had been only the beginning of what was to be an uncomfortable winter for us. January was filled with cold, snowy days. A shortage of coal and wood made our living conditions not the best. However, the magnificent work of our ground forces under the same conditions made us forget our worries.

The cold weather caused us considerable anxiety for the effect that it had on our own operations. Icing conditions on the wings and in the carburetors was a very serious problem. Snow and ice on the taxi-strips and runways made it impossible to operate at times. Our own men with the air of French workers laboured unceasingly to keep the runways clear of snow and ice, but it proved an inexhaustable job. If we only had a few days of good clear weather, most of the crews felt, our planes could put the retreating German armies into a complete rout.

Already the German counter-offensive was beginning to show signs of collapse. By mid-January the Bulge had almost ceased to exist. What was more, our troops were taking advantage of their positions to push the enemy back even beyond the point held before the break-through.

Again some of our old men were leaving us after having completed their tours of duty. Among them were Captain W.A. Peck, Captain R.J. Morton, Staff Sergeant Holloway, and Staff Sergeant Stephens. Lieutenant Greene departed for the States

for a period of 30 days, after which time he would be returned to this theatre for reassignment. Lieutenant M.S. Street, after completing his tour of duty, was transferred to the headquarters of USSTAF where he was to work as Armement [Armament] officer.

More crews went to the Front during the month to visit the ground forces. Lieutenant Renth, Sergeant Moskowitz, and Sergeant Brinkman had an unforgettable trip. They were bombed by our own "heavies" when they mistook their target and dropped on our side of the lines. Sergeant Brinkman was injured in the attack. They brought their jeep back, full of holes and scarred from the attack. Neither Lieutenant Renth or Sergeant Moskowitz were injured.

Four of our Engineering personnel, Master Sergeants Mihler and Anderson, and Technical Sergeants Anlauf and Melte, attended schools in England an [and] at the headquarters ASC, USSTAF.

Lieutenant Joseph Kupits was appointed Assistant Operations Officer on the 18th, relieving Captain Behlmer who had been promoted just three days before. This was the first time that a Bombardier had held the job.

On the 30th of the month, late in the evening, a stove in the mess hall exploded. With a great deal of excitement and haste the fire was extinguished. Although the building, a prefabricated wooden structure, did suffer some damage, no equipment was lost. Within a couple of days a temporary roof was erected and the building was in use again.

Two unfortunate accidents cost us the lives of two of our crews. One, Lieutenant H.B. Clark and Staff Sergeant J.W. Sabadosh, had been among our first replacement crews. They were nearing the completion of their tours of duty. The other crew, Lieutenant G.O. Van Meter, and Sergeant C.M. Kiker, were comparatively new to the Squadron, and had flown only a few missions. Their deaths were the results of take-off accidents in which their planes burned and exploded. Lieutenant Clark and his gunner were killed on the 2nd; Lieutenant Van Meter and his gunner on the 14th.

Despite the very bad flying weather during the month, the Group flew sixteen missions. Some of our crews flew on all but three of them. Those three missions were special bombing and strafing missions made by three six-ship formations.

The first mission in January was a special bombing and strafing mission against troops and installations in Belgium. None of our crews were in on the attack. No attack was made by the formation.

On the second, however, our crews participated in an attack on the Simmern railroad bridge. It was on this mission that Lieutenant Clark and Sergeant Sabadosh were killed. As the plane became airborne on take-off, it suddenly settled down, nosing into the ground. Before the crew was able to climb out of the plane, it began to burn. Soon the bombs exploded, killing the two crewmen. Although the exact cause of the accident was never determined, it was thought that either ice had formed on the wings during take-off or that there was ice in the carburetor. At this time we were experiencing extremely cold and damp weather. Two other planes crashed on take-off, one of them exploding, but the crews were able to get out of them safely. The rest of the planes went on to attack the target. Captain Morton, Lt. Moore, B-N, and Lt. Miller, Lt. Connor, B-N, both leading, flights scored excellent results with their bombing. The

bridge, railroad tracks, and a highway were blanketed by the bombs. Five to twelve ME 109's attempted a pass at the formation, but they were steered away by the fighter escort.

On the eleventh, Captain Hulse, Lt. Conte, B-N, and Captain Stebbins, Lt. Calloway, B-N, led the two boxes in an attack on the Simmern bridge again. This time a solid cloud cover hung over the target, and it was necessary to bomb on a PPF plane. An equipment failure in the PPF plane prevented it from attacking the primary target. He chose a marshalling yard at Alzey for his secondary.

Three days later, on the 14th, Captain Hulse, Lt. Conte, B-N, led another formation in an attack on the defended village of Schleiden. As the plane flown by Lieutenant Van Meter, Sergeant Kikar gunner, began to get airborne, it suddenly settled to the ground and crashed. Before the crew was able to get out of the burning wreckage, the bombs exploded. The crew was killed. The rest of the planes formed into one box behind Captain Hulse and went on to attack the target. Lieutenant Conte dropped his bombs squarely on the aiming point. Had it not been for one flight that was out of position when it dropped, he would have been credited with a superior. Hits were scored on the road junctions, and buildings in the center of the town. All north-south road traffic was blocked. The rail line was also cut in four different places.

Taking off on the 21st, our crews participated in a very successful attack on the Euskirchen railroad bridge. Despite the moderate accurate flak on the target and on the turn-off--causing battle damage to 13 of the aircraft--the crews went in to drop their bombs squarely across the bridge, railroad tracks, and into the marshalling yard. Lt. Col Napier, Lt. Moore, B-N, and Lt. Blomgren, Lt. G.G. Johnson, B-N, led two of the flights. Although there was no photo coverage of their work, crews reported that they scored excellent results.

In the afternoon of the 22nd, another six-ship special bombing and strafing mission took off. This time two of our crews were on it. They were Lieutenants Sorrels and [and] Martin with Staff Sergeant Malara and Corporal Sumner as gunners. When the formation was unable to contact their fighters, it was recalled by Parade before it was able to find a target to attack.

None of our crews flew on the two special missions that were flown on the 23rd.

On the 24th, Lt. Col. Napier and Lt. Blomgren again led two flights in an attack on the road junction at Schleiden. Lt. Johnson, Lt. Blomgren's B-N, scored excellent results with bombs blanketing railroad lines and cutting the main highway, with possible hits on a long road bridge. Lt. Moore, Col. Napier's B-N, was unable to bomb, however, even though they made three runs because his bombsight telescope cable was broken.

Another very successful mission on the 25th was led by the 669th--Captain Hulse, Lt. Conte, B-N, in the first box, and Captain Stebbins, Lt. Calloway [Calloway], B-N, in the second box. Lieutenant Conte scored an excellent and Lieutenant Calloway [Calloway], a superior. The road junction was blanketed; buildings, rail lines, and a rail siding were hit. It was estimated that about 20 freight cars were destroyed.

Despite the bad weather, our attacks had been very successful and the Group's bombing record again was the best in the Bomber Division for accuracy

within 1,000 feet of the target. The counter-attack of the Germans was definitely stopped and our troops had already begun to push back into Germany.

During the month, Lieutenant Madenfort and Lt. Jack F. Smith were awarded DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSSES, although Lieutenant Madenfort's award had to be forwarded on to him. He was already on his way back to the States. The usual Air Medals and Oak Leaf Clusters were awarded to other airmen.

February, 1945

669TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)
Office of the Commanding Officer

SUBJECT: Squadron History (February 1945 Installment)
TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces

February 1945 proved to be a month of intense activity for the 669th Bombardment Squadron (L). During the course of the month, the squadron moved from its base at AAF Sta. A-55 to AAF Sta. A-69. Despite inclement weather and the move, which disrupted the normal course of events to a certain extent, this organization participated in nineteen of the twenty-one missions flown by the 416th Bombardment Group (L). In many instances this squadron was called upon to furnish box leaders and flight leaders for the group formations even though it was not the squadron's turn to do so. In spite of all the handicaps encountered, the 669th passed the two hundred mark in the total number of operational missions flown in this theatre. When one considers the fact that the unit has been on operational status for a period of slightly less than one year, the record is really a remarkable one. In the succeeding paragraphs, the author will endeavor to recount some of the outstanding achievements, of members of the organization, against the enemy. A sombre note must also be struck, because the organization did not succeed in achieving this fine record without casualties. The squadron lost some fine men, whose losses have been deeply regretted by all.

On the first of the month, Capt. Earl E. De Mun and Lt. Robert J. McQuade, his Bombardier-Navigator, led the second flight of the first box, while Capt. David Hulse with his B/N, Lt. Ralph Conte, led the third flight of the first box in an attack on the defended village of Schleiden, Germany. No results could be determined for this mission, because PPF technique was used, and 10/10ths cloud cover prevented observation of the bombing.

The second day of February found misfortune once more plaguing the 669th. In an attack on the Euskirken Supply Center, which served as a processing and billeting area for enemy troops enroute to the front, the aircraft piloted by Lt. D. E. Smith was hit by enemy anti-aircraft fire. An explosion occurred in the gunners compartment of the airplane. Sgt. Richard De Stefano, the top turret gunner, was killed outright. The engineer gunner, S/Sgt. D. F. Abriola, bailed out. When last seen, S/Sgt. Abriola was drifting down to a landing behind enemy lines. (It should be added that the aircraft was an A20K.) Lt. Smith was obliged to crash land the airplane at AAF Sta. A-78. Fortunately, he escaped injury. Despite the unfortunate loss mentioned above, the flight comprised of aircraft of this squadron, led by Lt. Col. Napier and his B/N Lt. Moore, achieved excellent results.

On the following day, Capt. Stebbins with his B/N Lt. Calloway, led the entire group formation in an attack on the Berg Gladbach Storage and Repair Depot. Capt. Sommers together with Lt. Kupits, his B/N, flew in the deputy leader's position. The results of the mission were unobserved. PPF bombing equipment was used. Cloud cover prevented observation of the bombing results.

Once more on the sixth of the month PPF technique had to be employed in attacking Berg Gladbach, Germany. The deputy leader of this mission was Lt. Blomgren who flew with his B/N Lt. G. G. Johnson. Capt. De Mun together with Lt. McQuade led the third flight of the second box of the formation.

February 8th was quite a noteworthy day. The squadron engaged in its 200th mission against the enemy. The area on the Canadian First Army and British Second Army front near Cleve, Germany, was attacked. The results of the mission were unobserved because of 10/10ths cloud cover. On this mission, Capt. Hulse and his B/N Lt. Clonte [Conte] led the second flight of the Second box, while Lt. Col. Napier and Lt. Moore led the third flight of the second box. (A-26C aircraft were used for the first time to lead flights on this mission.) The 200th mission was marred by an unfortunate accident. Enroute back to the base, the airplane piloted by Lt. Steed ran short of fuel. Lt. Steed attempted a forced landing near Villers St. George, France. The airplane crashed into some trees. The pilot was killed instantly, and the gunner, Sgt. Tranchina, was seriously injured.

On the ninth of the month, this squadron led the entire group in an attack on the Kempen Communications Center. The formation was led by Capt. Stebbins and Lt. Calloway.

Military installations east of Munstereifel, Germany were attacked on the 10th of February. Capt. Hulse with Lt. Conte and Lt. Kupits, led the second box of the formation. Excellent results were obtained by the use of PPF technique.

No further missions were flown until the fourteenth of the month. During this period, the air echelon of the squadron moved from AAF Station A-55 to AAF Sta. A-69. The air echelon's part of the move was accomplished on the 12th of the month. Inclement weather prevented the aircraft from departing Sta. A-55 on February 11th as planned. Plans had been thoroughly and completely made. The entire movement proceeded with clocklike precision.

Although the air echelon had only arrived on the twelfth of the month at the new station, the morning of the fourteenth saw aircraft of this squadron participating in an attack on the Mechernich Repair Depot. PPF technique was used. Reconnaissance photographs showed that excellent results had been obtained.

On the afternoon of the same day, the Rheinbach Ammunition Dump was bombed by aircraft of this squadron.

Capt. Stebbens and Lt. Calloway led Box I while Capt. Sommers and Lt. Kupits led box II in an attack on the Unna Ordnance Dept on the 16th of the month. PPF technique was employed.

Once again, on the nineteenth, a pilot-bombardier team of the 669th led a box of aircraft in the group formation. This time the second box was led by Lt. Col. Napier and Lt. Moore. The Wiesbaden Ordnance Depot was bombed by the use of

PPF.

February 21st was another day when an unfortunate accident incapacitated [incapacitated] more members of the squadron. After successfully attacking the Lage railroad bridge in Germany, the aircraft piloted by Lt. R.K. Johnson, was hit by anti-aircraft artillery fire. It was necessary for Lt. Johnson to feather the left propeller of the airplane and proceed back to the base on a single engine. While attempting to land, another aircraft flew in front of the disabled plane. The pilot tried to go around for another landing attempt, but the aircraft swerved to the left and crashed in a wooded section of the 670th Bombardment Squadron's area. The crashing airplane destroyed one officer's billet and damaged two others. Lt. Cook, of the 670th died as a result of injuries sustained, while Lt. Merritt and Lt. Sheley, of the same organization, sustained a broken leg and a broken foot respectively.

The gunner of the aircraft, Sgt. Brandt, escaped with minor injuries. Lt. Johnson was pinned beneath the wreckage [wreckage] for approximately one hour. (Fortunately there was no fire.) When he was finally extricated, it was found that he had suffered a broken collar bone and injuries to his face. (All the injured personnel are well on the road to recovery at the time of this writing.) Lt. Miller and Lt. Connor led the 2nd flight of the first box on this mission, while Lt. Cornell and Lt. Enman flew in the lead position of the second flight of the second box.

The mission flown on the 22nd of February was unusual for aircraft of this squadron. Instead of flying the entire mission at medium altitude, the combat crews were briefed to descend and strafe certain targets on the return trip. Therefore, after attacking the Miltenberg Bridges, the airplanes descended and strafed the Simmern railroad yards, with good results.

On the 23rd, the Golzheim communications center, near Duren, Germany was attacked by the use of PPF technique. Lt. Col. Napier with Lts. Moore and McQuade led the first box of the formation, while Capt. Stebbins together with Lts. Calloway and Conner led the second box.

Bombing of the Virsen Communications Center, also located near Duren, Germany, was accomplished on the following day.

The Kerpen Road Junction in Germany was attacked with excellent results on the morning of February 25th. Once more the 669th Bombardment Squadron had the misfortune of losing one of its combat crews. Lt. John J. Farley and his gunner, Sgt. Hardesty, were reported [reported] missing in action. The aircraft in which they were flying was seen to have been hit by enemy anti-aircraft fire and then to have fallen toward the ground.

On the afternoon of the same day, the Duren area again received a pounding. The Nouvenich Communication Center was bombed by the use of PPF. The results were unobserved because of cloud cover.

The PPF aircraft failed to bomb in an attack on Munstereifel, Germany, on the 26th February. Cloud cover made a visual bomb-run impossible. The Gee equipment of the lead aircraft was inoperative. Despite all these handicaps, the formation went on to bomb the target on a vector from the fighter control station, "Roselee". Lt. Col. Napier with Lts. Moore and McQuade, led the first box of the formation while Capt. Stebbins and Lts. Calloway and G.G. Johnson led

the second box.

To complete the operational schedule for the month, this squadron participated in attacks on the Unna Ordnance Depot and the Seigen Marshalling Yards on the 28th. The 217th operational mission of the 416th Bombardment Group (L) was flown on this date.

What follows is an account of the other squadron functions.

On the fifteenth of the month, Second Lieutenants Emile C. Martin, Daniel E. Smith, Roy W. Van Rope, and Jack K. Conner were promoted to the rank of First Lieutenant. Congratulations are in order for all of these men. They are very deserving.

In keeping with the policy of attaching members of Air Force units to Ground Force units, a number of men from this squadron were sent up to the front for periods of from seven to ten days. Capt. Sydney A. Luria, Lt. Edward L. Miller, Lt. Jack K. Conner, and S/Sgt. James M. Pemberton spent a week on the Third Army front. They spent a very interesting and informative seven days in various command posts and in traveling about in the Third Army sector. Later in the month, Lt. John E. Blomgren, Lt. George G. Johnson, and S/Sgt. Leonard R. Fleming were placed on temporary duty with the IX TAC. During the time that they were at the front, they also had ample opportunity to learn first hand the various problems confronting members of the Ground Forces. Toward the end of the month, Lt. Donald W. Sorrels, S/Sgt. Harry L. Triber, and S/Sgt. Valo A. Malara were placed on temporary duty with the XXIX TAC. This latter group had quite an exciting time at the front. In one attack launched by the unit, with which these men were traveling, Lt. Sorrels assisted in the capture of a number of German prisoners of war, including one officer.

Not alone did this squadron send some of its personnel to the front, but it had the privilege of entertaining 1st Lt. Carl E. Geer, 1st Lt. Anthony R. Walsh, and Pfc Steve R. Hoforka, all of the Infantry. They were attached to the organization for the purpose of learning something about the functioning of an AAF Squadron. It was a pleasure having them with the unit. There was an interchange of ideas, which led to a better mutual understanding of the problems confronted by the Air and Ground Forces.

A new program of leaves and furloughs was initiated for all ground personnel of the squadron. The first men to receive the benefits of this new program were M/Sgt. Leroy T. Hancock, Sgt. Warren P. Knowlton, Cpl. William H. Loeb, and Cpl. George Petrone. These men were placed on temporary duty with the U.K. Leave Center. They were assured of a minimum stay of seven days in the United Kingdom, because the furloughs started as of the date of their arrival in England. Each of these men, upon his return to the squadron, praised the plan very highly. Every effort was made, by the authorities in charge of the program, to make the entire rest period as enjoyable as possible.

In keeping with the Army's plan to offer educational opportunities for all personnel in the European Theatre of Operations, Lt. Dolphus Whitten was sent for a one week course at the Cite University of Paris. The course that he pursued trained him to train potential instructors for the education program. The selection of Lt. Whitten for this course was a very wise one, because he has had wide civilian experience in the field of education.

One of the most important activities of the 669th Bombardment Squadron (L) was the move from AAF Sta. A-55 to AAF Sta. A-69. On February 6th, Capt. William F. DuFault, Lt. Leo E. Poundstone, 1st Sgt. Edward J. Ayo, and a detachment of 14 enlisted men left Sta. A-55 for Sta. A-69. This Advanced Echelon proceeded to the new station for the purpose of preparing for the arrival of the Air And Rear Echelons of the squadron. The efficiency of this group of men in fulfilling the assigned duties was evidenced by the fact that the Air Echelon was able to start operations from the new base within a short time of its arrival there. (No further mention will be made at this time of the Air Echelon's move, because that has already been covered in one of the preceding paragraphs.)

The Rear Echelon of the organization, which comprised the majority of the personnel, was split into two groups. The largest of these groups traveled by rail from the Melun freight yards to Laon. All equipment that could possibly be loaded was placed on freight cars. Some of the famous "40 et 8" freight cars were also provided for the troops. The trip by rail was a long and tedious one. Although the distance was not very great, the trip took more than a day. It was a new experience for most of the men. Fortunately, the weather was ideal for the move. Clear skies and reasonably high temperatures made a very monotonous trip a bit more pleasant. The other group of the Rear Echelon traveled by motor transport. Even though the truck convoy left the old base more than six hours after the train departed from Melun, it arrived at the new base more than twelve hours in advance of the other group. Essential items of equipment, such as tents, tent stoves, etc. were carried by truck to insure their being available for use prior to the arrival of the majority of the personnel. The entire move was accomplished with a high degree of efficiency. Much credit is due to the members of the organization who were responsible for making the plans for this undertaking. They demonstrated exceptional foresight and ingenuity which insured the success of the move.

As of the 28th of February, this squadron had 55 officers and 291 enlisted men assigned. During the month Capt. Earl E. DeMun and Capt. David A. Hulse left the organization for return to the United States. Each had demonstrated exceptional ability as a flight leader, during his tour of duty. The members of the squadron regretted to see them leave, but everyone was happy to see them have the opportunity to return home once more.

March, 1945

669th BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)
Office of the Commanding Officer

SUBJECT: Squadron History (March 1945 Installment)
TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces

Many important events transpired during the month of March 1945. The last remnants of the German Armies west of the Rhine River were either killed or captured. The great crossings of the Rhine were accomplished with remarkable success, and the drive through Central Germany was begun. Final victory over the Third Reich seemed closer than ever before.

After the completion of one year of operational missions against the enemy,

by the 669th Bombardment Squadron (L), it might be wise for us to pause and consider what has been accomplished. From Marh [March] 3, 1944 to March 3, 1945, the squadron has participated in the battle to destroy the V Weapon Sites. It has flown many sorties in the great "softening up" of "Festung Europa" prior to D Day. After June 6th, 1944, many missions were flown in direct support of the ground forces. Attacks were also made on strategic targets, such as marshalling yards, communications centers, enemy troop processing centers and billeting areas far behind the front lines. From the third of March, 1944 until the same date of 1945, the 669th flew nineteen hundred three (1903) operational sorties against the enemy.

In the succeeding paragraphs, the author will briefly analyze the missions flown by this squadron during the month of March 1945.

The first mission for the month, in which aircraft of this squadron participated, was flown on March 1st. The Giessen Ordnance Depot was attacked. PPF Bombing technique was used.

On March 2nd, airplanes of the 669th participated in a PPF operation against the Iserlohn Warehouses.

Lt. Col. Napier, together with Lts. Moore and McQuade, led the group formation on the third of the month. PPF technique was used to bomb the Giessen Ordnance Depot. Lt. Miller, with Lts. Conner and G.G. Johnson, led the second box of the formation.

On March 4th, Capt. Stebbins led one box of aircraft in an attack on the Huls Marshalling Yards. Lt. Calloway served as his Bombardier-Navigator. Bombing was done with the aid of PPF equipment. An opening in the clouds permitted observation of the bombing results. Strikes were seen on the North Choke Point and in the center of the yards. While descending through the overcast, on the return trip, Lt. Hackley's airplane went into a tight spiral. Sgt. Koons, who was flying as gunner, bailed out, because he thought the aircraft was out of control. The pilot succeeded in pulling the airplane out of the spiral and returned safely to base. Sgt. Koons landed safely near Charleroi, Belgium.

The Marburg Marshalling Yard was attacked on March 5th. Again PPF technique had to be used. Observation of the results was impossible because of the 10/10ths cloud cover.

The second mission to take-off on this day was led by Capt. Stebbins, with Lts. Calloway and McQuade flying as Bombardier and Navigator respectively. The Bingen Marshalling Yards were bombed by the use of PPF equipment. Results were unobserved, but photo reconnaissance five days later disclosed that considerable damage had been done to the yards.

The Opladen Marshalling Yards were attacked, on March 6th by a formation led by Lt. Col. Napier. Lt. Moore and Lt. McQuade flew as Bombardier and Navigator in the colonel's airplane. Lt. Miller, with Lts. Conner and G.G. Johnson, led the second box on this mission. Because of cloud cover, PPF technique had to be used.

Another Flight Leader from this squadron was called upon to lead the group formation on March 8th. Capt. Stebbins led the first first box in an attack on the Motor Transport Depot at Wulfrath. Excellent results were achieved by the

use of PPF technique.

Again, on the morning of March 9th, it was necessary to have a PPF aircraft fly with each box of the group formation. The Bitzbach Marshalling Yards were attacked. Lt. Col. Napier, with Lt. Moore, led the second flight of the first box, while Lt. Miller and Lt. Conner led the third flight of that box. Lt. Cornell and his B/N, Lt. Enman flew with the second box of the formation in the deputy leader's position. Enemy aircraft were seen near the formation, but they did not attack.

For the afternoon mission of the same day, blind bombing equipment had to be used. The Wulfen Ammunition Filling Plant was bombed with excellent results. Enemy fighters were seen along the route, but they made no attempt to approach the formation.

Another marshalling yard was the target for bombing on the 10th of the month. This time, it was located at Dillenburg. PPF technique had to be employed once more. Lt. Col. Napier led the entire formation. Lt. Moore flew as his Bombardier, while Lt. McQuade served as Navigator. Lt. Miller, with Lt. Conner, led the second box of the formation. Lt. Conner and Lt. Enman served as Bombardier and Navigator for him. The window aircraft on this mission had Lt. Blomgren's aircraft in the lead. Lt. G.G. Johnson navigated for him.

Lippe airstrip was the next target attacked. The date of this operation was March 11th. PPF aircraft led the formation on the bomb run. Capt. Stebbins, with Lts. Calloway and McQuade, flew in the lead position of the first box.

During the afternoon of the 11th, the Wulfen Ammunition Filling Plant received a return visit by aircraft of this organization. PPF technique had to be employed.

PPF aircraft led the formation on the bombing run in an attack on the Lorch Marshalling Yard. This mission was accomplished on the 12th of March.

The Marshalling Yards at Mummelbach were hit during the afternoon of the same day. The destruction of German equipment and supplies, moving up to the front through these yards, was the objective of the mission. Lt. Col. Napier, together with Lts. Moore and Calloway led the entire formation. Lt. Miller with Lts. Conner and Johnson led the second box of the formation. PPF equipment had to be used for the bomb run.

A jet fighter airfield, located at Rheine, was attacked on March 13th. PPF technique was used. Capt. Stebbins, with Lt. Calloway as his Bombardier-Navigator, led the entire formation, while Lt. Blomgren flew in the lead position in the third flight of the second box. Moderate, heavy, accurate flak was encountered. The aircraft piloted by Lt. Jordan was damaged. It was impossible for him to lower the landing gear. As a result of this, he was compelled to make a crash landing at AAF Station A-70. In the aircraft with Lt. Jordan were his gunner, S/Sgt. Jensen and an observer from the 11th Armored Division, S/Sgt. Bolton. The pilot did an excellent job, and no one was injured as a result of the crash landing.

On the afternoon mission, of the same day, it was possible to bomb visually for the first time during the month. Haze obscured [obscured] the target, but a bomb run was made [made] by using visual bombing equipment in conjunction with

Gee equipment. The Husten Marshalling Yards were bombed. Lt. Cornell led flight two of box one, with his B/N Lt. Enman, while Lt. Miller and his B/N, Lt. Conner, led the third flight of the same box. Capt. Sommers and Lt. Kupits flew in the lead position of the "window" flight.

The Wieder-Marsburg [Nieder-Marsberg] R.R. Bridge was attacked, by the use of visual bombing equipment. A ground haze obscured the area. Another bridge, approximately 3 1/2 miles from the primary target was attacked by Capt. Stebbins and Lt. Calloway and their flight. This flight scored excellent results in the attack.

Clear skies permitted visual bombing of the Pirmasens Road Junction on the 15th of March. When all the aircraft had bombed, the town appeared to be almost completely in flames and covered with smoke. Lt. Moore and Lt. Johnson flew as Bombardier and Navigator, respectively, in the lead aircraft of the formation, which was piloted by Lt. Col. Napier. Capt. Miller and Lts. Conner and Enman led the second box of the formation.

No mission was flown on the 16th of the month, but on the morning of the 17th, the Altenkirken Road Junction was the target for the attack. Almost complete cloud cover necessitated the use of blind bombing technique. Lt. Blomgren, with Lt. Johnson, flew in the deputy formation leader's position. The second flight of the second box was lead by Lts. Cornell and Enman.

The Bad Homburg Marshalling Yards were the targets for attack in the afternoon of the same day. Cloud cover caused the formation to scatter, with the result that Montabear was bombed instead of the primary target. Lt. Col. Napier led the second flight of box I, while Capt. Miller was in the lead position of the third flight of the same box.

Misfortune reached out to the 669th once more on the 18th of the month. In making an attack on the Worms Communications Center, the aircraft piloted by Lt. Cornell was hit by heavy anti-aircraft artillery fire. The aircraft was seen to be descending, under control, with the right engine afire. The right wing was seen to break off, and the aircraft was believed to have crashed near Johannesburg. Beside Lt. Cornell, Lt. Enman and S/Sgt. Carter were reported missing in action. Capt. Stebbins and Lt. Calloway led the second flight of the second box in the attack. Excellent results were obtained despite the intensive enemy defenses.

Lt. Col. Napier, with Lts. Moore and Mulgrew, led the formation on the afternoon mission of the same day. Capt. Miller flew in the lead position of box II. He had Lt. Conner and Flight Officer Wrubelle flying with him to bomb and navigate. The target was the Kreutzel Marshalling Yard. Blind bombing technique had to be employed because of the cloud cover.

The Lage Railroad Bridge was attacked on March 19th. Excellent results were obtained. Lt. Moore flew as bombardier with Major Ferris, of the 670th Bombardment Squadron (L).

On the second mission of the day, the Nassau Road Junction was attacked. The flight led by Lt. Blomgren and Lt. G.G. Johnson scored excellent results.

Another target was attacked on the same day. The Schwelm Marshalling Yards were bombed on this mission. Capt. Stebbins, with Lt. Calloway, achieved

excellent results in bombing this target.

On the 20th, the formation bombed the Geisecke Marshalling Yard. The bombing run was made by the use of PPF technique, because the cloud cover made a visual run impossible. Lt. Blomgren and his B/N Lt. G.G. Johnson, flew as deputy leaders of the second box. Capt. Miller and Lt. Conner led the second flight of the second box.

The Coesfeld Road Junction, in Holland, was the first target attacked on the 21st of March. Numerous fires were started from one end of the town to the other. Box I of the formation was led by Capt. Miller with Lts. Conner and Calloway. Lt. Col. Napier, with Lt. Moore flew in the lead position of the second box.

For the afternoon mission of this day, the Vreden Road Junctions were attacked. Lt. Johnson, flying with Lt. Blomgren, achieved superior results. The flight led by Lt. Turner and Lt. McGivern attacked flak positions in the vicinity of the target.

Two missions were flown again on the 22nd of the month. In the morning, the built up area of Borken was attacked. Lt. Mulgrew, flying with Lt. Jordan, bombed with unsatisfactory results. A malfunction in the release system was responsible. However, the results of Flight Officer Cardinale's bombing were believed to have been very good. A number of hits were seen in the town. Capt. Dufault was the pilot of the aircraft.

The second mission of the day was flown against the same target area. Smoke and haze obscured the target, which necessitated the use of "gee" equipment for bombing. Lt. Blomgren and Lt. Johnson led the second flight of the second box, while Lts. Turner and McGivern led the second flight of the third box.

To keep up with the terrific pace established by the ground forces, this squadron was called upon to fly two missions on the next day. The Dinslaken Factory Area was attacked with excellent results. Box I was led by Capt. Miller, with Lts. Conner and Johnson. Their bombing was considered good. The second box, which was led by Lt. Col. Napier, Lt. Moore and Flight Officer Wrubelle achieved superior results.

Mission # 250, flown on the afternoon of this day, was against the Town of Dinslaken. The third flight of box II was led by Lt. Jordan and Lt. Mulgrew. Capt. Dufault, with Flight Officer Cardinale, flew in the lead position of the second flight of the third box. Excellent results were obtained. Counter battery fire by our artillery, against enemy flak positions, kept the amount of anti-aircraft artillery fire to a minimum.

In a dawn attack on the 24th, which was coordinated with the "big push" of the ground forces, our aircraft attacked flak positions east of the Town of Bocholt. Lt. Jordan, with Lt. Mulgrew, were assigned to attack a flak position a short distance from the primary target. They achieved excellent results with their bombing. Lts. Blomgren and Johnson were in the leading aircraft of the second flight of the first box, while Lts. Turner and McGivern led the third flight of the same box. Capt. Sommers, with Lt. Vollmayer, led the "window" flight.

On the afternoon of the 24th, while the Allied Ground Forces were surging

across the Rhine River, an attack was made [made] on the Colbe R.R. Bridge. Flight Officer Cardinale's bombing was rated gross. He did not pick out the aiming point until late in the bomb run, and was not synchronized at the release point. Capt. Dufault was the pilot of the aircraft. Other flights attained excellent results and left the bridge in an unserviceable condition.

An attack, on the Road Junction at Altenkirchen, was made on the morning of March 25th. The formation was led by Capt. Miller, with Lts. Conner and Johnson as Bombardier and Navigator. The second box was under the leadership of Capt. Stebbins and Lt. Calloway. Excellent bombing results were obtained.

Capt. Sommers and Lt. Kupits led the third flight of the second box on the afternoon mission of the same day. They attained excellent results when bombing the Fulda Marshalling Yards. These yards were a key supply point for German troops facing Lt. General Patton's bridgehead. Third Army troops were advancing very rapidly. The target for the morning mission of March 26th was the Gemunden Marshalling Yards. Although the target was only a short distance to the east of the bomb line, it meant that our aircraft had to fly a tremendous distance to reach it. Excellent results were obtained by the flights led by Lt. Col. Napier, with Lt. Moore and Flight Officer Cardinale, and Lt. Blomgren, with Lt. Johnson as his Bombardier-Navigator.

Bad weather on the 28th of the month required that PPF aircraft be used to lead on the bomb run. The assigned target was an oil storage depot at Erbach. The flight led by Capt. Sommers and Lt. Kupits became separated, in the overcast, from the rest of the formation. This flight bombed a railroad and "autobahn" crossing with the use of "gee" equipment.

No mission was flown on March 29th, but on March 30th, PPF technique was used to bomb the Hann Munden Ordnance Depot and Barracks. Lt. Blomgren and Lt. Johnson led the second flight of the second box. The results of the bombing were undetermined.

To end an extremely busy month, two more operational missions were flown on the 31st. The Wurzburg Storage Depot was attacked by the use of PPF equipment by the first box. The second box made a visual run and obtained very good results. Capt. Miller, with Lt. Conner and Flight Officer Wrubelle led the first box. Lt. Col. Napier, and his B/N Lt. Moore led the second box.

Mission # 259 was the last mission flown during the month. The Marienburg Storage Area was bombed. PPF aircraft led the formation on the bombing run. Cloud cover made a visual run impossible. Capt. Sommers with Lt. Kupits flew in the lead position of the second flight of the first box. Lt. Turner with his B/N, Lt. McGivern, was the flight leader of the third flight of the first box. Bombs were seen to hit the target area.

The Flight Leaders have often been mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs. Some of the unsung heroes should come in for their fair share of the credit. The wingmen, who held their positions in formation despite many obstacles, deserve a great deal of praise for the excellent bombing patterns achieved. The ground personnel, who helped to keep the airplanes ready for operational flying, also did a magnificent job.

A number of combat crew members were granted well earned rest during the month. Lt. Hackley, Lt. Anderson, S/Sgts. Burland, Heath, Malloy, Mani, McGuire,

and Pemberton, and Sgt. Brandt were sent to the United Kingdom for rest and recreation. Some of the other combat crew men were sent to the French Riviera. Lts. DuBose, Martin, Weinert, and Depner, each spent a very enjoyable week at the U.S. Army Recreational Center at Cannes.

Leaves and furloughs, for ground personnel, were granted to Capts. Stewart and Mc Broom, T/Sgt. Gehrels, S/Sgt. Brady and Rhoades, Sgt. Lloyd, and Pfc's Field, Randall, and Lazore. Each of these men was sent to the United Kingdom for a period of one week. Both combat men and ground personnel have returned to the squadron with stories of having had a very enjoyable time at the various recreational centers.

In keeping with the policy of the U.S. Army in the European Theatre of Operations, a number of men from this squadron were sent to the front. The purpose was for them to obtain first hand information of the problems confronting the ground forces. During the month, Lts. Hayter, McQuade, Britt, and Allen, and S/Sgt. Veazey, Getgen, Basford, and McGaughey, Sgts. Chestnut, Dalton, and Hopfner were selected to spend a period of ten days with different Ground Force Units. Their experiences were very varied, and their telling of them has given everyone else a clearer insight into the life of the man on the ground.

The reverse of this program was also carried out during the month. Capt. Donald E. Eastlake, and S/Sgt. Edwin E. Bolton, of the Armored Corps, and Capt. James J. Rabbitt, 1st Lt. Harold R. Tait, and Pfc Roy M. Parks, of the Infantry, were guests of the 669th. The purpose of their stay with the squadron was to acquaint them with the functioning of an Army Air Forces Squadron. The interchange of ideas has proven valuable to all concerned.

Intensive training was carried out by all sections of the organization. A number of new combat crewmen had to be trained by the Operations Section. The other sections had to keep up their programs, in order to maintain the high degree of efficiency that they had attained. In addition, three non-commissioned officers [officers], M/Sgt. James B. Atkeson, S/Sgt. Harold Bithar, and S/Sgt. Edward M. Watz, of the 322nd Bomb. Group (M), spent two weeks with this organization. They were attached here for the purpose of receiving instruction in the maintenance and repair of the engineering, armament, and communications equipment of the A-26 type aircraft. Also, Sgts. Durkin and Bergum, of this squadron, were sent to the Pratt and Whitney Aircraft Engine School in England. The purpose of their being sent to this school was to give them a thorough knowledge of the servicing of the P & W engines.

A number of the personnel of the 669th were awarded decorations during the month of March. Lt. John W. Kehoe, who is now missing in action, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. Capt. Patrick F. E. MacManus, who has returned to the United States, and Lt. William J. Greene, who is now with the 354th Fighter Group, received Distinguished Flying Crosses. Air Medals were presented to Lt. Dapner, Flight Officer Swap, Sergeants Brinkman, Deathorage, Dubi, Francis, Koons, Sumner, Gillespie, and Santandrea. Lt. Farley and Sgt. Hardesty, who, unfortunately, are missing in action, were also awarded the Air Medal. The Purple Heart Decoration was awarded to Pfc Gur, who was injured as a result of the nearby explosion of a German V-2 reprisal weapon. Pfc Gur sustained the injuries while he was on detached service in England.

During the month of March, 1/Lt. Edward L. Miller was promoted to the rank

of Captain. 2/Lt. Clayton M. Anderson, 2/Lt. Carl E. Weinert, and 2/Lt. Jack A. Willard changed the color of their bars from gold to silver. Congratulations are in order for each of these officers. They are all very deserving of such recognition for their excellent work.

Limited Assignment personnel were assigned to this organization for the first time during the month. The first of these men to come to the squadron was Pfc Richard E. Jones, a former paratrooper of the 101st Airborne Division.

Quite a number of new combat crew men joined the squadron in March. We were glad to welcome to the organization Capt. John M. Shapard, 1/Lt. Robert P. Mulgrew, 1/Lt. Frank A. Reeves, 1/Lt. Peter J. McGivern, 1/Lt. Carl A. Vollmayer, 2/Lt. Robert E. Harper, 2/Lt. Claude H. Haneley, 2/Lt. Paul W. Wills, 2/Lt. Bernard L. Morley, 2/Lt. Nolan B. Dant, Flight Officer Otto A. Cardinale, Flight Officer William M. Wrobelle, Cpl. Robert M. Black, Cpl. Paul J. Block, Cpl. John F. Reicher.

Although we were happy to see them return to the United States, we regretted to have to say goodbye to 1/Lt. Jack F. Smith, 1/Lt. Edward J. Renth, and Capt. Robert L. Behlmer. 1/Lt. William J. Greene was assigned from this organization to the 354th Fighter Group.

A rating of excellent was achieved by this organization as a result of the monthly administrative and technical inspections conducted by AAF Station A-69.

As of the 31st March 1945 fifty-nine officers and two hundred ninety-one enlisted men were assigned to the 669th Bombardment Squadron (L).

April, 1945

669th BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (L)
Office of the Commanding Officer

SUBJECT: Squadron History (April 1945 Installment)
TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces

April 1945 will long be remembered as the month when the greatest debacle in military history took place on the plains of Germany. The German armies were decisively defeated on the Western, Southern, and Eastern Fronts. Shattered remnants of these forces continued to fall back toward the centre of Germany, but they were relentlessly pursued by victorious Allied Armies. The Air Forces continued to smash the enemy's communications and his beaten armies. American and Russian Armies met in the City of Torgau thus bisecting the crumbling Nazi domain. Mass surrenders of large forces of German troops indicated that Victory in Europe for which the free peoples of the world have been praying and hoping would soon arrive. Optimism ran higher, in the Allied Nations, than at any other time during this long and costly "blood bath" known as World War II. The San Francisco Conference was begun in order to work out a formula for lasting peace through international cooperation. The Conference began despite the world-wide mourning for our great President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was instrumental in bringing about this conference. In the pages that follow, the author will endeavor to point out how the 669th Bombardment Squadron (L) played its part in

bringing about the collapse of the Nazi regime and, thereby, helped to set the stage for the period of international peace and order that everyone envisioned.

Operational Mission # 260 was flown on the 3rd of April. An attack was made on the Hammeln Marshalling Yards by the use of PFF technique. It was necessary for the formation to go up to 16,000 feet at the Initial Point in order to take the bombing run. Cloud cover made it impossible for photographs to be taken, but visual observation through a break in the clouds disclosed that good results had been obtained. Lt. Col. Napier, with his B/N Lt. Moore, led the second box of the formation.

On the fourth of the month, the Crailsheim Barracks, in Germany, were attacked. Again cloud cover required that PFF aircraft be used to lead the formation on the bombing run. Lt. Miller, with Lts. Conner and Moore, and Lt. Blomgren, with Lts. Johnson and Morley, led the first and second boxes of the formation, respectively. The navigators reported that good results should have been obtained, because the indices on the "Gee" boxes crossed at the time the bombs were released. No observation of the results was possible.

It was not until the eighth of the month that the next operation was run. On that day two missions were flown. The first of these missions attacked the Munchen-Bernsdorf Railroad Sidings and Oil Storage Tanks. Good weather permitted visual bombing runs to be made. Violent explosions were seen, by the crews, in the target area. Lt. Jordan, with Lts. Mulgrew and Moore, led the Third Flight of the Second Box of the formation.

On the afternoon of the same day, the built up area of the Town of Sondershausen was bombed. Bombing was to have been done by boxes, but Lt. Turner found it necessary to lead his flight in separately. In doing so, his flight was able to obtain excellent results. Lt. McGivern and Lt. Moore flew as Bombardier and Navigator for him. Major Sommer's flight became separated from the rest of the formation, and joined a formation of the 386th Bombardment Group (M). Lt. Turner led the Second Flight of the First Box, while Major Sommers led the Third Flight of the same Box. Lt. Kupits flew as Major Sommers' B/N.

An Ordnance Depot at Amberg-Kummersbruck was attacked on the ninth of the month. Despite inclement weather, it was possible for the formation to make a visual bombing run. Excellent results were obtained. Major Sommers, with Lt. Kupits, led Flight Two of Box Two, and Capt. DuFault, with Flight Officer Cardinale, led the Third Box of the formation.

The Saalfeld Marshalling Yards were bombed on the afternoon mission of the same day. Visual bombing methods were employed, and excellent results were known to have resulted. Capt. Miller, with Lt. Conner and F/O Wrubelle, led the entire formation in making the attack. Lt. Blomgren, and his B/N Lt. Johnson, led the Second Box of the Formation.

Again, on the tenth of April, two missions were run. For the first time, aircraft of this squadron flew to Czechoslovakia. This mission was perfect. Weather conditions were ideal, the navigation was flawless, and the bombing was superior. The Eger Viaduct was attacked by the formation.

The second mission of the same day was flown against the Stassfurt-Leopoldshall Oil Pumps and Underground Storage Tanks. Large sheets of flame were

seen immediately after the bombs hit. Smoke was seen to rise to an altitude of between six and seven thousand feet. Excellent bombing results were obtained by the flights led by Lt. Jordan and Capt. DuFault. Lts. Mulgrew and Moore flew with Lt. Jordan in the lead aircraft of the Second Flight of the First Box, while Flight Officer Cardinale flew with Capt. Dufault in the number one position of the Third Flight of the First Box.

Excellent results were obtained in an attack on the Bernburg Marshalling Yards on the eleventh day of the month. The Third Flight of the Second Box was led by Lts. Turner and McGivern. Major Sommers and Lt. Kupits led the Second Flight of the Second Box. Perfect weather permitted visual bombing equipment to be used.

The second mission of the day also attained excellent results. The Zwickau Marshalling Yards were bombed by the formation. Both of the boxes were led by Pilot-Bombardier teams of this squadron. Lt. Miller, with Lts. Conner and Vollmayer as his Navigator and Bombardier, led the entire formation. The Second Box was led by Lt. Blomgren with Lt. Johnson as his B/N.

The Kempton Ordnance Depot, near the frontier of Switzerland, was the target of the Twelfth of April. Lts. Kupits and Dant served as Navigator and Bombardier for Major Sommers. They led the Third Flight of the Second Box of the formation.

Bad weather, on the afternoon of the same day, forced the formation down to an altitude of 7,000 feet in order to attack the Hof Railroad Bridge. Many bomb hits were seen near the structure, but when the smoke had cleared, it was seen to have been damaged but not destroyed. Capt. DuFault and his Bombardier-Navigator Flight Officer Cardinale, led the Second Flight of the First Box of the formation.

The next operational mission, flown by aircraft of this squadron, was against the Ulm Marshalling Yards on the fifteenth. PFF technique had to be used on the bombing run. Major Sommers, together with Lt. Kupits, led the Second Flight of the Second Box of the formation. Results of the bombing were undetermined because of the cloud cover.

Two missions were flown on the following day. The built up area of Zerbst was the target for the morning mission. Major Shaefer, who assumed command of the squadron, as of the seventeenth of April, led the entire formation. He had Lt. Conner and Lt. Hand, of the 668th Bombardment Squadron (L), as his Navigator and Bombardier. Major Sommers, with Lts. Kupits and Vollmayer, led the Second Box of the formation. Excellent results were obtained.

On the afternoon of the sixteenth, the Wittenburg Marshalling Yards were attacked with undetermined results. Cloud cover made it impossible for all but one flight of the formation to attack. The results of the bombing done by this one flight were obscured. Major Sommers led one of the flights of the formation with Lt. Kupits as his B/N. Capt. Murphy, our squadron Flight Surgeon, flew along as Observer in Major Sommers' airplane.

Superior bombing results were obtained by the formation that attacked the defended town of Magdeburg. This attack was made on the morning of April 17th. Lt. Turner, with Lts. McGivern and Morley, led the Second Flight of the First Box, while Capt. DuFault, with Flight Officer Cardinale, led the Third Flight of the same box.

For the afternoon mission of the same day, the Tribingen Ordnance Depot was bombed. Lt. Jordan's B/N Lt. Mulgrew, scored excellent results in the bombing. This Pilot-Bombardier team led the Second Flight of the Second Box of the formation.

No mission was flown on the 18th of the month, but on the 19th the Ulm Marshalling Yards were bombed with superior results. Capt. Miller, with Lts. Conner and Vollmayer, led the entire formation, while Major Sommers, with Lts. Kupits and Cardinale, led the Second Box of the formation. When the aircraft turned away from the target, it was observed that all the rail lines had been cut and the entire marshalling yard had been rendered useless.

The twentieth of the month was another day when two missions were flown. An Oil Storage Depot at Deggendorf was the target for the morning mission. Superior results were obtained by the flight led by Lt. Turner, with Lts. McGivern and Morley serving as his Bombardier and Navigator respectively.

A Fuel Storage Depot at Annaburg was the target for the afternoon mission. Superior results were attained by the flights led by Lts. Jordan and Turner. Lt. Jordan led the Second Flight of the First Box and had Lts. Mulgrew and Morley flying with him. Lt. Turner led the Third Flight of the First Box and had Lt. McGivern as his Bombardier-Navigator.

One of the longest operations ever flown by A-26 type aircraft was flown on the twenty-first of April. The Attnang-Puchheim Marshalling Yards, in Austria, were bombed. The total distance traveled by the aircraft on this mission was 970 miles. Cloud cover forced the formation down to 8,200 feet in order that visual bombing could be accomplished. High mountains in the target area increased the hazards encountered by the combat crews. Despite all the handicaps, superior results were achieved by the Bombardiers. On the return trip, the aircraft flew over a number of German airfields, still in enemy hands. One of them, located at Erding, sent up some meagre light flak when the last flight of the formation passed overhead. Lt. Hackley's airplane was damaged by this anti-aircraft fire, but he brought his aircraft back safely.

An attempt was made to use "Shoran" equipment for the first time on the 24th of the month. However, jamming by German radio prevented the equipment from being used. The attack had to be abandoned, and the aircraft returned to the base with their full bomb loads. An airfield for German jet fighters, located at Landau was to have been attacked. Major Shaefer, with Lts. Hand and Conner, led the entire formation. The Second Box was led by Lts. Blomgren and Johnson.

Lt. Mulgrew achieved superior results in bombing the Freilassing Ordnance Depot. He flew as Bombardier-Navigator for Lt. Jordan in the lead position of the Third Flight of the Second Box. This mission was flown on the 25th of the month.

Mission # 283 was the last mission flown by aircraft of this squadron for the month. The Plattling Airfield was the target for the attack. The flights led by Lts. Turner and Jordan again achieved superior results. With Lt. Turner, Lts. McGivern and Morley, led the Second Flight of the First Box, while Lt. Mulgrew flew with Lt. Jordan in the lead of the Third Flight of the First Box.

In addition to the operational missions, an intensive flying training program was conducted for all combat crews. Well over seven hundred hours of

training flying was done, including approximately sixty-four hours of night flying. This intensive training, together with the combat operations, kept all personnel extremely busy. The combat men were flying incessantly, and the ground crews had to work extremely hard and efficiently to keep the aircraft serviceable. Also, as part of the training program, a number of Engineering Crew Chiefs were sent to the School of Technical Training, Great Sankey, Warrington, Lancashire, England, for a period of two weeks. Master Sergeant Smith, Technical Sergeant Seese, Technical Sergeant Wilsman, and Staff Sergeant Gettle were the men sent to take the course of instruction that was offered. They had the opportunity to learn a great deal more about the aircraft that they were servicing.

Combat operations, training, and work were not the only activities of the unit for the month. A number of the men of the squadron were given the opportunity to relax and enjoy a well earned rest. Quite a few combat crew members were sent to the French Riviera to the U. S. Army Recreation Center. Lts. Dunn, Depner, Conner, and B. A. Smith, Staff Sergeants McLain, Deatherage, Walters, Moskowitz, Griffin, Klingman, Gillespie, and Kirik, and Sgts. Brinkman and Dubi were the fortunate men who were permitted to spend a week on the shores of the Meditteranean.

Flak leaves to the United Kingdom were enjoyed by Capt. Stebbins, Lt. Van Rope, Lt. Willard, Lt. Sorrels, S/Sgt. Brown, S/Sgt. Walters, S/Sgt. Moskowitz, S/Sgt. Griffin, S/Sgt. Klingman, and Sgt. Hinker. Ground personnel permitted to take advantage of leaves in the United Kingdom were Capts. McBroom and Stewart, Master Sergeant Dudding, Technical Sergeant Gehrels, Staff Sergeants Brady, Rhoades, Lichtenberg, and Hoover, Sergeant Chestnut, Privates First Class Field and Hertel, and Private Hall.

In keeping with the policy of sending Air Force personnel to the front for a period of about ten days, Flight Officer Swap, T/Sgt. Mullins, S/Sgt. Burland, and Sgt. Stroup were sent to the IX Tactical Air Command. They spent quite some time deep in Germany with the Infantry. They had some very interesting experiences and learned a great deal about Ground Force Operations.

For the first time since the squadron has been overseas, some of the men of the organization were transferred out of the Air Forces to the Ground Forces. Cpl. Gorman, Cpl. Dupell, Pfc. Lynch, Pfc. Adkins, Pfc. Gossett, and Pvt. Brown were transferred to the Ground Force Reinforcement Training Command. To replace these men, a number of limited service men, from the Ground Forces, have joined this organization.

For exceptional services of war, rendered during the course of the operations for the liberation of France, Lt. Col. John G. Napier was awarded the Croix de Guerre with vermilion star. The order for this award was signed by General Charles De Gaulle. Staff Sergeant Cletus V. Hinker was awarded the Soldier's Medal for outstanding heroism. Corporal William E. Lane received the award of the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious achievement. Air Medals were awarded to Capt. Shapard, Lt. Turner, Lt. Mulgrew, Lt. Harper, S/Sgt. Hawk, Sgt. Black, and Sgt. Block. For injuries sustained as a result of enemy action, Lt. R. K. Johnson and Sgt. Brandt were awarded the Purple Heart Decoration. Pfc Lee and Pfc Bellagamba received the Motor Vehicle Drivers Badge in recognition of their record of long service as safe drivers. In addition to these personal awards, two Bronze Battle Stars were awarded to every member of the squadron—the one for the Campaign of Northern France and the other for the Campaign of

Germany.

Every member of the squadron regretted to learn that the status of Staff Sergeant Arthur L. Nielsen had been changed from Missing In Action to Killed In Action. S/Sgt. Nielsen had been reported MIA after an operational mission.

One of the most important events that transpired during the month of April was the change in Commanding Officers of the squadron. Lt. Col. John G. Napier returned to the Zone of the Interior and was replaced by Major Richard F. Shaefer. Our new Commanding Officer was formerly assigned to the Group Operations Section. Major Shaefer assumed command of the unit on 17th April 1945.

In addition to Lt. Col. Napier, Lt. Hayter, Lt. McQuade, S/Sgt. Carstens, S/Sgt. Floyd, S/Sgt. Sharp, S/Sgt. Basford, and S/Sgt. Bookach were returned to the United States. We regretted seeing each of them leave, but we knew that every one of the men being sent home had worked hard for the opportunity.

Congratulations were in order for Major Harold L. Sommers, the Squadron Operations Officer, who was promoted to his new rank from the rank of Captain in recognition of his outstanding services. Second Lieutenant George G. Johnson also deserves to be congratulated for having been promoted to the rank of First Lieutenant.

As of 30 April 1945, the total strength of the 669th Bombardment Squadron (L) was fifty-six Officers and two hundred seventy-two Enlisted Men.

May, 1945

669th Bombardment Squadron (L)
416th Bombardment Group (L)
Office of Commanding Officer

SUBJECT: Squadron History (May 1945 Installment)
TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

V-E day was officially declared to be at 0001 hours on the 9 May 1945. This event did not come as a surprise. It came expected and welcomed as Christmas or the Fourth of July came when we were children. For many of the men of the Squadron the occasion called for jubilant celebration. Scotch, Cognac, Gin, Wine, Rum, and Rye flowed freely to the success of the Allied Forces, and to the quick return of all to the States. Others of us preferred to practice our rights of giving thanks as our conscience might dictate.

With the inevitable defeat of the German Military Machine resting on our door-step, two combat missions comprised the Squadron's monthly operational activities. On the first day of the month the Group sent two boxes of aircraft to attack the Stod Ammunition Dump. The formation continued on the mission for two minutes after crossing the bomblines. At this time the mission had to be abandoned because of the bad weather that had developed east of our base. No flak was encountered and no enemy aircraft were seen. On this mission the 669th Bombardment Squadron had twelve crews and twelve aircraft participate in the formation.

Two days later, on the 3 May, Major Richard Shaefer led the group back to the Stod Ammunition Dump. Captain Hand (of the 668th Bombardment Squadron) and Lieutenant Dant acted as Major Shaefer's Bombardier and Navigator, respectively. Captain Blomgren, with Lieutenant Johnson acting as his Bombardier-Navigator, led the second box of the formation. The bombs were dropped with excellent results. This was mission number 285 for the Group and the last operational mission to be flown by our Squadron in the European Theatre of Operations.

Before our last combat mission was flown rumors were on the rampage. We were scheduled for a move. Our field must be evacuated. These rumors had a fairly sound backing, but were not taken too seriously because of the frontline situation in Europe. On the 15 May 1945 orders were received to pack. We were scheduled to move to base A-59. Our date to move was set for 24 May 1945. Squadron Headquarters ceased operations at Station A-69 near Laon, France, at 2400 hours on the 24 May 1945. They resumed operations at Station A-59 near Cormeilles en Vexin at 0001 hours on the 25 May 1945.

The advanced echelon was selected. Lt. Van Rope was placed in command and sixteen enlisted men were detailed to accompany him. The advanced echelon left Station A-59 on the morning of the 19 May 1945. They were detailed to lay out the enlisted men's area, set up the messing facilities, and to prepare the Squadron site in general. It was through the efforts of the advanced echelon that the Squadron was able to move into its new home on the 24 May. Seven officers and sixty eight enlisted men proceeded to the new field by motor convoy on the 20 May. On the same day two officers and fifty seven enlisted men were flown to the new field. The following day one officer and ten enlisted men proceeded to Station A-59 by motor convoy. This unit was the ordnance unit of the Squadron under the command of Lt. Hall. On the 23 May 1945 five officers, two flight officers, and forty five enlisted men were flown to the new base. The following day the air echelon flew into the new station with the airplanes and equipment that was left on the old field. This completed the Squadron's move to Station A-59. All the time this move was in progress the flying training program was functioning without a break in its routine.

In conjunction with the flying training program that was adopted, a ground training program was organized to provide the Squadron personnel with the necessary knowledge for their role in the Pacific war. To add to the confusion of the situation, the Group, as well as the Squadron, was lacking in trained personnel who possessed experience and first hand information of the tactics used in the Pacific Theatre. The lack of such personnel and information concerning the tactics of the new theatre of war left the training program without a scheduled plan. We trained. But no one knew if the training was the necessary training that would be needed in the new Theatre. Conditions of uncertainty prevailed. Orders were issued. Within the same day, or on the following day, the old orders were rescinded, and new orders were issued. Often times these new orders were a direct about face in policy to those orders previously issued. As confusion replaced the usual stability of a well organized combat outfit, the morale obtained through victory in Europe could have been lost had it not been for the abilities of leadership demonstrated by Major Richard Shaefer, our Squadron Commander, combined with the cooperation of the officers and enlisted men of the organization.

The air training schedule, however, never diminished in the number of hours flown. Nor was the flying schedule carried out without its mishaps. On the 16 May 1945 Lt. Martin and Lt. Haskell were both seriously injured when the C-84 in

which they were flying crashed on take-off. Lt. Martin was checking Lt. Haskell when the aircraft went out of control and crashed into the old French water wagon that lay at rest on the side of the runway. Lt. Martin suffered third degree burns and Lt. Haskell received a broken jaw-bone. Both men received other slight injuries such as cuts and bruises. The aircraft was completely demolished by fire.

The ground training schedule for all flying personnel was established shortly after V-E day. These classes consisted of aircraft recognition, naval recognition, medical lectures, emergency equipment demonstrations, navigation principles, and physical training. These classes were tied in as near as possible with the flying training program. And wherever it was applicable the information taught in the ground school classes was practiced in the air. After the Squadron moved to Station A-59, ground personnel were sent to school for advanced training. First Lieutenant Andrews, accompanied by T/Sgt Winkle, was sent to a school of technical training at Great Sankey, Lancashire, England. M/Sgt. Dueding and T/Sgts Gettle and Stemler were sent to Britonwood Replacement Depot for further training.

For outstanding achievement while flying in combat missions against the enemy twelve members of the Squadron received the Distinguished Flying Cross medal. Those twelve men who received the award were Lt. Col. Napier, Major Sommers, Capts. De Mun, Kupits, Hulse, Peck, Lts. Allen, Du Bose, Hayter, McQuade, Moore, and Conte. To these men we extend our congratulations for their outstanding record. Other awards consisted of five Bronze Star Awards which went to T/Sgt Keebaugh and S/Sgts Gettle, Hanson, Springer, and Wells, for their outstanding work as Crew Chiefs of Squadron aircraft. A great many Air Medals and Oak Leaf Clusters were awarded to various members of the organization for participation in combat missions.

At this time we also wish to extend our congratulations to Lts Kupits and Blomgren on their recent promotion to Captain. Also we congratulate the recent First Lieutenant Depner on his promotion.

The Squadrons activities were not all concerned with work. The Forty Eight Hour Pass schedule was adhered to allowing some of the personnel to visit Paris. Other members of the organization enjoyed leaves and furloughs to various places on the Continent and in England. Capt. Bond, Lts Haskell, Foster, Turner, McGivern, Sgt Mohler, Cpls. Raine, Bailey, PFCs. Rooney, and Payne enjoyed the hospitality of old England. Capt Shapard, Lts Smith, Burton, Sgts Reiter, Dalton, Stroup, Francis, Gilbert, Donnelly, and McGaughy enjoyed the hospitality of the French Riviera.

During the month we lost a few old members of the Squadron. Major Sommers, Capt Kupits, Lts Du Bose, Moore, S/Sgts Heath, and McGuire were sent back to the Zone of Interior after completing their combat tour. S/Sgt Muldoon, Chestnut, Backe, and Smythe were returned to the Zone of Interior because of their forty years of age. We also lost Flight Officer Ward, who was transferred to the 387th Bombardment Group. In return we find a few new faces about us. Lts. Coulston, Yarbrough, and Martin are made welcome to the organization.

As of 31 May 1945 the total strength of the 669th Bombardment Squadron (L) was 56 officers and 279 enlisted men.

June, 1945

669th BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th Bombardment Group (L)
Office of the Commanding Officer

SUBJECT: Squadron History (June 1945 Installment).
TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

Gather the colored pencils! Get those charts constructed! Combat flying has become a thing of the past, but we still have a paper war to win. To fill these charts, we shall train and train and train. There will be ground school, flying training, and orientation lectures. These charts must be filled--and pronto! And so the training program for the Squadron was indoctrinated. By participating in that program, the flying personnel began fitting themselves for their future task in the other war--the Pacific War.

The training program which was introduced consisted of training for pilots, bombardier-navigators, and gunners. In ground school, classes in aircraft recognition, naval recognition, code and blinker were held as well as courses in escape and evasion in the Pacific, Far East geography; actual practise in dinghy drill and ditching procedure were employed as a means of orientation. At the same time classes in Loran (Long Range Navigation--a navigator's radio aid) gave the bombardier-navigators a chance to learn the operating procedure of the new instrument. In conjunction with this training, movies were shown of combat operations in the new Theatre. By this time, it was almost a certainty that the Group would be redeployed directly to the Pacific Theatre.

This ground training constituted only a small arc of the training circle to be traveled by the flying personnel. The greatest share of the training circle was consumed by a flying program which stressed low-level navigation, low-level bombing, and strafing missions. This training prepared the flying personnel for the combat action they were likely to experience when the Squadron received its orders to move to the Pacific.

At the time when Herr Goring was wearing his many pounds of brass medals, German aircraft and V-1 reprisal bombs were harassing the citizens of London and Southern England, in an attempt to shake the morale of the English people. The medals on Herr Goring's chest grew in number. During this period the American Armies had many troops stationed in and around London. American soldier's were a common sight on her streets and in her pubs. It was war, and London, though dangerous, offered a diversion to the American troops.

On a particularly warm August afternoon--the 29th--a young wide-eyed American Corporal was on a pass in the Milburn section of London. He was visiting friends and viewing London with the eagerness characteristic of the average American who visits the great city. With little warning the section in which Corporal Morris, now personnel clerk in our Squadron, was visiting became the final resting place for one of Herr Goring's more successful weapons--a V-1 [V-1] bomb. Without hesitation, Corporal Morris proceeded to the site which was near at hand. He entered the building and rescued six children and a woman who had been trapped by the explosion. With his clothes torn and dirty and his body bruised and cut, he courageously displayed the worth of the American soldier in

time of emergency. For his action which saved the lives of the seven people, Corporal Morris was awarded the SOLDIER'S MEDAL. The medal itself cannot possibly display the merits of this soldier. But once the story of his heroism is known, the medal becomes engulfed in a shining light.

Corporal Morris is not the only member of this organization that has proven himself by performing deeds which cast a shining light on the medals which have been presented to them. Major Shaefer, Captain Blomgren, and Lieutenant Tripp have proven themselves while in action against the enemy. For their outstanding performance while participating in aerial flight against the German enemy, these officers have been awarded the DISTINGUISHED-FLYING CROSS. It is with great pride that we look upon these men, leaders of our Squadron. Among other awards presented to men in our Squadron during the month were three Bronze Star Medals to Captain Edmond V. Bond, Jr., Technical Sergeant Thomas E. Melte, and Master Sergeant Roy A. Anderson, and seven Air Medals.

During the month there were many changes in personnel in the organization. New officers and enlisted men have been transferred into the Group and Squadrons to take the place of the old officers and men who have departed from our unit. Men with 85 points went back to the States for discharge if they were not classified as essential. Others with critical scores of 75 or more were transferred into other units to "sweat out" the occupation of Germany until they gathered enough points to give them a discharge. Many key men were lost in these transfers, but there was one redeeming feature for those who remained with us-- there were plenty of opportunities for promotion now that the old men had left. A shuffling of officer personnel at the beginning of the month transferred Major Marks and Captain Weisman and Lieutenant Foster out of the Squadron. They were replaced by Captain Kinney, Captain Haubrick, and Lieutenant Luckasen.

On the 14th and 15th, a technical and administrative inspection of the Squadron was made by the office of the Technical Inspector and the Inspector General of the 9th Air Division. Among the sections inspected by them were operations, communications, engineering, armament, the orderly room, and personnel.

The first of a series of Saturday morning reviews was held on Saturday, June 2nd on the taxi-strip near Flying Control. Each Saturday, prior to the review, a personal and barracks inspection was made by Major Shaefer.

An attempt was made to give everyone in the Squadron a leave before we would move to another theatre. As a result many men enjoyed seven-day leaves and furloughs in England and at the World-famous Riviera in Southern France.

At the close of the month of June, the Squadron was operating with fifty-one officers and two hundred and sixty-seven enlisted men.

July, 1945

669th BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th Bombardment Group (L)
Office of the Commanding Officer

SUBJECT : Historical Data, July 1945.

TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

The Squadron devoted most of its efforts during the month of July getting ready to participate in the war against Japan. This meant first, to complete the necessary flying training to meet ATC requirements. Engines with 480 hours or more were changed. All "line" sections worked feverishly to make these and other required modifications to the planes. Armament had to apply corrosion preventative to all the guns in the planes and tape them against weather. Communications had to change the frequency of the radios to the international frequency. Extra transmitters were also installed in the planes. It had been decided that our crews would fly the planes back to the States, making these adjustments necessary.

At 1830 hours on the 12th, a formation was held at which time all personnel present were advised that movement orders had been received. Article of War 28 was read to all personnel. On the 16th, our first crews took off for Station A-74, an Air Assembly Area at Cambrai, France. These crews were placed in indefinite detached service. The first plane off the ground was piloted by First Lieutenant Leo E. Poundstone. To all of us who knew "Leo" well, it was a great moment for him, and, as he put it, "The engine will have to fall out of it in order to keep me on the ground." Throughout the next few days, more of our planes and crews left Station A-59 for the trip that would eventually take them home. Some of the overage crews were transferred into other Groups or into casual pools, but their destination was the same, Home! When the last crews took off, the only commissioned flying personnel to remain with the Ground Echelon was 2d Lt. Jessie Britt and 2d Lt. Michael G. Meall. Lt Meall was a newcomer to the Squadron, having joined us during the early part of July.

Captain Joseph A. Haubrich, Group Personnel Officer, was transferred into the Squadron. When Major Shaeffer [Shaefer] left with the Flight Echelon, Captian Haubrich was named Commanding Officer of the Squadron's Ground Echelon. Lieutenant Burton was appointed Squadron Adjutant. There were other changes in personnel during the month. Lt. Luckasen, who had come into the Squadron in June from the 668th Bomb Sq (L) as Supply Officer, was transferred to a Detachment of Patients for medical treatment. His place was taken by First Lieutenant Philip C. Bunn, formerly assigned to the 98th Combat Wing. Lieutenant Dolphus Whitten, Jr., one of the oldest members of the Squadron, having joined it in Lake Charles, La., was transferred into Group Headquarters as Information and Education Officer. Before he left with the Flight Echelon, Lieutenant Claytom [Clayton] M. Anderson was appointed a Flight Commander with 2d Lt. Nolan B. Dant as his Bombardier-Navigator.

The activities of the Flight Echelon are rather vague at this writing. However, this much is known of them. After having arrived at the Air Assembly Area, it was necessary to install belly tanks in the planes. They were to fly the southern route across the Southern Atlantic. The long overwater hops along this route necessitated the installation of these tanks. A shortage of the tanks slowed their departure. About four days before their scheduled take-off, a hailstorm struck the area. The damage done was excessive and further delayed the departure. One of the A-26 C's was washed out in an emergency landing made by Captain Miller. There was no injury to personnel, however. Eventually the planes were able to take-off. They flew to Marseille, France, and from there to Casablanca, Natal, and eventually the States. To our knowledge, there were no mishaps along the way.

Getting back to our activities during the month of July, at Station A-59 a Pre-POM audit team inspected the records of the men in the Squadron on the 14th. They found the records in excellent shape.

Prior to the receipt of our Warning Orders, censorship was resumed on the 11th. All personnel were restricted to the Base on the 15th. "Shots" again plagued us. Most of us had to take Cholera injections. For a period of about a week, there was little back-slapping because of the sore arms caused by the "shots".

The USSTAF POM team arrived on the 16th and made a rapid inspection of the Squadron. The most memorable part of their inspection was the Personnel Conference Hour which they conducted. They were almost "snowed under" by the many men who had problems. The "Hour" stretched into two full days. They pronounced [pronounced] the unit ready for further overseas duty in another Theatre.

The last inspection of the month was a routine inspection made by a Ninth Air Force POM team on the 21st. It was completed in time for us to begin packing our equipment, for word had been received that we were to be ready to leave Station A-59 for an Assembly Area on the 25th.

Just before we were ready to leave Station A-59 word was received of the transfer of two more men in the Squadron. First Lieutenant Thaddaeus B. Hall, Squadron Ordnance Officer since out [our] Lake Charles days, was transferred into the 387th Bomb Group. He was replaced by First Lieutenant Jewell G. Dyer, a veteran of the North African, Italian, Southern France, and Germany battles. Second Lieutenant Jessie W. Britt, Squadron Gunnery Officer who had completed his tour of duty in the Squadron after having spent eight years overseas in India, the Philippines, North Africa, and Italy, was transferred into the 344th Bomb Group as his first step back to the States.

In the early afternoon of the 26th, the supply train with the Squadron's organizational equipment and 17 enlisted men left Cormeilles-en-Vexin for the Assembly Area. Five hours later the troop train--with the usual 40 & 8 cars--pulled out of the Pontoise station with 5 officers and 163 enlisted men. They arrived at the St. Erme railhead near Camp Chicago early in the morning of the 27th. As the troops got off the train, they were greeted by Capt. Haubrich and Lt. Western who had preceded us there to prepare for OUR ARRIVAL. The motor convoy left Station A-59 early in the morning of the 27th after having finished the work of policing the living site and picking up the last bit of our equipment. They arrived just before noon of the same day at Camp Chicago. When we arrived at Camp Chicago, we were transferred out of the Ninth Air Force and came directly under the control of the Theatre Commander.

Our new home, Camp Chicago in the Assembly Area Command, was located about 15 miles from our former field, Station A-69 at Laon/Athies. It was about 3 miles from Sissonne. Everyone continued to live in tents. Cement floors, however, made them more comfortable. Winterizing, done by German PW's, added more to their comfort. It didn't take the men long to find that the base was well-equipped with Post Exchanges [Exchanges], Beer Gardens, libraries, movies, and theatres for USO Camp Shows. There was very little work to be done the first couple of days and the men enjoyed the leisure moments.

Before closing this account of our activities for the month of July, there

are still a few loose ends to be included. Every type of aircraft used by the USAAF in the war against Germany was placed on exhibit under the Eiffel Tower in Paris during the latter part of July, and August. The A-26 chosen was "Tom Swift's Flying Machine" from our Squadron. The plane, a veteran of over fifty successful missions over Germany flown by Lt. Hackley, attracted much attention from those who visited the exhibition.

Unofficial word was received just before we left Station A-59 that the Group had been awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation, better known as the Presidential Citation, for successful operations from 6 to 8 August 1944 during the battle of the Falaise Gap. Also we received credit for participation in the Battle of the Rhineland and the Battle of Central Germany. The Squadron, therefore, had received credit for participation in six campaigns against the enemy in Europe.

The strength of the Squadron on the last day of the month, excluding those who made up the Flight Echelon, was 15 officers and 242 enlisted men.

August, 1945

669th BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th Bombardment Group (L)
Office of the Commanding Officer

SUBJECT: Historical Data, August 1945.
TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

Another month rolled around. The first few days of August were filled with activity. Camp Chicago was to be one of our last stops before boarding the boat that would carry us into the Pacific waters. First, our equipment had to be processed and packed in waterproof containers. Some of this processing was done at Camp Chicago. Some of the equipment had to be taken to nearby camps. The job of waterproofing T/E and MEE equipment began at 7 o'clock one evening. Working in four hour shifts, we succeeded in getting the job finished by the following afternoon. With this completed, little remained for most of us to do other than "take life easy".

"Taking life easy" was a welcome pastime, for the work to be done in the Pacific would leave us little time to relax. The climax in the war in the Pacific seemed to be near. To an outfit such as ours scheduled for direct redeployment, the Pacific war meant a great deal. Constant bombardment by Army Air Force units and Naval Air Force units had brought Japan to its knees. Yet there seemed to be no thought of surrender in the minds of the Japanese government officials. Daily Japan's cities were being destroyed, and daily our military leaders promised more destructive raids.

Can you imagine the feelings of the men when word was received on the 5th of August that Russia had declared war on Japan? The greatest military might of the world was now gathered together to break the whole of the Japanese Empire into a hollow core. Almost simultaneously came another announcement.

This time the whole world was horrified, joyous, aghast, and hopeful at the same time. American scientists had perfected the most destructive weapon ever

unleashed upon mankind during the history of man. The atomic bomb was the weapon and the city of Hiroshima was the victim. One bomb was released and the city of Hiroshima was almost completely destroyed along with its population.

Still the enemy offered no word of surrender.

Again an atomic bomb was used. This time the city of Nagasaki was destroyed.

On the 10th, Japan could not face any further attacks. She sued for peace.

She agreed to accept the terms of surrender drawn up at the Potsdam Conference.

Her qualification was that she would be permitted to retain the Emperor as the head of the Japanese government. On the 11th, the Allies agreed to accept her surrender, agreeing to keep the Emperor but only under strict Allied control.

At midnight of the 14th, Japan radioed her acceptance. The World was, at last, at peace. Of course, distant outposts continued to fight on. The Allies set dates for the surrender of these outposts. General MacArthur, Supreme Commander in the Pacific, set the date of the final surrender as 2 September.

The end of the war meant a change in our status. Although we were still scheduled for redeployment to the Pacific, we were now to return to the States first.

Life continued on at Camp Chicago in the usual quiet manner. Passes were issued enabling the men to visit Paris and Brussels. Leaves and furloughs to England, the Riviera, Switzerland, and Italy were part of a new and more liberal policy.

On the 28th, the Port Commander at Marseille called for our Special Purpose vehicles. A convoy left on the 29th with four refuel units, one decontamination unit, and six trailers to be turned in at Marseille. This left the Squadron with only two Cletrac units remaining. We were almost ready for shipment.

There were very few changes in personnel during the month. Two new flying officers joined the Squadron from other Squadrons- Second Lieutenants Bruce C. Morris and Raymond R. Knotts. On the 18th, Lt. Morris was transferred to the 70th Reinforcement Depot. The strength of the Ground Echelon at the end of August was 14 officers and 246 enlisted men.

No word of the Flight Echelon was received during the month except an occasional word that the crews had started their journey to the States.

The official orders granting the Squadron and the Group the Distinguished Unit Badge were received on the 4th, embodied in Section I, General Orders 144, Hq. Ninth Air Force.

September, 1945

669th BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)

416th Bombardment Group (L)
Office of the Commanding Officer

SUBJECT: Historical Data, September 1945.
TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

The first day of September was our readiness date. The Squadron's equipment and records were completely processed so that we would be ready to leave Camp Chicago by the 5th.

On the 3rd, the Squadron was notified that our departure date had been set back to the 10th. The Squadron was ready to move on the 10th, but orders were not received until the 12th to move.

We left in a train convoy with the other units in the Group on the 15th for the Camp Calas Staging Area, about 13 miles from Marseille. We arrived at our new base on the 17th.

On the 18th, Captain Stewart received our Warning Orders. Ordinarily only 5 days would elapse between the receipt of these orders and the date of our shipment. As is usually the case, there was a delay.

The Alert Orders were received on the 26th. After another delay we left Camp Calas for the Port of Marseille on the morning of the 30th. Immediately upon arriving at the Port, we began boarding the boat that was to take us home.

The Marine Panther was a C-4 type troop transport operated by the War Shipping Administration and manned by the US Merchant Marine. The boat pulled away from the dock at 1305 hours on the 30th amid cheers from the home-going troops.

To review some of the other events of September, on the 7th Captain Haubrich received orders transferring him to Germany as part of the Army of Occupation.

With the departure of Captain Haubrich, Captain Charles H. Stewart, who has been Squadron Engineering Officer since the activation of the Squadron, assumed command of the Squadron.

Also in the early part of September the Squadron was changed from a Category II unit to a Category IV unit. This meant that we would return to the States for immediate deactivation.

The usual organizational activities continued throughout the month. We engaged in no operational missions during the month and received no battle credit. Our strength on the last day of September was 15 officers and 244 enlisted men.

October, 1945

669th BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (L)
416th Bombardment Group (L)
Office of the Commanding Officer

SUBJECT: Historical Data, October 1945.
TO : Commanding General, Army Air Forces.

The month of October began for us on the high seas passing along the Spanish coastline. In the distance we could catch glimpses of the rugged Spanish terrain. Early in the morning of the 2nd we passed through the Strait of Gibraltar--but too early to see much other than the outline of the Rock and the lights of Tangiers in the distance.

The weather was unusually good and the water was calm. Several days of rolling sea caused some cases of seasickness. On the whole, however, the trip was comfortable and pleasant. In contrast to the food served to the enlisted men coming overseas in January 1944, their "chow" was very good--judging from their comments. The boat was very crowded, but the destination, "Home", more than made up for the discomfort.

The only casualty of the trip was the Squadron's mascot, "Duke", a thoroughbred German police dog. Duke joined the Squadron in England, flew across the Channel with us to France, and followed us on all of our subsequent moves either in a vehicle or in a baggage car to the Port of Marseille. There he came to the parting of the ways. The Ship's Commander refused to allow pets on board ship so that Duke had to be left behind. He was presented to the MP Company stationed at the Port who promised to take good care of him.

On the morning of the 10th, we came up on deck early to get our first look at American soil in a long while--the Boston shoreline.

As we steamed into the Boston harbor, we were greeted by an Army band, whistles from other boats anchored in the harbor, and the waves from people working in the port area. It was a happy day for all of us.

After disembarking, we entrained for Camp Myles Standish, about 35 miles outside Boston. We arrived there in mid-afternoon. After attending a lecture at which time we learned of what was soon to happen to us, we were billeted. There was little for most of us to do other than wait for our orders sending us to Separation Centers or Reception Centers. There was plenty of work for the Personnel Sergeant, Staff Sergeant Morris, and the First Sergeant, Sergeant Clements. They worked almost through the night to complete the records and other rosters prior to deactivation.

In the morning of the 11th, Captain Stewart accomplished the final duties of the Squadron and deactivation was completed with a few minor exception by early afternoon. The personnel were split up according to their Separation or Reception Centers at this time, and were detached from the now-deactivated 669th Bombardment Squadron (L). Captain Stewart and First Sergeant Clements remained as Cadre to complete other necessary details. The strength of the Squadron as of the 11th, or date of deactivation was 15 officers and 244 enlisted men.

Thus ends the history of the 669th Bomb Sq (L), a product of the Second World War.

(Declassified IAW EO 12958 and 13526)

Documents available from the Air Force Historical Research Agency (AFHRA) at Maxwell Air Force Base, AL.