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HISTORICAL REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 1944, 645th BOMB SQUADRON (L)

I. STRENGTH

The strength of the 645th Bombardment Squadron took a big jump during the month of November, gaining 21 more enlisted men and 19 officers. The overall total is now 330 enlisted men and 73 officers. A grand total of 403 men. All these men are either combat crews or mechanics.

II. LOSSES IN ACTION

Despite a general stepping up of aerial activity over Germany, losses of 645th personnel in action for this month was nil. This was unfortunately not the case with the other squadrons.

III. AWARDS, DECORATIONS, AND PROMOTIONS

"For recognition of meritorious service in connection with military operations against the enemy," the BRONZE STAR MEDAL was awarded to a total of five of our plane mechanics. The squadron takes great pride in the fact that the 645th alone had five out of nine such awards for the whole group! This was the second time that we lead the other squadrons in receiving more of the medals. The recipients were: T/Sgt. Murray M. Burns, T/Sgt. Harry D. "Moose" Bynum, T/Sgt. Paul W. LaRue, T/Sgt. Joe M. Long, and Sgt. Robert M. Carroll.

To Capt. Alan A. Rigdon went the Silver Star for gallantry in action. While on a mission over enemy territory, Capt. Rigdon was painfully wounded by flak before the target, along with that, his plane was badly shot up. Despite this he continued on to the target, jettisoned his bombs, and managed to limp back to friendly territory where he finally had to make a forced landing. Capt. Rigdon hailed from Shaw, Missouri.

Our "high man" among our gunners for the number of missions, is S/Sgt. John Harnish with a total of 58 to his credit. He now holds the 6th Oak Leaf Cluster. The 7th Oak Leaf went to no less than 37 of our boys this month. One man received the Silver Oak Leaf Cluster.

Two officers were given promotions the aforementioned Alan A. Rigdon from 1st Lt. to Capt. and George W. Apperson from 2nd Lt. to 1st Lt.

IV. 645th IN THE WAR EFFORT

November was generally a month of much rain and few missions, but few as they were in proportion to England, this squadron played its full share in the war in the air drama. Twelve missions were successfully run off. Two of our ace marksmen showed that they were no flashes in the pan. At Eschweiler on the 4th Lt. Robert A. Hobbs and Lt. Walter Bates co-starred with a Good for Hobbs and an Excellent for Bates. At Durwiss on the 18th, Lt. Bates had another Excellent to his growing list. The tops for the month was the defended village of Birgel in the drive for Cologne. Here, where every inch of ground has been bitterly contested by the Wehrmacht, our boys piled those missiles of mayhem right into its center. So pleased was the commanding general of the Corps in that area, that he sent a personnel message of congratulations to this group for their accomplishing just what he desired. As usual the Hobbs-Bates duo were right on the ball, both scoring Excellents.

V. STATION LIFE.

Outstanding went for us in the 645th, was probably the opening of our enlisted men's canteen and mess hall. The building is wooden and is 10' x 40'. It was transported from about 20 miles away and was erected quickly enough to the variant grating of the boys on their arrival. The job of our chief engineer in charge went to Louis J. Rinaldi a corporal, who

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