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OR

HISTORICAL REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 1944, 645TH BOMB SQUADRON (L)

I. STRENGTH.

The present manpower total roster of the 645th Bomb Squadron is three hundred and twenty one enlisted men and eighty one officers. This represents a loss of nine enlisted men and a gain of nine officers. The loss of men is attributed to the fortunate recall of 15 of our gunners back home. The gains made by both officers and men is realized from the acquisition of a B-26 crew plus a large influx of bombardiers.

II. LOSSES IN ACTION.

We were most fortunate again in not losing a man in action this being the second month in a row. Of passing interest was the two-in-a-row narrow escape by Lt. Baker and his crew. For two straight days the Lieutenant was forced to make a dangerous landing on one engine. The first was, fortunately, made on a friendly field. The second wasn't quite so fortunate due largely to the absence of a good field to land on. It turned out that the best he could do was to descend upon a Belgian's farm land, a former sugar beet field. Luckily, though the plane was in pretty bad shape, the boys came out of it without hardly a scratch. After apologies were made to the wide-eyed tiller of the soil, they proceeded to head for out lines. Not long after they arrived at a small village whereupon they spied an MP about a hundred yds. up ahead. At the same instant he saw them and quickly made himself scarce in a doorway. When they arrived at the door they knocked. It was answered by the same MP wearing a grim-visaged expression. They informed him who they were and even showed him their credentials. The wary MP was in no mood for lingering long with strangers. There had been too many Germans sneaking through in our uniforms and he was as anxious to have as little truck with these individuals as possible. The result being that, with menacing gestures from a hand carrying a .45, he told them of an area of safety and then quickly disappeared into the gloom of the hallway. The boys returned safely.

III. 645th IN THE WAR EFFORT.

This squadron might well be referred to as the 645th bomb group, for our officers have certainly made their mark in taking over key positions in group headquarters. To begin with, our one-time CO Lt. Col. Robert J. Hughey is now the Commanding Officer of the 410th Bomb Group(L). This is only the beginning. Next, in boasting, is the job of group operations officer now being held by our late squadron CO Lt. Col. Robert Rawl. Our original squadron commander, Major Carl O. Willey, is none other than Group engineering officer. Congratulations are also in order for 1st Lt. Robert Hobbs who has just been appointed group bombardier-navigator. This assignment comes as a well deserved reward. He has flown 46 combat missions, 43 of them being lead missions, flying with Lt. Col. Hughey as lead navigator for the entire formation. Lt. Hobbs' devotion to duty and his genial, friendly personality are well known to personnel of this squadron, and will undoubtedly set a fine example for the bombardier-navigators of the whole group. Lastly, our former ordnance and armament officers Lts. Lts. Cadigan and Short are now enjoying the honor of occupying group positions in their respective duties.

IV. STATION LIFE.

Probably the most interesting and happy event that befell us on the 12th month, was the recalling back to the States of 15 of our gunners. Thesefortunates were well-deserving of this, having flown at least 51 missions. The boys left with many a telephone number given by friends for them to call their homes.

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HISTORICAL REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 1944, 645TH BOMB SQUADRON (L)
(CONTINUED)

IV. STATION LIFE. (CONTINUED).

Close behind the latter in importance was the acquisition of a new Commanding Officer in the person of the very popular Major Ralph G. Kuhn. Major Kuhn has been with since the outfit's infancy. Prior to his new job he had been operations officer. Major Kuhn hails from Minneapolis Minnesota, is married. With both officers and men, there were very, very few dissenters of this new position now occupied by the Major.

Christmas Day found the boys in a sober mood, despite the presence of the festive day. Not only were they all far, far from home, but the Krauts were in a fair way of doing a good job of winning back a lot of hard won Allied territory. The day was ideal for flying and bombing and it was a serious time for all of us. The cooks whipped together a turkey dinner dinner for us and it did somewhat manage to help remind us that it was Christmas and not just another day of the war. Cpl. Paul Groves, the ever patient mail clerk, did a fine job in handling the mountains of packages that poured into us from the months beginning to well past Christmas.

For about 10 days our guard roster was doubled. This was a temporary measure instituted to guard against possible enemy agents slipping to damage our planes.

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