

HISTORY

of the

484TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HEAVY)

1 November 1943 to 30 November 1943

I. ORGANIZATION

On the first of the month we were still a divided organization. Key men of the air echelon were on duty at Pinecastle and administrative officers and ground personnel still suffered the rigors of lonely Idaho at Mountain Home. Two moves, then, the first on the 7th of November, the next on the 15th, brought the entire group into its present quarters at the Army Air Base, Harvard, Nebraska. (for details see par's. III and IV below).

During the month we added the names of three officers to our key personnel roster. Major Haldeman joined as C.O. of the 827th Squadron, Captain Milam came in as Group Operations O and 1st Lieut. Shannon joined as Group Navigator. (see par III)

III. CHANGES IN ORGANIZATION

The organization has been growing steadily to raise our strength to 120 officers and 939 enlisted men on 30 Nov.

On 20 Nov 43 Major DONALD C. HALDEMAN, was assigned to the 827th Squadron as Commanding Officer (*1 & *1a), vice Captain GAYLE S. COX, transferred (*2). On 29 Nov 43 Captain BENJAMIN W. MILAM was assigned as Group S-3, (*3) and on the same date 1st Lieut. WILLIAM R. SHANNON, became Group Navigator (*4), vice Captain EDWARD C. JOHNSON JR, transferred (*5).

IV. STATIONS

Having completed the prescribed course at AAFSAT, Orlando, Fla. key men of the air echelon entrained at Orlando on 7 Nov 43 and arrived at Harvard, Nebraska on 10 Nov. (*6). Remaining personnel left Mountain Home, Idaho 15 Nov 43 arriving at the Harvard Air Base 17 Nov (*7).

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- *1 - SO #204, Hq Fifteenth BOTW, Gowen Field, 7 Nov 43
- *1a- SO #22, Hq 484th Bomb Gp, AAB, Harvard, Nebr 20 Nov 43.
- *2 - SO #195, Hq, AAB, Harvard, Nebr, 15 Nov 43.
- *3 - SO #31, pars 5 & 7, Hq 484th Gp, 29 Nov 43
- *4 - SO #31, par 3, Hq, 484th Gp, 29 Nov 43
- *5 - SO #206, Hq AAB, Harvard, Nebr., 26 Nov 43
- *6 - SO #7, Hq AAF Tactical Center, Orlando, Fla, 4 Nov 43
- *7 - SO #193, Hq AAB, Mountain Home, Idaho, 13 Nov 43

V. PERSONALITIES

Major Donald C. Haldeman, Commanding 827th Squadron

Attended Long Beach Junior College to 1939. Enlisted as aviation cadet at Santa Maria, Calif, November 1939 and commissioned at Kelley Field July 1940, Four years service as Seaman L/c, U.S.N.R. First assigned as Instructor and Flight commander. Director of Flying Training, Marana, Arizona Aug 1942 to June 43. CO 347th B-26 Sq to Nov 43, Joined 484th 20 Nov 43 and assigned as 827th CO.

Captain Benjamin W. Milem, Group Operations O

Graduated SuPoss State College, Alpine, Texas, 1940. Enlisted as aviation cadet in 1940 and graduated at Stockton Field, California April 1941. Served as Instructor Pilot with 43rd Bomb Sq, Gowen Field from July to Sept 1943. Provisional Squadron Commander to November 1943. Joined 484th Group November 29.

1st Lieut. William R. Shannon, Group Navigator

Attended Miami University to 1941. Enlisted as aviation cadet, January 1941. Graduated at Kelly Field August 1942. Squadron Navigator with 411th and 563rd Bomb Sqs at Gowen and Wendover respectively, to April 43. Staff Navigator with McCauley Prov group to Sept 43. Staff Navigator for Strathern Prov group to November 43. Joined 484th November 29.

VI. ADMINISTRATION

Nothing to report

VII. TRAINING

We have had no flying training in this period. We have however accomplished much and under severe handicaps. This is particularly true in small arms training program. Under normal circumstances the construction and maintenance of firing ranges is a Base function. On our arrival, one common "butt" type range was available, this for all types of firing. In his attempts to improve the situation, Lieut. Fagerstrom, Group Armament O continually ran into dead ends. Finally, taking the initiative hr is well on the way toward completion of special ranges for firing all small arms. These ranges should be completed within the very near future. By the end of the month all personnel had been given familiarization course in the Thompson sub-machine gun under the guidance of group instructors. The skeet range has also been maintained and served by our men.

TRAINING (Cont'd)

Chemical warfare lectures for group personnel have also been organized and this instruction will be completed shortly. The entire schools organization under the direction of Capt. Sawyer is becoming a well knit unit designed to accelerate both ground and air echelon schooling.

VIII. MORALE

We are located about three miles from Harvard, population some 700. Nearest town of any size is Hastings, Nebraska with a population of some 17,000. The suburban in our midst are well satisfied with the opportunities offered in the latter city whereas our urbanites still have their fingers crossed. Hastings is not an aggressive city, nor one which seems to have enjoyed any particular boom. The restaurants and other eating places offered by the hotels are rather mediocre, and army chow certainly hasn't suffered in the comparison.

On the Base the Theater nightly plays to a packed house. From one showing we advanced to two shows, and everyone seems now to be able to find a seat. The PX has excellent facilities and a reasonable assortment of merchandise. The athletic facilities are good and the enlisted personnel have had some good times as the Thursday evening dances in the gym. The downtown Service Club is a large, very comfortable establishment and there seems to be an abundance of nice USO gals. In all it's not too bad a deal despite the cold.

The officers club is as efficiently run as any we've seen. Imagine our surprise when we were welcomed with a party at which everything was 'on the house' including the rarest of the rare, a small quantity of bourbon. This party was topped off with an excellent table served late. The mess is fine, first because more than ordinary ingenuity is exercised to contrive the menus. The Thanksgiving dinner, very well attended, was a rare feast almost equaling the holiday chow of an enlisted mess hall.

Liquor control measures are no longer necessary. It is foolhardy to attempt control of something almost nonexistent.

XI. SLANG

The usual Air Corps cant phrase still serves us in our daily slang usage, but we've several phrases that will become a signature of this Group. "Let's not be carried away" is ours and a logical evaluation from other slang expressions designed to discourage eager beavering.

XII. UNIT PUBLICATIONS

The Group publishes no paper, but several of the Squadrons particularly the 824th, has made notable contributions to the Base paper, the Harvard Accent, several illustrated issues of which are hereto attached.

XIV. MISCELLANY

The 824th, under the able command of Capt. Ayres has done much to improve the extremely poor facilities of its operations building, housing Operations, Intelligence and the familiar Briefing Room. The alert room has grown from four bare walls to a place of exceptional comfort, with maps continually teaching from the walls and the center table an interesting mine of combat information for all to read and profit by. They've also 'snowed' homy furniture and the means for providing coffee for the crews after flights and the latter will be in operation as a coffee bar in the very near future. Looks like an on the beam outfit, Captain and we'll be by for our coffee, just let us know, Time, Place, Altitude.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

SPECIAL ORDERS

- *1 - Paragraph 7, Special Order #204, Headquarters
Fifteenth Bombardment Operational Wing.
Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho, 7 Nov 43
- *1a- Paragraph 10, Special Order #22, Headquarters
484th Bombardment Group (H), AAB, Harvard
Nebraska, 20 November 43
- *2 - Paragraph 2, Special Order #195, Headquarters
Army Air Base, Harvard, Nebraska, 15 November 43
- *3 - Paragraphs 5 and 7, Special Order #31, Headquarters
484th Bomb Group, AAB, Harvard, Nebraska
29 Nov 43
- *4 - Paragraph 3, Special Order #31, Headquarters
484th Bomb Group (H), AAB, Harvard, Nebraska,
29 Nov 43
- *5 - Paragraph 12, Special Order #206, Headquarters
Army Air Base, Harvard, Nebraska, 20 Nov 43
- *6 - Paragraph 50, Special Order #7, Headquarters
AAF Technical Center, Orlando, Florida, 4 Nov 43
- *7 - Paragraph 35, Special Order #193, Headquarters
Army Air Base, Mountain Home, IDAHO