

pouring out her top. As we were looking at all the ruins a pilot came aboard and directed the tugs as we were pushed into the docks. The dock was a cement affair and badly damaged by the shelling it had taken. The troops were unloaded and loaded on 6 x 6 trucks. The first time we had touched foot on ground in 31 days.

The 6 x 6 trucks with the men pulled away from the pier and then traveled through the bomb scarred and ruined areas of Naples. We passed the old castle located on the waterfront and came out on a wide street bordered on one side by a park filled with bust statues and some very modern hotels on the other. We proceeded along this street and finally passed through a tunnel and as we came out we passed a military installation tented and this was a reple depot. We passed by this and then the road turned north for a short distance and then we turned to our left and came in view of a college campus. We pulled into the campus which turned out to be Costanzo Ciano College and it was badly damaged. We were given quarters in one of the buildings. The floors were of hard marble like tile, no heating and no windows. The buildings were either damaged by bombings or by the Germans as they had used this place too. We stayed here for several days under numerous German aerial assaults, not aimed at us but the planes passed over us to bomb our ships in the harbor. Naples was off limits as a serious typhus epidemic had broken out among the Neapolitans, and the 5th Army medical and sanitary corps were busy DDTing the buildings and the people.

February 16, Capt. Ramsey called me in and told me I was to stay behind with 6 men and pick up our equipment from the boat with trucks and take them to Bari on the Adriatic Sea. He told me I was to get the trucks the best way I could. I helped the men load on trucks and they were taken to a railroad station and loaded on \*40 and 8's (four wheel, box cars) and that night they pulled out for Bari. The men and I looked for our equipment which was located at a dump about 5 miles east of Naples and decided to stay there in tents till I could find trucks. While we were there our first night, German planes again struck near us strafing the airfield at Capatachino and pulling up just over us. They were so low we could easily tell they were Messerschmit 109's with the cross clearly visible on the wings. We all were in our fox holes with our carbines and me with my 45 pistol and they were useless. (\*40 & 8 a WWI term meaning 40 men or eight horses.)

On February 18th I finally rounded up 6 trucks and we loaded them and started out for Bari. We spent the night

at Foggia which was having an aerial attack as search lights were still trying to pick up the planes. We drove through the main street, passed a big red brick building, and on through the town. There was no place to stay and we could not drive at night as our lights would be picked up by night fighters so we pulled into what looked to be new military base all constructed with brick. As we approached we saw black soldiers with what looked to be towels wrapped around their heads. This was a detachment of Indians of the British 8th Army. The commander was a young white British Captain and he directed us to an American unit in the same encampment. This turned out to be a pipeline construction battalion. They took us in and fed us. That night Lt. Bob Fernandez asked me if I wanted to go to a club and we went. The club later became the Foggia Red Cross Officers Club and the three of us officers were among the signers of the book of record. I think we were on the second page.

The following morning we started out for Bari and passed through some towns called Cerignola, San Fernando de Pulia, Barletta, Trani, Molfetta and finally into Bari. We pulled into a big military station which turned out to be Air Force General Depot Number 5 and asked if they knew where the squadron was. They told us they were there and we went over to one of the warehouses and they greeted us with a lot of questions about what happened to us after they left. From all I could gather we were the lucky ones to come over on the trucks cause it took us 6 hours and on the train it took them better than 40 hours to cover the 200 miles. After we were all together we moved out of the depot and set up camp just outside the depot. We were in a farmers plowed field and then the rains came. Unless one has been in similar conditions and has experienced the Italian winters it would be hard to conceive the hardships and miseries we underwent. At times the rain made a large lake for us to drive our now acquired one jeep and weapons carrier through. I found out that a very good friend was our Commanding Officer and went to see him. We had a real reunion and Col. Manning (Omaha, Nebraska) asked me to make a flight with him and Capt. Rogers in their B25 to North Africa. We took off from Bari airport and headed southwest and in a little while we were over Palermo, Sicily, then Trapini and Marsala, and out over the blue Mediterranean sea. In a couple of hours we could see the rugged North African coast and we then flew over Bizerte. Looking down I could see ships sunk at the docks and many gutted buildings. We then changed our

course and flew down the coast toward Algiers. All along the coast I could see beached and sunken liberty ship, landing crafts, enemy ships as well as Allied. Soon we were over Algiers and I could see a large blue ship on the beach in the Algiers harbor. We circled the city and radioed Maison Blanche airfield for landing instructions. We then circled the field and set down on a steel runway that clattered from the time we touched down till we taxied off the runway and up to the well scarred hanger. A staff car, a French made Ford, came out to meet us and drove us into Algiers. We went directly to headquarters in the St. George hotel and completed our business. Col. Manning set me up in La Belle Tour hotel for the evening. Several other American officers staying there were interested in me as I looked battleworn and mostly I was the first one they had talked to who came back from Italy. Later that same night we picked up and went to the Algerian version of a Burlesque and it was rather corny as we say in English but by this time we had grown to enjoy it as we had had no entertainment of any kind up to this time and I enjoyed it immensely. We went back to the hotel and went to bed. I got up early the following morning, dressed and walked down to Rue Michelle to a transient officers mess and got my breakfast. The morning was spent just looking around the city which I thought was really beautiful. It was strange for me to see people dressed in sheets but that was the case and I accepted it with out question. They have been dressed that way for centuries and why should I try to change them. I saw an officers PX (Post Exchange) and bought some 1st Lt. Bars as Richardson and Welsch had received promotions and 1st Lt bars were unobtainable in Italy. They were still wearing 2nd Lt. Bars too. I thought I might be promoted sometime and I might as well have some on hand in the event that I should. This sightseeing took all morning and I was to meet Col. Manning and Capt. Rogers at the transient officers mess. I walked over and they were there waiting for me and we had lunch. Col. Manning told me we were flying to Constantine that afternoon and that a staff car would pick us up in a few minutes to take us back to Maison Blanche where we left our B25. After clearing the field we took off and headed our nose southeast toward the Atlas mountains and presently we were over them. We were only a few minutes out from Algiers when it started to snow and these north African snows are really bad. We could barely see the mountain tops but we skillfully eluded them. Occasionally we came out of the snow and could see towns with stone bulding and red tile