

Hq 444th Bombardment Squadron  
 320th Bomb Group  
 APO # 374

SUBJECT; Historical Records.

TO : COMMANDING GENERAL, 1<sup>st</sup> Tactical Air Force  
 "THRU CHANNELS" - ATTENTION: HISTORIAN

1. Outline History of the 444<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron for the period 1 Dec. 1944 to 31 Dec. \_\_\_\_\_ 1944.
  - a. Present Designation  
444<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron; 320<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (M), 42<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Wing (US), 12<sup>th</sup> Tactical Air Command, 1<sup>st</sup> Tactical Air Force (Provisional).
  - b. Changes in Organization
    - (1) Changes in designation: None.
    - (2) Echelons or Units
      - (a) Transferred: None
      - (b) On DS or TD: None.
      - (c) Attached to other Hqs for operational control:
    - (3) Change of Commanding Officers: None
    - (4) Changes of Staff Officers ( not applicable to Gp or Sq).
    - (5) Changes in T/O: None.
  - c. Strength, Commissioned and Enlisted
    - (1) Month of Dec. \_\_\_\_\_ 1944

	Off	F/O	W/O	EM	TOTAL
a. At Beginning	84	1	0	339	424
b. Net Increase	1	0	0	16	17
c. Net Decrease	0	0	0	<u>0</u>	
d. At End	85	1	0	355	441

S E C R E T

- d. Stations of Units or Echelons
  - 1. Name of Station: Dijon Air Base, France
    - a. Date of Arrival: 22 November, 1944.
    - b. Date of Departure: Presently here.
  
- e. Movements of unit or echelons None.
  - (1) From \_\_\_\_\_ to none
    - a. Purpose
    - b. Dates
    - c. Means of Transportation
    - d. Conditions of roads, conveyances, and weather.
  
- f. Campaigns
  - (1) Name: German
  - (2) Duration; From 1 Dec., 1944 to 31<sup>st</sup> Dec. 1944
  
- g. Operations
  - (1) Campaign: German
  - (2) Nature of Operations: Precision bombing of communications, troop Concentrations and supply dumps.
  - (3) Number of Missions and Sorties for period:  
14 missions - - - 120 sorties.
  - (4) Results of the most important missions:

17<sup>th</sup> Dec., 1944- Neiderotterbach, Germany, Defense positions, in Siegfried Line.  
320<sup>th</sup> group led by 444<sup>th</sup> Sq., destruction of defense positions..

- h. Command Officers in important missions

Major Berge – Captain Ramage

- i. Losses in action: Officers and Enlisted Men
  - (1) Mission and dates

a. Killed: none

b. Wounded none

c. Missing none

d. Taken Prisoner: none

S E C R E T

j. Personnel who have distinguished themselves in action.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Mission</u>	<u>Act</u>	<u>Award</u>
No major awards this month			

k. PHOTOGRAPHS being submitted: None.

2. Inclosed are War Diary 444<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron  
for the period 1 Dec.'44 to 31 Dec.,'44

For the Commanding Officer:

(signature)  
GIBSON G. RAMSAY,  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt., Air Corps,  
Squadron Historian

1 Incls  
x War Diary  
Special Accounts (if any)  
Supporting Documents (if any)  
Photographs (if any)

SHEET NO. 1                      WAR DIARY                      444<sup>TH</sup> BOMB SQUADRON                      320<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUPMONTH OF DECEMBER, 1944                      PREPARED BY GIBSON G. RAMSAY, 1<sup>ST</sup> Lt., A.C.DAY                      EVENTS

## WAR DIARY FOR MONTH OF DECEMBER

1<sup>ST</sup>                      This month starts off with our squadron standing down for nine days. However, the stand-down  
 thru                      gives the personnel the opportunity to try and get settled in their French quarters, and we don't mean the  
 9<sup>th</sup>                      French quarter in New Orleans, U.S.A.

There has been quite a difference of opinion among the "wheels" of the organization as to the billeting arrangements. The first idea was to have the combat crews, officers AND men, billeted in the chateau so that they could be conveniently summoned when they were scheduled to fly a mission. The ground officers and men were billeted in private homes in the village. Along came the group C.O. and presto! things were changed. All officers were billeted in the chateau and all enlisted personnel were billeted in the village with private families. In ye historian's opinion this is a rather poor distribution as all supervision of the men is lost when they are not working in their sections, and are extremely hard to find when they are scheduled to fly. However, who is a historian to criticize the C.O. Perhaps he is prejudiced because at first he was billeted in a warm room with a "feather bed" stove and plenty of hot water, and now he is in a modern French chateau, M-1790.

We have finally whipped the mess situation into shape. The men have a two-story house with a kitchen down stairs and the mess hall upstairs. The officers are eating in the chateau with five beautiful ? French madmoiselles as waitresses and two ancient French Mesdames as cooks. We have GI food with that French flavor.

The only fly in the ointment is the fact that the chateau will not heat itself and fuel is practically non-existent. However, we are in the hopes of getting some wood or coal before spring or freeze to death, whichever comes first.

There is considerable talk about opening an officer's club room and bar but, as with the weather, everybody talks about it but no one does anything about it.

10.                      At last we are birdmen again. We flew a mission, nine sorties, today to Rastadt marshalling yards, but it was to no avail on account of the target being weathered in and all bombs were returned to base.

11<sup>th</sup>                      Today and for two days hereafter we reverted to our previous "stand-down" condition due to  
 to                      weather but utilized this non-operational time to improve our living quarters. The chateau has been  
 13<sup>th</sup>                      re-wired for electricity by the communications section, the Germans having completely torn out the  
 French wiring. GI stoves are slowly replacing the semi-operational fireplaces and screen-glass is covering the holes in the windows broken by the Krauts.

DAY	EVENTS
14.	One mission, six sorties, was flown today, but the target( Defense area at Steinfeld, Germany) could not be identified and no bombs were dropped.
15.	Today was non-operational on account of the weather and combat crews divided their time between housekeeping at Bessey and attempted homewrecking in Dijon, neither was very successful.
16.	Another non-operational day today and again it was the fault of the weather man. The I & E officer (squadron historian) attended a meeting at Wing at which big things were planned for the personnel after the war is over in the E.T.O. The rest camp at Paris is being patronized by the combat crews at the rate of six officers and six men per week. It's not such a good deal as there is a curfew from 2000 hours until 0600 and when that period of time is eliminated, one might just as well stay in the beautiful city of Bessey les Citeaux.
17.	A mission was flown today in close support of front line troops and was very much a success. The group officers held a party and dance at the Chateau-Longcourt and three officers of the Squadron attended. 'Twas decidedly a liquid proceeding. The monthly liquor ration was received today but was turned over to the officer's club for dispensation if and when we have a club room. The fuel situation is still so acute that it is a miracle that any of the chateau furniture remains furniture and not ashes. Coal has been promised but we are living in hopes that it is not a mere promise. In the meantime, SHIVERS!
18.	Again the combat crews were briefed for a mission after an invigorating 5 mile ride in the rain in an open truck. The weather can stop a mission, but it seems as if <u>nothing</u> can stop a briefing. This certainly puts reverse English on morale. Still more talk about a Xmas party, but as yet nothing has been done about it.
19.	One mission, 14 sorties, was flown today; The RR bridge at Breisach, and for a change, the weather was such that the target was hit with a good pattern of bombs. Capt. Ramage and Lieut. Froehlich comprised the team that led this effort.
20 <sup>th</sup> thru 22 <sup>nd</sup>	The weather again denied the skies to the Marauders during this three day period. and the crews relaxed by scrouging for wood for heating purposes, visiting Dijon and hitting the sack. A meeting was held and ye sad historian was elected "Keeper of the purse" for the squadron officers' club. We were paid today for the month of November and the French champagne and Eau de vie will be sampled as long as the surplus francs hold out.
23 <sup>rd</sup> .	Two missions, fifteen sorties, were flown today. One to the RR bridge at Breisach and the other to some gun positions at the same place. Both missions were successful, but the flak was intense

S E C R E T

SHEET NO. 3                      WAR DIARY                      444<sup>TH</sup> BOMB SQUADRON                      320<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUP

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MONTH OF DECEMBER, 1944                      PREPARED BY GIBSON G. RAMSAY, 1<sup>ST</sup> Lt., A.C.

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DAY                      EVENTS

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AND THE PLANES WERE SOMEWHAT DAMAGED. However, no personnel were injured. Everybody is talking about Xmas and anxiously awaiting Santa Claus in the person of the mail clerk. Christmas packages are rather slow this year probably due to the increased activity on the northern end of the battle line. After all, pushing back the Krauts comes first.

24.                      One mission, eleven sorties, today against the Langenargen RR bridge and was reported as successful. No ships lost, missing or damaged.

25.                      One mission, eleven sorties, today intended for the Singen RR bridge in Germany, but we unintentionally played Santa Claus to the good burghers of Thayngen, Switzerland and dropped our bombs on them. Fortunately no one was reported killed although a large tile factory received several hits. It was a case of mistaken identity. Thayngen's misfortune was to be so close to Singen and resemble it from the air.

The officers pitched a party after dinner, celebrating the opening of the club room, and we mean "pitched!" There were only seven of the opposite sex present, so the odd officers attempted to drown their sorrows and celebrate Christmas at the bar. They were highly successful at both undertakings.

26.                      Two missions, fifteen sorties today back to our old targets, the gun positions and RR bridge at Rastadt. The bridge was missed but the frags were dropped in the gun positions.

27.                      French classes were started today by the I & E department for both officers and enlisted men with a teacher furnished by the University of Dijon. We hope to hear something around the area now besides "Bo cups" and "we we." The classes are held in the school house at Aiserey twice each week, Wednesdays and Fridays.

28.                      Another non-operational day on account of the weather.

29.                      Two missions, fifteen sorties today to Annweiler and Kaiserlautern barracks. Again concentration was had at Annweiler, but no bombs were dropped at Kaiserlautern due to weather.

30.                      A repetition of yesterday's mission were again flown today but Kaiserlautern was hit and Annweiler missed.

31st                      Today was non-operational due to weather but not too bad to celebrate the exit of 1944 and to give 1945 a rousing welcome. Several of the officers attended a group party, while the remainder celebrated in the chateau, the officers having relinquished their December liquor rations to the officers' club. Everyone is hoping to celebrate next New Year's eve in the States. Vive la France, but give us the good old U.S.A.