

Gene Ulrich's Diary
Christmas 1942 – 21 Sep 1943

Natal, Brazil, South America

The population is about 30,000. Only about 3 white women in town and the rest are natives, who are probably diseased up. (The boys in the venereal ward next to me, say experience is the best teacher.) American exchange of money at any place in town is 16 millres for one American dollar, and at the Finance Office twenty millres. After my first trip to the city I was wised up to this fact.

The language is very funny to listen to, and easy to comprehend if you listen closely.

American cars are used as taxi cabs. They have a small sort of street car. It is just like the first trolley cars in the States. The streets are cobblestone and very rough.

One of the sights worth remembering is the burros they use to carry large baskets of fruits, sticks and the native men, who are twice as big as these tiny creatures.

The buildings are built of square design and very highly colored. All are surrounded by a fence of some kind or the other, made up of materials of every kind and description, and various heights. The construction of the lower and poorer class of homes are of no particular design, outside of four walls and a roof of a cheap type of tile, that is plentiful. Some of the stick frame works are plastered with clay, which after drying make a fairly durable protection against the weather. Others are patched with palm leaves that are interwoven.

Beggars and peddlers are very commonly seen on the streets. By jewing-down, one can pay his own price. Common labor pays \$0.30 to \$0.40 cents per day. With soda selling at \$0.15 per bottle one can see how much this labor scale affords luxuries and amusements.

The stores in lower Natal, are all overstocked and dirty and every thing from soups to nuts can be bought in them. (Bought Janie 3 pair of nylon hose.) The stores in upper Natal are in the better section of the city and located up on the hill. The materials and things are of much finer quality and also much more expensive. The sales girls are very young and usually speak a little English. Most of them having taken a few years of college with English conversation. They are the most interesting people we have met so far.

Street cars operate between upper and lower Natal, for a fee of \$0.01, and if they manage to reach you, before you get off. There are usually more people hanging on to the outside than inside. I doubt if they ever collect all the fares.

Night Life. Soldiers have to be off the streets every night at 6 o'clock, except on Saturday and holidays. Officers can stay out until 9:30 or 10:30 on special occasions. Mixed drinks are sold and there are a couple good German beers, that are made in Rio de Janeiro. Unnecessary conversations, concerning military activities, must be avoided due to foreign agents. This city is partly pro-Nazi. For self-preservation one has to find out which side of the fence he is on. Brazilian sailors are very friendly and conversation with them very amusing. Social drinking with a girl is perfectly alright being un-chaperoned between 4:30 and 5:30. The higher class of girl is chaperoned by her parents. A usual custom is three dates, chaperoned by her parents, and then the question marriage is considered on the fourth.

Took a jeep ride to Gook village, which is located in back of airport. Everything pertaining to the natives in called 'Gook'.

I cannot believe that people exist in such a low form of life. The children (younger ones) run around in the nude. They all seem to have a little 'pot' belly. The living conditions are much worse than the lowest in the United States. The houses are made of mud and dried palm leaves. Some have sides, while other only have roofs. At one place, which only had a roof and a bunch of hammock swinging beds, lived seven families. There was no privacy whatsoever. Most of the natives in this section run around bare-footed. The clothing of the women consist of a dress, slip over type made of one piece. Underclothing is almost unheard of. There is no school in this place and the boys of 8 and 9 years old are all smoking. There is no refrigeration and all meats and foods are place on the counter and shelves uncovered. Flies are very numerous and swarm these products.

The ground here being very sandy makes farming of any type, almost impossible. Jungle type of undergrowth and trees are about the only type of vegetation. The lack of grass, etc., accounts for skininess of livestock.

New Year's Eve. I really saw the town until 10:30 when I had to catch a bus for the base. Although we have had a black out on account of submarines seen off the coast here in Brazil. Tonight the city was lit up.

The first day of the New Year 1943. I went sailing. I sailed to a beach across the inland bay. The trip over and back cost 2 millres, and took about 15 minutes each way. Since today was an occasion, dancing was the entertainment. All the girls were quite young and an introduction was necessary, before asking for a dance. They only seem to dance one step, which is very simple. The dance hall was just a junky looking, small, white-washed building, built in the sand near the water. Another very dirty stand near where whiskey is sold by the drink. The glasses in which the drinks were sold were only rinsed out, after each use, with dirty water that had been dipped from the sea. Sandwiches made with the same un-cleanliness were also sold.

From this inland bay the clipper planes and Navy PBY's operated. Collected \$100.00 clothing allowance. Balance now \$450.00.

January 5, 1943. Today I had the opportunity to fly with a Brazilian officer, who was very good, although we landed at 110 MPH with flaps up and power on.

January 6, 1943. A member of our crew went to the hospital. Guess what!) Studied about three hours on my Portuguese lingo. "Mao compred muito bong." At 9:45 this evening we bid farewell to South America and all the native gooks and we were on our way to a new and little less than 10 hours. Our landing was so rough due to a hastily laid iron runway. Things here really rounded from the ground over. The tops are covered for protection and probably camouflaged with straw. Wall-boarding is roughly nailed inside to form walls and ceilings. The beds are made by the natives. They are built similar to an army cot with the exception of having rope bottoms, instead of springs, which leave imprints after a few hours of sleep. A net is hung from the ceiling above each bed to protect against the mosquitoes. The water is unfit to drink and the toilets are just big cans with home-made seats and covers and sufficient sand and shovel is near on the floor to hide the evidence (at least three shovels full) Hundreds of native men work at the different jobs for the sum of one shilling (0.20) and some for a hand full of rice. They wear any and every type of hanging-type of clothing. The belief that lingers is that Mohammed said his successor was to be born of man, so they wear long robes and baggy drawers. The drawers are so if they become pregnant and the baby falls out it will not be hurt. The race as a whole seems to be very dumb.

Sanitation is the main problem. Typhus is very frequent and all precautions heeded to prevent it. Boots, long pants and sleeves rolled down are the orders for evening wear.

The winds blow all day, making sand and dust very bad. The roads are very rough and sandy.

In the evening, monkeys can be seen scampering across the roads

This place was just built in the jungle and clearing out process is still in progress. From the air, I observed all the different types of grass huts so dominate for Africa.

Walls of small timber and bamboo are used by construction of fences around each, for protection against the wild beasts. The palms are very tall and only the bush part is leaves at the top.

The jungle is very colorful with all its different flowers and undergrowth. In the evenings the crickets shrilling whistle fills the air. A sort of surrounding is filled with stillness. It gives you a feeling,

danger is lurking near. Mosquitoes are plentiful and malaria cases number to quite a few.

A number of bonfires are lit to smoke and combat them. The native are, or rather must be very accustomed to them, because even at night they run around in shorts

What I mean is the beds were really hard. If a person could only get up and rest a few minutes every hour, they might be ok. I don't know what kind of food these men here on the post eat but I have my idea. They were bragging how good the food was today. If I had to eat it all the time I would probably starve to death.

America's a Great County.

Sunday. Olio strut is still leaking air on the plane. Today's take-off was postponed due lack of equipment necessary to pump up the strut. Let us hope to leave here as soon as possible, although food and bed is only \$1.00 per day.

Four under-nourished natives sat under the shade of the wing of our plane waiting for cigarette butts and any kind of food we would give them. At meal time they would take any kind of old can to the mess halls' garbage can, fill it by dipping it down in the scraps and then returning to our shade and eating it. They would then spend hours sticking their tongue into the cans and licking all over it.

11 Jan 1943 – Up at 5:00AM, breakfast and usual preparations for takeoff. Steve, Gant, and I were to run a 50 yard foot-race for a \$3.00 pot we had made. Noll also bet Steve \$5.00 that I would outrun him. We did not have time to run it so before take-off we heard the natives singing their native war and other chanting songs. Took off at 7:08. Arrived at Marrakech, Morocco, Africa at 5:00 o'clock. This is really some city, a high wall, that is over 600 years old surrounds the city. It was built for protection against the hostile raiding Arabs. All homes and orchards (citrus) are also walled in. The city is very compact and the buildings have a modern type of architecture. Somewhat like the 1950's American design. Most of the building are yellow or pink, in color, with inlaid marble in designs as decorations. Marble is very plentiful over here, so therefore, all the steps and lots of floors are constructed of it. They are really beautiful. The Arabs all remind me of slinking thieves in dirty robes and turbans or head coverings. The roads are filled with them on their burros, camels, horses or other transportation. The trails across the desert were being traveled by several caravans.

We managed to get a room at the Hotel de Machreb, which is only about 8 blocks from the French part of the city. This hotel and Hotel de la Mamounia is being taken over by the Army. When the first American planes came here to land, over a month ago, the French were a little bit contrary, so they rushed out to their planes and started to give battle. Results: most of the French airport as well as their Air Force were destroyed as well as many Frenchman. Not a single American man nor plane were destroyed. The Captain described the battle as slow transport with machine guns, with men who did not know how to pull the trigger against our modern equipped planes. (Just clay pigeons). The streets are filled with Arabs in their native dress. They are all trying to sell one or the other and always asking for cigarettes or waiting until you throw down your butts. The kids even the older ones are always asking for chewing gum. Evidence that one little French boy had not seen chewing gum before, because when Gant handed him a plug of chewing tobacco, he hastily spit it out, amusing all around.

Transportation – is horse and carriage, bicycles for two with carts, automobiles transformed into horse-drawn carts (with motor removed) or some run by coke burner and lots of bicycles. Most of the automobiles were taken over by the Army with French drivers and used for transportation from the city to the field for the soldiers.

Candy, cigarettes and whiskey are very limited. Wine is not served everywhere because it is scarce. Although since it a French custom, I have been getting it here at the hotel instead of water, at meal-time. We had one dinner at the French Officer's Club. We had wine for dinner and were very happy when we finished.

The Arabs have a custom of squatting most anywhere to urinate or have a bowel movement. They lie down anywhere to sleep, all in all are very filthy.

Our beds here are really OK, compared to ones we have been sleeping on since we left the States. The toilet is modern with the extent of having running water. Each room is equipped with a douche bowl with cold water running through it. No hot water is to be had because of the lack of fuel. There is one place that hot water can be had one day a week. Gant and I went to the Barber Shop and got a haircut, shave, tonics (2) massages (2) shampoos (2) for \$0.65. Cold water was used for shaving. This sure is raw.

We have been getting fairly good meals although they are feeding cat, dog and horse at some of the places here. The average meal is \$0.30 to \$0.40.

The French part of the city resembles California in many respects. The Streets are very modern and cleaned by Arabs with hand brushes and pans and throwing the refuse into a reed basket. All the streets have orange trees lining both sides. This past month has been the orange season making a very colorful sight. High mountains of 14,000 feet are on two sides of the city but 30 to 40 miles away. The snow-capped mountains really make a beautiful background, for the green fertile foothills. All types of vegetables are grown here and there are a number of truck gardens. The days are very warm and it is very comfortable without a coat, but during the night, 4 or 5 blankets are needed. Freezing not frequent.

Meals can only be had at certain times, not like going to an American café and eating any time you want. Breakfast from 7 AM to 9 AM. Lunch from 12:00 to 1:30PM and dinner from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. They have no sandwiches and only orange is served as a drink, even at the bar.

13th of January 1943 – Went down to the Arab village. What I mean this place is really lousy. This place is clustered with thousands of Arabs milling around. Some bring the wares through the narrow, dark and dingy alleys on camels and burros. The sights cannot be really described. The entire market place is just a series of alley ways just a sort of dug-back in cave affair. The market is divided into different sections. The woolen goods, metals, grains, etc.. The place is filled with all sorts of human life. People with leprosy, blind, and women with babies are constantly begging and some guide is trying to steer you to his business or the man he is working for. Camels, beggars and all kinds of things are brushing up against you. There are quite a few of the Arab women who cling to the old custom of wearing veils. Their eyes just show, they catch yours and continue gazing at you. The higher class of Arabs wear black robes, are usually fat and big beards. This idea of having my beard, encouraged me to shave mine off, the first day I arrived.

14 January 1943. Marrakech, had quite an occasion. A very important conference was held here (although everything was supposed to be secret), news leaked out through some military personnel, an Officer becoming slightly overcome by drink, gave out the information that should have been retained as confidential. This is the day after so let's hope the news did not leak out to the enemy. All men were ordered to wear clean clothes and jeeps with machine guns were in the streets all day. People probably suspected something. Here's hoping FDR made his return journey safely.

Gant and I went swimming. What a place. Our 45's were always ready and some of the dark alley's, where everything could be suspected, we carried them in our hands. At the French Café we later visited the dancing girls were lousy. All the Arabs at the place seemed to enjoy it immensely. American girls are missed by all.

In the Jewish section, you can hardly walk through, for the girls hanging on your arms and all over you, with their propositioning. Seven of us were nearly mobbed and dragged into their candle-lit flats. What a ratty place to live and these people really exist there. The Jewish gals do not wear the veils and are not tattooed as are the Arabian gals.

16 January 1943. We left Marrakech and out of the late ones in our original group we are the only ones to stay in Africa, the rest (about 7 or 8 crews) are being sent to England. Note: one of the 4 planes that left for England several days ago, drifted over France, and was shot up but made a forced landing in England. All were ok. Rumor has it, and believe it must be true. I believe it was Burch with Noblin as Navigator. Noblin had missed every ETA (estimated time arrival) by at least an hour and had turned wrong on one landfall and Burch just barely made it onto the field. Note 2: Three crews over-shot Briskra and went on over the Tunisian Front. Coalter disappeared in a cloud out of the formation and was not seen again. Russel made a forced-landing and all his crew were captured. Devers trusted Watts' navigation and flew back to Briskra by night. They circled, but could get no response so they flew out an hour over the desert and put out in chutes. Corenis was by himself all night on the desert, but they all reunited the next day and luckily a camel caravan picked them up. After 6 days of traveling and eating dates with camel-hair on them., they arrived back safely. (Nothing was heard from Coalter's crew except his Form A-1 was seen) His plane was taken all intact. Tough luck) Russel, Briem, Millichamp and Burley

were taken captive after setting down and having a gun fight with the Germans. They, after a few days, were put aboard an Italian submarine to be taken to Germany. The submarine was attacked by an English convoy and blasted to hell. They were left in the submarine but overpowered a guard, who came back to look for something and escaped out of the conning tower., only to run into steady gunfire. Russel was killed, but after spending over an hour in the water, the remainder of the crew were taken aboard an English boat. The first thing the English thought was that they had sunk an American submarine. Watt said, "They shot down 1 of 2 MIG's that attack them." This field here in Oran is well- protected, by patrolling 'Spitfires' and a barrage of search lights. Talked with quite a few of the boys who have made raids. Saw a number B-17's with patches all over them and the number of bombs dropped painted on the nose which indicates how many raids they have been on. Some had 15 to 17 and plenty of battle scars.

18 January 1943 – Noll and I went uptown to the Quartermaster to some needed equipment for our crew. My foot after the long walk today, is all swollen again. Oran is about 450,000. Everything is fairly modern and the stores are really nice. One even had a escalator. The Arabs are not nearly as thick as in other parts of Africa. Lots of good-looking French gals, no bumming of cigarettes. We secured out ration cards and obtained our weekly rations. There is a lot of old art in this city. Grecian painting and statues cover a number of the public and administrative buildings. Our plane is ready for combat, outside of the oxygen and ammunition. Yesterday we flew to the target range to test our guns My first shots burst the target open and others were very close.

19 January 1943 – Gant and I put a cheerful atmosphere in our room by putting up our gals pictures. We have not fully decided whether the picture help or just plain make us home sick. Note: You can't hold a memory in your arms. Damn my foot is swollen again. Flink went out on a raid with another crew and they were shot down. Some of them bailed out but they don't know who. P-38's found Russel's plane being towed in and set it afire by strafing it.

20 January 1943 – My first real indication of war. We had an air raid here in Oran tonight. It wasn't the usual blackouts we have in the States. In the event we lost two (2) planes. A 39 and a 'Spits' ran together. The pilots were both Commanding Officers. (C.O.'s) They jumped out, got in another plane and took -off. Submarine reported on the surface 30 miles off-shore. Traces filled the air and all the fellows ran for slit-trenches. The moon is full and we can expect raids now, anytime. We keep our steel helmets handy. Today makes one-month away from the States. 38's reported nine parachutes from Flinks' plane. German planes tried to bomb the convoy in the harbor from 75' to 100' off the ground Flak was so thick they could not get a straight run at the target and only a few bombs hit in the water. One of our large aircraft carriers is located in the harbor now. Finally got up enough initiative to write some letters. Had a good bull-session with a bunch of Gant's friends, all B-26 men. Really a bunch of swell fellows. Had to look at the calendar to see what day of the week it is. The next bunch of planes from Salina, Ks., are now arriving. Must be nearly 100 planes on the field now. There are sure a lot of funny looking French planes here now. They are keeping a few hangers to maintain their planes and remaining Air Force. Most of the time here is spent sleeping or playing cards. I lost \$14.00 with Noll and Henry.

25 January 1943. Packed all our stuff in our plane and was ready to head for Briskra, but at the last minute they decided we could not fly up there alone and the other planes would not be ready til morning. So since it was Steve Henry's birthday we gave him 27 licks. We then went to the movie, which was in an old bombed hanger and saw "To Be Or Not To Be". Very good. We opened our boxes of rations. I got a hunting knife, fishing kit and silk water catcher. Gant and I slept under the wing of the plane and nearly froze to death. I used my heavy flying suit as a 'nightie'.

26 January 1943. Finally managed to leave. We flew a 3-man formation and arrived in Briskra around 5:00 o'clock. I saw the fake airport and the so-much

mentioned dust. We were taken up-town to Briskra best hotel, The Transatlantic. Had an air-raid this evening but no planes. We all ran up the stairs and onto the roof to see the fireworks. They have no night fighters here and the JU's just bomb at will, unless they get too closed the ack-ack open up on them. A raid here a couple of nights ago destroyed a transport A17 and 38. A few nights ago a JU was reported flying over taking pictures. The ack-ack shot out one of the motors and they sent a P-38 after him. The captured all the men were left alive. The pilot said it was 109th mission. Briskra is just a little oasis here in the Sahara Desert. The town is small but very pretty. All the hotels, etc., are done in Arabian designs. A lot the art collectors would really go for these tables, trays and furniture here. The food is not as good as it has been in the past.

British rations here for us and the American food for the French and British at Oran. (Sometimes I wonder.) Of course, the city has its districts and a small one it is, just a long narrow street filled with Arabs and kids, intermingled with worn-out looking old gals during the daytime. They are usually dressed with white or highly colored clothes and are adorned with tattoos, paint, and lipstick. The disease they carry has been handed down through the years and some of their children now suffering. Lots of the kids have sores on their faces. The whole of the population is exceptionally dirty. A small entertainment was provided for us at the Transatlantic this evening. A group of girls with their native sexual dancing, lacked so much art they are supposed to have been taught. Most of the girls were from the district and started drumming up business while passing the collection pans. At the time, I thought it might have been embarrassing for the one lady in the crowd of men when one of the dances pulled up her net skirt and exposed her pink panties and said "Zig, Zig, very good". Of course, the second show turned out to be really a 'hot' one. At an unexpected moment one of the dancers threw her dress over the head of one of the fellows, who was standing near the stage. The French Censoring Officer stopped the show. The best part was a native dance by two individuals who stuck needles in their tongues, necks and put red-hot iron on their bodies as well as fire and then let poisonous spiders crawl all over them.

28 January 1943 – Arrived at Aimmlila today. Lots of grass in the valley where we are staying. Spent the remainder of the day starting to dig-in for our living quarters and slit trench. Goldberg, Gant, Graham and myself are living in our tent. Went up to the Grainery and listened to a band composed of fellows from the different Squadrons. They really sound ok. The air raid warning did not come tonight until 3AM. I slept through it. Probably the only sleep I got all night. Sleeping 4 in a double tent on the ground is no picnic. "Believe Me."

29 January 1943 – Finally finished our little tent today and it is really homey. This out-of-doors living is ok. Never felt better in my life. Steve Henry went along today in #25143 as co-pilot. Not a hole in it yet. All the Officer's on our crew are on battle orders for tomorrow. An ack-ack outfit moved in here this morning. Truck have been rolling for 2 days now. The fellows say in the last few days raids, enemy pursuits have been very slack. Saw the formation move over again today. Target for today was an oil tanker. A good hit reported.

INCOME FOR THE YEAR 1942

Cadet Pay til 13 Jun 1942	\$ 410.00
Officer's Pay (remainder of 1942)	1462.00
Travel Pay	440.00
Per Diem Nov	18.00
Dec	126.00
Total	2614.00
Deductions	

Uniform Allowance	150.00
Foreign Pay	8.00
Travel Pay	440.00
Flying Pay	487.50
Per Diem	144.00
Total	1229.50

Total Pay	\$2614.00
Total Deductions	1229.50
Total	1384.50

Bank Balance 1/1/43	\$ 350.00
Clothing Allowance	100.00
Total	450.00

31 January 1943 – Went out in 24 plane formation of B-17's not counting B-25's and B-26's. Our target was Bizerte. The flak was considered heavy although I was expecting more. We were jumped by a number of ME109's, just as we were starting our bomb run, but they all stayed out of range of our guns. Gant was pretty excited so I toggled the bombs. Fred Stahl, in our element, lost an engine and we could only indicate 170 so he could keep in tight formation. The feeling a really a thrill to look ahead and see the sky filled with black puffs of ack-ack and wonder how closed they will come to you. Your wings push on through the smoke as you scan the sky for enemy pursuit. Your target is spotted and you turn on the axis of attack. The bomb doors are opened and finally your bombs are away. The doors are closed, the nose is pushed down, you stay in close formation and head for home, in sort of a zig-zagging course to keep the mechanical devices from picking up a pattern and getting the range to fire. I was so excited I did not take time to see what damage we had done. Upon landing, we only found one little flak cut on our wing. We lost one B-17 but all bailed out over safe territory.

Bank Balance	\$ 450.00
January allotment	160.00
Total	610.00

1 February 1943 – Our target for today is Tunis, but we spotted a 5-ship convoy and let them have it. All our bombs were really close misses. Flak was a great deal more plentiful and really covered the city, but we flew around it. The ME's really furnished the excitement today. I got in a few good blasts but they respect our ships and stayed out of range. Five ME 109's in a formation on our left at the 10 o'clock position, peeled off one by one at Major Quick's element and let go with their blasts. The Major's No. 4 engine was shot out and a radio operators' ankle was pretty well shot up when a 20mm shell burst in the radio room. We believe we got one direct hit on a ship.

2 February 1943 – Ground Hog Day and what I mean we spent it in the ground. Our little tent is not the best one here yet but it is really a port in the storm. Today is bath day. The shower is located in Ainmlila. There is only one of this size in town. All the Squadron and soldiers stationed around here have to use it. It is about a 20 minute walk from our tent. A person usually has to wait for a shower but – what I mean a good douche really makes one feel better.

3 February 1943 – Today's mission cancelled on account of weather. Lt. White gave me a haircut today. It took him nearly an hour to cut it but he did a nice job. Note: Lt. Goldberg has some pictures he has taken of the operation.

4 February 1943 – Had a 301st Bomb Group celebration. This outfit has now been organized for a year. Our band furnished music and we had wine to drink. During the excitement we had an air raid. Some Major did believe in share and share alike, so I took his gal home. He

came outside to get in his car and there I was talking to her. He pointed to a GI truck and said "OK, there's your ride home." We had fun in the old American way with American girls. The truck we rode in had no cover over the top and it seemed 10 degrees colder than at the north pole. The mountainous 8 to 10 miles winding road, would have frozen us to death if we hadn't had enough alcohol in our systems.

Jane Finley, blonde and 26. Very nice. Our promotion for all 2nd Lt.'s in the Squadron (352nd) have gone in, so Major Holman says. I for one will wait and see.

5 February 1943 – Light mission today. Was supposed to be an early mission but it was one of our most furious. Everything would have been alright if it hadn't been for a plane out of the 32nd Bomb Squadron dropping out of formation, due to 2 motors being shot out and being left behind by their own squadron. The 97th Bomb Squadron also flew over him without trying to give aid. Major Holman banked with us on his tail and started back into the line of fire and sure trouble. Before we could get back to him, a number of ME109's jumped them and had the injured ship in flames. In our diving turn of 360 degrees we lost 7,000 feet in less than 5 minutes and we were indicating nearly 300, making a ground speed of over 400 MPH. In the battle we were without Julian's waist gunner, who had been killed instantly by a 30 caliber through the heart, his radio gunner, had his arm shot up, Captain's electrical system was shot out, leaving him with no nose or waist gunner and flak very accurate. Looking up the barrels of machine guns and 30 mm cannons, that are puffing at you, is not my idea of fun. I just sit behind my gun as did all the other men, sweating out who would hit who first. Our top turret gunner is living on borrowed time. A 20 mm hit and exploded not 6 inches from his head, leaving a hole, big enough to stick your fist through. He didn't get a scratch and now has the end off the shell to wear around his neck. Our waist gunner got a 30 mm just a few inches from his head. Dudley, another member of Julian's crew had his parachute torn up by a 20mm. 2 holes in the stabilizer just about him. A large piece of flak came up just a short distance in back of me, causing quite a concussion in my local vicinity. Drewes, our tail gunner, shot down an ME109 and Crump also damaged one.

6 February 1943 - Noll and I went up to the Nurse's Home. Saw Web and learned that Watkins was also in his B-26 outfit. Butch and I rode home on an English 1-cylinder motorcycle, all 3 of us. Some fun. Went up to the B-26 outfit to see Weppner and Watkins. Sure did my old heart good to shoot-the-bull with them. Found out that Wisebecker spun in and was killed, and Viesca in a B-24 outfit was killed when they crashed into a mountain. Sure is cold as hell. Rode 30 miles to Constantine in the back of an open GI truck to attend Fitch's funeral. They had a nice military service with American Flag draped over the coffin. He was a nice kid and went down fighting. On the last raid, he was credited with knocking down an ME109. The pictures of yesterdays' mission showed a number of aircraft destroyed, as well as personnel and buildings.

7 February 1943. 24 years old today. Missed an over water mission to Sardinia Airdrome. This is the first trip of its kind here. Reports are that it was a very successful raid. The many planes that were stationed there were either destroyed or heavily damaged. Only 3 enemy pursuit ships were encountered and only one man injured with another stray 30 caliber. Steve Henry and the crew caught me and I got my birthday licking. Noll and I stole the quart of whiskey that Henry had given Gant for Christmas because we know he does not drink. We told him about it and he does not want to settle for a fair price. Results: He is \$30.00 ahead for the 5th of whiskey that was a present to him.

LITTLE MISS MUFFETT

Little Miss Muffet
Sat on a tuffet
Eating her curds and whey,
When along came a soldier
Who spoke to her bolder
Than any youth of her day.

She put down her sandwich
And in plain GI language

Asked him what he wanted and when
He said he was looking
For good-ole home cooking
So Miss Muffett is finished with men.

8 February 1943 – Tuesday is bath day. General Doolittle went out on a mission with us, was totally p.p.. Overcast forced them to their 4th target which was spotted and bombed. Sure is cold. Snowed this evening. We have our little stove inside. There is no smoke-stack, so the smoke is really getting in our eyes, but taking the chill out of the tent. Convoys have been moving through here for 4 or 5 days now. I sure feel sorry for the ground troops, who regardless of weather have to stay out there and fight. They are riding in open trucks and sleeping in the open. They are all packed and gone when we get up in the morning from the place across the way where they pitch their tents at night.

9 February 1943 – Spent all morning in snow and rain gathering fire wood. I sure did get wet. I spent the rest of the day in a leaky tent drying out my clothes. Gosh! it's messy here. Our planes will sure have a bad time getting off. Rumor – Major Walker says we might have to move our planes to a dry field.

10 February 1943 – Forced landing in a B17F number 124349. We took off from Bovington at 11:00 AM. We flew with the formation for 45 minutes with no trouble. At approximately 11:48 the fuel pressure on number 4 engine dropped to 4 pounds. With booster pump and full throttles it only went back to 6 pounds. At the same time, the manifold pressure, tachometer and cylinder head temperature fell far below operating ranges. Number 4 motor was feathered and we tried to stay in formation but could not do so. We circled the immediate vicinity for 10 minutes trying to keep the formation in sight. We could not maintain contact with them and seeing no place we headed south toward Bobbington, searching for a suitable landing field. At 12:15 PM, we spotted a large field at Bramcate. We let down our wheels and tried to contact them by radio, to no avail. We made a pattern intending to land but 6 Ficker-Wellington were taking off, so we could not land. As we passed over the field at 600 feet altitude number 1 engine lost fuel pressure and we repeated the procedure of number 4 engine. We found we lost altitude at this time. We retracted our landing gear which helped some, even so we lost altitude at the rate of 100 feet per minute. Our inboard engine would only pull 33 inches at full throttle. We flew on gradually losing altitude, looking for any field where we could make a reasonably safe landing. At 12:24 PM I spotted a field dead ahead about one-half mile away. At this time, our altitude was about 50 feet. We stalled the plane over a hedge and made a wheels up landing on this field. At the time of landing, our inboard motors were only pulling about 28 inches at full throttle and were slowly dropping. We skidded on the ground approximately 300 yards and hit a stack of bricks and a small pile of dirt on the runway under construction, coming to a stand-still. Written by Lonnie M. Miers. Repeated here from his writing. On 22 Mar 1943, Lt. Miers was shot down over Sicily – 3 to 5 parachutes were seen to have opened.

13 February 1943 – The rains have ceased and the sun is shining very brightly. The warmth and heat is drying out the ground, but operation of our aircraft is still very uncertain. A metal gage runway is being laid and operation is expected when it is finished. Major Doolittle bogged down when he made an experimental takeoff and ground test. Our stove is smoking and I mean it is hard on the eyes. Gant is wearing his gas-mask to evade it. They put us in a volley-ball net for our leisure time. The fellows seem to go for this form of recreation.

Collected \$180.00 per diem and \$108. January pay. Made \$144.00 by exchange to 75F to 50F Per American dollar.

14 February 1943 – Happy Valentine's Day. Sunday and the day for good meals. Dinner: mashed potatoes, peas and carrots, hash, chicken a la king, plus turkey, cherry cobbler, Coffee and hardtack. Had a meeting and lecture on enemy aircraft identification by Captain Powell. Built me a chair for movies and etc. which I put to use this evening when I saw "Argentina Nights", a very old film but good. Have been singing and humming "Every Night About This Time: resulting from a radio program last evening. Topeka, Ks. 1942 for memories. Finally fixed our tent so it doesn't smoke. FLASH: 8:50 PM our tent just caught on fire. Before

the fire was discovered, we smelled smoke. Then a little flame from around the stove was spotted and it really started to burn fast. A canteen of water extinguished the flame but not before it burned a large hole in Graham's shelter-half.

15 February 1943. Another day, another \$9.00. Wrote a few letters today and made a drawing of Lt. James tent for his diary. Shined my shoes for the first time since leaving Miami, Florida. Russia is still moving on. The 97's, 25's, 26's, 38's, 39's and 'Spits' raid North African towns. Weather again wins out and our raid to Bizerte will have to wait for a later date.

16 February 1943 - A good time was had by all, at our 352nd Squadron party. Our liquor ration, which is scotch and gin, constitutes our drink. The nurses were our guests and pleasant ones they are. The band had a PA system tonight which made them better than ever so it was also more fun to dance. These gals have not been out of the states long and are very good dancers. Margy, Kay, Peiot and others. Finley had to work or something. I guess the Major who she came with last time is up at the hospital (Dr.) saw to it she would not get away. Major Holman and Colonel Walker are real good sports and fine fellows. Took the after-party GI truck ride to the nurses quarters, but this time it had a cover. Had enough alcohol to prevent freezing.

Break: The little moron cut a hole in the carpet so he can see the floor show and then Covered it up so he can not see the hole show.

17 February 1943 - Sardinia, the target for today. All overcast except for a small hole over the target, where the bombs were dropped. There was only one puff of ack ack and I saw only one enemy pursuit plane. Over the command set, one P-38 pilot spotted the enemy pursuit. Over in a minute, nothing but flames and smoke. Sure was a lazy mission. Those six hour delay bombs will sure give them hell about 8 PM tonight. Last night will sure be remembered today. I got to toggle the bombs again today which makes me more than a Bombadier, on account of him bringing a 500-pounder home the other day.

18 February 1943 - Gabes Airdrome is briefing target but weather precludes flight. American are losing heavily on this front. Losing men as well as equipment. Three airfields were taken yesterday. American radio says it was a temporary set back which was expected. LATE NEWS: Germans advancing 12 miles from Algerian border. Our bombing was very good. Heavy damage inflicted.

Goldberg and I worked on our tent all day. Made a new door, tightened canvas and laid steel floor as well as placing steel around my bed to keep in the heat and reflect the candle light.

19 February 1943 - Saturday - On the alert for the past two days, but rain and clouds are hindering us. Today we had to drill for half an hour. The radio was broken so we did not get to hear the new but went to the Grainery and listened to the band.

20 February 1943 - Had a special party for Colonel Walker, who is leaving us to go to Higher Headquarters. All Officers and no women, but plenty of sandwiches and wine. Spent most of the evening talking to Bob Strickland, vocalist, about our girls back home and the States, etc. Sure miss Jane (wonder when I will see her and the States.)

21 February 1943 - Sent \$300.00 to the bank. Balance was \$610. Plus \$300. Equals \$910.00.

22 February 1943 - My Air Medal mission today, Gabes. We found was all overcast. Plenty of P-38's to help our tail-end Charlie position, but we saw no enemy pursuits and only a little accurate flak thrown at us through the clouds. Could not find second and/or last resort target so we brought the bombs home. The briefing this AM warned us of a great number of fighters in that vicinity. They estimated 170. The p. p. weather the last few days evidently has given them ample time to get in new supplies and troops, still on the march.

23 February 1943 - The Airdrome at Kairourn. No escort and saw no enemy pursuits. Flak light but accurate. A second raid was sent out today to bomb Kasserine Pass. Drewes had a piece of flak to graze his forehead. Lt. White had a piece come through the dome and hit him on the head. This second raid was at 15,000 feet. All the guns were mounted in the mountains and with their range they could reach our formation and did. We destroyed nearly 80 German tanks. Kairourn is a "Holy City". Seven trips to here equals one to Mecca. We were given strict orders to not let any bombs hit this city.

24 February 1943 - James and I went to Constantine to see some French friends of his.

We had a nice time but started back too late. It took five different rides. We stopped a truck with a go-fer match. I struck the match and waved it. It was a British gas truck, riding between the cab and the tank, we nearly froze to death, but any old port in a storm.

25 February 1943 – Briefing at 09:30 AM and take off at 11:15 AM but the B-25's went out and reported the target to be overcast. I am beginning to believe that most of the time is spent hoping to go and remainder hoping not to go. Had our crews picture taken by the photographer who was to go with us today. Had pancakes and coffee at the same meal. Quite a treat.

26 February 1943 – Went to a movie at the Grainery and the place was packed due to so many infantry in the vicinity. Looks like tent city. The movie was "Alexander's Rag Time Band", with Irving Berlin's song "Now It Can Be Told". I had seen it a couple of times but enjoyed it again. Starting tonight they will have 3 shows each week, each show showing 2 nights.

27 February 1943 – Bizerte docks and shipping. Had ample escorts (20) Spits and P-38's. I saw one ME109 over Bizerte Lake and really got in a good burst at him. The last I saw of him he was headed for the bay with P-38's on his tail. Gant either got a hit or a near miss on a ship. I spotted troop barges (10) and 3 big boats. There was heavy flak but we escaped with only a small hole in the stabilizer. Normally on missions we are given chocolate bars, but there were none today. Gant had saved his from the last mission and shared it with me. I got up in the dome to eat it so Henry and Noll would not get p'ood. A warm fire this evening was very comfortable. Wrote Janie a letter. The war is looking much better over here on the Tunisian front. Note: Six B-25's went out and sank an oil tanker with 3 million gallons of gasoline on it. Three of the planes failed to return. A marvelous feat but the price was too great.

28 February 1943 – Today "Dirtie Gertie" was scheduled for Julian's crew. He is Assistant Operations Officer, so you see why. The weather was ok, but it so happened that today is our Squadrons day off. Three other squadrons took off though for Sicily. Only 6 returned because of weather. They landed at Qone and Aimmlila. Drew house plans most of the day. (Some day you wait, my den is most important.)

Up early, not scheduled for a mission, so Goldberg and I went to Constantine. What a town, really a bunch of dolls.

The city of Constantine is built on the craggy edge of a deep gorge, that divides the city. This gorge is over 450 feet deep from bridge level and then the city is a few hundred feet above that. There are various bridges that span this valley and lead to different part of the city. The population is made up of French and a few Arabs. The Arabs have places that are similar to those in Marrakech and are off-bounds to soldiers.

The main shopping district is on a street no wider than USA alleys. People are milling around up and down these streets all day. All the stores have sold out of their goods and only a few odds and ends that are made by the Arabs in the city can be bought.

They have electric busses and privately owned forms of transportation. The burros seem to do their share of the work. They carry rocks from the mountains for new construction. Lots of kids begging as well as shoe shine boys at dirty Arab women. The Casino is really the place. There place is really packed. About half are French girls looking for a good time, etc. I was really surprised when Gilman came up and slapped me on the back. First time we have seen him since around the 12th of December. Pritchard then ran up. We really had fun. Old Gil came home with me and again surprised the crew. There is a parade in Constantine everyday of the dirty Arabs. They round them up to march to the river to bathe and wash their clothes.

1 March 1943 – Gertie failed us for the first time today, her number two mags was acting up and results were, we did not get to complete our mission over Sicily. NOTE: Every time somebody else uses our ship, something happens when we get ready to use it. So mission number eight will have to wait for a later date. Goldie and I put a new door on our tent today. It is really the nuts.

This is the poem we named our plane after, because of its popularity.

DIRTY GERTIE FROM BIZERTE

Dirty Gertie from Bizerte,
Had a mouse trap neath her skirtie

Strapped it on her knee cap purtie
Baited it with Fluer de Flirtie.
Made her boy friends fingers hurtie
Made her boy friends most alterie.
She was noted in Bizerte as
Miss Latrine of 1930.

2 March 1943 – Our plane was reported to be in just after briefing today. Henry left for a cave, he had made a bet on, walk there and back in so much time. He won. Stahl took 'Gertie' as a spare but came back when they did not need her.

3 March 1943 – The raid yesterday was one of the best the 301st Bomb Group has pulled so far. 12 ship were definitely sunk, 16 damaged and an unknown number of submarines destroyed. Later on this raid, the 97th Bomb Squadron went over the target and dropped 2000 pounders, putting the finishing touches. Note: We just found out that the 97th went on a raid the other day and got 75 miles off course. They picked a target (they say) just like the one they were briefed on and bombed the hell out of it. The place turned out to be a British Airdrome and their best bombing. The place was demolished. La Aounia Airdrome at Tunis was our target 3 for today. The flak today was heavy, but not nearly as accurate as on previous raids. Our bomb racks would not release, so we had to salvo. The bombs overshot the field and hit in the bay. "Poor little fishes" I also drew a picture for S2 of the Bay of Bizerte and location and numbered as well the position of dud ships, counting 22 in all.

4 March 1943 – We got a new crew in our squadron today. This morning I invested \$112.50 in War Bonds, making a grand total of \$1,182.50. A Jap convoy was sunk today by our H-20s. Approximately 15,000 troops were killed and 20 boats sunk. The way they bomb is called skip-bombing. They come in a very low altitude and drop delay fuse bombs. Sometimes nearly taking the stacks off. The delayed fuse allows enough time for the plane to pull up and away from the explosion and concussion. Our gang sank 4 out of a 6 ship convoy today. Two 'Spits' were playing follow the leader today and stalled at 300 feet. He spun in near the runway and was instantly killed. Had the general 'snafu' movie. Mess around waiting for it to start until about an hour after show time, after 15 minutes of show something else went wrong. One movie is missing this evening.

5 March 1943- -We are moving soon so as to concentrate all our heavies, mediums and other groups together. Two new B-17 groups are moving in. There are hopes our group will be sent home after the African Campaign. New groups of P-40's moving in today. They dog-fight all day. Another 'Spits' made a belly landing today. Evidently, he did not realize it, until he was on the ground. Had an argument with Graham as to which was North. He got furious. My compass proved me to be right. I sure like to win with him.

6 March 1943 – The gang all played cards today in our tent. I messed around with my art work today. This afternoon we had a 'dingy' drill. It rained so we only went through the first part of the drill. Parts of our outfit moved out today and I repacked for the move, burning every thing I did not need. Got back my laundry today, some French lady really did a good job on it.

7 March 1943 - Most of our ground crew moved today. I sent my baggage ahead by truck. We (4 Officer's) beat 7 of Juliennes' crew in a game of volley ball. They won't forget that. Drew another house plan today, maybe for future use, which I hope is soon. The group went out on a mission today. Wrote Janie and Mom a letter.

8 Mar 1943 – Up early. Had breakfast and worked like-fire downing our tent and covering up the hole that we worked so hard digging. St. Donet is our new station. We have large pyramidal tents for the 4 of us. They are cold as hell, especially with a damp dirt floor. We have no stove, only candles for light. The closest place to go is Constantine, about 35 miles. Worked on our tent and build me a small cabinet for my clothes. Front moving in, is the cause of the cold weather, to say nothing of our airy tents. The Armament is catching a lot of work, changing loads. Our 500's have been changed to fragmentation bombs. Note: White got the GI's and got sent to the hospital.

10 March 1943 - Number 9 at last. La Marsa Airdrome at Tunis. Bad weather cancelled our Sardinia trip. At 10:00 o'clock we rendezvoused with the 97th. There were about

75 "Flying Fortresses" B-17's in the two groups, which makes the biggest formation to date. Our bombs hit with a great deal of Accuracy. We were attacked by about 30 Focke-Wolfs and ME 109s combined. One 190 came so close I could see his cylinder fins. He was really lucky to escape alive. One of our B-17s dropped from formation and was jumped by ME 109's. One of the other squadron B-17s dropped down and helped beat off the attackers and helped the crippled ship home. One motor was shot out and a 20 mm exploded inside the waist, just missing the waist gunner and leaving a hold big enough to crawl through. In the excitement the waist gunner bailed out, leaving the ball-turret man to get out the best he way he knew how. Of course, there are many ways to look at this incident, since the inner phone system was shot out. 2 men on the plane were injured.

11 March 1943 – We were on alert for briefing all day, but weather again won out. Had exceptionally good chow today. Got our weekly supply of rations, which included 4 sticks of gum, 5 packages of cigarettes, 2 packages of Life Savers and some paper matches. The promotion for all 2nd Lt. In the 301st Bomb Group, except we new crews, who outrank many of the guys in this squadron came through today. We got our training in the 2nd Air Force, whereas these guys got theirs in England, doing at the most 6 raids. Result, we are still 2nd Lt. and probably will be for the duration and six months. Wrote 5 letters today to try and keep up with my weekly letter system of writing.

12 March 1943 – Had a late mission to Sousse today. Our primary was Tunis, but an overcast prevented us from going there. The bombs looked very good, starting fires and huge billows of black smoke. I really got in a good burst of first at an ME 109 who rubbed wing tips with us. I don't see how they escape with streams of lead and tracer bullets going into them. We were attacked 7 times. The bombs bursting nearly 5 miles below was really a sight to see, especially when a few times bombs drag on into the city, starting fires. At least 4 different ships had near misses which are more effective than a direct hit, if close enough. One seemed to be on fire and another on it's side, I noticed this as we were leaving the target. After the mission, we had to march to the parade grounds to receive awards. General Atkinson presented the awards which were earned before January 15, 1943. Catman stole the show with his muddy run-over, heel-less shoes, dirty shirt, un-creased and shrunk up blouse with the lining hanging out and a pair of dark green pants he has worn every day since being overseas and a dirty khaki flight cap.

13 March 1943 – Up this morning at 4:30 AM, breakfast and briefing at 5:30. We were given coordinates to find a tanker and convoy. The cloud covering was solid nearly all the 5 hours and 10 minutes we were out there. We skirted Bizerte twice, went by Tunis, Sicily, Sardinia and nearly to Italy. We came back with our bombs, not having encountered any trouble of any kind. I really reviewed my navigation today. After about 3 and a half hours flying with overcast, over water. I picked up an island off Sicily and was only a few miles off course.

14 March 1943 – Noll and I hitchhiked down to the 97th squadron to see some of the old gang. Met a bunch of swell fellows and had a good old bull session. Found out Watkins and Weppner are missing out of the B-26 group and Wilkins was shot down over Naples, in a B-24. Thomas looks like a missionary with his long growth of beard. Lt. Parrott has in 27 raids. The 97th, fair-haired boys have electric lights, radio, GI stoves, passes not necessary and are free to go anywhere when not scheduled to fly.

15 March 1943 - About noon I was given a 2-day pass. Goldberg and I headed for Constantine. ETA was about 12:45. Had a nice dinner at the Officers Mess located upstairs at the Casino. After scouting around for some time we managed to find the town. A Major directed us to a place to spend the night. We looked up the gals we met on the last trip up here and had a long conversation with mama. She said they would have the girls meet us there at 6:15. On the way back downtown we were offered a drink of 'vino' by some GI on the way back to the States. We ended up by drinking his full quart. We gave him a 100 francs though. Met the gang at the Casino and had some 'vino' mixed drinks, which is wine with sweetning, and a dash of lemon. At 6:50 we made it back to the French family and were whole-heartedly taken in. They had Nany and Mebbe, as well as three other girls there to greet us. My French is very poor and about all I could say was 'no comprende' which they seemed to get a kick out of. Goldie speaks a little French and one of the girls spoke a little English so we made out ok. About 9:00 o'clock they said we should all go. They took us by the hand and led us into this beautiful park that overlooks the city. The moon light and trees really were beautiful. They then proceeded in running us down about 6

blocks of steps. We were so tired my whole body was aching. People here don't seem to mind the hills because I guess they are accustomed to them.

16 March 1943 – Up early this morning, breakfast at the British Mess and loafed around till after lunch. The Goldie and I took Butch and looked up the old gals Goldie had found earlier. What I mean they were bags. After awhile we all proceeded to hitch hike home. Upon arrival I found I had received my first letter from Janie. She's been sick, has met and danced with Clark Gable. Barbara Lee has had the measles. (She's his little sister). Jane has bought our silver and has been making dresser scarves for us. Gosh! I'm glad to hear from her.

17 March 1943 – Was alerted til 8:30 AM. Mission then cancelled. Wrote a story "On a Combat Mission" just to pass the time away. Built a stove, which works perfect and wrote Janie a letter.

18 March 1943 – Yesterday the mission was ok. Four out of a six ship convoy were sunk.

19 March 1943 – Trains have been constantly on the move today, taking half-tracks, guns and supplies up to the front. By night bringing prisoners. Some camps have been set-up for them in the local vicinity. The Italians don't mind at all but the Germans are a lost cause. Spent the day thinking and planning for a future after the war. The American Forces are advancing and are now only 100 miles from the British Army and 10 miles past Gafsa. They are still debating as to Who and Why one should get the Distinguished Flying Cross.(DFC). They say they are not getting it for 25 missions and this and that. Wish they would make up their minds.

20 March 1943 – Three months ago I was leaving Morrison Field. Seems like a long time since I was there, but then again the time has flown by. A person can sure do a lot of things in a few months. This old world has a lot of strange and interesting places for one to see. I've learned lots more since I have been out of school than I did in school. News from the boys of the 97th, that the big drive is starting tomorrow. From the way we've been advancing makes us wonder if, it isn't already under way. Went up to the Grainery and heard the band play. They sound good. The band is composed of Bob Andrews, trumpeter and song writer; Spree, Sonny Durhams' drummer, Croser, accordion, has had his own band, clarinet and vocalist Strickland (Bob Chester).

21 March 1943 - First day of spring. Today the 97th sent out 2 squadrons at 8:00 o'clock and we (92nd) sent one out at 9:00 o'clock. One of our planes let go a red flare on approach. Had a slight argument with Goldie. Had a second mission today. Everything worked out ok. Spotted a bunch of German planes along the highway, on the way into the target. They probably are using them for runways now. Saw very little flak and 2 MIG's who were running like hell for home. One ME 109 dived on 6 – P38's, who in turn channeled up and then when above them peeled off at them in few second intervals, riddling them to shreds. I bet Gabes has seen all of the bomber and P-38's they want to see for awhile. Rumor has it we are moving to the Middle East when completion of work here.

22 March 1943 – Thirteen must be our crew's lucky number. We attended the briefing and were slated as the #4 ground reserve, but after only counting 23 ships taking off we taxied onto the runway cutting out Hamm and indicating 200 mph to get us a position in the formation. The squadron we flew in happened to be the 32nd. They were the ones who ran away and left a crippled plane over Gabes. On the way to Sicily we skimmed over the top of the waves at 500 feet so their sound detectors could not locate us. All would probably been ok if a 3 ship convoy had not spotted us and radioed ahead. The fighters were up there to meet us. At 24,000 feet we went into the target and the heaviest flak I've seen. The burst rocked our ship from side to side and I expected to lost a motor at anytime. The direct hit we go on an ammunition ship had such concussion, it was felt at our altitude. After our bombs were away we made a sharp turn to the left passing under my squadron (352nd) and forged out ahead. I saw one motor smoking on 1-3 ship in my squadron (352nd). About 5 to 10 minutes away from the target the pursuits jumped the trailing squadron (352nd) and Lt. Hair's ship dropped from formation. Part of the way down his left wing came off and the ship exploded in mid-air, leaving a trail of smoke and fire as it started winding down. Five chutes were reported to have left the ship, but our rail gunner, Drewes, reports the pursuits made passes at them. The remaining 5 ships in the squadron had 4 ships with 3 motors out. Little Joe had a 20 mm shell through # 3 propeller and had a flak shell burst in the bomb bay, leaving a sieve effect and a number of holes elsewhere in the ship. All the ships in the 352nd

Squadron flying in that order today are now grounded for repairs that will take some time. Tonight we are without the brave men, who did their duty, without a whimper, they went down fighting. Thanks to our God for taking care of us the way he did --- not a scratch.

23 March 1943 – The 99th boys who moved in today stood in awe and wonder at the plane's coming in on 3 motors, so many holes and the tale of the missing plane. I can truthfully say I was scared today. This mission will be remembered because it is the first plane this squadron has lost since organized over a year ago. Docks have a hole 50 foot by 300 yards long in part of the city, 3 boats of ammunition and who knows what else was destroyed. Concussions probably injured people around for miles.

24 March 1943 – Ferryville was our target for the day. Gant's bombs hit right in there. We had plenty of escorts including P38's and some 'Spits' who were mistaken for enemy pursuit and were fired upon. Flak was slight but right in there. A plane in our old 1-3 position, lost a motor. This was the position Julian's crew had before they had to turn back. We led the second element and my ETA's were right in there.

Note: Newspaper write-up. While direct aid was being given to the Armies in the battle area "Flying Fortresses" were striking another blow far behind the lines in the vital battle for supplies by raiding Ferryville docks by daylight. They hit 3 supply ships with heavy caliber bombs. A concentration of bombs on the northern area of the docks resulting in a gigantic explosion which was immediately followed by large fires.

25 March 1943 – Gant and I got an overnight pass to Constantine. We visited the French family I know and really had fun. We really made them happy when we gave them some chocolate candy, cigarettes and gum. They made us some coffee (if that's what they call it) and brought out rum and some other kind of liquor, although I know it is very scarce and cannot be bought anymore. Later in the evening we came back again and they opened a quart of wine and offered it to us. Note: The French people are very hard people to meet. They feel offended if you don't accept what they offer you. They also feel hurt if you don't offer them a cigarette even though they do not smoke they will save it for someone who does smoke. Really had fun trying to convey my conversation. I even had to go to the extent and extreme of drawing pictures. We spent the night at the British Fighter Command. We had a nice mattress and ample blankets to keep comfortable. We had breakfast with them after a night sleep. We did a little window shopping and visited the barber shop where we got a haircut, shave, massage, shampoo and manicure.

27 March 1943 – Up at 6:27 AM which just gives me time to dress and be in formation before roll call. We had 15 minutes of drill and then breakfast. Found out today that there is a place here in St. Donet where we can get a Turkish bath, a small fee of 7 francs. I really enjoyed my first douche, we have had in several weeks. The Arab who runs the place for the army, wash you down in hot water and then throw buckets and buckets of cold water on you, making a person feel like a million dollars.

28 March 1943 – 'Tis Sunday again, slept late and had no mission. Electric lights were installed today which makes our tent a lot more livable. Our GI stove has a home-made burning unit and it is really a piece of art even if I do say so. Our troops are at Gabes, El Hamma Airdrome and only 30 miles from Sousse. Goldie and I beat Henry and Noll in a little game of bridge. Won \$2.65 a piece. Afterward I heated hot water and washed, shaved, using my helmet and a home-made wash stand to hold it. Really making progress on the old front., The British have taken the Mareth line and are now only a few miles from Gabes. The retreating troops are plowing up their landing fields as they are being pushed back into the sea. Since the 20th, 6,000 prisoners have been taken, most of them yesterday. At our evening meal, we had a half a dozen girls from the Red Cross working as KP's (kitchen police.). We had 42 of them volunteer for regular KP duty here, maybe they will add that motherly? touch. Rumor has it, we have no targets for today. The 8th Army has now moved into Gabes. Reports are they are shelling hell out of Sfax. The heaviest bombing by the light bombers up to this day. They destroyed 50 motor vehicles, damaged 300 more along the highway between Gabes and Sfax. The pursuit has constantly been pouncing on enemy troops and enemy pursuit. They downed 9 today. The British lost 21 bombers on a raid to Berlin today. Icing conditions and

bad weather may have accounted for some of them. Re-arranged our tent today and it looks very neat

Except for running water we (nearly) have all the conveniences of home. I put a bedspread on my bed today which I bought in South America.

28 March 1943 – Finally my second cluster and a very successful raid on Cagliari, Sardinia. We had four groups on the mission. 97th had 2 groups and the 99th made their initial appearance along with our 352nd Squadron. We had shipping and our bombs dropped right in there. I saw one big boat explode and burst into flames. We were attacked by a Regiena. He made a pass at our group which had the squadrons in a good defensive formation. He realized he was coming in too fast and did not have a way to dive away so he throttled back, as I could see from the fire and smoke burst from his exhaust. He skidded and slid into the group before diving off, taking advantage of our speed to make his turn. A number of 50 caliber machine guns opened up on him, causing probably a great deal of damage. He dove toward the ground but was lost to us by a cloud. Note: After we landed our Commanding Officer, Major Holman came out to the plane to see if everything was ok. He then took us in his jeep directly to the Red Cross tent where they serve coffee and donuts to the combat crews after returning from a mission. This is something new around here but everyone really appreciates it greatly.

Janie's birthday was the 24th.

The sight of Lt. Hairs B-17 burning and spinning downward will be remembered always on 22 March 1943.

An article out of a newspaper.

“ It was a long jump from teaching school in Indiana to leaping out of an airplane 11,000 feet over some African mountains, but Tom Thayer made it. He hope his next jump would be right back to his Indiana farm and there he would stay

Tom Thayer, was 27, weighed 200 pounds, taught school for five years at Clifford, Indiana and was the Navigator of a Flying Fortress (B-17) when I met him. They say he was the best Navigator in the Squadron.

One day a bunch of Fortresses started a bombing run over Bizerte, over the mountains they ran into stormy, freezing weather. The ship Tom was navigating iced up and went out of control. Over the inter-communication phone, the captain gave the order for the crew to put their parachutes on and get ready to bail out. A minute later he gave the order to jump. Lieutenant Thayer was first on the list. He opened the escape hatch and out he went. Now, in the next few seconds some things happened. The other men did not jump immediately because they could not get the ball turret gunner out of his turret. While they were pulling and tugging at him, the Captain got some control over the plane. Then he ordered the bombs salvoed – which means dropped so they won't explode – and that gave him more control. THEN he countermanded the order to jump. But poor Tom was already half way to earth. The plane returned safely to base in less than an hour. It took Tom 4 days. The mountains where he landed were full of Arabs, working in the fields, and finally he walked a short distance and spoke to one of them. They tried to talk, but not knowing each other's language, they did not get far. So the Arab took him to a village and they went to a stone house, apparently the home of the village chief. The whole village clustered around to stare at him. Next morning, they got six donkeys, put Tom on one and started out. The donkeys over here are very small, and Tom was very big. When they would ride along the edge of a chasm, on a little shelf just wide enough for a donkey, Tom could feel his long legs itching for the ground. He finally got home. He tried to pay the Arabs, but they would not take anything. However, they were fascinated by the photographs in his wall and they indicated their desire for some. so Miss Mary Scott of Shelbyville, Indiana, will be interest to know that her photographs now repose, for all I know, next to some Arab's heart.”

3 April 1943 – Received a very nice letter from Jane, which I answered immediately. Had a briefing on a mission to Trappino, Sicily but after waiting at our plane for a short time it was called off. Got some exercise playing volleyball. Heard a good joke today. Two pennies, a piece of paper. Moving your hips you say, “Hit the penny, hit the penny, hit the paper twice” The sold out all rations that

were left over so I bought a carton of cigarettes, mints and matches. Found my hat and light. I have some Captains coat and hat from the 5th Wing.

3 April 1943 – This being Sunday when we could sleep late and not bothered with Reveille would have to be the day for an early mission. Our first trip to Europe. Naples, Italy. We had 3 targets and 96 planes with no escort. We used the 'Isle of Capri' as a turning point and Mount Vesuvius as our IP. Our group had the Capodichina Airdrome as a target. We destroyed something from the huge cloud of smoke we saw. The 99th had the railway yards and the 97th the docks. We were the first group over and the guns were all aimed at us, but being on the far side of the city where the F/O is located, their shells burst far short. The other two groups went over the city and the guns before they were ever detected. The 110's they were using were bursting as high as 35,000 feet. After looking at the target upon leaving, I saw the sky we had just passed through, a solid mass of flak bursts. The trip was mostly at 500 feet, skimming over the Mediterranean Sea, so they could not use their radar equipment with any degree of accuracy. On the way home I had some target practice shooting at bubbles made by 50 caliber bullets. I shot ahead of the plane. I sure mashed my thumb though, in the gun on a recoil. 5 letters and 3 from Janie. Oh! Boy.

4 April 1943 – Up bright and early this morning after a good nights rest on a double-bed mattress. We stayed at the British Command after a jeep ride with Captain Dion to Constantine. We had breakfast at the mess here which consisted of their usual tea, some kind of breakfast food, egg and hash patty and spaghetti. After this we strolled down the long flight of stairs and up into the business section. I got a shave, massage and shampoo. After sometime we decided to go to the Casino, have orange drink and watch the people go by. We saw the dirty Arab parade marching down toward the river for their forced bath and other busy bodies moving to and fro. A P-38 returned today that had been missing for 3 days. It seems that on an early morning weather flight the weather closing down making it hard to get into home base. The pilot made a forced landing on the desert not too far away. He managed to get enough gas to get here and land. After landing all were astonished to see the supposedly dead man step from the cockpit.

7 April 1943 – Lt. White and I went to Setif for dinner today. We ate at the French Officer's Club. I did not recognize any thing we had to eat but eggs and it was edible. Our plane went out on a mission today and was pretty well shot-up, as was the whole squadron. The "T" was shot out of Gertie, where the flak came through, hitting the Navigator's auxiliary oxygen bottle, but although a big dent was put in it, it did not explode, but landed in Castle's lap.

8 April 1943 – On a raid over Tunis, ye ole P-38's shot down a large number of JU's 32 of them. The 97th who they were escorting bombed the rest of them were coming in to land, after being turned back. The transports were full of German troops taken out of Tunisia. None of them had parachutes, so it was a bloody mess. All in all with the raid on Palermo, it is reported 200 planes destroyed by our Air Force over here today. This is from a report on yesterday's raid. White and I missed out on a 10,000 foot convoy hunt today that the 97th missed out this morning. Had a nice time in Constantine today mostly just eating all we could and admiring the strange sights we saw there.

Mission Related by Graham.

At a briefing on the mission today which was a convoy someone asked if they were flying #20's or B-17's when the bombing altitude was given as 10,000. Lt. White and I were in Constantine so someone else slated for us. Lucky we found out later. About 5 or 10 minutes away from the convoy which they discovered later was the wrong one we were attacked by pursuits. Our own pursuits, we found out later, were at the right convoy but were no where in sight making the going rough. On the bombing run, Lt. Goldberg was shot through his parachute and on through his hip by a 20 mm shell. An English Officer, who was riding along, also was hit in the leg. Even though Lt. Goldberg's wound was very painful, he set his bombsight and dropped the bombs. On a short turn away from the target, Sgt. Tuka was also hit by a 30 caliber through the arm, knocking him down. He rose, grabbed his gun again and kept on firing until a 20 mm shell exploded in the waist, flooring him again. At this time Lt. Graham looked over at another

ship in the element and saw where a 20 mm shell had exploded and had torn a hole under the waist window that was as large as the window itself. To his amazement the waist gunner was standing above the hole and thumbing his ears. The armor plating had saved his life, but was buckled from the explosion. The pursuits kept blasting away injuring 2 more men and damaging the ships still further, but in the fight they also lost nearly 15 planes. Three ships out of five, which consisted of two merchant marine vessels and three battle cruisers were sunk. One boat was full of ammunition that was sunk. The concussion from this hit and knocked Lt. Long's ship clear out of the formation. On the way back, the English Officer took care of Goldie giving him morphine and trying to stop the flow of blood. Upon landing, the pain was so severe that they had to give him a shot to knock him out so they could put him in the ambulance. T/Sgt. Collins helped Sgt. Tucka, who was not suffering near so much. Lt. Graham asked him how he felt and he said about the way I did last time. This is now a cluster for his Purple Heart. I rushed over to the Doctor's tent to see how Goldie was. He was being given blood plasma. He had taken so much dope he was acting very drunk. His first words to me upon seeing me standing outside the tent was "Hello, you old bastard, come in here. Did you have a good time in Constantine? Did you see Lily? It's a good thing I went yesterday, isn't it?" Goldie was operated on last night to remove shells and fragments from his stomach. Although it was a major operation he will be ok, if infection does not set in. The doctor says he is through with combat for good. When he is well, he will be shipped back to the States. He has been recommended for the Purple Heart and Distinguished Service Cross. The lucky guy is in a large room to himself and a nurse with him around the clock. The doctor said "They were good-lookers, too."

9 April 1943 – This morning around 11:00 o'clock nearly 60 P-40's passed over. They sure looked nice. Probably are out for a strafing good time. Ordinance is moving very soon now. Wonder what's up? The 1st Army is 35 miles away from Tunis, the 8th Army is 45 miles from Sfar and American and British Forces have combined and are now fighting together.

10 April 1943 – Mission No. 17. It was an easy one. Our three heavy bomber groups went to northern part of Sardinia, on three different targets in the vicinity and completed them all. Our target was the battle cruiser "Triesta" which was 600 feet long and had approximately a 10,000 ton replacement. Each plane in our group dropped its six 1,000 pound bombs. (72 tones in all) all around and on it. If it does not sink it will take a long time to repair. The 97th severely damaged or sunk the other cruiser which now only leaves 5 out of 7 they had before the raid. The 99th took a submarine base on Corsica (which is just across the Strait of Boniface from Sardinia where Napoleon was born). I noticed just before their bombs started hitting a number of ack-ack batteries near the base but--- the base covered them as well as the docks, part of the city and caused large explosions and fires immediately. The P-38's had another field day, when they knocked down 27 JU 52's out of Bizerte. 10 fellows jumped before the attack was started.

11 April 1943 – Today's briefing for Trapina was called off and we were rebriefed on a lone cruiser that may be used for evacuation from Africa that was in Tunis Bay. Our group went out with 12 – 500's in each plane and laid our eggs from one side of the ship across and onto and extending on the outer docks. Flak was very heavy. They threw up everything, at us, but the kitchen sink. Our cover was the 'Spits' who really stayed high and out of range. Latest reports are that we have officially taken Sfax and most of Rommel's Army is now north of Sousse. Reports on yesterdays' bombing was "Two Italian battle cruisers were severely damaged, when Fortress' bombed them as they lay outside the harbor". A few days ago the P-38's went out with 500 pound bombs and dive bombed a three ship convoy, sinking all three.

12 April 1943 – Up at 4:00 o'clock, rushed through half of a breakfast and off at 6:00 o'clock. Our target was a convoy east of Tunis. Our route out was via Tunis at 15,000 feet, resulting in a Navigator in the 32nd being killed by a small fragment of flak through his cheek and out of the back of his head. After going through flak alley, we spotted a 3 boat convoy about 30 minutes out. We followed the 1st group out and back over them. We dropped our bombs, only then to see the other group make a right turn and head for a 7 or 8 ship convoy. They dropped their bombs there, only to miss everything as we did. During this time, enemy pursuit were trying to make passes on us, only to run all over the sky by our P-38's. This mornings news declared that the Italian battle cruiser 'Trieste' has finally sank. Our Armies were now past Sousse and going strong. Again P-38's downed 30 more JU's. They as well as our 'Spits' are doing constant

patrolling for JU's.

13 April 1943 – Our fourth straight day of flying. Castratrano Airdrome at Sicily was really hit today. We found the place crowded with JU's and it looked as if the larger one's were ME6 motor transports. We set a large number of them on fire as well as covering nearly the complete area with fragmentation bombs. We led the second element in our squadron and we had a grand stand view of the 353rd ship that was hit by flak and caught on fire. They flew about 10 minutes away from the target with a small fire on #2 motor. It seemed he started to make a turn-back into shore when the plane banked off in a slow spiral and headed for its watery grave. About 10,000 feet down, it exploded and disintegrated in mid-air. I saw fragments flying everyway. The remains fell on into the water and waves finally engulfed them. I saw 3 chutes open just before the explosion and Drewes saw 2 over land. Others reported more.

14 April 1943 – Not scheduled for today. Noll and I went up to see Goldberg. He is doing ok. Saw the ambulances bring in a tail gunner from the 353rd shot through the back with a 50 caliber (make your own conclusions). They also brought in a tail gunner from the 99th who was shot through the leg and probably died because his oxygen mask was cut in two. Rode back with a negro "Taylor" who has been up to the front most of the time. He said this morning that he saw about 600 prisoners marching in streets of Algiers. The Italians were all happy but the Germans are a sorry lot. Comings this way from the front, about 30 miles on the other side of Tebessa, he stopped to pick up a soldier on the road and about 18 of them came running out and got in the truck. He did not know it until they told him that they were Italians and were giving themselves up as prisoners. They did after getting here report to a concentration camp. The report tonight on the raid yesterday states that we destroyed 73 out of nearly 150 planes on the field at the time.

15 April 1943 - Well, today we got the dope on when to expect to go home. At the end of the war. We have a new fighter group and a new heavy outfit moving in next week. The object of this African Campaign is to let no one escape from here, either capture or destroy them. A theory is just hold Japan and defeat Germany first. Before too long we will attempt to move into and take Sicily and Sardinia. From there we can operate far into Germany. It is known that a new fighter group has moved down into Sicily. This would mean a little action on our raids.

16 April 1943 – Received 15 letters: (6) Bettie; (2) Janie; (2) Lynn; (1) Janice; (1) Shirley; (1) Imogene; (1) Dad and (1) Ben Frank. Was so certain we were not going to have a raid today that I put on my pinks and clean shirt only to be called to briefing. We got off at 12:15 and headed for Palermo. This is where the 97th lost 2 ships the other day. Approaching the target and about 10 minutes away vapor trails started pouring from our planes at 21,000 feet. We climbed up though and lost them at 25,000 feet. The flak was as heavy as I ever wanted to see it. It was really ample. Our bombs extended over into the city and really started some big fires. The place was a mass of smoke when we left it. Our P-38's really did a good job all the way over and on the target, but half hour from the target 3 MIG's came through the overcast and our p-38's were on their tails and shot one down. He bailed out in the Mediterranean Sea somewhere and is probably swimming around down there. Another pilot flew in our squadron formation home because of a large hole in his wing and his aileron was shot up.

17 April 1943 – A very nice easy one today which made all at briefing give a sigh of relief. Ferryville shipping was our target, but seems all three squadrons over-aimed and the city proper of Ferryville was left in a mass of flame and smoke. The enemy pursuit were waiting for us to come off the target and we expected lots of fun but it seemed our high 'Spits' who were cover and high they were 32,000 feet were right on the ball. Their vapor trails soon cut off and they were really mixing it up as we lost sight of our target. I had extra ammunition all over the place, as I knew I would need it when I saw them all waiting. A radio report of yesterdays raid said we destroyed 6 merchant vessels or rather damaged as well as two destroyers. We set the power house on fire and destroyed more of their docks.

18 April 1943 - Well, I got mine today over Palermo. Our group went after the marshalling yards and the round house. The 97th went over after an airdrome. Twenty minutes off the target we were attack by ME110's. A plane was knocked out of the 353rd group which was trailing and he was gliding for the water the last time I saw him. He failed to return. We hit the IP and then for the target. Flak was really heavy, hitting our plane 3 times. 30 caliber bullets tore from one wing to the other. Our transmitter was shot out as was our induction system on #2 engine. A piece of flak tore through Sgt. Drewes foot and just as our bombs were dropping a 20

mm shell exploded and one fragment went through my oxygen mask lodging in my upper lip. (It is still there in 2000) Blood really spurted out due to pressure. I tore off my oxygen mask and grabbed a spare. It would not fit due to not being adjusted. About this time an ME 110 was in, so I fired the gun in his general direction with one hand holding the mask on with the other hand. We came back in formation until we hit our coast and then pushed ahead indicating over 200 mph. We came on in for a landing upon approach. The ambulance carried us for first aid and then the Station Hospital #35. X-rays showed fragment in Drewes' foot and my lip. Note: 97th lost 4 ships day before yesterday as did the 99th losing 2. What stories these fellows in Ward 5 have to tell. Also 3 gas tanks will have to be installed as well as a new tail surface. The nurses are all very nice. Don't seem they can do enough for a person. They sure take a beating with all the crazy guys here in the Officer's Ward. Had my back washed and massaged and powdered by Miss Martin. Food is not too bad.

21 April 1943 – This is really a rest cure. We have worlds of fun kidding, joking, playing a game of football one of the fellows has and reading. Gosh! Of all the people I saw. Holly Martin this evening. Sure was good to talk over old times. He is now the proud papa of a little girl. He's a PFC in transportation here at the hospital. Bundy married Betty Fletcher. Johnny Timmons and Hank Wilkerson are in Australia somewhere. Johnny is in the Signal Corps.

22 April 1943 – The Japs were reported to have killed all the Americans they captured during the raids over Tokyo. A German broadcast reported this news. They said the Americans were bombing cities and killing more women and children than the British did. The raid over Tokyo was 18 April 1942 (approximate date) and was led by General Doolittle. The 5-25's used and the purpose was mostly to prove we could bomb them and break down morale. Spent this evening talking over old times with Holly and the rest of the fellows in the Transportation here at the hospital. About 11:30 PM the nurse in my ward sent the ward boy to tell me it was quite a bit past my bedtime. The 2nd Bomb Group is here now. Part of them at our field are living in their planes. Stanley White. Andy Devine and a few others are with them. They were at Alamogordo, New Mexico with us, but remained in the States four months longer than did the rest of us.

23 April 1943 - Friday, Had breakfast in bed as all the other days here in the hospital. The sun was very warm so we all had a sun bath before dinner. I made arrangements to be released today, which finally came down about 7 :00 PM. I bid adieu and returned to the field in the same ambulance that brought me here. Everyone was asking how I felt and looking at my damaged lip. The 301st Bomb Group had a party this evening so I attended. A good time was had by all. Sandwiches and vino were served. Our band beat out some good numbers and dancing was enjoyed. Most everyone was in a very gay mood all evening. About 10 British nurses were here beside our American gals. Afterwards I took Pat Thomson home in a GI truck.

24 April 1943 – The p-40's and 'Spits' caught and shot down 31 of Germany's 6 motored transports over Bizerte yesterday. They also shot down the escorts. We lost 2 planes.

25 April 1943 - Easter Sunday.

Darkness fell upon the earth,
For Christ was crucified.
Then in a mighty victory proved
In vain he had not died.

Risen from the grave, he spoke
To all men here on earth
To die in faith is not to die
But gain a newer birth.

Had a visit with Ward 5, most of the afternoon. Had dinner with Holly and a date with Pat. We had a very delightful evening drinking vino, dancing and strolling through the city and observing the newly budded trees. Everything is beautiful and green. Went to another Easter service with Noll and Luce up at the hospital. Sure was nice.

26 April 1943 – The group went to Italy today. The bombing run messed up because a few scattered clouds drifted over the target after they were on the run and had their sights set up, making the leader believe target was hidden. Most planes brought their bombs

home. This evening we had a hail storm and heavy rain. Water was left standing over 3 inches deep in lots of places. All our tents were flooded however I got my grass mat off the floor before the water reached it. The wild flowers are really beautiful. Poppies are growing every where, and are they ever beautiful. The 2nd Bomb Group took off from our field today, where 'they have been stationed until their field was ready to go to their assigned location. The 97th lost a ship today. Gillman's crew got show up the same day we did over Palermo. His 2 waist gunners were killed, his tail gunner seriously injured. The ball turret man with his leg just dangling by skin and Banks, his Navigator hit by flak.

27 April 1943 – Bad weather again today. Drying out our tent from the rain storm of yesterday. Played volleyball for pastime, unless sleeping.

WELL, IT'S A RUMOR

I just heard a rumor
I'll have to repeat
It's hot off the griddle
Or should I say 'seat'.
I heard it today
At a quarter of two,
It sounded so good
I must tell it to you.
Rumor or not,
I don't give a damn,
But they just shot the guy
Whose been sending us 'Spam'.

28 April 1943 – Messed around most all day before they decided to have a mission. We had a target in Sardinia, but weather kept us out. The 2nd Bomb Group followed for their first mission today. We were attacked by 4 ME109's but they stayed out of range. Was back at 7:30 PM and rushed to dress for a party at the Nurses' Quarters. Had a marvelous time but my gal sure got mad at me. I messed around with all the other nurses too and all turned out ok. I really got happy and gay. Sort of hate to face what they will say to me when they see me. Sure makes a person feel great to clean up and go somewhere for a change. A very nice letter from Janie. The definition of a wolf is a fellow who dates a sweater girl and then tries to pull the wool over her eyes.

29 April 1943 – Slept through roll call formation this morning probably because I did not get in until about 4 AM. Was in a gay mood all day due to last night. Sure was teased a lot. Had briefing and was at stations but mission was called off. It was ok, because we were flying in #22980, which is not a good ship, and secondly, because I was not feeling up to par. I wonder why? Most of the fellows think we are going to be relieved of combat duty very shortly after this campaign. General Montgomery said it would be over in another two weeks.

30 April 1943 -

Bank Balance	\$1,230.00
Allotment	160.00
Total	1,390.00
War Bonds	112.50
Grand Total	1,502.50

Mission cancelled today. Had presentation of Awards. We all marched out on the drill field and popped to Attention, when General Atkinson drove up in his car. First awards went to those in the hospital and Missing In Action. Then, we, who were to receive the Purple Heart were honored. I walked, seemed like blocks, up to the General and gave a salute. He did not return it, which made me think I had made a mess of something. He gave me my Purple Heart, shook my hand and we saluted. I was all shaky when I returned to my position because I was so sure I had messed up.

The medal is really beautiful and I am very proud of it. Believe me, I am happy there are no clusters on it.

1 May 1943 – Another new month. Nothing very eventful has happened today except being Duty Officer for the evening.

2 May 1943 – Went up to visit the fellows I know and for a little social life. Had a nice time. Simkins and James went up with me and enjoyed themselves. Captain Bard invited me to eat with him. I did him a slight favor and he does not seem to think he can do enough to repay me.

3 May 1943 – Group day off, so to Constantine we go. About 10 of us, out of our squadron go up and have a good time. We barely make it for lunch which is ok. Sitting down with someone waiting on a person is just like the good old US of A. Met quite a few fellows I knew and showed Captain Williams the town. Noll and I stayed for a party a bunch threw at this French home. Had a nice time dancing and drinking vino. The girls, 8 or 10, were really nice and all good dancers. My French is awful and I sure have a time carrying on a conversation with them. We came home in a jeep with a couple of Captain's who came by for us. It rained all the way home and turned pretty cold. I sat in between the front seats and managed to stay dry. The 97th Bomb Group went out late and were returning far into the night. At midnight all our landing fields were still lit up waiting the return of some of the ships. The Second had 4 ship that failed to return. The weather is really nasty, low ceiling and very little visibility.

4 May 1943 – Last night's flight finds 13 planes missing. 11 are reported as wash-outs and 2 unaccounted for. Lt. Colonel Rainey made a water landing near Bonn was picked up by a destroyer. One ship came in here this morning and made a wheel-up landing damaging it considerably. (B-17's) A rumor has it that we are going to give ships to someone else to fill the gaps and we will go home. They are looking for a Chinese interpreter or we are moving to India. 25 new ships are coming in for us. I talked with a jeep filled with men who were headed for the front. They made their initial landing here in Africa and are just now going to the front for the first time. They seemed to be quite worried about having their convoy strafed. They said an earlier convoy was surprised by an attack by ME 109's and 285 men were killed. No mail for a week now.

6 May 1943 – Mission No. 25. Time was when you would receive the DFC for completing 25 missions but the Government has discontinued that policy. Caught it about 30 miles off Palermo. It was escorted by 2 destroyers and a single plane. Upon seeing us the plane headed straight for land and the destroyers took evasive action. All our group aimed at one merchant supply ship and blew it up. A large explosion took place and a cloud of smoke. The ship sank in about 30 minutes. They are trying to starve some of the enemy out of their foxholes around Bizerte and Tunis. Our troops are now bombing Ferryville and are only 10 miles from Bizerte and just a few more miles from Tunis. Rumors still rampant. Saw a good picture show "In Old Chicago" Danced and had an enjoyable time.

7 May 1943 – This AM at 6 the other groups were rendezvousing and leaving for their targets. Our briefing was set for 12 o'clock but cancelled. I went to Constantine with Looney and had dinner at the Casino. What a treat! We had chicken and ice cream. About 7, Lt. Berson and myself in his reconn car came back and then went up to St. Arnaud. We had over 400 planes over Tunis yesterday. We are nearly in Bizerte and have them pushed way back.

9 May 1943 - Rickenbacker addressed our group today. He told of his adventurous life in a conceited sort of superman way and then brought in the old (real meaning of his speech) that we would not get home before 1945. He said Germany would not crack from the outside before the inside. Then Japan would take a minimum of a year to lick. It will not be an easy job. Kill and kill because the sooner be have destroyed the enemy the sooner we can end this war.

REMEMBER BATAAN On April 9th 1942, a gallant army of American fired their last shot on that bloody peninsula. The men of Bataan were outnumbered but not out fought. They succumbed to starvation .. disease... and the lack of arms and ammunitions that we did not send. We had our 4 groups which

compiled 134 B-17's and 96 P-38's. The target was the city of Palermo. Captain McAdams who wanted to get in his flying time went in my place. The city was divided into areas for different squadrons. The bombs were fair and the city was left in a mass of wreckage. The B-25's B-26's and A-20's followed up. Flak was really heavy but no one was injured. Lt. Peabody flew back on one motor and made a forced landing at Bizerte. The squadron flew over the city at 3,000 foot. We had a squadron party. Had a fair time but some of the gals getting drunk disgusted me. We had nurses from the 35th and 57th. There were also about 30 English nurses. Cannot understand how England could have so many awful looking women.

Just give me the good old USA any day.

10 May 1943 - Lost Julienne's crew today. What happened will probably never be fully known. It could have been a direct burst of flak which blew off a wing or it could have been a stray bomb from a squadron above, since they were lagging behind the formation. Lt. Julienne and Lt. White were killed. Reports say Lt. Kam, who was the Bombadier, is a Prisoner of War but has lost both legs. I do not know what the mission was that day for them as I only kept track of the 50 missions I flew and I did not fly this

date. Lt. White, his navigator, and I were in the same Navigation class of 42-B in San Antonio. He was quite an artist. He also cut my hair several time outside our pup tent in Africa.

11 May 1943 – Another mission to Sicily. The target was the city of Maroala. We are carrying 1,000 pounders and believe me they really mess up things. We turned back shortly after going over Bizerte because of a bad gas leak. The fumes were so strong inside the plane that the tail gunner was bothered by the odor. When the leak was discovered all the windows and doors were opened to prevent fire. Lt. Noll had just finished a cigarette. If one had been lighted later, the plane would have been blown to kingdom come. I sweated out the ride back to base. The position we had, 21, was filled in by Ace, whose position was filled by a 353rd plane. The co-pilot in the 353rd was shot in the shoulder.

12 May 1943 – Today is Group day off and what a lovely day it is. No reveille so I slept until nearly 8 AM. Up, then for breakfast. We were scheduled for gas mask drill so I went over to the 32nd area and visited. They have a still over there to distill the vino we get around here. Nearly pure alcohol comes out. They mix it with juices to drink.

13 May 1943 – Today's target was in Sardinia. The 2nd went over just as we hit our IP and left the place smoking. We then encourage the cause by leaving big black clouds. The 97th was next followed by the 99th. The town must be a total wreck especially with those 1,000 pounders we dropped today. We were attacked by a number of ME 109's whose cannon burst were falling short but in great numbers. The Italians news broadcast this morning said two of our planes are missing, maybe three. Bought \$40.00 worth of champagne and had a party with the band boys. Some American pilot found an ME109 complete in a hanger up front. He started it and it ran fine. He painted out the German insignia and put circles there. He now has a plane of his own.

14 May 1943 – Had a splendid time at Constantine with the band. We rode around most all afternoon looking the city over. What a place! Then we played for a dance at the Casino. General Spaatz, Doolittle, Rickenbacker, and others were present. I met Major Sherry and rank did not mean a thing. Brought a nurse home who was really a lemon.

15 May 1943 – Played at a dance for the 2nd Bomb Group at Chat Dunn. Met a lot of the old gang I knew while going through the stages. Shields, Spivery, O'Neil and others. The English nurses and 5 Americans were from St. Avenard. We had chicken to eat, vino to drink. Some of the fellows sure got in a sloppy mood.

16 May 1943 – Had a chance to go to Algiers but thought I could have more fun with the band. We played for the Enlisted Men at the Red Cross. Their playing was ok. but the response of the band wasn't any too good from the standpoint of the audience. They wanted every number to be "You Are My Sunshine" or something similar. We, after coming home from Constantine, took

the truck and visited the English nurses. We picked up 2 on the road and another at a different hospital. A good time was had by all.

17 May 1943. We had our briefing at 05:00 AM. Our group with the 2nd and our escort of P-38's were all of us. We came through the first cloud layer pretty well in formation but when we came through the second layer there were B-17's and P-38's everywhere but where they belonged. Everyone was really sweating out that flight. We, all, after sometime, separated and came home individually. Had a nice time with some British nurses, I picked up in a 2 ½ ton truck and brought back to the field with 5 gallons of wine. We showed them the camp by moonlight. I bet. Miss Ethel Fall was mine.

20 May 1943 – We went to Italy today, Crossetto Airdrome and really did a real good job. The 2nd went over ahead of us and above us. A little flak was thrown at them but they probably destroyed the gun batteries because we went over with the greatest of ease. No enemy pursuit was seen. Our bombs started huge fires and planes were on fire all over the place. We salvoed nearly all of our bombs which hit on a hanger. Had a date at the 103rd this AM. My transportation was a Command Car. Monty Beringson was along with a date

21 May 1943 – Was scheduled for a mission today at the last minute, they decide our plane was in no condition to make the flight so we sat at home. The bombing was fair as reported. An aerial bomb was dropped on one plane. The plane made a landing Bonne with only a hole in the wing. Had a nice trip today with Smithy, who used to be our Engineering Officer. He came by in his jeep and we went to Ainmilila and back. We stopped in Chatto Dunn for dinner. We did some visiting and home about 12 AM.

22 May 1943 – Had a group day off today. Made arrangement for transportation another Command Car and went to Constantine. Got up there in time for dinner and then spent the afternoon driving around seeing the better part of the city. Some of the homes are lovely. Saw some of the General's homes. Went to a depot up there and saw some captured German material. The little German jeeps aren't nearly as good as ours. The motor is located in the rear and only a 2-cylinder engine. It has 4 speeds forward. The guns they have look as if they were rushed in putting them out because lack of polish and smoothness.

22 May 1943 – They changed the time here, one-hour today so when I got up at 8 o'clock to eat it was 9 o'clock instead. The weather was bad over Italy so we did not venture out. Smithy picked me up about 4 and we headed for the 103rd. We picked up our dates and went to an early GI movie. We, then, jumped in a jeep, 6 of us, and came up to the 99th, pick up grub and had a party at the Red Cross in St. Donet. We had music on the radio to dance by. On the way home we were halted by an armed British guards who suspected us to be 3 escaped German prisoners who had stolen a GI car and were on the highway. They were armed and ready for action. Received a card and nice letter from Mrs. Collins. (Janie's mother).

23 May 1943 – Ferranova shipping. The ship we were supposed to bomb wasn't at said location, so we dropped the lead Bombadier. 2 ships were sunk in the harbor. Flak was light and no fighters were seen. The P-38's dived, bombed, and strafed before we went in. The mediums also took the A10's and eventually did a good job. We followed the 2nd in. Got transportation and went down to the 97th and saw Radcliffe and more of the old gang. Saw some friends about 8 miles out of Chato Dunn.. Had to hitch hike home. Ended up by getting a jeep from the 97th to bring me home.

27 May 1943 – Today was Number 29. It was a rough one. The target was Messina shipping. We followed the 2nd in most of the way but we were slated to drop first. We did and got good hits. Flak was really accurate, knocking several holes in our planes. McGee had a motor knocked out. All in all, 5 ships came in with feathered props. The 97th and 99th followed later. They were reported to have lost 5 ships. Fires could be seen raging all over Sardinia from earlier bombing by medium bombers (B24's and B26's) and pursuits. Major

Rehment rode with us again today and seemed to enjoy it.

28 May 1943 – No . 30 mission today. The target was ship building and machine shops at Leghorn, Italy. This in one of the biggest in all of Italy and our bombs were right on. When we reached our target, smoke from the 97th and 99th nearly covered our target and it was very hard to see. Gant salvoed all 12 – 500 pounders . We saw 4 fighters but they were not very eager. On ME 109 spun in. I was lead Navigator on the 92nd Squadron today. We had to feather number 3 engine because it was nearly vibrating off. The other 3 squadrons ran off from us and I got to do piloting from the coast into the base. We were really sweating our gasoline. When we landed there was not a drop of oil in number 3 engine and 7 red lights were on. McRae and Rawlis pulled up the wheels instead of the flaps and washed a 353rd ship after landing.

31 May 1943- Target for today was Messina Airdrome and I know we must have completely destroyed it. Out of Naples we were hit by a bunch of ME110's, who gave us a running gun battle. We were all settled down for a peaceful trip home when bingo 15 ME109's hit us from Sicily. We were down on the deck and they had a hard time, but we lost one B-17 who made a water landing. When we passed over the were all out in their dingy's. The plane sank in about 30 seconds, tail going in last. On one attack one came within 50 yards of the nose, diving past. Another cam equally as close to the tail of our formation. Over Italy, I saw 'Isle of Capri' and "Mount Vesuvius" which was really giving forth a big cloud of smoke.

Bank Balance		\$1,418.67
Allotment		160.00
	Sub Total	1,578.67
Bonds		112.50
	Total	1,691.17

2 Jun 1943 – Had a party planned for this afternoon with some of the English in return for one they gave last week. I was up at 8 AM and worked until nearly 1:30 PM getting things ready. I went to Setif and picked up wine. I talked to the Mess Sgt. who gave me sufficient deviled eggs and pickles. We bought cherries, 8 kilos of tomatoes, 4 loaves of bread (which Major Brigham picked up when they fell off the bread truck). There were 14 of us and everyone got a little stinko. The were until 9:30 PM getting here, but everyone had a good time, that it last til 2 AM.

3 Jun 1943 – Mission today cancelled on account of weather. Not being scheduled is making me angry. Now that the boys are going home at 50 missions it seems I am going to have to share my seat of 'honor' on "Dirty Gertie" with others. My GI's are no better today than yesterday so I went to the doctor and he gave me some huge pills and paragoric. I spent most of the day sleeping.

4 Jun 1943 – On patrolling one day over the Gulf of Tunis the spit fires sighted these amazing Argosies. Down near the water, about 50 feet off of the sea, they saw 31 huge six engine transports. This was the biggest formation ever seen of the biggest plane in the war. The Merseburg 323 was developed from designs for a monstrous wooden glider, with a wing span of 180 feet. Six French Cnome Rhone engines were added to make a plane that would carry 120 fully equipped soldiers or 20,000 pounds of freight 450 miles at 140 mph. It has 10 sunken wheel wells forward to prevent nosing over in rough landings and the front of its fuselage can let down to take in trucks and light tanks. It looks like a box car that insists in flying. Since the plane is German built and the medium powered engines are French, the Germans consider it expendable. They never knew how expendable they were until all were shot down last week.

5 Jun 1943 – The gang went out today for a portion of the Wop (Italian) Navy. Four Cruisers and 3 battleships were caught in a northern Italy port. Some of the

planes carried 2,000 pounders while others carried 1,600 armor piercing bombs. McMurray flew in my place today. 'Gertie' lead the 92nd Squadron. Captain Wollars' bombs were said to have hit with great accuracy. The ship we were on was throwing up huge burst of flak from their 16 inch guns but after the first load hit, all guns ceased. Damage is yet unknown. With today's letters I have received nearly 50 'old' ones dated from 6 December through March.

6 Jun 1943 – Sunday – no reveille – no mission. Most of the fellows went visiting today but I took a sun bath and wrote letter till noon. Harry Brown and I went to some Arab's house and bought 4 rabbits. We cleaned and rounded up enough stuff out of the mess hall to prepare them. What I mean we really had a good feed. Henry, Noll came down and I took our new Commanding Officer Captain Walter Williams and Gus some of our food. Everyone enjoyed it. Kahel – Carlson – Simpkins and I played bridge. Bed at 10:45PM.

7 Jun 1943 – Reveille has been changed to 6:45 giving us an added 30 minutes of rest. Our briefing was at 9:15 AM and our target was Pantelleria, the small island 50 miles off Cape Bon. They are using the place for an airport. We were supposed to fly 1-3 but the plane #24348 developed engine trouble on take-off so we landed after the group took off and picked up a spare ship. "Dirty Gertie", which they were warming up. We caught our squadron a short way out and flew #7 spare ship position. On the target, the other groups caught a little flak and a few fighters. They left the place in so much smoke, we couldn't see our target. Our bombs went over the city. It sure is great to be able to fly over all of Africa. Rumor: No mail for 30 days either way because of supplies being needed for the invasion which we expect very soon.

8 June 1943 – Mission today is leading to the sinking of an unsinkable Aircraft Carrier. A 24 hours patrol is being used today. Our planes worked to perfection. The Navy was throwing quite a few shells at coastal guns there until our 'Fortresses' put them out of action with 1,000 pounders. I let McAdams fly today for me, working on my strategy of plans. Of course, it was a snap mission. With Rest Camp coming up thing should wind up in form for me. This morning I got 50 minutes as Co-Pilot, testing 403. We fouled up a supercharger and had to come in before going to altitude as scheduled. Had an air raid about 10:45 PM. The moon and stars are really giving out lots of light which air the night raiders.

9 June 1943 – When the big drive started the first 900 gun ranging from 75's to 150's at the zero hour. 300 rounds went through each. When the Americans followed they encountered some funny experiences. Some of the Germans were so shell-shocked they crawled on their hands and knees to surrender. One enemy jeep pulled up to an American camp, in it were the General, his Adjutant, and another from his staff. They asked to surrender, but was told it was filled up but if they drove down the road further they might secure a place. Sure was quite a few prisoners at El Gerha, where we went to play for a dance. They could speak English fairly well.

10 June 1943 – Pulled a mission on Pantelleria today. The first was at 5:30AM and second one at 2:00 PM. The weather was fairly bad and instead of going in at 17,500 feet as we should, we went in at 11,000 feet. The P38's dive bombing took care of most of the gun batteries. They were coming and going all day. The mediums also did their share. The flak was ample, but a couple of batteries knocked out. Coming home we were in a lot of bad rough weather. Went to a nice dance at Chat-A-Duen. Most of the fellows made fools of themselves, but what can you expect from recruits.

11 June 1943 – Pantelleria taken at 11:40 AM today. This is the time we are releasing our bombs. We sure saw a good show at the 'Island'. At briefing today they told us that there would be no minimum altitude. The bombing had to be done so the invading troops could come ashore. Our bombing altitude was supposed to be around 16,000 feet, but a cloud was over the target at 11,000, so we went under it to bomb. The ships were blasting away at the coast line, while 'Spits' and P38's were patrolling. As soon as our bombs were released the landing barges headed inward, so to be undercover of the smoke of fires and the clouds of dust from our 1,000 pounders stirred up. P38's and P51's were having their share of dive bombing and strafing. We led our 92nd Squadron over the target today.

13 June 1943 – Had a holiday today and decided to go to Constantine. We needed transportation so Kabrey called and asked. He wanted me to go ask and I did, then he was questioned as to whether he had the Commanding Officer's permission. Gus messed up our squadrons whole day and believe me, he is not too popular around here. Noll and I finally rode

the band truck up after being approached by Gus and nearly got bawled out because of the above. Met Mills and Michaels. Had a nice party, even rum. The band played in an outside park for the GI's and French civilians. They were very attentive. Some negroes started jitter-bugging and really livened things up.

14 June 1943 – Stayed over night at Constantine with the boys

Noll suppose to fly today due to McGee getting sick but he wasn't there so ----- The mission today was to the southern part of Sicily on an airdrome. The Royal Air Force (RAF) went in first and put the Radar equipment out of action. They must have hit because the raid sure went smooth. 16 pursuits were encountered but the P38's took care of them. Condy finished up today. Found out Spaduzzi went down over Germany on a recent raid. Weppner lost an eye and is going home. Nothing of Watkins and no hope of White. Saw Goldberg today in the Casino. This is his first time out. Had on his Distinguished Flying Cross, Purple Heart, African Campaign, and a cane. He went to see Lily. Radcliffe has finished his mission.

14 June 1943 – Nothing exciting – not on the battle orders.

20 June 1943 – Really had a surprise when Steve called over

and said we were leaving England today, to take some British bigwigs there. We, after some hurried packing and running around headed for Algiers, at 2:30PM we took off with General Anderson, a three-star head of the 1st Army. General Culterbaker, a couple of Colonel's and a Major, headed for Rock of Gibraltar. We spotted the Rock, which was really a thrill to me, made our landing and went into the city. This is the most fortified place in the world. Battle cruisers and aircraft of all kinds are located here. "Gib" is used as a last stopping place for England-bound planes, since flying over is restricted. Spain is restricted to our planes as well as the enemy aircraft and we must go around the coast line. The 'Rock' must be 1,500 feet high and the inside is nothing but passage ways and gun batteries. The Airfield is located so that the edge of the runway is the boundary of Gibraltar and Spain. Spotlights which were turned on really lit up the small place. The Runway runs into the water of either end and an 'undershot' or overshot' would mean a ducking. We sweated out going by Brest and arrived in England on a landfall. We immediately spotted our field. After landing we ate.

21 June 1943 – The weather on the coast was very foggy and we were upon it before we knew it. The water and the sands were numerous with rocks, which outlined the coast, made a most beautiful sight. England is really a beautiful place, green fields and valleys are touched with nature's most beautiful color schemes. The gray stone buildings can be seen, as they are very prominent. We took off for London and North Holt airdrome. It so happened that we landed at the wrong airfield first, resulting in the General being pea' oed. We lost a few minutes taking off again and landing at the right airfield. At this point We were on our own, and our vacation in London starts.

22 June 1943 – Some of WAAF girls took us to the nearest tube (underground railway) and thus our adventures started. I was so tired from being awake all night that Steve woke me several times, when I would nod on the way into the city. London is the largest city in the world in spite of the challenge of New York. It includes 700 square miles and a population (1931) of 8,204,000 and is still increasing. It has miles and miles of tubes. Taxis are the main source of transportation and their rates are very reasonable. Everything is strictly modern. The hotels took my fancy, probably because of having lived in a tent for so long. The maids here as well as other girls elsewhere are drafted to their jobs. Everyone is compelled to work. This is one place they really believe and realize there is a WAR on. The city has suffered considerable damage from bombing earlier in the war, but a lot has been repaired. Some buildings have been knocked full of holes, but are in use again. The All the flowers and trees are beautiful. Driving on the wrong side of the street really messed me up though and when I crossed the street, I was always looking the wrong way. Almost got it a couple of times. Picadilly Circus, so named back from Charles I, was the main center of town, similar to Times Square in New York City. Streets running out from it in all directions are inhabited with bars and cocktail lounges. Girls here were really plentiful and if a person does not watch his step, he could be mobbed by them. Never seen

anything like it in my life. I visited the Picadilly Tea Dance and really had a swell time this afternoon. Met a little Canadian girl (Greene) who really looked the nuts in her civilian dress. She is in the WAAF's and really a good dancer. This is really a vacation.

24 June 1943 – Had a good bath this morning and a good meal at the Officer's Mess. We, Steve, Noll and I, looked the city over. What a place! We saw Buckingham Palace, Mall, Towers of London, Big Ben, Thames River, Monuments, the Admiralty and Arch, Westminster Bridge, Picadilly Circus, House of Parliament, the Cenotaph, London Bridge and blocks of beautiful parks, bird paths, the James River and so many interesting sights. We, also, took in the Park Lane, Cumberland, Universal, Trocadero, Picadilly Tea Dance, and (Hotel) Transatlantic dance. Penny Greene bid me adieu at London at 3:00 PM and we leave the beautiful city of many women, good times and rationed Scotch.

25 June 1943 – At 5:30 AM this morning we took off from Boeath Field, England and headed home. The result of our stay in London have tired all of us out and believe me we dreaded the long ride ahead. The weather was excellent for passing Brest. Clouds in the sky made it possible so that if we were hit by enemy fighters we could scamper into them for protection. I was asleep, when someone spotted an unusual light, it disappeared, and we were at ease again. At another time we were all asleep again and drifted over Lisbon, Spain, but soon turned out again. We arrived at Gibraltar at breakfast and at the Limas Mess and we were on our way again. The bunch was sure surprised to see us come in about 2:30 PM. The first thing all asked about was how much Scotch we had and how they envied us.

The mission today was a bit rough for our outfit. Flak hit 2 planes and fighters hit the group 2 hours off the target.

26 June 1943 – The 1st's Commander, Kenneth Arthur Noel Anderson is a formal, frugal, unglamorous Scot who has been somewhat eclipsed from the outside public by brilliant commanders above and around him here in Tunisia and by his own troops by his brilliant junior officers within the First Army. He speaks fluent French and his French subordinates like his Scottish mentality. He was born in India and was in World War I. He has a delicate job of commanding various attached troops both French and United States, also the II Corps of US troops.

Taken from the "Time" 26 August 1943.

This three-star general was one of our five passengers to England.

25 June 1943 – Up at 4:45 AM, breakfast and an early mission to Leghorn, Italy. "Old Gertie" needed a new magneto, so we took "Sadie Hawkins" 980, which on the last mission ate up almost all her fuel but a few gallons and the crew was in a sweat. We went up along the west side of Sardinia and Corsica to get to our target. There do not seem to be any enemy pursuit fields along this route due to the fact we have never been here before. We were the fourth group to go over the target so you see it was a roaring mass of flame and smoke. The flak was late and all was behind us. We ran into 5 enemy pursuits who were too scared to come in to us. One fool-hearted fellow came in with a 189, but was riddled by 50 caliber bullets. Outside of being a seven and a half hour mission, it was easy. Now only 13 more and then homeward bound.

28 June 1943 – Group holiday so – Constantine bound. I took a pint of gin and visited the Red Cross girls. Had dinner with Mary and then took Jones 1932 V-8 convertible to go to the 73rd Station Hospital, to see McGrath who broke his ankle last Sunday. I got through there about 1:30. We sat and drank the gin and really were feeling good. We talked about

everything and everybody. Left about 5PM.

30 Jun 1943 – Pay day. B/F	\$1,578.67
Allotment	160.00
Sub-total	1,738.67
Bonds	112.50
Total	1,851.17

Due to a mix-up in the account this figure may be wrong.

5 July 1943 – Up at 5:45 AM for a mission to Gerbini Airdrome in Sicily. Take off was at 7:55 and rendezvous was at *:30 AM. This mission consisted of three of our groups. We went in last. We got 55 miles off-course on the way to the target and had to fly around Malta. We flew in our 2nd element dragging all the way, making me mad, as well as Noll, who was flying on a wing in the 2nd element. He said at one time he would have left the element and come up with us. On the way home the lead Navigator 419H got 45 miles off-course which resulted in quite a few planes having to land at airports for gas before coming on home. The mission really has made me mad. The 99th lost 3 or 4 ships yesterday.

9 July 1943 – These sirocco winds are really blowing. Whirlwinds are numerous and lots of them are violent. Tents are flattened and huge gusts hit a plane blowing it off the runway making it hit 50 gallon drums of gasoline, tearing off 2 motors and the elevator. The plane went straight up and fell back exploding the bombs. Two heads are all that we found of the crew.

10 July 1943 – Got in this morning from Constantine at 2:30 AM, jumped in bed and was awoken at 3:15AM for mission. I was navigating James, leading the second element. Everything was ok until about 25 minutes off the targets when the knuckle on the #2 propeller control broke loose and we had to feather it and return home. The bottom turret was out as far as the radio. On the way back we hit some thick weather and had to do some round about navigating. Just got one whole week as Duty Officer' for staying in Constantine over- night.

11 July 1943 – I was awoken several time by fellows coming in and out asking questions as to take-off times, etc. The alarm clock was set at 1:30 and again I was roused. At 4:00 we were up for the mission. Breakfast at 4:15 and take off at 6:15AM. The target Gerbini, four or five landing fields. We saw no fighters and flak was inaccurate. We saw the invading troops of USA going into Sicily. They had a line 60 miles along the southeast coast and were really having a show. I saw one ship sinking and three more dashing to the rescue of it. The destroyers were laying a smoke screen and the landing barges were going full blast. Convoys of boats with supplies were running between Pantelleria and Malta to Sicily bringing needed equipment.

11 July 1943 – Had a fairly decent hour for take off today at 10:30AM. I lead our 301st Group and hit everything as planned. Our target was Messina and the flak was really rough. A navigator in the 419th was hit. We destroyed our two railroad bridges. This road was the only supply route to Palermo. Called up Mary on return and had a nice conversation. Note: 'Dirty Gertie' was unable to go with us today so they substituted 151, a new plane.

13 July 1943 Breakfast at 4:40AM Take of at 6:40 AM. Target was Milo Airdrome, Sicily. I was Navigator leading the 352nd Squadron today. McAdams the Bombadier sure put the eggs in there. Not a single bomb from the 2nd Group or 352nd Squadron went wild. The flak was heavy and accurate on the squadron wind. It was bursting with us but about 1,000 feet under us. The B-26's or the other B-25's attacked another airdrome and in

turn were attacked by 20 to 25 fighters. I spent a few extra minutes loading my guns ready for action after bombing run, but our group formation kept them away and too, we thought maybe they had run out of ammunition. They made 2 passes at the 2nd. One came in at us but did not like the looks of our lead and headed home. If his home port was Milo, he had better find another field. Excellent bombing

14 July 1943 – All hell popped loose today on a raid in Italy, when we made our bombing run down a lane of flak guns. The 353rd lost a ship over the target and another was so badly shot up that when it finally made it to Cape Bon, it was junked. The waist gunner was killed. The ship Michael was flying had its ball gunner shot up. Lots of the planes had feathered motors. Our ship 'Dirty Gertie' who was flying on our wing feathered #2 and then #4. It started #2 and feathered #3. We waited for it and it finally picked a place on the edge of Sicily inside our lines to land. Four 'Spits' escort picked him up. I only hope all is 'OK'. The squadron circled until he was down to safety in the 'Spits' hangers. All our squadron except our "Dirty Gertie" and Sinnots landed on the coast to gas up. Our gas was limited and I navigated right on the nose to hit our field while skirting mountains and flying up valleys to save gas. This mission was rough.

18 July 1943 – Briefing at the decent hour of 10:30 and take off at 11:30. Our 352nd Squadron lead the group and the 2nd in target. Target being Naples and it made it one mission closed to my 50. The flak was accurate. A big burst big burst hit under us and rocked the plane but no holes. The bombs were all good. On the return home we saw the other groups of B17's heading into Italy. We saw 2 groups of B26's and later the group of B25's with P38 escorts. Before we hit the target the 9th Air Force (B-24's) hit the place and fires burning everywhere.

19 July 1943 – We were the first group to bomb Rome, Italy.

Our target was the marshalling yards and what I mean the bombs were really in there. Instructions were that if we could not hit the target, do not bomb. The big dogs all went with us today. On the way home we heard a London radio broadcast that Rome had been bombed. Leaflets had been dropped two hours before our bombs were dropped. Flak was slight and inaccurate. No fighters were encountered but some were seen taking off. The groups came in after us since it was an all-out mission. The medium bombers were seen coming in with a P38 escort on our way out. I also flew formation for an hour.

27 Jul 1943 - The target was Foggia. It was weathered in, but we flew up and down the flak guns for nearly 15 minutes taking all they had to give. Resulting in the 353rd losing Lt. Booker and crew, who all bailed out over the water and probably were picked up by enemy shortly. Colonel Stoddard led. We hit another airdrome on the way out. This mission was strictly snafu in all respects. I got in another half hour of formation flying with Emerick. Confined to Post, no flying, and Duty Officer until we move, which probably will be 11 or 12 days and me with plans and 4 more to fly.

1 August 1943 -

Balance	\$1,738.67
Allotment	160.00
Net Amt.	\$1,898.67
War Bonds	112.50
Total	\$ 2,011.17

If you get gloomy, just take an hour off and sit and think how much better off this world is than Hell. Of course, it won't cheer you up much if you expect to

go there.

Everything is so lovely. 2 letters from Mary today and I got my Distinguished Flying Cross. This is really o.k. because I have really been hoping for it.

3 August 1943 - Was scheduled for the mission today but they called this AM at 2:00 and said it was cancelled.

4 August 1943 – Well, another mission towards going home. Target was the Naples docks and we really blasted them. Our group was divided in 2 flights in all out effort. We flew (Hammond) got the 2nd element tail-end-charlie behind a 353rd element. Our bombs were in there as well as those of the other groups ahead and behind us. We were hit by 4-ME110's and four Fouckwolves. No damage done but 2 ME110's shot down. We logged 7 hours and 25 minutes for the flight. The flies are so bad here they are driving everyone nuts – Not being able to use the phone and missing Constantine and Mary Lou especially.

5 August 1943 - Called Mary Lou this morning and she is hitch hiking down to see me. She got here about 2:15. I took my sheet and we found a cool spot in the shade of a willow, by a stream. We talked and talked. (I bet). About 9 we had to find her a ride home. We though we could not for awhile and had a place for her in a small hotel in St.Donat. A Captain finally got us a jeep and I had my final ride with her. We arrived and took a drink to us. If I ever hated to leave anything or anybody it was now, but soon maybe things will work out as we planned.

6 August 1943 – Today, Saturday, we are packing and moving. Things at the new base here are nicer. The country is prettier and the cool breeze off the sea is marvelous. Tunis is just a few miles away and they say swimming is ok. It will also cut about 3 hours off missions. It is really set-up nice. The tents are all very orderly. The planes all parked as they should be. The 352nd planes are parked right here by us.

11 August 1943 – Had a nice juicy target today. It was a gun and ammunition factory, at Terni, about 60 miles from Rome. Our bombs were really right in there. Our group was on this target alone. We had two flights of 27 planes. All was ok till we hit flak and fighters near the coast at Rome. A P-38 that had been captured by the Germans, was re-painted and all, attack us for nearly half an hour, shooting down one of our planes and damaging another. We saw 6 chutes. Came back and to Mike's and my greatest surprise, we found Mary and Pat waiting for us. Tunis bound for fun.

14 August 1943 – Today, Friday the 13th, our mission was to bomb marshalling yards at Rome. Good bombs, no flak till we hit the coast and the a few burst dove in our plane, caging it. Only one fighter did not come in. Mary went home in a B17 today with 'Red' O'Brien.

19 Aug 1943 – Well today was Number 50, This makes me a senior birdman. our target was Marseilles, France. An airdrome was our main target and it was really hit. I can say I was really sweating until the wheels of our plane were on the ground. I saw one of my best friends, Robert Michael go down. 7 chutes were seen. Lt. Howard was also on this flight. The whole nose of the plane was blown off. Chances are very hopeless for Michael. I am so happy to have finished my missions, but so sorry about the bad luck today.

20 August 1943 – Here's hoping my promotion to 1st Lieutenant comes through Headquarters today.

21 August 1943 – Arrived at Rest Camp today. It is located at Fez. Everything is marvelous here. We have tennis, fishing, hunting and all kinds of amusement. We have picture shows often and a dance almost every night. Picnics are common. These French gals here are really on the ball and from

the best families, too. This is a resort and only wealthy French families have homes here and spend a month or two every year here.

21 August 1943 - Received our orders today to go home. Our group was usual off the ball and never sent them to us. A Lt. Col. brought orders down to his men and we made copies of them. Buchard hoping to get off sooner. This ship will probably join the convoy there after being picked up here by ships from Bizerte. There are 57 of us on orders from the 97th, 301st, 82nd Fighter Group, and the 310th.

5 September 1943 – Well, home, we are on our way. Came aboard the “Susan B. Anthony” today. This boat was taken over from the Grace Lines by the Navy. It was used in the Sicilian Invasion. It is the best armed transport here and was in the convoy from the states over. It has 16 guns. The passengers consist of Red Cross, WAC’s, who would not enlist in the Regular Army, Civilian War Workers, prisoners, Air Corps personnel, in other words, a little of every one. The food is excellent. I see now why men join the Navy. This ship has to its credit 2 planes and a German torpedo, an Italian boat.

8 September 1943 – Today after waiting four day aboard to leave we pulled anchor at 3:20PM and getting in convoy and heading home. We have 1,008 prisoners aboard and they were really happy today when they knew Italy had surrendered. We had scarcely put out to sea when this news came through and most of the prisoners made motion that they wanted to go home. At 9:05 we had an Airplane General Alert but nothing came of it and the “All Clear” was given. All the hatches are closed at night to insure blackout conditions and what I mean we really sleep in a sweat. The washing facilities are none too sharp, as the water is in only on from 7 to 8, 11 to 12, and 4 to 5. We have 36 Officer’s in the stateroom here and a mad rush is about 7AM for the bathroom.

9 September 1943 – To start the morning off right at 3AM depth charges were dropped due to submarines in the area. We have 4 destroyers with us which is a good sight. The sailors say not one single troop transport convoy this ship has been in has been sunk. At 12 noon we are in Oran. We are supposed to pick our convoy up here and go on, but, since Italy capitulated we docked and unloaded all our Italian prisoners. This waiting is driving us slowly mad. The food is excellent making every meal a treat.

10 September 1943 – Left Oran at 4:30 AM in a 17 ship convoy. We had a 12 ship destroyer escort, which looks good to all aboard. At 11:35 PM and 9:35 AM we had an air-raid alert. The plane turned out to be friendly pursuit. We also have a P39 aerial escort as well as the occasional Lockheed Hudson. The Mediterranean Sea is really beautiful. Today at 12 noon we passed the Rock and are now heading out into the Atlantic Ocean and a course which seems to be getting closer to home.

11 September 1943 – Nothing exciting has happened. The ocean has calmed and we are making good time. Had tea with the Captain today at 3PM. Sort of dry but afterward they showed 10 of us a lot of vital operations of the ship.

21 September 1943 - HOME AT LAST.

DATE	PLACE BOMBED	TAKE OFF	#LBS. DROPPED	MISSION #
Jan 31	Bizerte shipping	3:00AM	5,000	1
Feb 1	Tunis shipping	3:30AM	6,000	2
Feb 4	Gabes Airdrome	4:25AM	2,880	3
Feb 17	St. Elmas Airdrome	3:25AM	6,000	4
Feb 22	Gabes	4:20AM	0	5
Feb 23	Kairouam	2:25AM	2,880	6
Feb 25	Bizerte shipping & docks	2:50AM	6,000	7
Mar 3	Tunis & La Aouria	2:50AM	2,880	8
Mar 10	Tunis & La Marsa	4:20AM	2,880	9
Mar 11	Sousse Railroad Yards	3:40AM	6,000	10
Mar 13	Hunting Convoys	5:10AM	0	11
Mar 21	Airdrome/20 mi.N/Wgabes	3:30AM	2,880	12
Mar 22	Palermo shipping	5:40AM	6,000	13
Mar 24	Ferryville	3:00AM	6,000	14
Mar 31	Cagliari, Sardinia		6,000	15
Apr 4	Naples, Italy	7:45AM	2,880	16
Apr 10	Triesta cruiser & Straits of Boniface	5:35AM	6,000	17
Apr 11	Tunis	3:10AM	6,000	18
Apr 12	Convoy – Tunis	4:00AM	6,000	19
Apr 13	Castelvatrono Airdrome	5:20AM	2,880	20
Apr 16	Palermo shipping	5:45AM	6,000	21
Apr 17	Ferryville shipping	3:00AM	6,000	22
Apr 18	Palermo shipping		6,000	23
Apr 27	Travano, Sardinia	5:15AM	0	24
May 4	Supply Ship –Palermo	5:10AM	6,000	25
May 13	Cagalairo, Sardinia		6,000	26
May 20	Grossetto Airdrome, Italy		2,880	27
May 24	Travano shipping	5:35AM	6,000	28
May 25	Messino shipping	7:20AM	6,000	29
May 28	Leghorn, Italy ship Bldg.	7:35AM	6,000	30

May 31	Foggia Airdrome	7:50AM	6,000	31
Jun 6	City of Pantelleria	4:15AM	6,000	32
Jun 10	Gun Batteries-Pantelleria	4:30AM	6,000	33
Jun 11	Laying barrage-Pantelleria	4:30AM	6,000	34
Jun 20	Trip to England			35
Jun 25	Return Trip via Brest			36
Jun 28	Leghorn Rail Road Yards	7:30AM	6,000	37
Jul 5	Gerbini Airdrome, Sicily	7:30AM	2,880	38
Jul 9	Biskra Airdrome	5:30AM		39
Jul 10	Gerbini Airdrome, Sicily	6:00AM	6,000	40
Jul 12	Messina R/R Bridge	6:45AM	6,000	41
Jul 13	Milo Airdrome, Tranpani	6:45AM	6,000	42
Jul 16	A Port in Italy	7:30AM	5,400	43
Jul 17	Naples marshalling yard	7:00AM	6,000	44
Jul 19	Rome, Italy	7:50AM	6,000	45
Jul 27	Caupa Airdrome	8:20AM	6,000	46
Aug 4	Naples – Docks	7:25AM	6,000	47
Aug 11	Terni – Factory	6:00AM	6,000	48
Aug 13	Rome –marshalling yard	5:45AM	6,000	49
Aug 17	Marsielle, France	7:40AM	2,880	50

Total time 274 hours and 5 minutes.

No. of pounds of bombs dropped 232, 200 or over 116 tons.

No. of Missions 50. The two to England counted as they were over enemy territory.

Dirty Gertie was assigned to the 352nd Bomb Squadron, 301st Bomb Group, on January 11, 1943 at Main M'Lila, the St. Donat on March 6, 1943. She was crash landed after her 52nd mission on July 16 1943 with the Hammond crew. Repaired and transferred to 347th Bomb Sq., 99th Bomb Gp., at Oudna on Novemeber 14, 1943. Flew 25 more missions with this group, then became a weather aircraft in August 1944, then transferred to the 52nd Fighter Group in Madna, Italy in October 1944. Then salvaged in November 1944.