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GP-92-HQ Bomb
Nov., 1945

November can safely be nominated as the month during which less happened than in any other previous month in the history of the 92nd Bomb Group. This fact was reflected by a marked decrease in rumors and an increase in the "let's wait and see" philosophy. The group had still been assigned no specific task, and had observed no hint of one. As a consequence, many guesses were hazarded, but none were taken too seriously - one point that nearly everyone agreed on was the certainty of undergoing a winter at Istres.

Although several days during the month were warm and pleasant, there were others which provided an uncomfortable foretaste of the frigid, wind-blown days to come. The small wood-burning stoves which were installed in the barracks, offices, and orderly rooms were a welcome luxury, however they were only a partial answer to the weather. The wind was still able to find its way into the buildings through ill-fitting doors and windows. It was evident that some sort of winterization would have to be effected.

Major Oherbak, commanding officer, is doing his utmost to surmount the shortages in necessary items of clothing and equipment. He has been successful in obtaining both oil and wood

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stoves, extra clothing, and many general improvements about the base conducive to more comfortable living. Despite numerous obstacles in securing these improvements, more are on the way.

Turkey is a delicacy even in the United States - in Southern France it's a miracle. If anyone had griped about the food previously, the meal that was presented them on Thanksgiving soon changed these complaints to praise. There were one and a half rounds of the "noble bird" per man. Each item on the menu was a credit to 92nd mess personnel.

Thanksgiving always serves as a reminder that Christmas is not far away; this coupled with the steady stream of Christmas packages pouring into the station post office made the situation all too clear. The holiday season was upon us. For many it would be their fourth Christmas in the army, their third overseas.

Ratings, which had been frozen for nearly two months, again opened in November with 113 E.M. promotions on the 29th. Sixteen men were promoted to Technical Sergeant, 25 to Staff Sergeant, 35 to Sergeant, and 32 to Corporal. No officers were promoted.

A reenlistment campaign to secure volunteers for the regular army, which was instituted through the I and E office, got under way last month by means of rosters, lectures, and recorded announcements at the station theater. The result? By the end of November 33 men had signed up; 11 for three years, 11 for 18 months, three for one year, and nine were undecided. Thirteen had left on their reenlistment furloughs.

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Those members of the 92nd who came to Istres with the Group, but left shortly thereafter, would blink their eyes in disbelief if they were to see our station theater once again. When the group arrived in France the theater was merely a concrete revetment plus chairs, a movie screen, and a portable 16 mm projector. From this meagre beginning, one of the best outdoor theaters in Southern France has been built. First a large well lighted stage was constructed by station utilities in the record time of five days. During the weeks which followed special services personnel, under the direction of Capt. Milton Cord, continued to improve the appearance of the new stage by adding more curtains and lights.

These improvements continued steadily; a gay paint job of red, yellow, and blue was added, the cement walls were extended eight feet in height as protection against the wind. An all-steel projection booth was built to house new 35 mm projectors, and a power plant was installed to furnish power for them. Now that the theater is enclosed on all four sides, the final stage in its step-by-step metamorphosis is under way - the construction of a roof. Unused material originally intended for hangar construction is being utilized.

A Thanksgiving party at the Red Cross Aero Club featured recorded music, French pastries, candy, and assorted nuts. The interior of the club was further enhanced by the addition of new hand-made curtains, plus numerous pictures depicting the holiday scene in vivid colors. The evening was highlighted with door prizes, bingo, ice cream, and an old fashioned community-sing finale.

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As a result of the lack of automotive mechanics, and increasing negligence in first and second echelon maintenance, it was deemed necessary to revoke all drivers' licenses and issue new ones. In order to obtain a new license, prospective drivers were required to pass first, a written test on vehicle operation and maintenance, and second, a test in actual driving. It was hoped that this measure would relieve some of the stress on the already over-taxed motor pool staff, and at the same time make drivers more safety-conscious.

In conjunction with this program, a system was devised whereby violators of vehicle regulations would be fined. The amount of each fine was to be determined by the seriousness of the infraction.

In order to facilitate Christmas shopping for 92nd G.I.'s large quantities of lace and perfume were procured and sold at 50% of cost at the P.X. Other special items included small inexpensive cameras and specially made Eighth Air Force patches with 92nd Bomb Group inscribed on them. Silk stockings and cigarette lighters were also available.

An ice plant, which has been under construction for some time, is now about 98% complete. This plant, which is being constructed by 92nd utilities, will supply ice for both the 92nd and 384th Bomb Groups.

A new leave area has been added to those already alotted to the 92nd. It is now possible to spend ten days in the French Alps, skiing. The tour, which begins each Saturday at 11:00 P.M., leaves from St. Charles station in Marseilles, and from there

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proceeds by train to Grenoble. From Grenoble it is a 1½ hour bus ride to the final destination, L'Alpe D'Huez. Here the men are quartered in alpine hotels, which are maintained by French staffs. For those who have had no previous experience in skiing, ski instructors are provided. These instructors are members of the French olympic ski team. Other sports available are tobogganing and snow-shoeing. The whole program is being sponsored by the French government, and involves no cost to the G.I. It is for American troops only.

Other station improvements include street lights, which have already proved their value as an aid to pedestrians and motorists alike. Our once rough, stone-laden roads have attained a certain degree of smoothness through constant work with graders and power rollers, thus decreasing wear on vehicles and tires.

In a new liberty run policy, one aircraft is now sent daily to Nice, with 24, 48, and 72 hour passes being authorized. Officers, who fly to Nice and are supplied transportation from there to Cannes, have the same pass arrangement. Ten day leaves and furloughs are also granted to the Rivierra.

On the 15th of the month a letter was received from USAFE, extending the authority to award the battle participation star for the Northern France Campaign to all officers and enlisted men who flew on the combat raids of the 14th and 15th of April, 1945 to Royan, France. For many of the officers and men, this additional "battle star" resulted in raising their ASR scores to the required number of points for separation. Sixteen of the Group's enlisted men, thus affected, left for the "States".

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For the first time in several months the group had remained more or less intact. As a result the 55 pointers were "champing at the bit". For those whose minds had created a sharply focused picture of Christmas in the "States", the image was blurring rapidly. But then December was another month.

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