

Chapter 8 – Shipping Out [v2]

SECRET

596TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON

397th Bombardment Group (M) Hunter Field, Ga.

31 January 1944

SUBJECT: Summary of Squadron History for Month of January.

TO : Historical Officer, 397th Bombardment Group (M) Hunter Field, Ga.

January 1944

On the first of January 1944, the Squadron, with the exception of the flying crews, entrained for maneuvers at Atterbury Army Air Field, Columbus, Indiana. We arrived early in the morning on the third of January, but, due to bad weather, the flying personnel did not arrive until the fifth of January. After they arrived, the squadron actively joined in the maneuvers supporting attacking ground troops maneuvering in Tennessee around Lebanon, Nashville and Manchester. The intensified training was carried out by all sections of the squadron, and were very beneficial to all participating. We returned to Hunter Army Air Field, leaving Atterbury on the evening of the fifteenth of January and arriving at Hunter on the seventeenth of January. The flying echelon left Atterbury on the afternoon of the fifteenth of January, and proceeded to Hunter Field by way of Barksdale Field, Louisiana, arriving at Hunter the sixteenth of January.

On our return, routine training was carried out until the twentieth of January at which time an inspection prior to our POM [program objective memorandum] inspection was conducted by the III Bomber Command through the twenty-fourth of January. As a result of the inspection and recommendations by the inspecting department, the balance of the month was spent in catching up on deficiencies in training and in our records, which were brought out by this inspection.

Captain Kennard, our Medical Officer, and Captain Erskine, our Intelligence Officer, started work on a photographic history of the Squadron during this month.

2nd Lt. Byron Eells, our Supply Officer, received his promotion to 1st Lt.

The strength of the squadron on the thirty-first of January was 66 Officers and 338 Enlisted Men.

JOHN R. NEALE

1st Lt., Air Corps.

Asst. Intelligence Officer

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Historical Report of the 596th Bombardment Squadron (M)
397th Bombardment Group (M) AAF for the Period of February, 1944.

During the month of February our squadron completed its final phase training and made the necessary preparation to pass the final POM final inspection which took place about the middle of the month.

After that inspection, we were assigned our new airplanes and the pilots, co-pilots, navigators, radio operators, line chiefs, and flight chiefs, together with the Engineering Officer and Communications Officer were staged, and took off on the first leg of their journey overseas, under command of Major Robert M. McLeod, our Commanding Officer. The balance of the squadron prepared themselves for departure to the POE, under command of Captain Forrest W. Acton, our Executive Officer.

The squadron takes pride in the ability of its pilots and the Engineering Section in that we were able to complete our training periods without the loss of any planes or personnel by flying accidents.

The squadron lost by transfer 1st Lt. John A. Haupt, who was transferred to Group. His place was taken by 2nd Lt. T.E. White, Ordnance Officer. 1st Lt. Goodbody was transferred from Group to the squadron as Gunnery Officer.

2nd Lt. Walter J. Joos was promoted to 1st Lt. on February 22, 1944.

The strength of the squadron at the end of the month was 315 enlisted men and 64 Officers.

JOHN R. NEALE,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Historical Officer.

SECRET (continued)

596TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (M)

397TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (M) Station 168, England.

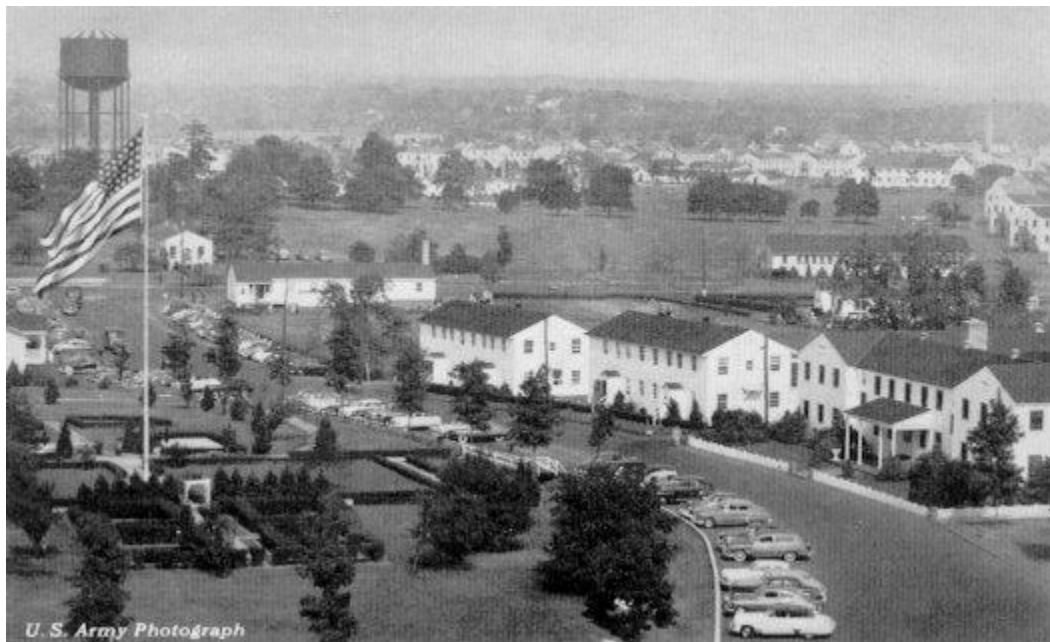
10 June, 1944.

SUBJECT: Summary of Squadron History Until Arrival in ETO. (European Theater of Operations)

d. We completed our training in February and our flying crews departed from Hunter Field to Morrison Field, West Palm Beach, Florida on February 24, 1944, on the first leg of their flight to our overseas destination, authorized by Special Order Number 53, par 14, Third Air Force Staging Wing, Hunter Field, dated February 22, 1944. They left Morrison Field, February 25, 1944 and proceeded by the prescribed Southern Route through South America, Ascension, North Africa, to Southwestern England to final destination at Station 154, Gosfield, arriving there on March 8-9-11, 1944. The order authorizing movement was by Hq Station 11, Caribbean Wing, Air Transport Command, dated February 25, 1944 (Operation Order 605) for shipment #5254 from Morrison Field. Meanwhile, our ground crew and personnel that did not fly remained at Hunter Field until March 12, 1944. We arrived at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey for staging on March 14, 1944 under authority of Special Order 67, par1, Third Air Force Staging Wing, Hunter Field, dated March 7, 1944.

Camp Kilmer, New Jersey

Camp Kilmer, New Jersey was a former United States Army camp that was activated in June 1942 as a staging area and part of an installation of the New York Port of Embarkation. The camp was organized as part of the Army Service Forces Transportation Corps. Troops were quartered at Camp Kilmer in preparation for transport to the European Theater of Operations in World War II. Eventually, it became the largest processing center for troops heading overseas and returning from World War II, processing over 2.5 million soldiers. It officially closed in 2009.



175d. Chow Line, Camp Kilmer, New Jersey (USA)



A SECTION OF THE HOSPITAL BLDG. CAMP KILMER, N. J.



IN FRONT OF THE LOYCE KILMER MEMORIAL, CAMP KILMER, N. J.



THE EQUIPMENT, CAMP KILMER, N. J.



THE CHURCH, CAMP KILMER, N. J.



ONE OF THE MESS HALLS, CAMP KILMER, N. J.



ONE OF THE BARRACKS, CAMP KILMER, N. J.



IN LINE FOR CHOW, CAMP KILMER, N. J.



SECRET (continued)

596TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (M)

397TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (M) Station 168, England.

10 June, 1944.

SUBJECT: Summary of Squadron History Until Arrival in ETO. (European Theater of Operations)

e. We completed our staging at Camp Kilmer and arrived at Port of Embarkation, Brooklyn, New York on March 22, 1944 and embarked March 23, 1944 for overseas under authority Secret Letter O, ASF, NYPE, Brooklyn, N.Y., March 19, 1944, file SPTAA-GM (EC) 370.5 (#5102) and letter 3/20/44 A.S.F. Camp Kilmer, New Jersey (Subject-Movement of Troops) assigning us to ETOUSA.

While researching this chapter I was contacted by the son of a pilot from the 396th, Donald Hoch, whose parents were good friends of Hazel and George and spent the last evening together before George and Sterling embarked for Europe. Here is Don's message:

Mr. Hofmann:

My father, Sterling P. Hoch, was a pilot in the 596th. He knew your father well (my father passed away in 1999). They (my father and mother) had dinner with your parents in Brooklyn before the 397th sailed over on the liner Saturnia. My parents had gotten married on March 5, 1944, while the (ed. note – his) air echelon was flying over to England. Normally, my father would have flown one of the planes. My father returned to Hunter Field, GA, and then took the train with the remainder of the 397th Group up to Camp Kilmer, NJ. He would meet my mother when he could, and one evening they went to your parent's flat (I believe they said that your parents were staying with your father's parents) for dinner. I also believe my mother (Evelyn) would spend time with your mother while my father was in camp. I believe the ship departed for England on March 23, 1944.

I have a lot of info on the 397th, and the 596th. Let me know if you are interested in anything. I don't believe I have any pictures of your father, but I will check.

Don Hoch

Convoy UT.10

From: NYC Thursday, 23 March 1944.
 To: CLYDE Monday, 3 April 1944.
 Official number of ships = 26 (TDS)

Vessel	Flag	Tons	Built	Pdt.	Cargo	Notes
AFRICAN SUN	Amer	6,507	1942			
ALDEN BESSE	Amer	8,271	1944		STORES, 200 MAILS	
ANNE ARUNDEL	Amer	7,796	1941			1894 TROOPS
ARGENTINA	It	5,014	1907			4792 TROOPS
ATHLONE CASTLE	Br	25,564	1936			5111 TROOPS
BRAZIL	Amer	20,614	1929			5072 TROOPS
CHEMUNG						ESCORT OILER
DOMINION MONARCH	Br	27,155	1939			4322 TROOPS
DOROTHEA L DIX	Amer	6,736	1940			1600 TROOPS
DUCHESS OF BEDFORD	Br	20,123	1928			
EDMUND B ALEXANDER	Amer	21,329	1905			5296 TROOPS
EXCHANGE	Amer	6,736	1940			2200 TROOPS
HENRY GIBBONS	Amer	12,097	1943			1900 TROOPS
HMS NABOB					A/C, SPECIAL AMMUNI	
JAMES PARKER	Amer	10,021	1939			2226 TROOPS
MARINE EAGLE	Amer	11,500	1943			
MARINE RAVEN	Amer	11,757	1943			2500 TROOPS
OCEAN MAIL	Amer	7,842	1941			
SANTA PAULA	Amer	9,135	1932			2366 TROOPS
SANTA ROSA	Amer	9,135	1932			2501 TROOPS
SATURNIA	It	24,470	1927			3300 TROOPS
SEA SERPENT	Amer	8,591	1942		FRIG, 300 MAILS	
SHOOTING STAR	Amer	8,591	1942		FRIG	
STIRLING CASTLE	Br	25,550	1936			5038 TROOPS, 9 DAYS REPAIR A
THURSTON						1155 TROOPS
USS CINCINNATI						

51,273 troops in total were in this large convoy.

SATURNIA / FRANCES Y. SLANGER 1925

The SATURNIA was a 23,940 gross ton ship, length 630ft x beam 80ft, one funnel, two masts, twin screw and a speed of 19 knots. Accommodation for 305-1st, 460-2nd, 310-intermediate and 700-3rd class passengers. Built by Cantiere Navale Triestino, Monfalcone, she was launched for the Cosulich Line on 29th Dec.1925 and started her maiden voyage from Trieste for Naples, Marseilles and South America on 21st Sep.1927. On 1st Feb.1928 she started Mediterranean - New York sailings and in 1937 was transferred to the ownership of Italia Line. Interned in New York in May 1940, she was seized by the USA in Dec.1941, and in 1945 became the US Hospital Ship FRANCES Y.SLANGER. Returned to Italy in Nov.1946, she reverted to SATURNIA, was rebuilt to carry 240-1st, 270-2nd and 860-tourist class passengers and commenced Genoa - Naples - New York sailings on 20th Jan.1947. Her last voyage on this service started on 3rd Oct.1955 and she then transferred to Mediterranean - US/Canada sailings. On 7th Mar.1965 she commenced her final voyage from Trieste to Venice, Patras, Naples, Palermo, Gibraltar, Lisbon, Halifax, New York, Boston, Lisbon, Gibraltar, Naples, Palermo, Patras, Venice and Trieste. She was scrapped at Spezia the same year.[North Atlantic Seaway by N.R.P.Bonsor, vol.4,p.1619]



Funnel:

Red funnel with black top, broad white band on the red.

In 1940 most Italian ships were taken over for military service and by 1945, few were left afloat. The fleet was gradually rebuilt but from 1960 the rising popularity of air travel signalled the gradual decline of the passenger ships and they were eventually switched to cruising. By 1977 all long distance passenger travel had ceased, although many cargo ships continued to carry a few passengers. A cruising company was set up (Italia Crociere Internazionali) to employ the

remaining passenger vessels but ceased trading in 1980. Italia continued as a freighting company, mostly with second hand or chartered container ships and still operates, but in private ownership.

Saturnia	1927	1932 transferred from <u>Cosulich</u> , 1940 interned at New York, 1942 chartered to Red Cross, 1943 Allied troopship, 1945 became US Hospital ship renamed Frances Y. Slinger, 1946 returned to owners, renamed Saturnia, 1965 scrapped.
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Saturnia



Photo by D. Timpano January 2008

SHIP FACTS

- ♦ The Saturnia was Built for the Cosulich Line and transferred to Italian Line in early 1935 when it absorbed Cosulich Line
- ♦ On May 8, 1935, she was used as a troop transport for the Italian Government to East Africa (Eritrea)
- ♦ She was chartered to the International Red Cross for evacuation voyages from East Africa in 1942
- ♦ On September 8, 1943 she made for an allied port following the Italian capitulation. She was taken over by the US Government and used as Francis Y. Slinger, a hospital ship
- ♦ She was returned to Italian Line in late 1946, where her original name was restored. She returned to transatlantic sailing until 1965, when she was withdrawn from service
- ♦ On October 7, 1965 she arrived at La Spezia, Italy to be scrapped. In April 1966, she was scrapped by Terrestre Maritma



Saturnia & Vulcania



The *Vulcania* and *Saturnia* were owned by the Italian Line. The *Saturnia* started operation in 1927 and the *Vulcania* finally sailed in December of 1928; both were built by Cantiere Navale Triestino in Monfalcone, Italy. Each weighed about 23,970 tons and were considered sisters. From the information that I have found, they were near identical. The ships cruised on the North and South Atlantic runs. Each ship shared in conservative decorations at the time. This was odd because the trend for liners at the time was heading for the Art Deco style. that was so popular on the French ships.

History

Information on the ships' history is hard to come by. Although, I have seen it associated with other liners. The *Vulcania* played a key, well a small, role in the maiden voyage of the Italian liner *Rex*. To the embarrassment of Italian line officials, the new *Rex* had lost power during her maiden voyage. For one hour the ship was filled with darkness. The engineers worked hard to get power up again. After limping into the port of Gibraltar, passengers waited for three days to continue their trip. On the second day of waiting, the *Vulcania* steamed into port.

She contained important parts for the *Rex* and supplied passage for those passengers who needed it.

The *Saturnia* and *Vulcania* were two of four Italian Line ships to survive the second World War. The *Saturnia* also served the United States as the hospital ship *Frances Y. Slanger*. Many of the more beautiful appointments were taken off and never restored after the war. The number of passengers that the ship carried also decreased from 2,100 to 1,300. During the restoration for passenger use, the ships' engines were replaced with Sulzer diesels, that were outfitted for the sisters' twin screw layout. The ships were now capable of a 21 knot speed.

After a 39 year run, the *Saturnia* was scrapped in 1966 in her birth place of Italy. The *Vulcania* also meet her fate in the '60s. She was said to have burned in Hong Kong harbor.



Saturnia



SATURNIA

Cabin Class - Dining Room



SATURNIA
Cabin Class - Bar

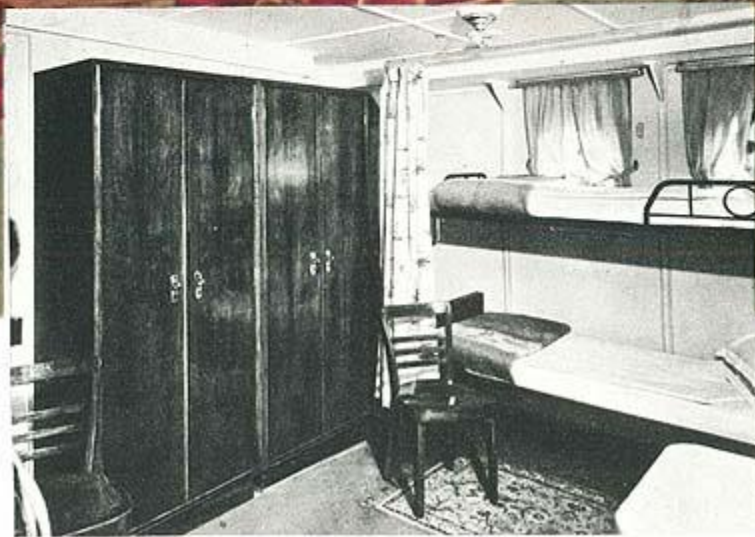


SATURNIA

Cabin Class - Four-berth Stateroom

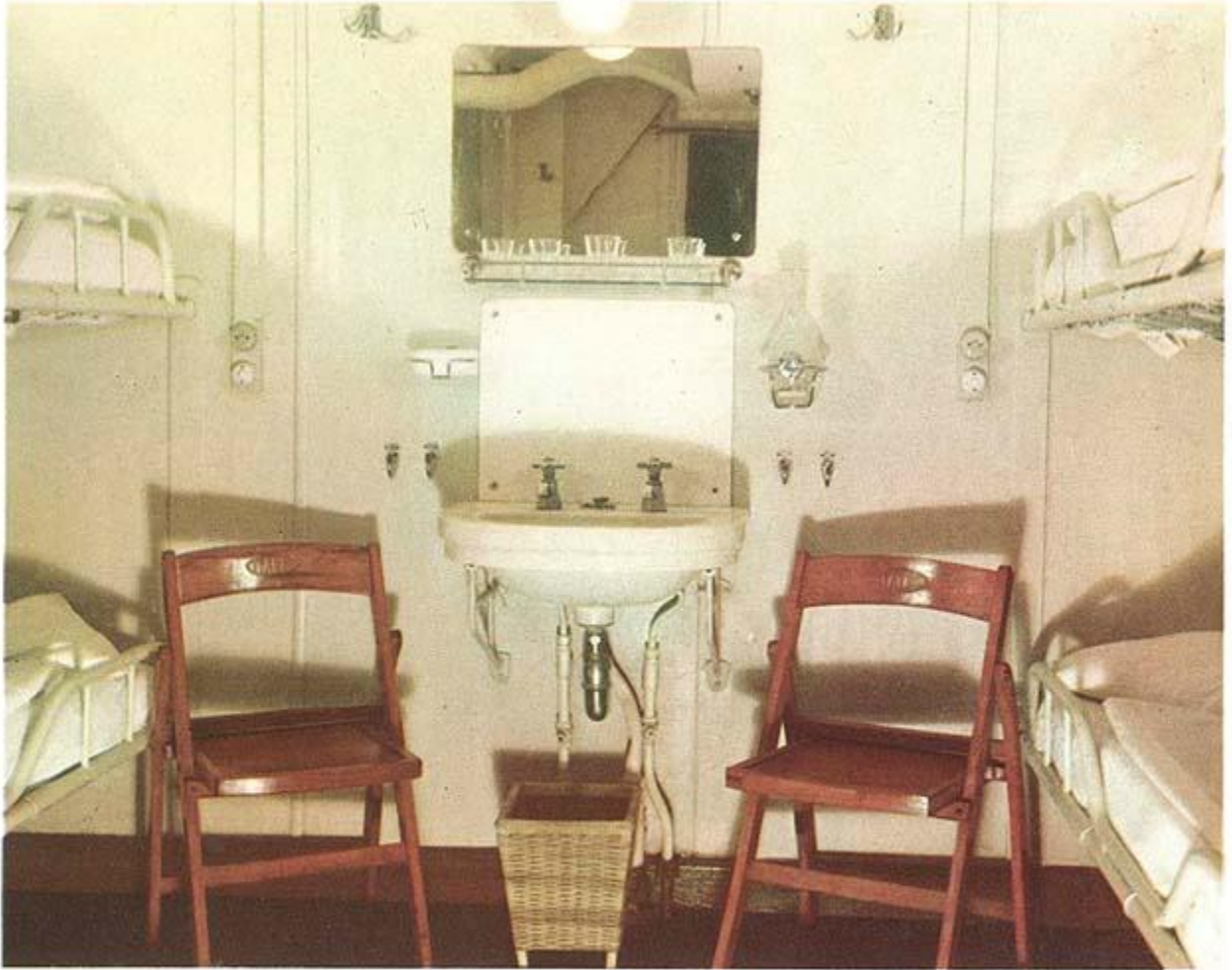


SATURNIA
Cabin Class - Hall



VULCANIA

Cabin Class - Four-berth Stateroom



SATURNIA

Tourist Class - Four-berth Cabin

SATURNIA

Tourist Class - Lounge



SATURNIA

Tourist Class - Dining Room



SATURNIA

First Class - Social Room





S A T U R N I A
First Class - Two-berth Stateroom

The following newsletter was published on the Troop Ship Saturnia while division units were enroute to Europe in 1944. The original was printed on mimeograph paper and even the original print was not too clear. (Probably from typing a stencil with a portable typewriter with dirty keys). So, if you don't mind straining your eyes a bit, check it out and see what was happening later in 1944 after D-Day on the 27th November when the ship was ferrying troops directly to France.

**SIX ALLIED ARMIES DRIVE STEADILY INTO GERMANY**

PARIS: The U.S. First Army seized the fortified town of Weinsweiler, Sunday and drove the Germans from a height in the eastern edge of Hartgen Forest four and a half miles from the Roer River fortress of Duren, major barrier to the allied smash toward the Rhine. The enemy's defenses at the approaches to the Cologne plain were bending under the hammer blow of Gen. Eisenhower's great winter offensive, but there still was no hint of a collapse. All along the four hundred mile Western front the six Allied armies were driving steadily into Germany, Holland and into Alsace and Lorraine in France. The U.S. Third Army drove four miles into Germany at least at a new point west to within but four miles of its border on the south. The U.S. Seventh Army cleared Strasbourg of all Germans save those still holding out in a six hundred yard bridgehead across the Rhine. The French first Army routed the Germans from all forts east of Belfort taking a number of prisoners.

NEW APPOINTMENTS MADE

LONDON: Gen. Alexander has been made a Field Marshal and appointed to succeed Gen. Sir Harold Wilson as supreme commander in the Mediterranean Theater. Lt. Gen. Mark Clark of the U.S. Army has been made Commander in Chief of the Allied Fifteenth Army group in Italy.

U. S. BOMBERS ATTACK WISBURG

LONDON: At least 110 Nazi fighter planes were shot down in aerial combat Sunday while trying to protect Germany's largest natural oil refinery at Wisburg from an American fleet of 1100 heavy bombers guarded by 700 fighters. Other targets hammered Sunday were a four lane rail viaduct at Bielefeld and rail yards at Isern. Enemy supply lines were again generally harassed over the weekend.

RUSSIAN TROOPS DROVE EIGHTEEN MILES INTO SLOVAKIA

LONDON: Russian troops driving eighteen miles inside Eastern Slovakia, captured the important axis stronghold and road hubs of Michalovec and Humenne, Sunday and swept thru sixty other localities, Moscow announced Sunday.

SIXTEEN JAP SHIPS SUNK

WASHINGTON, D.C.: Sixteen Jap ships including a heavy cruiser and destroyer were sunk in a carrier borne strike of the U.S. Third fleet east of the Philippines,

AMERICAN FIGHTER PLANES DESTROY CONVOY.

GEN. MACARTHUR'S HEADQUARTERS; PHILIPPINES: Gen. MacArthur announced Saturday that deadly American fighter planes destroyed a four transport convoy carrying an estimated two thousand troops, a repeat performance of the previous day's work. MacArthur said that in all, sixteen Jap transports carrying Leyte reinforcements plus fourteen escorting warships had been sunk with a total of seventeen thousand troops aboard. In the stiff Leyte ground fighting, the American seventh division pushing slowly northward along the west coast road toward the port of Ormoc to bring up the lower jaw of a nutcracker squeeze.

PREMIER BONOMI RESIGNS

ROME: The government of Premier Bonomi in power less than six months resigned Sunday after two weeks of crisis in which its six parties were unable to agree on a program to rule war-torn, hungry Italy.

BRITISH TROOPS CROSS PARZENO RIVER

ROME: British 8th Army troops in swift advances have flung an assault around the Po Valley town of Faenza and the Germans are digging in inside the city, nine miles southeast of Bologna. Troops and tanks crossed the swollen mud-piled Parzeno river south of Faenza. Eighth Army units northeast of the city of Borgo Durbese cleared the east bank of the Liana river for more than two miles above highway nine. American troops fighting twenty miles north of Mantua, seized Mt. Balvedere in limited advances northwest of Perrotta and knocked back a stiff German counterattack on that height.

CREW OF B-29'S RESCUED

MANILA: The entire crew of one of the two B-29's lost in the Toyko raid was rescued Saturday afternoon from two rafts north of Saipan. An American destroyer picked up the twelve airmen at three p.m. after they had been adrift for almost twenty four hours.

SECRETARY OF STATE CORDELL HULL RESIGNS

WASHINGTON, D.C.: A high government source said Sunday that Secretary of State Cordell Hull has submitted his resignation because of ill health and the indications are President Roosevelt will accept it. His current illness was not serious but he is expected to take a lengthy rest.

**REPORT ALL LOST AND FOUND ARTICLES TO THE
CAPTAIN'S OFFICE**

LOST: Shaffer pen, Finder contact Lt. Gibson in room #332.

LOST: Pocket check serial numbers on all binoculars for #261069. If above numbered binoculars are located, return to 1st Sgt Keel, Co L, in Ballroom.

NATIONAL LEAGUE FOOTBALL RESULTS: ---

New York 7, Brooklyn 0
Chicago 26, Phila 7
Greenbay 36, Card-Pitt 20
Washington 14, Boston 7
Detroit 26, Cleveland 14

LIVE SATURDAY FOOTBALL SCORES: --

Pt. Pierce Amphib: 21, Jack Navy 0
Wisconsin 28, Wisconsin 25
Kbraska 36, Kansas State 0
Oklahoma 24: 28 Oklahoma 6
SUN 7, Texas Tech 6
Southern Calif 33, Calif (UCLA) 6
St. Marys Navy 38, Calif 5

ROSE BOWL GAME IN JANUARY

LOS ANGELES: The University of Tennessee will play the University of Southern Calif. in the Rose Bowl at nearby Pasadena on January first, Arnold Eddy, chairman of the Rose Bowl committee of the Pacific coast conference announced today.

OTHER JANUARY GAMES

NEW YORK: January first bowl football games will include Georgia Tech and Duke in Miami's Orange Bowl; Alabama and the Sugar Bowl at New Orleans and Oklahoma A&M versus Texas Christian in the Dallas Cotton Bowl. Most football attention however is centered recently on the coming Army-Navy classic at Baltimore next Saturday.

KEEP HIM, GUY!



DAILY CHURCH SERVICES

WESTERN SERVICE -- 1st Deot at 1700

CATHOLIC ROSARY SERVICE -- Chapel at 1700

JEWISH SERVICES -- Chapel at 1730

MOVIES TONIGHT

PROEMIDE SQUARE -- 1st show at 1800

Holders of Pass Tickets with Bank Nos from 301 to 600 only will be admitted. Line will form single file down stairwell and down 1st deck companionway.

2d show at 2000

Holders of Pass Tickets with Bank Nos from 601 to 900 only will be admitted.

"MARGIN FOR ERROR" is the picture tonight.

LIBRARY -- Veranda Deck 1st -- Hours -1100 to 2100 daily

SHIPS CHURCH FORE TIG

All men interested in singing in a ships chorus, report at Chapel at 1830 tonight. Come one and all and have fun with song.

SICK CALL

Sick Call for E.H. 0830-0900
Sick Call for Off. 1030-1100
Dental Clinic 0900-1100

Emergency care will be available throughout the day.

The dispensary and dental clinic are located in the troop hospital on Main Deck, aft.

WATER DISTRIBUTION HOURS

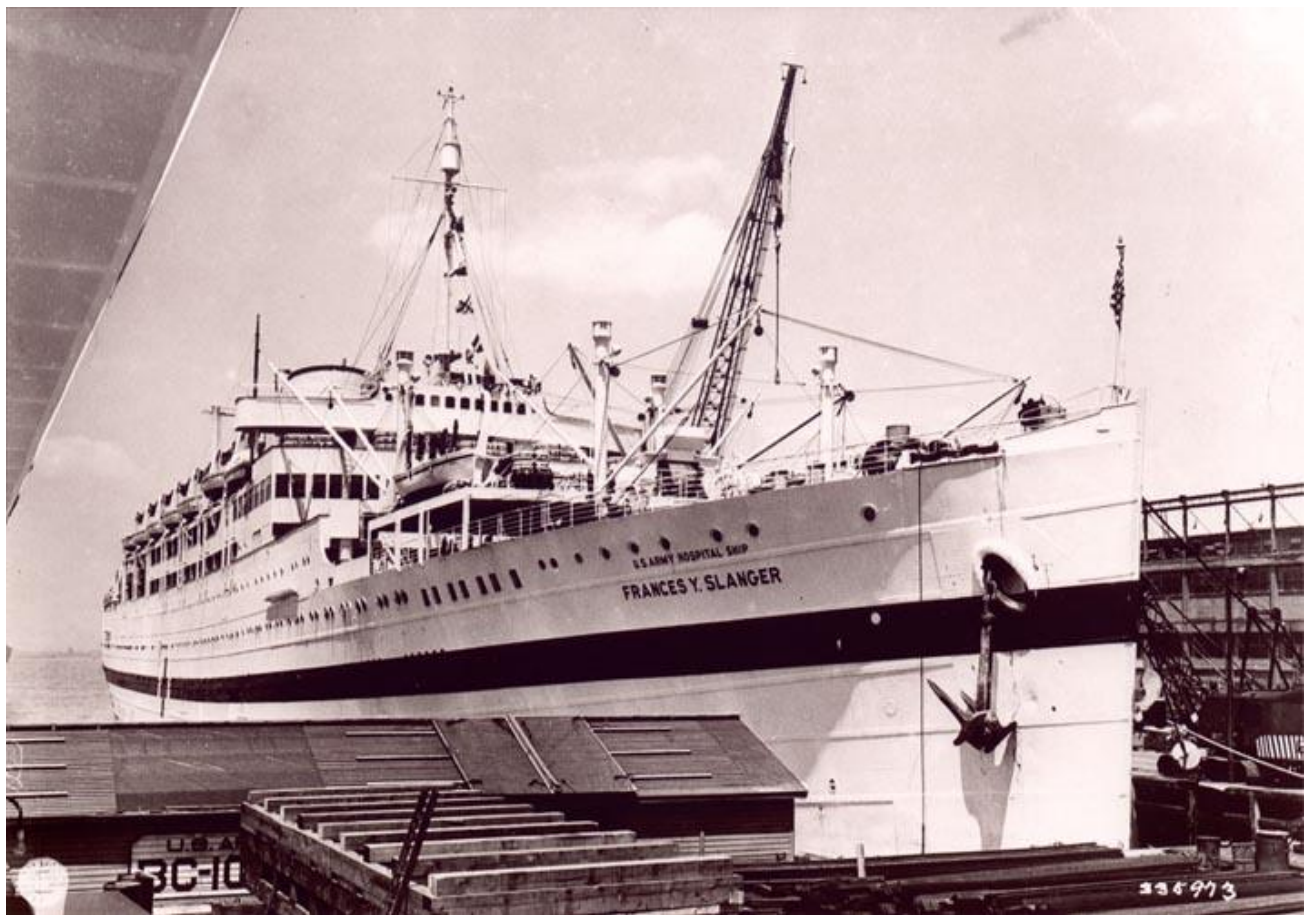
0730-0830
1500-1630
1930-2030

PREMIER FIORLOT CALLES TESTING

PRUSSEL: Premier Fiorlot Sunday night called an emergency meeting of his cabinet for Monday to consider the crisis arising from a bloody clash between anti-government demonstrators and black-helmed state police in front of the chamber of deputies. The premier said in an interview that the "small minority including communists" have the childish hope of seizing power, but he will not yield.

Frances Y. Slanger

The *Saturnia* was renamed *Frances Y. Slanger* when serving as an allied hospital ship towards the end of WWII. Below is a brief history of her career by Steve Miner, who is looking for information on the ship and contacts with anyone with a connection to her during this time.



(US Army Signal Corps photo 1945)

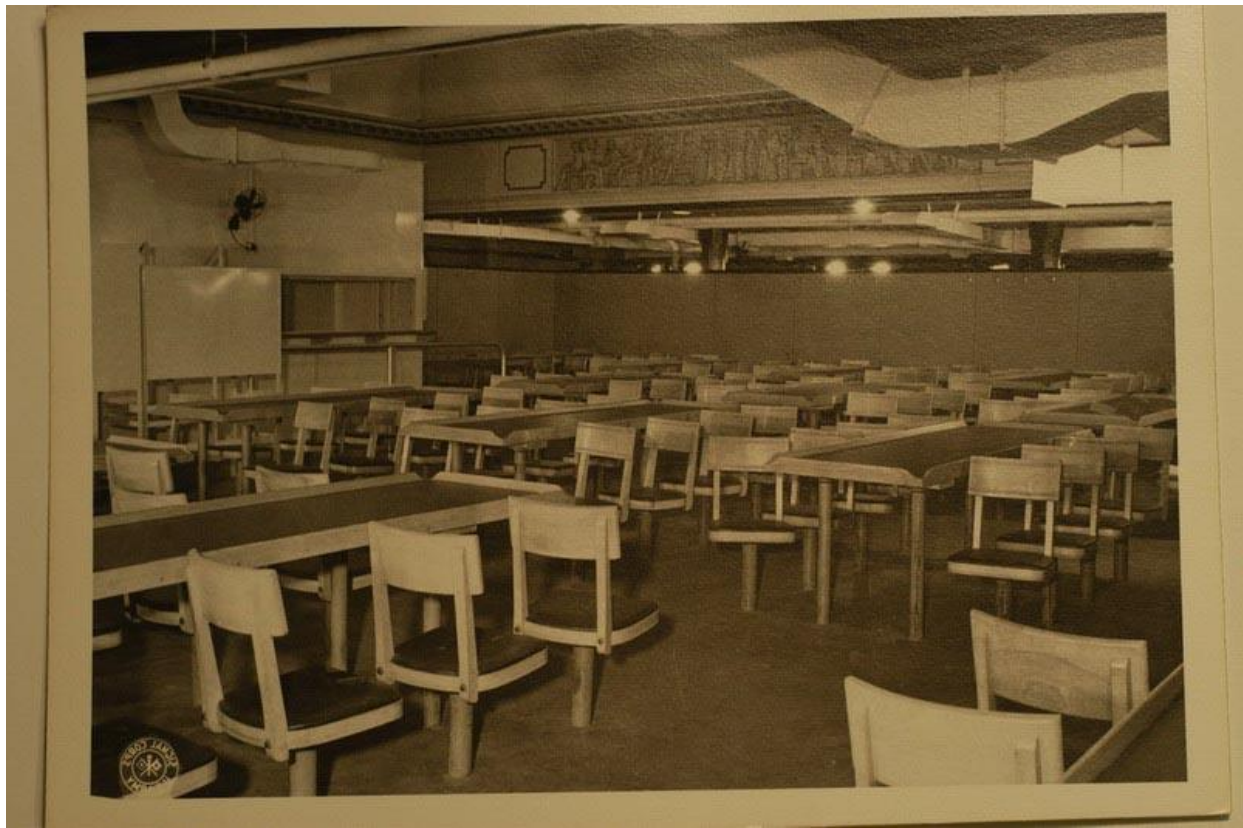
The *Saturnia* was taken by her crew to the United States in October 1943 to prevent the ship from being destroyed by wartime conflict in the Mediterranean. The Wartime Shipping Administration (WSA) leased the ship and her Italian crew during 1944 for use as a troop transport between the New York City Port of Embarkation (NYPE) and Europe, operating as the US Army Transport (USAT) *Saturnia*. Until the bureaucratic red tape was eliminated, the Italian crew worked at great personal risk without pay or insurance by operating the *Saturnia* in the Atlantic war zone for several voyages! At the time the only US crew aboard were US Navy Armed Guard unit members. Infantry troops were successfully ferried to England and France in 1944. At the end of 1944 it was decided to convert the *Saturnia* into a hospital ship. The conversion took place at the Todd-Erie Basin shipyard in Brooklyn from January 1945 until June

1945. During her military service, veterans say that the ship's luxurious appointments were either removed, covered with plywood, or obscured in military grey paint.

As a hospital ship, the *Saturnia* was known as the *HS Frances Y. Slanger*, and was operated under the US Army Transportation Corps from June until December 1945. Unit members wore the distinctive wheel patch. The medical unit aboard was the 235th Hospital Ship Complement (HSC) consisting of approximately 400 people with 60 nurses and was commanded for much of the time by Col. Gilbert Saynes, a surgeon from the University of Pittsburgh. The 235th HSC was formed in spring 1945 and was stationed at Camp Kilmer, NJ while waiting for the ship's conversion. Various members of the medical unit commuted to the Brooklyn shipyard to oversee portions of the medical equipment installation during that period. The *Frances Y. Slanger* was retrofitted to accommodate approximately 1600 patients and 500 crewmembers. The ship contained operating rooms, dental surgery suites, XRay, lab services, pharmacy and commissary and recreation room accommodations. Approximately five trips were made to Europe to carry patients back to the US between June and November 1945, between NYC and Southampton, England or Cherbourg, France. Typical trips took about three to four weeks per turnaround, including reprovisioning and loading/unloading of patients. During this period the US Merchant Marine operated the ship. In December of 1945 *HS Frances Y. Slanger* was deactivated from service as a hospital ship.

In January 1946, the *Frances Y. Slanger* was quickly reconverted to a transport and was again known as the *USAT Saturnia*. Operating between NYC and Southampton and Cherbourg between January and June 1946, *Saturnia* was used to carry servicemen and women and their families back from Europe to the U.S. via New York. The unit responsible for ship transport activities was the 9222 TSC TU NYPE and its crew included a doctor and several nurses. In late 1946, after a public uproar helped to defeat an attempt by the USSR to seize the *Saturnia* for war reparations owed by Italy, the *Saturnia* was returned to the Italian government.





SECRET (continued)

596TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (M)
397TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (M) Station 168, England.

10 June, 1944.

SUBJECT: Summary of Squadron History Until Arrival in ETO. (European Theater of Operations)

f. We arrived at Gourock, Scotland, in the Firth of Clyde on April 3, 1944 and entrained for Halstead, Essex, England, arriving on April 5, 1944, at Station 154, Gosfield, Essex, England, where we were joined by our flying crews.

The following orders cover assignments from ETOUSA through assignment to 98th Combat Wing at Gosfield, England:

- a. ETOUSA Letter Order AG 322 OPGC dated March 31, 1944 (Subject Troop Assignment #43, par 1 (a) - which assigned the 596th Bomb Squadron to USSTAF.
- b. USSTAF Letter Order (322) dated April 4, 1944 (Subject Assignment of Units #38) assigned the 596th Bomb Squadron to Ninth Air Force.
- c. Ninth Air Force Letter Order (370.5) dated March 22, 1944 (Subject Arriving Unit) assigned the 596th Bombardment Squadron to the Ninth Bomber Command.
- d. Ninth Bomber Command (General Order 62, par 1, assigned the 596th Bombardment Squadron to the 98th Combat Wing.

The strength of the organization on arrival in the United Kingdom was 63 officers and 307 enlisted men.

{SIGNED}
JOHN R. NEALE,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Squadron Historian

CLASS OF SERVICE
 This is a full-rate Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION CABLEGRAM

A. N. WILLIAMS
 PRESIDENT

SYMBOLS	
LC	Deferred Cablegram
NLT	Cable Night Letter
	Ship Radiogram

Received at 40 Broad Street (Central Cable Office), New York, N.Y. ALWAYS OPEN

E6301 Q709CDC GFM INTL

CDC APR 11 PM 9 18

CD AMGASU VIA COMMERCIAL

EFM MRS GEO HOFMANN

QR

69 WEST 104 ST NY

VERY HAPPY TO HEAR FROM YOU, DEAREST. AM FIT AND WELL. YOU ARE MORE THAN EVER IN MY THOUGHTS AT THIS TIME. ALL MY LOVE DEAREST.

GEORGIE HOFMANN

Arrived safely Thank goodness.

THE QUICKEST, SUREST AND SAFEST WAY TO SEND MONEY IS BY TELEGRAPH OR CABLE

The Saturnia had avoided the German U-Boats of the north Atlantic that were sinking many allied vessels by this time in the war.