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**HISTORICAL REPORT
1 AUGUST TO 31 AUGUST 1944**

Information contained herein, is written in compliance with Ninth Fighter Command Memorandum Number 20-4, date 22 December 1943. It is a resume of the activities of the 368th Fighter Group Headquarters, for the month of August, 1 to 31st, 1944.

1. ORGANIZATION

No Change.

2. STRENGTH AS OF 31st AUGUST 1944

Figures shown below are total strength for Group Headquarters and assigned squadrons.

<u>Assigned Personnel</u>	<u>Authorized Personnel</u>
Officers -----195	Officers -----181
Enlisted Men ----831	Enlisted Men ----826
1026	1007

3. DATE OF ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE FROM EACH STATION IN ETO:

Departed ALG A-3, 2 miles east of Cardonville, France,
23 August, for ALG 40, 2 miles west of Chartres, France,
arriving 23 August, 1944.

4. LOSSES IN ACTION:

Nil (for Group Headquarters)

5. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

Nil (for Group Headquarters)

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RECORD OF EVENTS
PAGE ONE

1 August 1944

Another month in the history of the 368th Fighter Group starts again today. What this new month will bring in the way of work, trials, and errors no one can say. As the month starts the Allied the Allied Armies are making very good headway on all fronts, and the S-2 tent is a busy place with everyone coming in to see the ALO map display. There are exclamations of joy as each bomb line change comes in, and the line on the map moves steadily forward. Everyone has but one thought in his mind: to get this war over with and get home again.

We started the month out right on the operational side by having a briefing at 0530 for the 397th. A change from the regular set-up of last week when we were to fly 4-ship flights, it had been changed to 8-ship flights because it had been noted the GAF was becoming more aggressive. The types of missions are still the same: we are flying tank escort for the 3rd Armored Division, relying on them for targets to bomb and strafe. Our control is now with the tank commander, who has the same type of radio in his tank as we have in our aircraft. In accordance with the escort, we also furnish a close armed recon at all times to let the tank commander know just what is ahead of him when he can't see it himself.

Six missions of 8 a/c were flown today, starting at 0846, to provide tank escort. Each squadron got in two missions apiece, each carrying 2-500 lb. GP bombs plus the usual eight machine guns. All types of targets were attacked: tanks, gun positions, strong points, and enemy troops. No aircraft were sighted or encountered, but the 397th suffered one loss when Lt. Rudolph Marko was MIA. He was last seen strafing vehicles in front of the tank columns. He was seen to attempt to pull up when his right wing hit a tree or a house; his wing came off, and the a/c did three rolls, hit the ground, and burst into flames. The loss of Lt. Marko will be sorely felt by the men of the 397th because he was a well-liked pilot and a good one. His manner and personality had endeared him to the whole group.

Results of today's missions were very good. Claims for the destruction of tanks were 5 destroyed and 3 damaged. The last mission for the day by the 395th was recalled because the weather was too closed in for good visibility. All bombs were jettisoned in the channel, and the planes landed home at 2115.

2 August 1944

Because of bad weather and low cloud ceiling this morning, no planes were able to take off. Nothing happened all morning and it wasn't until 1400 that the first flight of eight planes were able to take off. During the course of the day 40 aircraft were dispatched, 5 missions of 8 a/c each. The 395th and 396th led with two missions apiece, and the 397th tagged along with only one. Results of the 5 missions were generally very good. Claims for the day are: M/T's 12-0-6, Tanks 9-18, Halftracks, 4-0-2, Staff cars 1-0-0. Our boys encountered no enemy aircraft all day and only periodic flak, mostly small arms fire while

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2 August 1944 (continued)

strafing and while in the bombing run.

A special order came out today announcing the award of the Good Conduct Medal to several members of Group Headquarters. Names of these men will be found in the attached document, paragraph three.

Capt. R.E. Leary, Group S-3, left this morning for five days of DS to the 3rd Armored Division. We will try to bring about closer cooperation between Ground Units and the Air Support. Pilots believe that they are wasting good bombs on poor types of targets, and they want to know about some of the difficulties of the Ground Units have in picking targets for the Air Force to bomb.

Special Orders #87, Supporting Document #1.

3 August 1944

In spite of bad weather conditions this morning, the 395th managed to get in one take off of 8 planes. 8 P-47's took off at 0725 to give armored column support to the 3rd Armored Division. Nothing happened, however, because when the planes got over St. Lo they ran into extremely bad weather and the controller ordered them to return to their base. All bombs were dropped in the Channel, and the boys came home.

All planes were then kept grounded until late afternoon when the weather broke long enough for the 396th and 397th to get in one flight apiece on armored column cover. There were no E/A sighted, and not much activity was noted. The boys dropped their bombs on tanks and other request targets from the Ground Support Party. Claims for the day are: Tanks 0-0-3, M/T's 1-0-6, Halftracks, 4-0-1. The 395th sent up another flight of 4 A/C at 1910, but they weren't destined to get in a mission today. Shortly after take off they were told to come home and land because of bad weather. All the bombs were dropped in the Channel, and the planes were flown back to the base and landed at 1930.

After seeing several of the boys in Headquarters walking around with long smiles on their faces this morning and congratulations being thrown back and forth, it was decided to do a little checking on the situation. Just then Special Order #88 arrived from S-1 bringing the explanation with it: the new rating list had come out. After months of sweating it out, the boys had finally come through and were now the proud possessors of another stripe. A list of names will be found in the attached document.

Special Order #88, Supporting Document #2.

4 August 1944

Each squadron managed to get one mission of 8 planes apiece today despite the weather conditions. The weather is the main cause of our not flying as often as we would like to go up. Today the sky had a few breaks in the low scud and made it possible to fly these missions. Visibility wasn't too good, ranging from 3 to 6 miles. Even on cloudless days it is quite hazy, and this tends to make visibility limited.

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4 August 1944 (continued)

All missions flown today were in support of the 3rd Armored Division's drive, from tank escort to recon work up to 20 miles in front of the columns. Each plane carried 2-500 lb. GP bombs, plus the usual eight machine guns carrying API ammo. Bombs were released on targets of opportunity such as tanks, armored cars, and gun positions. While on the bombing run the boys also did a little strafing on the targets they were bombing. No enemy aircraft were sighted on any of the missions today, but the flak encountered was vicious. Several of our airplanes were damaged by flak, and Lt. Col. Henry R. Quimby, CO 395th Ftr Sq, bellied in on a field in the Caen-Défont area. He was in a bombing run when he called over the intercom "Sorry, fellas, I guess I won't be able to make it home." He then flew on for about 4 minutes, after which they saw him belly into a field, hit a stone wall, and then came to a stop. The pilots say there was no fire and one of the boys saw a hospital down the road about a mile and a half. The place where he landed is thought to be in friendly territory. A searching party was organized but did not go out because of the inability of the pilots to locate the place where he bellied in. Hope is held out for the recovery and return of Col. Quimby in the near future. The boys are sure he landed in our lines.

The announcement of the promotion of S/Sgt. Ray McConnell to the grade of Tech. Sgt. came thru this morning on Special Order 89, dated 4 August 1944. Sgt. McConnell holds down the important job of Motor Inspector for the Group.

5 August 1944

Because of weather conditions there were only two missions flown today, one by the 395th Squadron and one by the 397th Squadron. Early this morning the weather looked at tho' it would be real nice; but after the first mission was flown, the sky clouded up to a 10/10ths coverage and no more planes could get off until 1750. The 395th managed to get in their mission in the morning, taking off at 0812 and returning 1002. Bombing results on the mission were very good with many tanks and armored vehicles destroyed and damaged. Most of the targets bombed were requested by the Ground Support Party.

Eight P-47's of the 397th Squadron took off at 1750 this evening to continue the job of armed column cover and tank escort. After making contact with the Ground Support Party, they bombed the road and area on both sides of a bridge ahead of the advancing troops. The purpose of this as explained by the Army was to explode the mines in front and on the other side of the bridge. They did not want the bridge to be knocked out. No enemy a/c were encountered on any of the missions today. One plane was damaged by own bomb fragments on the last mission. All planes were back at the strip at 1927, and no more flying took place because of weather conditions.

Word was received this morning that Lt. Col. Quimby had been located in a hospital near the front lines. He is being taken care of by the medics at hospital # 128 until he can safely be moved to a hospital away from the front. Col. Quimby suffered a broken arm, brain concussion, and severe lacerations on the head as a result of the belly landing he had made. It is hoped that he will be back with us soon. In the absence of Col. Quimby, Capt. Thomas N. Montag, Operations Officer, has been appointed Acting CO of the 395th.

Special Orders #90, Supporting Document #4

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6 August 1944

Heavy haze which lasted most of the day and contributed much to the fact that we could only get one mission off today. 8 P-47's of the 395th took off about 1640 to provide armored column cover and armed recon for the 3rd Armored Division. Planes were armed with 2-500 lb. GP bombs, plus the ever present eight machine guns. Bombs were dropped on various targets as requested by ground control. Targets attacked were mechanized units, gun positions, and artillery spotting positions in a church steeple. The Church was demolished by hits from two bombs. Several enemy vehicles were destroyed: the Germans can write off 4 M/T's, one tank, and one staff car.

This was the only mission flown by the Group today. The night duty officers and EM waited around until late evening, when a release came thru until the following morning.

7 August 1944

As the weather clears every afternoon it tends to set a heavy dew, and this ends up as a fog that doesn't dissipate until about noon. A morning of flying is lost because of this fact.

It was 1215 before the first flight was able to take off this morning. It was the first of 4 missions of 8 ships each providing cover for the 30th and 1st Infantry Divisions. Results of bombing for all missions was very good. Several direct hits were obtained on tanks and gun concentrations, as requested by ground contact. Some of these targets assigned by the Ground Support party couldn't be located. The boys were given coordinates and after flying to these places they could see nothing. This resulted in dropping their bombs on various targets of opportunity.

There was a little excitement this afternoon when one flight sighted a formation of 35 plus Me-109's at 5000 feet carrying bombs and heading in the general direction of our lines. When Capt. J.J. McLachlan saw them coming, he immediately called control and asked for help. Several flights of P-51's and some more P-47's came in, and they all bounced the E/A. The enemy didn't seem to want to fight, some of them hit the deck and started for home, others just milled around looking as tho' they didn't know what had happened. Our claims are 2-0-0, one Me-109 for Capt J.J. McLachlan, his first in 75 missions, and one for Lt. A.E. Benton. Lt. Benton got his by a unique way, coming up behind him firing all the time, and closing up so close as to chop off the enemy aircrafts tail with his prop. The E/A did a series of three summersaults, went over on its back, and headed for the ground. The collision had ruined the peto tube, causing Lt. Benton to overshoot the field and dropping his plane almost into the boys' foxholes in the Hq area. The plane finally came to rest, it was within two feet of one hole with a wing resting right over the top of it. One wheel had been left in the entrance of T/Sgt Mullens and Sgt. Hutchins tent. If it had continued any farther, it would have taken away the enlisted mens showers and completely demolished one foxhole.

8 August 1944

No missions were flown early this morning because of weather conditions. For the past week we have not been able to plan a morning mission because of the heavy fogs that spread over the area. It takes on the average of about four hours to burn off, so it is usually about 1100 to 1200 before it clears sufficiently to take off.

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8 August 1944 (continued)

A total of five missions were flown today under the same schedule that has prevailed since the start of the drive. All missions were flown either as cover for the 3rd Armored Division or the 2nd Armored Divisions. The first flight of 8 planes was from the 395th, who led along with the 396th with two missions for the day. The 397th was low man on the totem pole with one mission to its credit. All bombs were either dropped on targets as requested by ground control or by picking them as good targets of opportunity. Results of bombing were very good; 20 M/T's were destroyed along with 4 German tanks. Several bombs were dropped in wooded areas as requested, with unobserved results. Much activity by the enemy was noted behind the bomb line.

Enemy aircraft were encountered again today when 8 a/c of the 396th were bounced by 30 plus 190's and 109's. We lost no planes or pilots and accounted for two destroyed e/a, one Fw-190 and one Me-109, both by Lt. Dave Farrish of the 396th Fighter Squadron. The pilots were seen to bail out of their planes by the pilots of the squadron.

Capt. John Lougee, 397th Squadron, had a narrow escape when a 20 mm. flak shell penetrated into his cockpit and exploded, scratching him on the leg. He was not injured seriously enough to require hospitalization, and is now back flying regularly every time his name is up for a mission.

1st. Lt. Walter D. Courtwright of the First Army joined the ALO staff.

Special Orders #91, Supporting Document #5.

9 August 1944

Five missions of different types were flown today, 2 of armored column cover, 2 armed recon, and one recon mission to dive bomb enemy tanks in a concentration. As in previous missions all types of targets were attacked, requests by ground control and also targets of opportunity. Several wooded areas were bombed and results could not be definitely established because of the inability of the boys to spot anything in the woods. Several enemy vehicles were destroyed and damaged by bombing and strafing. On one of the armed recon missions the boys were just about to dive bomb a target that appeared to be a fuel dump when control reported that there were 100 plus enemy aircraft over Argentan. Bombs were jettisoned, and they took off in the direction the e/a were reported. After orbiting about for a time could not locate any e/a. The planes then returned to the strip and landed at 1358. About 1730 we received a call asking to send out a flight to dive-bomb enemy tanks and artillery in the Forest d' Eccunes area. 12 P-47's were put on this mission, and the results of their bombing were very good. No tanks were located so the boys dropped the eggs on road junctions and houses; the house was destroyed and in flames. This was the last mission for the day; the last plane landed at 1952.

A softball game between the officers of the 368th Fitr Gp and the officers of the 370th Fitr Gp was played on the diamond back of Hq's area this evening.

It looked for a time as tho' it would be a walkaway for the 368th: at the end of the 4th inning they were leading by a score of 7 to 1. The 370th woke up about time to score 6 runs in their half to tie the score, and then the next inning they scored 6 more runs to bring their total up to 13 runs. The 368th managed to bring 6 runs over the plate in their half, but couldn't find the necessary hits to run up anymore. The game ended with the score at 13 to 7 in favor of the 370th officers.

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10 August 1944

The squadrons took off in flights of 12 to lend a hand in a battle which 500 tanks were reported to be staging near Beaumont. Though they never found the enemy tank concentration, the P-47's picked on other available targets. The 396th was jumped by 15 to 20 Me-109's, who made one pass and fled without damaging any of our planes.

After 2000 the squadrons dive-bombed road junctions in the Mortain area with delayed action bombs and thus could observe no results. The weather was CAVU.

After much anxiety concerning Captain Leary, Lt. Col. Perego located our S-3 officer at the 24th Evacuation Hospital near Percy. Captain Leary was directing communications between our planes and the tanks of the 3rd Armored Division when his tank's radio went out, he continued to operate from a Jeep. But in the vicinity of Sourdeval a German 88 zeroed in on the road the column was traveling; and when a shell burst just above the Jeep, the two radio operators were killed and Captain Leary was seriously injured by shrapnel which entered his back, ricocheted off his ribs, and punctured one lung. Captain Leary has been taken to a hospital in England and barring complications should be completely recovered in a couple of months--when we hope he may return to the 368th group.

The S-2 section did a little moving, trading places with the ALO contingent.

11 August 1944

Finally getting a real break from the weather-man, the squadrons started out at noon in flights of 12. The 395th made a mess of an ammunition dump in the Forêt de Senoches. The 396th and 397th, following on the same mission after 15 minute intervals, found little left to do but hit the target again for good measure. The three squadrons repeated the procedure on gasoline and ammunition dumps in the Forêt de Maintenon with even better results.

In the evening the three squadrons planted delayed action bombs on road junctions in the Mortain area. The pilots reported seeing C-47's dropping supplies for the "lost battalion" cut off by the Germans in that area.

Having picked up the moving fever, the S-2 and ALO sections did it again, this time into a new and larger tent. Putting up the tent turned out to be quite an event, attracting nearly as many spectators as a Broadway excavation.

12 August 1944

Three flights of 8- P47's, flying "interference" for the 2nd Armored Division in the vicinity of Ger, successfully dive-bombed and strafed enemy tanks, half-tracks, and other motorized vehicles. In addition, they destroyed field pieces and started fires in a fuel or ammunition dump.

Later in the afternoon the squadrons began having a field day dive-bombing and strafing enemy convoys in the Ger-Flers area despite very poor visibility. The total score for the day was over 100 tanks, half-tracks, and other motorized vehicles destroyed or damaged, in addition to installations destroyed and fires started in fuel and ammunition dumps. One flight strafed a German headquarters as requested by ground contact, and smeared several German guns being towed by ambulances.

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12 August 1944 (continued)

Five planes were damaged by flak; and Lt. Charles E. Rife of the 395th was injured in the shoulder by flak and will be out of action for some weeks.

A special order announced the appointment of Lt. Col. Frank S. Perego as Group Tactical Inspector, Capt. Meredith W. Henry as Group Operations Officer, and 1st Lt. Howard W. Jenson as Assistant Group Operations Officer, and Major Harold T. Sparks, 396th Squadron Operations officer, today took over as CO of the 395th Squadron.

Special Orders #94, Supporting Document # 6.

13 August 1944

The Group was greeted with the following message to Col. Meyers from Major General E.R. Quesada on the previous day's activities. "Congratulations on a good days work. You and your boys are contributing to what may be the beginning of the end. I am fully conscious of what you and your boys have turned in today and I am ore grateful than words can express. Please express my appreciation to your staff and crews and I am fully conscious of what your service team, cooks, armorers, crew chiefs, electricians, and all of your men are doing. Today was a tremendous contribution."

Whereupon the boys went to work to do even better, since it was Sunday and the weather was CAVU. The box score reads: 64 P-47's took off, 152 tanks and other vehicles were destroyed, and 71 damaged, and German gun emplacements, supply dumps, and other installations within the Mortain pocket were left in a horrible condition.

On this date also the 368th became a high altitude bomber outfit. Four P47's from each of the squadrons were ordered to drop 500 lb. bombs with delayed actions fuses over unknown targets in the Heins pocket--from 10,000 feet! The planes were vectored over the target, directed in their bombing, and given a course home by Sweepstakes. Great stuff, this Radar!

But we had one MIA for the day. The Oprep Report for the day reads: "1st Lt. Clarence H. Olson was last seen near Leffard, France. He was preparing to attack enemy gun emplacements when, approximately 30 seconds later, his plane was seen on its back and a parachute was seen falling from it. The a/c hit the ground and exploded. Parachute landed in a field. Later, when the field was buzzed, neither parachute nor pilot could be seen. A/c is believed to have been hit by flak which was quite heavy in this area."

14 August 1944

No day could have started out worse. In the day's first mission Captain Montag of the 395th hit a tree while strafing and crashed east of Domfront. No eulogy could do justice to the incomparable "Monty", a standout pilot in any Air Force. His record of 3 German planes destroyed doesn't begin to do justice to his ability and his courage; but whenever the talk came around to the men of individual pilots, Monty's name always came up--and he never lacked supporters.

The day's record speaks for itself. After that first mission when 8 planes blasted a fuel dump in the Forêt de Andaine, east of Domfront, 8 more flights of 8 planes each went out on missions. These 72 planes destroyed 94 MT's and damaged 17, des-

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14 August 1944 (continued)

troyed 5 tanks and damaged 8 more. That score doesn't include the gun emplacements and flak positions that were hit, the supply, oil, and ammunition dumps blown up.

This record of destruction was tossed in the lap of Von Kluge's boys who were getting hopelessly tangled up in the net from Dornfront to Falaise.

15 August 1944

This was designated as a day of rest and recuperation, for we were released. The day's chief attraction was a super-colossal softball game, with the headquarters officers nosing out the 395th officers 2-1. Both line-ups were fortified with outside stars. For headquarters, General Quesada was at first base, Lt. Col. Borrell at second, Col. Meyers at third, Capt. Pendleton pitched, and Lt. Col. Perego was behind the plate. Col. Salisbury, CO of the 84th Fighter Wing, played first for the 395th.

In the evening Spike Jones and his City Slickers put on a very good show at the Aero Club.

16 August 1944

We got started late again because of the weather over the strip, but shortly after 1400 two flights of 4 -P47's went down to give Poodles tanks some help and came back reporting perfect weather and good hunting in the Heinie-pocket extending from Flers to Argentan to Falaise. Lt "Stormy" Steers confirmed the good weather rumor, and Operations called for all available planes to go after the faessing Krauts.

When the smoke had cleared, 36 planes had destroyed 16 and damaged 6 tanks, destroyed 53 and damaged 5 motorized vehicles, besides bombing gun emplacements and fuel dumps. But the flak was plenty rough in the pocket, and two of our planes went down. Lt. Robert S. Brown of the 397th bailed out safely, probably in enemy territory; but 1st Lt. Pike B. Martin went down with his plane and was killed, his body being recovered by Allied troops.

17 August 1944

The 368th really hung one on the Paperhanger's chin today. While many Allied planes had field days in the shrinking German pocket and turned in scores of more than 100 German M/T's destroyed, our group went after bigger game. Though the hunt started late, 40 -P47's destroyed 24 and damaged 6 enemy tanks in the area between Flers and Argentan, where our armor really needed help. As a side-line, we also nailed 37 trucks for keeps and damaged 44.

1st Lt. Marvin L. Rosvold of the 397th squadron bailed out safely in the battle area, and our last flight of the day heard over the R/T that he had been picked up safely by our troops and was on his way back to us. He got back to us the next day, little the worse for wear.

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18 August 1944

Game was getting scarce in the shrinking German pocket, and the usual "armored column cover" was something of a rat-race. But Bronco and Poodls were more than satisfied with the help our P-47's gave them; in fact, after one of our flights had bombed and strafed a forest that had our tanks stopped, Poodle sent the message: "That's terrific. Now I can go on to Berlin." Thirty-two sorties were flown, and though some of our planes failed to find targets, the rest got their usual quota of tanks, M/T's and gun emplacements.

19 August 1944

Ever since we came to France various assorted fighting men who had escaped from enemy hands and are trying to get back to their own outfits in France or England have turned up at our base. But all their stories were topped by those told by four paratroopers who turned up last night and stayed over night with our outfit. These boys landed on the Cherbourg peninsula before dawn on D-day, were captured on June 8 and held by the Germans until July 27th, when they made their escape from a German hospital near Alencon. They they fought alongside the Maquis for a couple of weeks and finally got back to our lines. They found an appreciative audience here, especially for their stories of the Fighting French.

The weather kept us waiting--but on the ground--until after noon; and after the rain began falling pretty regularly, we were finally released until daybreak.

M/Sgt Conder became 2nd Lt. William T. Conder today and took over the duties of Group Aircraft Inspecting Officer.

Special Orders # 98, Supporting Document #7.

20 August 1944

The 368th went to work on the Germans trying to escape across the Seine today. About noon the first flight of 12 P-47's on an armed recce from Elbeuf to the Mouth of the Seine, destroyed docks, two barges, an oil installation, and scored hits on a large, unidentified ship.

Late in the afternoon 3 more flights of 12 planes each hit ferry installations along the lower Seine with delayed action fuses and had very good bomb runs. But, since we couldn't come back 4, 8, or 12 hours later to watch the results, we'll have to let it go at that. Whatever the results, the harried Heinies probably didn't like it; and it didn't help them get across the Seine in one piece!

Captain Leo H. East joined the 368th group today as S-2 Officer, replacing Major Walton B. Ten Eyck.

Special Orders # 99, Supporting Document #8.

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21 August 1944

We were released for a rest today. Though the pilots, who had declared open season on Hitler's back-tracking armies sometimes back, had been having plenty of good hunting, many of us were wondering if life in France wasn't getting a little dull.

We had no foresight.

22 August 1944

The moving rumor had been bouncing around; but when orders came at noon today to start moving immediately, it was something of a shock. We've grown fond of our fox-holes; at least, we felt at home in them. But we packed crates, took down tents, and loaded trucks, ready to leave at 5:15 in the morning.

Our only job today was to convince Hitler's boys that the war wasn't going so well for them. We had a leaflet-dropping mission for six planes over Verneuil, Routot, Bourneville and other points in the same area. The sheets carried about the same world news as our "Stars and Stripes" for the same date, plus home news, sports, and features of Germany--in German, of course. As an added touch, the papers carried a quotation from a German poet, which translated into English means, "The strong have no need to suppress the facts."

23 August 1944

The rain started about midnight, and it rained all night. When we got up for our 4 am. breakfast, it was raining. When the first part of our convoy pulled out at 5:15, it was raining, and it rained all day at intervals as we rode through the shambles that was St. Lo and Vire and Mortain. But the sun was shining beyond Domfront as we passed through the country where the Germans were driven out so fast that they couldn't do much damage, and it seemed that all the people of France were along the roads and lining the curbs of Alencon, Mamers, and Nogent.

As the day wore on and we found ourselves behind, in, and in-front-of a strange-acting armored column, we began to suspect that the reception wasn't all arranged for us. We got all mixed up with the 2nd French Armored Division, who were making a triumphant entry into Paris!

Just before dark we reached our field--which the Germans had left just four days earlier. It was somewhat the worse for wear: what our bombers hadn't done the retreating Germans had contributed. We unloaded some of the trucks, and as it started to rain again we covered everything up and bedded down for the night in the once-grand chateau which dominated our camp-site.

Back at Isigny the group flew no missions for the day, and the rest of the headquarters contingent could concentrate on the moving problem.

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24 August 1944

We slept well in the half-ruined chateau just outside Chartres; but it rained throughout the night, and it was still raining in the morning when we went to work putting up tents. We got pretty wet, but we also put up seven pyramidal tents for enlisted men quarters and the large S-1, S-2, S-3, and two S-4 tents, while the Chaplain found a home in the chateau and Major Davis housed his medics in the stone stables. The officer's also found quarters in the chateau.

Perhaps the toughest and most critical job of all faced the Communications Section. The wire problem was one of the worst, for how could they string the miles of wire necessary to start operations at Strip 40 and at the same time maintain the communications at Strip 3? Finding a huge storehouse of German equipment near Chartres solved the wire problem. Among other things found were 10,000 bamboo lance poles!

But supplies were only a small part of the problem. Telephone lines had to be run to the fire fighters, the MP's, the tower, the weather detachment, and the bomb disposal outfit. That last one was a really tough proposition; the line ran past a small cafe in a little village and it took three days to finish it.

Furnishing electric power, mostly for lights, is only a sideline for the communications men -- but a very important one and big job. They operate two AC power units and one ex-German DC unit which was practically snatched out of the Krauts' hands near Cherbourg, while the German's were still holding out in the city.

The Message Center - the heart of the communications set-up - has four means of contact with the outside world: radio, telephine, teletype, and courier. But a Combination of Blitzkrieg (American style) and a terrific thunderstorm left us out of contact with the outside world for 24 hours except for the radio net. As one high ranking officer put it, the rapid advance of our armies made communications "a worse problem than the worst ever conceived." That our communications staff was able to keep up operating under such conditions is tribute enough to their work.

The Communications staff also makes the mail run, that vital morale builder; operates a workshop, which can even be persuaded to take care of our private radios; and within a week after our first party got to Chartres, practically everything was set up and operating smoothly again.

And back at Strip A-3, the Oprep Report for 24 August 1944, again read: "This Group did not execute any missions for date stated above."

25 August 1944

Back at Isigny our fighter-bombers went to work again, providing support for the 2nd and Armored Divisions; and today they began a four-day hot streak which was a mighty contribution to the route of Germany's forces along the Seine and east of Paris.

On June 25 we dispatched 95 planes in 12-plane flights. The weather was CAVU, and our planes remained in the air from 0710 to 2118, hammering the enemy as they tried to cross the Seine. Two bridges were wrecked and 6 to 8 barges destroyed or damaged. Flak positions were smashed, other gun emplacements bombed,

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25 August 1944 (continued)

and at least 10 other field pieces destroyed. The score in the 368th's specialty --destroying tanks and vehicles--was 10 tanks knocked out and 264 M/T's, half-tracks, and scout cars destroyed or damaged.

At Chartres we woke up to a nice bright day for a welcome change and put up more tents for enlisted personnel, because the "B" party was coming in by plane and truck. We shoveled and swept out the chateau, clearing as much debris as possible. We put up the S-1 tent in the afternoon, but by that time it was raining again.

By evening S-1, S-2, S-3, and S-4 were getting their sections set up to operate. After a battle with a swarm of bees which already occupied the territory, we also put up Col. Meyers tent.

26 August 1944

We went back to flying armored column support for Bronco and Poodle today and had to carry belly tanks to do it, because the 3rd Armored Division was working toward Sens, south and east of Paris. No bombs were carried, but our P47's strafed convoys and tanks ahead of our armor.

Though our working days was necessarily shorter than yesterday, we still sent out 72 planes. They destroyed 3 tanks (including one Tiger), 12 horse-drawn wagons, 2 field guns, 5 goods wagons, and 130 M/T's.

It really rained last night at Chartres, and we found that our chateau was not as waterproof as our tents. But we were getting ready to operate and expecting our planes.

Evaders and escaped PW airmen have been coming in since we arrived at Chartres and have been an added problem. But this evening we had a new one: three Morroccans were sent out by a French officer in Chartres to guard us! We finally persuaded them that our own MP's could guard us and took them back to Chartres. The three fighting men from Casablanca told us that they had been taken prisoner by the Germans in Belgium in May 1940 and had been doing forced labor in this area when our forces liberated them.

The process of moving was speeded up today when 7 P-47's made about 25 trips for us, bringing in "B" party personnel and equipment.

27 August 1944

Our planes moved to Chartres today, but there was no pause in our operations. Very poor visibility and the great distance from our targets made things tough, however. One mission, going out at noon, nailed 22 M/T's while flying support for the 3rd Armored SW of Paris from Melun to Meaux. About supper time 12 more P47's on a similar mission found no enemy activity at all but came down at our new Chartres strip, A-40.

In the middle of the afternoon, 12 of our planes were assigned to fly close support for the 79th Infantry and the 5th Armored Divisions. The P47's bombed a possible supply dump and got one lone M/T, despite very bad visibility.

SECRET

PAGE THIRTEEN

27 August 1944 (continued)

In the evening our planes made their first landings on the ex-French-German strip at Chartres. We even prepared to run one mission from our new base, but darkness cancelled that; and we concentrated on trying to establish communications for Monday's mission, which was a man-sized job for our communications men.

Few of us had a chance to remember that this was Sunday, but our chaplains held mass and services for the first time at our new base.

And the Red Cross rolled in tonight, bring their doughnut flour with them.

28 August 1944

Our pilots broke in the new strip by destroying nearly 300 enemy vehicles for something approaching a modern record, but the 396th was almost forced to land in the dark after making their last grand foray which knocked out 100 German vehicles. Our group total for the four-day period August 25-28 was 673 enemy M/T's destroyed!

Seventy planes flew armed recce for the 3rd Armored Division from Compiègne to Soissons to Brecy. Despite very bad weather most of the day and extremely uncertain communications at our base and between the planes in the air, and tanks on the ground, our score on vehicles was spectacular. Fourteen tanks were knocked out, 9 half-tracks destroyed, and 286 M/T's destroyed or damaged, 190 of them being definitely wrecked.

But the cost was high. 2nd Lt. John B. Stewart Jr. was seen to hit a tree and crash while strafing at Metz. He did not bail out.

Another flight of 12 planes, briefed in the air to attack German planes on an airfield near Chalons-sur-Marne, failed to find either field or planes and had to be satisfied with bombing marshalling yards and getting a locomotive and 3 goods wagons.

The Operations trailer pulled in tonight; and a French paratroop captain, who had landed in Brittany on August 3 and had accompanied the 4th Armored Division on their drive along the Loire and all the way to Sens SW of Paris, turned up and asked for transportation back to his SAS (Special Airborne Service) unit in England.

29 August 1944

It was raining again today, and we were grounded all day; but a detail put up the Special Service's movie tent despite the rain. Our big job for the day was entertaining visitors: first 22, then 40 more RAF and American airmen--evaders and escapees who had gotten together in Paris and hoped we could fly them back to England. We couldn't do that; but we fed them, listened to their sometimes fantastic stories, and helped them on their way as best we could. The group even included one Russian paratrooper who had been wounded and captured while fighting with Partisans near Smolensk over 3 years ago.

SECRET

PAGE FOURTEEN

29 August 1944 (continued)

Lt. Col. Corbin, CO of the 386th B-26 Group, came in with his crew. Their plane had bellied in east of Paris after a bombing mission, and they contacted 9th TAC seeking a plane back to England. Since neither planes nor flying weather were available, the bomber boys were our guests for several days.

And tonight a few of us saw our first movie. Special Services showed Gary Cooper and Frank Morgan in "Casanova Brown."

30 August 1944

We began to wonder about this new base of ours. This was supposed to be sunny France, not the wet Channel Coast, yet we were rained out again! And all the while the Germans were advancing so fast in reverse that we were almost as far away from our probable targets as we were back at strip A-3.

But the last two trailers rolled in late last night--Lt. Col. Gorrell's and the S-2 trailer--and during the day the tail end of our outfit got here to complete our reunion. The briefing tent was put up, with the help of some fancy stake driving by Major Rice and Captain Sparks, both past-masters at the art. The wooden stakes bounced off a layer of rock just under the surface, and iron stakes had to be substituted.

31 August 1944

Our P47's got in a good day's work today, flying 7 missions of 12 planes each to provide armored column support for Bronco and Poodle, and this time their armed recon missions took our boys over Belgium and Luxembourg. Ranging ahead of the 3rd Armored as the tanks raced northwards from Soissons, the 368th planes knocked out 6 tanks (one of them a Tiger), 15 half-tracks, 74 M/T's, and found enough extra time to clobber a fuel dump and an anti-tank gun.

A burst of flak caught 2nd Lt. Gerald J. Graces' plane, and the 396th pilot was forced to belly in. He landed un-injured in friendly territory north of Soissons, however, and came back to us the next day.

Payday this month meant a little more than usual. Though we were confined to our base and could only gaze longingly in the direction of Chartres, we hoped against hope that somehow, someday, someday we could get to Paris! And we were all afraid that we would have to move again very soon and that our new base might be closer to what-used-to-be-Berlin than to Paris.

R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

APO 595, U. S. Army
2 August 1944

SPECIAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 07)

1. VCOG, IX TAC, Capt RICHARD E. LEARY, 0900694, AC, is placed on TD for a period of approx five (5) days, will proceed from this sta o/a 3 Aug 1944 to 3rd Armored Division on matters pertaining to this command. Upon completion of this TD, he will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT.

2. VCOG, IX TAC, 1st Lt JOSEPH S. NOLAN, 0802337, AC, is placed on TD for a period of approx five (5) days, will proceed from this sta o/a 3 Aug 1944 to 2nd Armored Division on matters pertaining to this command. Upon completion of this TD, he will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT.

3. Under the provisions of AR 600-68, the following named EM, Hq 368th Fitr Gp having completed the required amount of serv in the Army of the United States, and having demonstrated fidelity through faithful and exact performances of duty, efficiency through capacity to produce desired results, and whose behavior has been such as to deserve emulation, are awarded Good Conduct Medals for exemplary behavior, efficiency, and fidelity:

T/Sgt Edward E. Manco	17033874	Sgt Joseph J. Rapoza	31094653
T/Sgt Clarence D. Reese	15082295	Cpl Donald F. Byrne	18046309
S/Sgt Alfred Stecklein	17010916	Cpl Edmond A. Frank	16143989
T/Sgt Samuel M. Pratt	31127821	Cpl Joseph Pesolyar	33275149
S/Sgt Clarence A. Glasrud	37292251	Cpl Edward H. Spahn	32161179
S/Sgt Herbert W. Levesque	31031218	Cpl Joe Zolin	39274332
S/Sgt Kenneth W. Oliver	11662216	Pfc Lloyd L. Hostetler	33292894
S/Sgt Richard T. Pleiss	39457252	Pfc Earl New	15338963
Sgt Richard H. Lonien	17155984	Pvt Tony Hernandez	39158974
Sgt Isaac S. Hutchins	32363036	Pvt James W. Hudson	34652166
Sgt Frank G. Michalak	31253630	Pvt Clyde H. McNew	34729963
Sgt Edward W. Nieman	16037001		

By O of Col MEYERS:

OFFICIAL:

Hugh L. Rice
HUGH L. RICE,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

HUGH L. RICE,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

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HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

APO 595, U. S. Army
3 August 1944

SPECIAL ORDERS)
NUMBER 88)

1. Under the provisions of AR 615-5, 30 June 1944, and upon the recommendation of their Orgn Comdr, the following named EM, Hq 368th Fitr Gp, are promoted to grades as indicated:

TO BE STAFF SERGEANT (TEMP)

Sgt (511) Chester S. Gadonski	36731532
Sgt (502) Frank G. Michalak	31258690
Sgt (667) Charles H. Plante	31007368
Sgt (321) Arthur F. Sherman	32503231

TO BE SERGEANT (TEMP)

Cpl (505) Lawrence J. Lange	36733170
Cpl (305) Carl E. Newsome	34529185
Cpl (060) Edward H. Spahn	32161179

TO BE CORPORAL (TEMP)

Pfc (805) Leo D. Bryant Jr	38240427
Pfc (345) Earl New	15338963

2. Under the provisions of AR 615-5, 30 June 1943, and upon the recommendation of their Orgn Comdr, the following named EM, 395th Fitr Sq, are reduced to the gr of Pvt for misconduct:

Pfc (750) Francis Reading	7026375
Pfc (747) Delos E. McMatt	37303109

3. The following named officers are appointed to witness and verify the cash balance of Major JOHN P. VGLIVA, 0311398, FD, Accountable Disbursing Officer, as of the close of business, 31 July 1944:

Capt GEORGE E. MYERS	0569530	AC
1st Lt ROBERT J. NACHTWEY	6569537	AC

4. The officers and enlisted men of the 77th Ord Bomb Disposal Sq (Sep) are hereby attached to the 395th Fitr Sq for rations only.

By C of Col MEYERS:

OFFICIAL:

Hugh L. Rice
HUGH L. RICE,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

HUGH L. RICE,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

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HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

APO 595, U. S. Army
4 August 1944

SPECIAL ORDERS)
NUMBER 89)

1. The following named officers are granted five (5) days operational leave will proceed from this station to Station 519 UK so as to arrive thereat o/a 4 Aug 1944 reporting to the Regulating Station for registration upon arrival. Period of leave will commence upon arrival at Station 519 and terminate upon return to that station for return transportation to their proper orgn. 60-136 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: Ltr, Hq IX TAC, file 210.711, dtd 21 July 1944, sub: "Operational Leave Policy."

1st Lt CLARENCE STATON	0678967	AC
1st Lt ROBERT E. CALDWELL	0745289	AC
2nd Lt ALBERT H. KLEINKLAUS	0745419	AC
2nd Lt HOMER E. HAYES	0815331	AC
2nd Lt WILLIAM C. DIMAN	0814665	AC
2nd Lt FORREST D. MIDLAM	0681585	AC
Lt Col PAUL P. DOUGLAS JR.	0432187	AC
1st Lt CLARENCE H. OLSON	0678908	AC
1st Lt PAUL J. QUILTY	0679943	AC
2nd Lt GERALD J. GRACE	0702793	AC
2nd Lt JOHN R. KNAUSS	0820510	AC
2nd Lt GEORGE P. OHLMAN	0697943	AC
Major RANDALL W. HENDRICKS	0441804	AC
1st Lt HENRY F. ARES	0677934	AC
1st Lt ROBERT S. BROWN	0679988	AC
1st Lt JOHN P. FOLTZ	0745337	AC
1st Lt GEORGE L. SUTCLIFFE	0681739	AC
2nd Lt ROBERT D. CASSADY	0887230	AC

2. Under the provisions of AR 615-5, 30 June 1944, and upon the recommendation of his Orgn Comdr, S/Sgt (014) Raymond F. McConnell, 13028819, Hq 368th Fitr Gp, is promoted to the grade of Technical Sergeant (Temp).

By O of Col MEYERS:

OFFICIAL:

Hugh L. Rice
HUGH L. RICE,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

HUGH L. RICE,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

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HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

AFQ 595, U. S. ARMY
5 August 1944

SPECIAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 90)

1. Capt THOMAS N. MONTAG, 0732311, AC, is appointed Acting Squadron Commander, 395th Fighter Squadron, vice Lt Col HENRY R. QUIMBY, 0429168, AC, trfd.

2. Having been asgd this orgn per par 5, SO 134, Hq 20th RCD (Avn), dtd 28 July 1944, Cpl (405) Paul L. Davis, 6259987, is further asgd 397th Fitr Sq.

3. The officers and enlisted men of the 77th Ord Bomb Disposal Sq (Sop) are hereby reld from attached for rations to the 395th Fitr Sq.

By O of Col MEYERS:

HUGH L. RICE,
Maj AC
Adj

OFFICIAL:

Hugh L. Rice
HUGH L. RICE,
Maj AC
Adj

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HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

APO 595, U S Army
8 August 1944

5
/

SPECIAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 91)

1. A Special Courts-Martial is aptd to meet at such time and place as may be designated by the President thereof, for the trial of such persons as may be properly brought before it:

DETAIL FOR THE COURT

Major	JAMES R. WERNLI	0386976	AC	(President)
Capt	JOHN R. ELLIOTT	0905637	AC	
Capt	STANLEY C. JOHNSON JR	0583430	AC	
Capt	WILLIAM E. QUINNLAN	0546474	AC	
Capt	LEONARD L. KREMER	01578724	QMC	
Capt	RICHARD R. WEISS	0570712	AC	
1st Lt	MAURICE D. POWELL	0650448	AC	(Trial Judge Advocate)
Capt	RICHARD T. ALLEN	0906292	AC	(Defense Counsel)

2. The VOGO 368th Fitr Gp of 7 May 1944, under exigencies which prevented the issuance of advance orders, are hereby confirmed and made of record:

"1st Lt JOHN F. REGAN, 0569887, AC, is aptd Gp Soldier Voting Officer."

3. The following named officers are appointed Class "A" Finance Agents to Major John P. Voliva, FD, for Officers' Vouchers and enlisted men's payroll for the month of July for units as indicated:

Capt	MORRIS G. LEWIS	0918051	AC	Hq 370th Fighter Group
Capt	MORRIS G. LEWIS	0918051	AC	Det "X" 21st Weather Sq AC
Capt	MORRIS G. LEWIS	0918051	AC	Det "X" 40th Mobile Com Sq AC
2nd Lt	ROSS F. SEATON	01554970	AC	402nd Fighter Squadron

4. Having been atchd this orgn per par 12, SO 207, Hq First U S Army, dtd 30 July 1944, 1st Lt (1930) WALTER D. COURTRIGHT, 01233728, Inf, is further atchd to Hq 368th Fitr Gp.

By O of Col MEYERS:

OFFICIAL:

Hugh L. Rice
HUGH L. RICE,
Maj AC
Adj

HUGH L. RICE,
Maj AC
Adj

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HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

APO 595, U. S. Army
12 August 1944

SPECIAL ORDERS)
NUMBER 94)

1. Pvt (590) Richard S. Ross, 35229492, 396th Fitr Sq, is placed on TD for approximately ten (10) days for the purpose of attending parachute riggers school and will proceed fr this sta to sta 590 UK arriving not later than 1700 hours, 13 Aug 1944. Upon completion of this TD, EM will ret proper orgn and sta. TDN by mil acft, MF or rail. Rations and grs will be furnished. Advance PX rations authorized. 60-136 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: TWX IX TAC A 325 E, dtd 11 Aug 1944.

2. Lt Col FRANK E. FERREGO, 0426422, AC, is aptd Gp Tactical Inspector (AD) vice Capt MEREDITH W. HENRY, 0786688, AC, rtd.

3. Capt MEREDITH W. HENRY, 0786688, AC, is aptd Gp Operations Officer, princ duty, vice Capt RICHARD E. LEIRY, 0900694, AC, trfd.

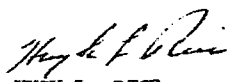
4. 1st Lt HOWARD W. JENSEN, 0805630, AC, is aptd Assistant Gp Operations Officer, princ duty.

(Travel directed is pursuant to auth contained in Ltr Hq ETOUSA, 24 May 1944)

By O of Col MEYERS:

OFFICIAL:

HUGH L. RICE,
Maj AC
Adj



HUGH L. RICE,
Maj AC
Adj

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HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

7.
APO 595, U. S. Army
19 August 1944

SPECIAL ORDERS)
NUMBER 98)

1. So much of par 1, SO 97, this Hq. cs, pertaining to operational leave, as reads "2nd Lt WALTER R. JOHNSON, 08114696, AC," and "2nd Lt LOUIS L. VIECK, 0752156, AC" is deleted and the following named officers substituted therefore:

1st Lt RICHARD KIK JR	0745414 AC
2nd Lt WILLIAM J. WAYLAND JR	0818470 AC
2nd Lt CHARLES E. RIFE	0887235 AC

2. Having been asgd this orgn per par 1, SO 150, Hq 20th RGD (Avn), dtd 13 Aug 1944, the following named EM are further asgd to Sq as indicated:

Pfc (911) Frank D. Narkiewicz	395th Fighter Squadron
Pvt (911) William R. Kingray	397th Fighter Squadron

3. Under the provisions of AR 615-5, 30 June 1943, and upon the recommendation of his Orgn Comdr, Sgt (060) Victor H. Talbott, 38084715, 397th Fitr Sq, is reduced to the gr of Pvt for misconduct.

4. 2nd Lt (7536) WILLIAM T. CONDER, 0886390, AC, is appointed Gp Aircraft Inspecting Officer, princ duty.

By O of Col MEYERS:

OFFICIAL:

HUGH L. RICE,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

Hugh L. Rice
HUGH L. RICE,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

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HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

AFPO 595, U. S. Army
20 August 1944

SPECIAL ORDERS)
NUMBER 99)

1. Having been placed on TD with this orgn per Ninth Air Force letter, sub: "Orders", dtd 20 Aug 1944, Capt (9301) LEO H. BASK, 0913617, AC, is atchd to Hq 368th Fitr Gp and cptd Gp S-2 Officer, princ duty, Gp Security Officer, Gp Public Relations Officer, and Gp Map Officer, AD, vice Major WALTER B. TENNEYCK, 0486947, AC, trfd.

2. The VOCC 368th Fitr Gp of 31 July 1944, under exigencies which prevented the issuance of advance orders, are hereby confirmed and made of record:
"Having been asgd this orgn per par 29, SO 213, Hq Ninth Air Force, dtd 31 July 1944, the following named officers are further asgd to Sq as indicated:

2d Lt CHARLES E. RIFE	0887235 AC	395th Fighter Sq
2d Lt LESLIE G. HANSEN	0887226 AC	396th Fighter Sq
2d Lt ROBERT D. CASSADY	0887230 AC	397th Fighter Sq

3. The VOCC 368th Fitr Gp of 6 Aug 1944, under exigencies which prevented the issuance of advance orders, are hereby confirmed and made of record:
"Having been asgd this orgn per par 11, SO 219, Hq Ninth Air Force, dtd 6 Aug 1944, the following named officers are further asgd to Sq as indicated:

2d Lt EDGAR M. MCCRONE	0887234 AC	395th Fighter Sq
2d Lt KENNETH L. WILCOX	0887225 AC	396th Fighter Sq

(Travel directed is pursuant to auth contained in Ltr Hq ETOUSA, 24 May 1944)

By order of Colonel MEYERS:

HUGH L. RICE,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

OFFICIAL:

Hugh L. Rice
HUGH L. RICE,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

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