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HISTORICAL DATA

HEADQUARTERS HISTORY
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

DECEMBER 1944

HISTORICAL OFFICER
RECORDER
TYPIST

LT. WILLIAM S. BLAGEN
S/SGT. CLARENCE A. GLASEUD
PFC. WILBERT R. AHONAN

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HISTORICAL REPORT
1 December to 31 December 1944

Information contained herein, is written in compliance with XIX Tactical Air Command Memorandum Number 20-1, dated 5 February 1944. It is a resume of the activities of the 368th Fighter Group Headquarters, for the month of December 1 to 31, 1944.

1. ORGANIZATION

No Change.

2. STRENGTH AS OF 31 DECEMBER 1944

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

Assigned Personnel

Officers -----209
Enlisted Men-----815

1024

AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL

Officers-----181
Enlisted Men -----826

1007

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

Departed ALG 84, 1 mile south of Chievres, Belgium,
27 December, for ALG 68, at Juvincourt, France, arriving
27 December 1944.

4. LOSSES IN ACTION:

Nil (for Group Headquarters)

5. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

Nil

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RECORD OF EVENTS
PAGE ONE

1 December 1944

The 368th started out the last month of the year with a good string of flying days already started. We had been able to operate the last 6 days of November, and as the new month started the weather seemed to promise that we could run that string for a while longer. We even had some hope that the Allied winter offensive, which had started in the middle of the last month, might get somewhere if we could continue to fly every day. But none of us expected to be home by Christmas.

Our operations for the first day of the new month were merely a continuation of last month's--support for the First Infantry Division, with the Ground Forces assigning the targets, followed by an armed recon from the First Infantry's front to the Rhine (paying particular attention to enemy rail and M/T movement). All planes carry bombs, 500# G.P.'s and 260# frags, on a 2 to 1 proportion. Twenty-four planes were dispatched today, with the 395th and 396th squadrons flying the missions.

The 395th dropped 13 500-pounders on a stretch of track about 10 miles N E of Duren; direct hits cut the tracks at 4 places, but the results were described as only fair. Two 500's were dropped on a steaming locomotive farther NE on the same line-N RO. The 8 frags were dropped from above clouds on the M/Y area at Horrem. The weather was pretty bad and that was about the best the boys could do.

Booty had no targets for the 396th. They contacted Disco #1 who vectored the planes on a blind-bombing assignment, even instructing them when to drop their bombs through the overcast. All their bombs were dropped, and the squadron believed their target to be either Zulpich or Euskirchen.

1st Lt. James J. Binter of the 395th Squadron was instantly killed when his plane went into a spin and crashed during a training flight near Tourmignes, France.

2 December 1944

Each squadron got in a mission today, 36 planes being dispatched on our usual assignment. But there was something different: a heavily-defended hill and strong point southwest of Duren was to be attacked before 0900 hours, if possible. The 397th got there at 0905 and dropped 8 500's and 8 frags on the position, which Orgar had marked with smoke. The results were excellent. Five more 500 pounders were dropped on a dump south of Duren and started fires there. On their recon toward the Rhine the squadron strafed a pair of trains, destroying two locomotives and damaging 35 cars. A flak position was also destroyed by strafing. Major Carbine, who lead the squadron, ran into flak trouble: a shell exploded in the wing of his F-47, blowing open the door to the ammunition bay, causing the ammunition belts to trail out. Since he had no way to slow his plane down, the Major bellied his plane in at about 220 miles an hour--and got away with it unhurt! That is believed to be something of a record.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE TWO

2 December 1944 (cont'd)

The 395th dropped 8 500's on Oberzier at Booty's request, getting at least 4 hits on the town. Despite the weather, which made flying difficult and accurate bombing impossible, the squadron released the rest of their bombs in a forest NE of Duren. The target was thought to be a dump, but no results could be observed. Seven ME-109's were seen in the target area, but the weather made an attack impossible. The weather even caused 4 of our P-47's to land at Strip A-92.

The 396th, lead by Capt. Loughary, dropped all their bombs on the town of Echtz- which was supposed to contain infantry and tanks. If they were there they got messed up somewhat, for the squadron got good hits and also strafed the town. Booty reported excellent results. But back at Strip 84 the weather conditions were impossible, and the squadron landed at Strip 89. A rough engine caused one plane to come down at A-93.

Lt. Col. Douglas carried a passenger on a piggy-back ride accompanying the squadron today. The "super-cargo" was W. R. Hearst, Jr. of International News Service and the New York Journal-American, who thus became the first newspaper correspondent to fly on a mission in a P-47.

We drew our rations today, finally; and though we got only cigarettes (5 packs), we scarcely expected that.

Capt. Powell acquired a new job today. He is now "Group War Bond Officer". He took the job seriously, too, and immediately went to work on us to see if we had enough bonds. If not, he wanted to know the reason why!

Special Orders #144, Supporting Document #1.

3 December 1944

Again today each squadron got in one mission at our usual job of supporting the First Infantry. The 397th got off first. Booty had no targets for them; they contacted Organ, who marked 7 tanks with smoke just east of Gey. Though the tanks could not be seen from the air, the squadron dropped all their bombs--16 500's and 8 frags--and Organ reported good bombing results. On their armed recce 8-10 M/T's were strafed and 3 damaged. They had better results with a locomotive and 5 cars, which were destroyed by strafing.

On the other two missions both the 395th and 396th carried all 500 pounders. Working with Booty again, the 395th dropped 22 on 9 heavy gun positions at the edge of woods near Oberzier, with excellent results. The 396th dropped 24 500's on 8-12 more gun positions at the same place and also had excellent results, getting 16 good hits. At Booty's request, the squadron strafed the west side of Merken, which was marked by smoke, and Booty liked the strafing. Both squadrons were ordered to the base without flying recces.

The 368th Group won its opening football game 2-0, turning back the 404th Fighter Group in a game played this afternoon in our cow pasture at Chievres. Steady rain throughout the game slowed up both teams, and our second quarter touchback was the best either eleven could do.

The starting lineup for the 368th had McConnel (Hq) and Bernard (397th) ends, Nolan (397th) and Kyle (397th) tackles, Fields (395th) and Parrish (397th) guards,

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE THREE

3 December 1944 (cont'd)

Camil (396th) center, Miedel (395th) quarter, Quinlan (Hq) and Barber (397th) halves, and Gatz (397th) fullback. Ardito (395th) at end, Zolin (397th) at tackle, and Gilchrist (397th) at center also got into the game, as well as Bafle (395th) at quarter and Spiggett (396th) at halfback.

4 December 1944

We upped the ante considerably today, sending out 72 planes on two types of missions: the 396th and 397th each flew 2 missions in support of the First Infantry, while the 395th flew 2 armed recon missions to bomb and strafe enemy rail traffic.

The day started inauspiciously when Sweepstakes contacted the 396th at Liege and sent them back to the base because of bad weather. The 397th had better luck, several big explosions resulting after they dropped most of their bombs on the marshalling yards at Zulpich as directed by Disco. Thirty of the 75 freight cars in the M/Y were destroyed and the tracks cut. Four more 500 pounders were dropped on gun positions and buildings south of Zulpich. A second 397th mission worked for Booty again and dropped 24 500's at Echtz, supposedly 8 gun emplacements. Though the results were called only fair, 4 houses were left smoking. The squadron conducted an uneventful armed recon to the Rhine; a pair of M/T's and a trailer were destroyed by strafing. The 396th, on their second mission, again ran into bad weather and couldn't locate the target assigned by Booty. Through a hole in the overcast they spotted a pair of active factories about 10 miles SW of Cologne and dropped their 24 500 pounders. Several direct hits were scored and small fires started.

On their first mission the 395th had to switch from their assignment of attacking rail traffic and do some blind-bombing through the overcast. Sweepstakes vectored them to Disco, and the squadron was instructed to drop their 24 500's on Uxheim through an overcast--from 20,000 feet. 2nd Lt. James E. Stover is MIA on the mission. He was last seen as the squadron was coming down out of the overcast near Honsfeld, Belgium. He had reported that he was having trouble with his turbo regulator. On their second mission the squadron got to work on their assigned mission, despite weather trouble. Four planes dropped 8 bombs (through a hole in the overcast), on a RR junction only a couple of miles SE of Cologne. One P-47 bombed a train near Bruhl, destroying a locomotive and 6 freight cars and damaging 9 more cars. Three more planes bombed the RR Yard at the same place but got only near misses. Three P-47's bombed the M/Y at Wesseling, on the Rhine south of Cologne, getting hits on buildings and cutting rails in 3 places. Their armed recon was uneventful.

Our AIO's, a lieutenant and a captain, became a captain and a major today. "Our" two infantry officers are now Captain Walter D. Courtright and Major William E. Davis.

But for the rest of us there was only weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth today, for passes to Brussels were cancelled. The reasons were not clear, though there were plenty of rumors; but the fact remains that Brussels is off limits to American troops. Many of us had to break dates there this week, without even being able to explain ourselves; and many others just began to realize what a nice place the city really was. C'est la guerre! Also, war is hell!

SECRET

PAGE FOUR

5 December 1944

Our six missions today were all in support of the First Infantry, who were slowly grinding out some yardage toward Duren.

Booty's first target for the 396th was covered by 10/10 overcast, but they dropped 24 500's on a smoke-marked gun emplacement just north of Echtz. The bombing results were excellent, but the following armed recon was uneventful. The 395th dropped all their bombs on a bridge just NW of Duren, hitting the road near the bridge and damaging the embankment--but rating their results no better than fair.

The 397th had trouble spotting troop concentrations which Booty marked with smoke, but they finally dropped 19 bombs on a concentration between Luchen and Merken--and Booty said the bombing was good. On their armed recon the squadron was vectored to southwest of Bonn, where they found a hole in the cloud coverage and clobbered about 100 vehicles. About 40 of them, mostly M/T's, were destroyed, and nearly 50 more damaged.

To start off the second series of missions, the 396th dropped their bombs at Neiderzier, as directed by a new controller, "Cardclub". The bomb concentration was good. Then, at Booty's direction, they strafed a stretch of the Autobahn NW of Duren. The 395th went from Booty to Ballard to Organ, who finally gave them their target--trenches and gun emplacements at Gurzenich, about 2 miles SW of Duren. All 24 bombs were dropped with fair results. The 397th moved from Booty to Ballard to Cardclub, who assigned the Autobahn bridge over the Roer NW of Duren and a cloverleaf road intersection just east of the bridge. Fourteen bombs damaged the bridge, and 6 bombs hit the road system. Bandits were called in but the squadron couldn't find them.

The "Yankee Doodlers" put on a Special Services show at our theater in Chievres this evening.

6 December 1944

Each squadron drew one mission today on the same assignment: radio--controlled blind bombing on Zulpich or Euskirchen at the direction of "584" Controller. Marmite I vectored the 395th to the target and they dropped their bombs from 10,000 feet at 200 mph. Since not even the town could be identified, results could not be observed. The 397th and 396th flew similar missions, except that the overcast cleared off and both squadrons could observe very good results--the 397th on Zulpich and the 396th on Euskirchen. All three squadrons conducted fighter sweeps to the Rhine, but all were completely uneventful.

7 December 1944

We thought our string of flying days, which we had been nursing along since Nov 25, might be broken yesterday. But the morning's fog burned off, and we got three missions off after one o'clock. But today, which would have been our 13th consecutive day, our string was snapped by the weatherman.

But it was a very good day for our Group Deputy Commander, Lt. Col. Douglas. He left for the U.S. today, on a 30-day leave. But unlike the other pilots who have gone back to the states, Lt. Col. Douglas will come back to the 368th.

8 December 1944 (cont'd)

SECRET

PAGE FIVE

8 December 1944

We got back into the air today; and although it was only one squadron mission flown by the 397th, it was quite a party. The mission started out about as usual, with the squadron releasing their bombs on Zulpich at the direction of Marmite I; the results seemed to be very good. Then, shortly after they began a fighter sweep, the squadron spotted 4 bogies 10 miles west of Bruhl and chased them northeast. Then, coming out of the clouds, they saw about 10 ME109's and 30 FW190's. The 397th attacked the bandits; but in the resulting dogfights in and out of the clouds, our planes were unable to keep any formation and thus lost much of their effectiveness. Without attempting to tell a dozen separate stories of encounters, the following is the score: Lts. Dame, Hamilton, and Olden each destroyed an ME109; Major Leary and Lts. Lewis, Hamilton, and Sharp each damaged one ME109; and Lts. Dame and Hamilton each damaged one FW190. On the debit side, we had one MIA. F/O Charles W. Vickerman checked in with his flight leader approximately 10 miles west of Cologne after the squadron had been ordered to return to the base; at that time he reported that he was all right. However, another group reported seeing a P-47 start on fire and go down about that time. He is listed MIA.

The group acquired 3 new pilots today and immediately distributed them equitably among the squadrons.

Special Orders #146, Supporting Document #2.

9 December 1944

We had our first snow last night, a fairly heavy fall; and this morning the ground was white in spots and there was plenty of slush. We were grounded again today, and the only part of the 368th group that went into action was our football team. The snow didn't discourage the gridders, who went to Maastricht to take on the 29th Tactical Air Command--and lost 7-0 in a snow and rain storm. Our "Buzz Bombers" left Strip 84 at 0730 in two trucks and a trailer, and reached the Dutch town of Maastricht at 1320. Snow fell steadily most of the way. After a light lunch, the team dressed and took the field at 1345, getting in less than 10 minutes of warmup before starting the game. The 29th scored after about 10 minutes of play on a reverse around their own left end and kicked the extra point to take a 7-0 lead. Though the 368th pushed their opponents all over the field from then on and twice had the ball inside the 10-yard line, that was all of the scoring for the day. The field was in fair shape in the first half, but snow and rain which fell throughout the last two quarters made the going pretty tough toward the end of the game. Over 3,000 spectators, largely GI's, saw the battle--and there was even a band to complete the setting.

10 December 1944

Forty-eight planes took the air today, and we went back to an old friend--the Third Armored Division--although we were also to support the Ninth Infantry. The 395th got off first, and Seascout asked them to attack a castle just west of Schlich, marking the target with smoke. Sixteen 500's were dropped, and the tower and NE corner of the castle were destroyed by direct hits. Though the squadron strafed the town of Schlich and strafed and fired 12 rockets at a train of 30 cars, results on these targets could not be observed. A group of B-26's fired at the squadron over Eschweiler. The 396th got their target from Instand, who instructed them to bomb the western part of Echz. All 19 500-pounders hit the town. Due to flak dam-

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE SIX

10 December 1944(cont'd)
 age, the squadron's recce went only to Duren; a light gun was strafed and destroyed.

The 397th worked for both Seascout and Instand. Seascout marked a target at Schlich, and 15 bombs destroyed several buildings and got 4 hits on a crossroad. After Marmite I had reported bogies, which turned out to be friendly, Instand asked them to knock out a tank which was holding up our armored column in the town of Dhorn. Though the tank was hidden under an overpass, the 397th knocked it out with two or three rocket hits; an M/T was also destroyed. The 395th jettisoned their bombs safe and fired their rockets when sweepstakes called in 30 bandits above and below; but the enemy could not be found, though the controller said that another group had already been bounced the Jerries. The fighter sweep to the Rhine was uneventful.

11 December 1944

We were back working for the Third Armored and Ninth Infantry again today. Instand #2 asked the 396th to bomb a target in Hoven, and 20 bombs fell in the target area. Seven rockets were fired at 3 tanks near the town with only fair results; one of the tanks was damaged by strafing. There was no time for an armed recce. Seascout marked two targets with smoke for the 397th, and the squadron blasted a strong point just north of Derichsweller and bombed the town itself-NRO. Rockets and strafing clobbered the M/T's and rolling stock between Zulpich and Euskirchen; 9 freight cars were destroyed and 15 damaged; 3 tanks were destroyed and 6 damaged. Instand #3 marked the NE edge of Mariaweller with smoke and called back "Good Show" after the 395th had dropped their 15 500-pounders. The target was supposed to contain guns, tanks, and troops. At the request of the same controller, the squadron strafed Hoven. Northeast of Duren rockets and strafing destroyed 3 and damaged 1 gun position, and destroyed one and damaged 4 tanks.

Passes to Lille, France, began today, and we began trading in Belgian francs for the French variety--with the accompanying illusion of having made money on the deal. But Lille was not very popular with the boys, probably because it was not Brussels. The sixth city of France and boasting over 200,000 inhabitants, no one could point out any particular objections to Lille. But most of the boys preferred to sleep late on their days off and perhaps go into Mons, Ahh, or even Chievres in the afternoon and evening.

12 December 1944

Twenty-three planes of the 397th and 395th flew blind-bombing missions to Euskirchen today. Bombs were released at 15,000 feet at 200 mph. The 397th, vectored by Disco I, reported NRO; but Marmite I took the 395th to the railroad one mile west of Euskirchen and one pilot reported 3-4 possible hits on the RR.

We were all "requested" to attend a meeting in the mess hall at 7:30 this evening to hear the straight dope on the Education and Information program, but first we had to listen to the 395th CO and Executive Officer harrangue their squadron. Then Lt. Regan explained the E & I plan and program, both for the present and more especially the period between the "Cease Firing" and "Board Ship" orders. We filled out a mimeographed form and then escaped.

13 December 1944

After the morning's god had lifted, the three squadrons flew blind-bombing missions this afternoon, again under the direction of "584" Radio Control. The 396th bombed 3 miles NE of Duren, and the two following squadrons hit Zulpich. The first two

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE SEVEN

13 December 1944 (cont'd)

squadrons were vectored by Marmite I at 200 mph and 15,000 feet; the 397th was vectored by Marmite II at 200 mph and 10,000 feet. Though the first two squadrons flew armed recces, the whole days work might be described as entirely uneventful.

14 December 1944

Two squadrons flew in support of the 78th and 8th Infantry Divisions today. The squadrons had 16 planes carrying 2 500-pounders each and 8 escorts armed with 4 rockets each. Foundation directed the 395th to drop 8 bombs on gun positions at Nideggen; 3 buildings were destroyed and much smoke was seen. The same controller then asked for 6 bombs on Strauch, and again the results were good. The 397th was assigned no targets so the squadron found their own, a train of 25-30 cars. Then the trouble began. 2nd Lt. Benjamin Poleson was able to bring his flak-damaged aged plane over friendly territory before he bailed out near Verviers. Though he was slightly injured by fire in the cockpit and bailing out, he returned to the base for hospitalization. The overcast prevented the rest of the squadron from landing at Chievres, so they set their P-47's down at Strip 78.

Three pilots of the 395th drew a leaflet-dropping mission and distributed their propaganda between our lines and the Zulpich-Euskirchen area.

One bright spot was that we got our rations on time today--and there were 5 packs of cigarettes.

15 December 1944

The assignment was again support for the 78th and 8th Infantry, and 48 planes got off, the 396th flying two missions. On their first, the squadron dropped 20 500's on Konzen, getting good results on the target which Foundation marked by smoke. The recce was uneventful. Disco I vectored the 395th to their target, and 14 500's were dropped east of Julich--NRO. Disco's controlling was poor. Sweepstakes asked the squadron to go after tanks NW of Schleiden, but due to bad weather no tanks were found. The weather blotted out the target Foundation assigned to the 397th, but on their recce the squadron spotted a locomotive and 10 cars through a break in the clouds. Sixteen bombs destroyed the locomotive and 5 cars, damaged the other cars, and cut the tracks in 2 places. On the last mission, the 396th did some more blind bombing from 10,000 feet at 200 mph. Disco I vectored them to 12 miles east of Eschweiler where they dropped 24 bombs=NRO. Again the 395th sent 4 planes on a propaganda job. Leaflet bombs were dropped through the over cast west of Gemund.

There was a compulsory roll call this morning for headquarters personnel, and Major Rice read us some courts-martial proceedings and sentences. We couldn't hear him because of the planes warming up, but we had heard Major Sparks read the same thing to the 395th on Tuesday night anyway.

We had two very bad fatal accidents today. Lt. John P. Foltz was killed when his plane locked wings in mid-air with another P-47 and crashed. The other plane landed safely. And in an accidental rocket discharge Cpl. Michael T. Gaydos of the 397th Squadron behind the rocket was instantly killed.

S-1 acquired a new EM, Pfc. Henry L. Stark, who joined the 368th Group today. And Pfc Melvin Sasse of S-3 returned today. Since October 25 he has been in vari-

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE EIGHT

15 December 1944 (cont'd)

hospitals in Belgium and France.

Special Orders #148, Supporting Document #3.

16 December 1944

Our latest operational string was snapped at 6 days when we were rained out today. Though it was far from Christmas weather, we began getting into the holiday spirit--putting up decorations, planning our celebrations, and watching the mail even more closely than usual.

17 December 1944

Our group dispatched 52 P-47's today in support of the 106th Infantry Division and to conduct armed reces to the Prifer area. Their primary duty was to attack enemy road traffic; and though we did not realize it at the time, this was the area where the Germans were launching their big counter-attack. With the ground attack, the German strategists also sent out the Luftwaffe in strength. Both the 397th and 396th ran into them and the 395th were forced to jettison their bombs but lost the enemy planes in the clouds; although it cost them a dozen planes, the Luftwaffe did succeed in preventing our attacks on their ground forces--which was probably the German objective. The 397th jettisoned bombs and rockets at Prum, just before they were bounced by 22 FW190's and 15 ME109's. Lt. Kerr shot down 2 FW's and 2 ME's, and probably got another ME. This little performance was certainly one of the outstanding feats of the air war--and incidentally got him into the Stars and Stripes. Lt. Bauer got another ME109 and 2nd Lt. Frederick C. Stoll damaged an FW190--but did not return from the mission and is listed MIA. His plane was seen to start down in flames. He was not seen to bail out.

The 395th were about to attack enemy vehicles between Prum and Malmedy, as requested by Whistdrive, but had to hastily get rid of their bombs when 12-15 ME109's were called in. The squadron chased the Heinies but lost them in the clouds. The 396th had better luck. One flight had already bombed vehicles in the town of Schonberg, with better results, when 20 FW190's attacked. The other planes had to jettison bombs and rockets but got revenge by shooting down 5 E/A and damaging 3 more. Captain Kerchner got 2 and damaged another, Capt. Benton and Lts. Davis and Johnson each got another, while Lts. Johnson and Hansen each damaged one. 2nd Lt. Robert M. Pace was seen going down in a steep dive during the encounter; and although he was not seen to bail out, 3 parachutes were seen about this time. He is listed MIA.

On the last mission of the day, 16 planes of the 397th were finally allowed to go about their business without interference from the Luftwaffe. They hit Schonberg and several convoys in that area, destroying 8 tanks and damaging 5 more, and clobbering over 100 M/ T's, claiming about 30 destroyed and the others damaged. Five planes were damaged by flak. On this mission the squadron leader, Major Leary, turned in a spectacular performance. Knowing that the ground forces needed air support badly, he asked the controller for his most urgent target. The following answer came back: "Our troops are holding St. Vith, but there is a very strong enemy column about a mile and a half away. If you can knock out the leading tank and slow them up, we may be able to hold the town tonight." Although he was unable to contact his squadron because of a weak radio, Major Leary strafed the column time after time. Flak guns firing at him from the steep hills on both sides

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE NINE

17 December 1944 (cont'd)

of the road actually fired into their own convoy, adding to the destruction caused by Major Leary's guns. The column was stopped, and at the same time Lt. Hamilton worked over another road near by. Our troops held St. Vith for several days, splitting the German westward drive temporarily and giving our troops time to move into position and eventually stop the threat.

The 368th Group medics were assigned a Medical Administration Officer today when 1st Lt. Edgar G. Tchirkow joined the group.

Special Orders #149, Supporting Document #4.

18 December 1944

Though we dispatched 85 P-47's on 8 squadron missions today in support of the 28th Infantry Division, we had to fight the weather nearly as much as the enemy. As a result, 36 planes were forced to return to the base without anything to their credit but the ride. But some of the others had excellent results despite the weather when they were able to spot targets through holes in the overcast, and two of the Squadrons ran into the Luftwaffe again. On the second mission of the day, the 396th bombed a train southeast of Aachen, destroying 10 cars which were left exploding and in flames. Then E/A were called in, and the squadron bounced 6 FW190's and 6 ME109's over Nideggen. Capt. Saer, who was leading the mission, shot down 2 ME's and damaged another. Lt. Ryerson got our FW and Lt. Dunbar probably got another, while Lt. Brizendine damaged a third. We had no losses, though 3 planes were damaged. On the next mission the 397th also ran into enemy planes, after trying unsuccessfully for 1½ hours to contact Hopcraft. Thirty ME109's jumped the squadron near Nuren, and the P-47's went to work on them--after getting rid of their bombs and rockets. Lt. Potter got 2 of the bandits, Major Leary (who led the mission) shot down one, Lt. Clary got one and another probable, and Lt. Weinstein damaged one. Lt. Conant was not seen after the battle and is listed MIA. The squadron also found time to destroy 9 vehicles and damage 6. The best mission of the day was flown by the 396th, lead by their new squadron CO Capt. Crisp. Marmite spotted some tanks for them near Stavelot and the 14 P-47's dropped 28 bombs on a concentration of 30 tanks. The bombing could scarcely have been better, for 14 tanks were destroyed and 16 more damaged. The planes strafed the tanks after the bombing, and 4 large fires were seen. One P-47 was forced to belly-in west of Liege, but the pilot, Lt. George Davis, called in that he was all right.

19 December 1944

We were never more anxious to get our planes into the air than today--and we probably never had less of a chance of doing it. We had hoped that the heavy morning fog would lift by noon, but it stuck with us. Many of us were getting pretty nervous about the German armored columns which were reported heading for Namur, and the knowledge that our dive-bombers couldn't go out after them adds matters much worse especially since those German panzers would have been just our meat. As we had been expecting, IX TAC finally evacuated Verviers; and back at Chievres we began carrying our guns again for the first time since Normandy. Nevertheless we were told that passes to Ghent would start tomorrow--though some of us doubted if passes would continue at all.

Two Black Widows, P-61 night-fighters, were forced down here last night. One crashed at Ath, killing the two-man crew; but the other landed on our strip, and

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE TEN

19 December 1944 (cont'd)

although the plane cracked up, one man was unhurt and the other suffered a broken leg.

20 December 1944

We received official notification of changes in status of 15 of our pilots, who have been listed MIA thus far. Eight are now prisoners of war: 2nd Lt. Robert J. Reichtold (went down 14 June), 2nd Lt. Paul R. Jasper (22nd June), Capt. Joseph Mariani (11 July), 1st Lt. Jack B. Robbins (24 June), 2nd Lt. Curt C. Doescher (29 May), F/O Arlington J. Clever (7 July), 1st Lt. Grover Y. Greene (27 July), and 2nd Lt. Robert W. Rinehart (12 June). Now listed killed in action are: 2nd Lt. Norman E. Langmaid (went down 7 June), 2nd Lt. Buel W. Bates (7 July), 1st Lt. Edward Haughton (10 June), Capt. Robert S. Anderson (26 July), 1st Lt. Rudolph L. Marko (1 Aug), and Capt. Thomas N. Montag (14 August). 2nd Lt. Ruben G. Bork was seen to bail out of his plane on 27 July after bombing a column of tanks; after landing he disappeared into a hedgerow. About six weeks later his squadron commander received the following letter from Lt. Bork, and his status was changed to "seriously wounded in action":

England
6 September 1944

Ruben G. Bork
2nd Lt. AC, -763473
U.S. Army Hospital Plant 4115
APO 207, c/o PM, New York

Dear Sir:

Sir, I do not know if you have been notified about me being recaptured or not. Perhaps you would like to hear my end of the story. Well Sir, I had dropped my bombs and had pulled up to about 1500 feet, and all of a sudden this shell exploded in the cockpit. I glanced down and saw that my left arm was shot off. Then the plane burst into flame, and as I reached up to pen the canopy I passed out. When I came to again I was swinging in my chute about 300 feet above the ground. My face and right hand were burned pretty badly also.

When I landed, three German soldiers picked me up and took me to a hospital and nine days later I was in Paris, I was recaptured when our boys took Paris. Now I am back here in England, waiting to go back to the United States.

Sir, the main reason I am writing is about my clothes and personal things that I left behind.

I would like to know if the Col. would know anything about them, if it will be transferred to me or not. I would appreciate it very much if I could receive word on what will be done about it.

Please excuse the informal letter and the very poor writing.

Sincerely
Ruben G. Bork

THIS IS A TRUE COPY.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE ELEVEN

20 December 1944 (cont'd)

Later, orders came from the Ninth Air Force to classify Lt. Bork "slightly injured", though there was no question about the amputation of his arm! No comment.

The fogged cancelled operations again today.

Lt. William Blagen of S62 came back today after a six-weeks' tour of 3 hospitals in Belgium--with virus pneumonia and pleurisy. During that time he was notified of his promotion to 1st lieutenant. Lt. Blagen came to the 368th from IX TAC on 22 July, 1944.

21 December 1944

The German break-through scare stories grew to such a pitch that we began pulling guard duty last night in the headquarters area. A sergeant of the guard and 6 guards were housed in a pyramidal tent, 2 guard posts marked out, and the "tour of duty" set from 1700 hours to 0800 hours the following morning. With the fog still keeping our planes on the ground, we just sat tight, sweating out the German counter-offensive--and our Christmas packages.

22 December 1944

The fog kept us on the ground, and the scare stories concerning the German counter-offensive continued today. But for us the attack was overshadowed by "bigger" news. We are moving again. This time the orders came as a real shock: we had been at Chievres longer than any other station on the Continent, and we were convinced that we would be here for the winter. Some of that was wishful thinking, perhaps, but this time there were none of the rumors which have always preceded our other moves. Nevertheless, late this evening we were alerted; and the air echelon was told to pack and be ready to move in the morning. This news, coupled with the German counter-offensive rumors, really got us into an uproar. But before morning the move was slowed down somewhat, and we were told that the air echelon would be ready to move but would not pull out in the morning.

23 December 1944

Twenty-nine enemy planes shot down in one day should be some kind of a record for a dive-bomber group. In fact, those 29 ME109's and FW190's were shot down by two squadrons this afternoon, the 396th coming in first with a bag of 13 bandits and the 395th topping that score later by nailing 16 enemy planes--all in the air. To support Von Rundstedt's great counter-offensive, the Luftwaffe came out over the Ardennes Front today in its greatest strength since D-Day; but they won't be able to do it very often at this rate. And with the weather clearing up to promise more flying tomorrow, the chances that the great German drive might get anywhere are fading fast. In fact, our ground forces have been dling all right on their own while bad weather kept our planes grounded.

Fifteen planes of the 396th saw some bogies and jettisoned their bombs, half armed and half un-armed, near the Rhine SW of Koblenz. These planes proved to be friendly, but jettisoning the bombs turned out to be a good idea; soon afterwards they saw 25 FW190's and 5 ME109's attacking B-26's near Koblenz. The bandits had shot down from 3 to 5 Marauders in flames, but our P-47's soon broke up that little game and clobbered about half of the Heinies in the battle. The 13 German fighters shot

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PAGE TWELVE

23 December 1944 (cont'd)

down from the air were pretty evenly distributed among the pilots: Capt. Baer, who lead the mission, got 2, Lt. Tullis, 3, and Lts. Kerchner, Grace, Newhart, Brizendine, Dixon, Hansen, Dunbar, and Busenbark each 1. Capt. Henry damaged one FW190. Though we had no losses in the fight, 2nd Lt. Joseph S. Busenbark was forced to belly in his plane about 35 miles west of Koblenz when his engine cut out. He called over the R/T saying that he was all right, and he eventually then fired his plane before abandoning it.

Sixteen planes of the 397th found no bandits, but they did find plenty of rolling stock between Trier and the Rhine. The toll taken by 16 500 pounders, 16 rockets, and strafing was 25 freight cars destroyed and 67 damaged, including many oil cars, besides an M/Y hit and buildings destroyed. On the way back, the 397th escorted 40 C-47's. Fifteen planes of the 395th flew a similar mission further north, near Cochem, and accounted for 15 more cars destroyed and 15 damaged, plus a pair of locomotives also destroyed.

The biggest show of all came late in the day, when 12 planes of the 395th were jumped by 23 FW190's and 7 ME109's over Koblenz. The squadron was able to release their bombs armed before the attack and then proceeded to blow the Jerries out of the sky in a melee of air battles over the Laacher Lake area. Sixteen of the bandits (13 FW's, 3 ME's) were destroyed and 5 FW190's damaged, although the enemy pilots were very aggressive and attacked in two groups: one formation attacked our flights from the rear just as the 395th pilots started climbing into the first group of enemy planes. Some of the Jerry pilots seemed to be very good and experienced, while others appeared to be rookies, several of them bailing out of their planes as soon as a P-47 lined up on them. Lt. Garry won top honors for the day, shooting down 4 FW190's in rapid succession. Lt. Wayland, who shot down 2 FW190's and one ME109 and damaged another FW, destroyed one of the planes by ramming, his bomb shackles tearing one wing off the enemy plane! Lt. Matthews destroyed one FW and 2 ME's, Lt. Smith bagged 2 FW's and damaged another, while Lt. Foltz reversed that score, destroying one and damaging 2. Lts. Huff, Ivey, and Aldridge each shot down ~~in flames early in the fight~~ a Focke-Wolf, and Lt. Aldridge damaged another. 2nd Lt. Bruce A. Ralston was shot down in flames early in the fight and was not seen to bail out. Lt. Gianetti was wounded by 20 mm shells but brought his plane back to Strip A-84. Lts. Foltz and Johnson were forced to land their damaged planes at other airfields but returned to the base safely later.

This was our first day's work for XIX TAC, for we now were assigned to that command. Lt. Col. Peregó left for our new field, Strip A-79 at Prosnés, just beyond Reims, and we prepared to move all day. Since the air echelon will push off in the morning, our Christmas parties were hastily improvised and moved up to tonight. Our EM Club boasted champagne this evening--in a sad farewell to our comfortable barracks.

We "lost" two of our pilots today--to the Ground Forces. Lt's. Nolan and Sharp left for the front lines today to act as an Air Support Party.

Special Orders #151, Supporting Document #5.

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PAGE THIRTEEN

24 December 1944

It was bright and clear this morning, but it was also the coldest day we have had and the ground was covered with a heavy frost. We sent up 86 planes and started our air echelon on the road to Reims and Strip A-79. Later in the day we learned that this move would only be temporary, and that we would go on to Metz, Strip Y-34, in about a week.

The six squadron missions today were not spectacular in any way, but they added to the troubles of the Heinies in the break-through area. The assignment again was an armed recon in the Ardennes, and the squadrons attacked targets of opportunity. The destruction score for strafing, 18 rockets, and 198 bombs was 14 tanks destroyed and 20 damaged, 25 freight cars destroyed, besides 3 guns destroyed, and 1/1, a fuel dump, buildings and roads hit. Though no enemy planes were encountered, seven planes were damaged by flak. 2nd Lt. Donald N. Evans bailed out of his P-47 and was seen to land safely in the region of the battle line between Stavelot and Laroche.

The air echelon were none too happy when they reached Prosnes on Christmas Eve, after a very cold ride. The field was a mess, any way you looked at it--and we were used to Chievres. But as soon as they arrived they were told to put up tents for the night only; early in the morning they would leave for Strip A-68 at Juvincourt, between Reims and Laon. Here they would stay until the group could go on to our new field at Metz.

25 December 1944

This was Christmas Day--according to the calendar--but there was no time for a holiday. First in importance, the German salient in the Ardennes needed some attention--and got it. Our pilots flew 55 sorties despite very bad haze in the afternoon. Though they encountered no German planes, we lost two planes which were hit by flak, and we have two pilots MIA. On the first 397th mission, 2nd Lt. Jack W. White's plane was hit by flak during a dive-bombing run near Dahlem, NE of Schleiden; the P-47 crashed and exploded--and the pilot was not seen to bail out. 2nd Lt. George E. Swink of the 395th bailed out of his plane when it was hit by flak while the squadron was strafing M/T's; the pilot was seen to land safely in enemy territory near St. Vith.

The 397th took off first with 16 planes, lead by Major Carbine. The squadron dropped 33 500 pounders on the wide mouth of the bulge near Birgel, as directed by Ripsaw. The squadron claimed only 2 tanks and 18 M/T's destroyed and 13 M/T's damaged, but the intense flak prevented the pilots from waiting to evaluate the destruction. It was undoubtedly much greater, for the planes strafed several concentrations of vehicles and fired one rocket. Fifteen planes of the 395th were directed by Ripsaw to attack a large concentration of vehicles just east of St. Vith. Twenty-nine 500 pounders were dropped with good results, and other vehicles were strafed. The 396th claimed only 24 vehicles destroyed and 4 damaged, but again it was usually a case of no results being observed. Four rockets were fired at an anti-aircraft gun emplacement and destroyed it. While bringing his flak-damaged plane back alone, Lt. Garry attacked 12 FW190's which were about to begin a dive-bombing attack south of Liege. The P-47 went into a spin when the pilot dived on the enemy planes, for the plane had a large hole in one wing. Lt. Garry, while he succeeded in disrupting the attack, would probably have been shot down himself, but a formation of Typhoons hit and routed the enemy.

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PAGE FOURTEEN

25 December 1944 (cont'd)

Eleven planes of the 396th, lead by Major Crisp, got a similar assignment near St. vith from Ripsaw, and 20 bombs destroyed 2 tanks and damaged 4 M/T's and another tank. Strafing added 3 more M/T's, and the squadron then got rid of their remaining bombs in a hurry to go after 15 M E109's and FM190's which were attacking a B-24 formation. But the Jerries hit the ceck and went for home after only one pass at the bombers, and no encounter was made. The day's last mission really found the enemy vehicles. Major Leary lead 12 planes of the 397th to the area between Prum and Schleiden, at the mouth of the breakthrough area, when Ripsaw had no targets for them. The squadron dropped 16 bombs, fired 16 rockets, and strafed a number of vehicles concentrations and convoys. The total score was 6 tanks destroyed and 3 damaged, 109 M/T's destroyed and 25 damaged - in addition to cutting roads and blasting road junctions with the 500 pounders.

The air echelon got up at 5 am. at Prosnes and moved to Juvincourt. They were cold and hungry, and this was no way to spend Christmas Day; and although Strip A-68 was not a very inviting place either, they were glad to leave Prosnes and had hopes that Metz might prove to be another Chievres. Back at Strip A-84 we kept on breaking camp, packing, and loading trucks.

26 December 1944

The planes were due to take off at Chievres today and land at Juvincourt, Strip A-68. But the fog grounded us, and we plan to move tomorrow--weather permitting. In the meantime we took down more tents, loaded more trucks, and sent more men and equipment to Juvincourt. Our mess hall still has the Christmas decorations up, but no one has much time to think about Christmas any more--except for the time we stand in the mess line, for the whole group (left in Belgium) now eats at our (or 395th) mess hall.

At Juvincourt the advance echelon set up our headquarters tents - and hoped that they wouldn't be up long. Strip A-68 is bleak, barren, and generally un-inspiring.

27 December 1944

Though the fog which kept us on the ground and prevented our moving yesterday seemed actually worse this morning, our planes were finally able to take off in the afternoon on three squadron missions and landed at Juvincourt, Strip A-68. The snack bar was used as a briefing room; in fact, practically the whole 368th Headquarters operated from the shack.

The assignment for our missions was an armed recce over the breakthrough area--Malmedy, St. Vith, Wiltz, Bastogne, and St. Hubert--and to attack targets of opportunity. Forty planes got off, the 397th sending out 16 planes and getting the largest share of vehicles. In all, 85 bombs were dropped, 14 rockets fired, and many vehicles strafed. The score for the group was 4 tanks destroyed and 5 damaged, in addition to buildings and road junctions hit and roads cut in many places. Although no enemy planes were seen, 8 planes were damaged by the flak, which was generally intense and too accurate for comfort. At Juvincourt the air echelon, re-inforced by a good share of the "middle echelon", was set up to operate--temporarily. This evening the S-3 trailer rolled in--but the S-2 Brockhouse rolled over into a ditch near Reims after an encounter with a French truck. The trailer was in pretty bad shape, but the contents were not greatly damaged and were soon transferred to the old trailer--and S-2 went on operating.

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PAGE FIFTEEN

28 December 1944

Activities slowed down all over today. At Juvincourt the planes could not get off the ground, and back at Chievres the fog was so bad and the roads so slippery that no more vehicles were sent on to Strip A-68. But we completed the razing of our headquarters area, watched our British successors begin to move in, and entertained our Eighth Air Force guests who had been weathered in with us. A Liberator came in the other day with a wounded crew member, and a couple of P-51's were "stopping over", too.

29 December 1944

Sixty-eight planes got into the air today on 3 different assignments. The first was an armed recce to Kaiserslautern-Mainz-Saarbrücken, and the two squadrons ran into bad weather. Both the 396th and 397th bombed marshalling yards. The former cut the tracks in 3 places and generally scored good hits. The 397th was forced to bomb through a hole in the clouds, and though there were about 40 cars in the M/Y, the weather prevented any results from being observed.

The 395th was assigned to "attack by strafing cylindrical cone-shaped objects located in fields and town over a 3-mile radius"--between St. Vith and Wiltz. The squadron strafed the objects, which seemed to be haystacks, without any noticeable results; but they destroyed 22 M/T's in the same area. The weather was CAVU for this mission as well as for the following, an armed recce to Frankfurt, Koblenz, TRIER. Each squadron sent out 12 planes on this one and got good results: 2 supply dumps were destroyed, as well as 5 gun positions and 5 buildings, and tracks were cut when an M/Y was hit. Our vehicle claims were one tank destroyed, 22 M/T's destroyed and 18 damaged, one locomotive destroyed and another damaged, and 40 freight cars destroyed and 20 damaged.

Moving from Chievres to Juvincourt continued today, for the RAF was beginning to act possessive about Strip 84.

30 December 1944

Sixty-six planes of the 368th covered the Trier-Cochem-Koblenz area on armed recce missions today, attacking targets of opportunity and hitting targets assigned by several controllers. Though there were no unusual incidents, the squadrons had generally excellent results and caused widespread damage to communications systems serving the break-through area. Besides strafing, 23 rockets were fired and 29 tons of bombs released. Three roundhouses and 3 warehouses (besides many other buildings) were destroyed; an M/Y, a road junction, and various rail lines were hit, the tracks being cut in many places; and several fires were started as bombs were dropped on towns and woods in the recce area. Vehicle damage included 2 tanks destroyed and one damaged, 69 M/T's destroyed and 2 damaged, 5 locomotives destroyed, and 43 freight cars destroyed and 63 damaged. No enemy planes were seen, but 2 planes were damaged by flak.

31 December 1944

On the last day of the year we got ready to move again--in the morning. We took down some tents (which had been up less than a week), and packed a number of trucks this afternoon. The reports on Strip Y-34 at Metz were encouraging: the 365th Group is already operating from the base and our planes are scheduled to move in a couple of days. We are to live in buildings in Metz--or its outskirts--and we

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PAGE SIXTEEN

31 December 1944 (cont'd)

may have some of our offices under roofs. Our prospective barracks are said to be substantial (brick), not beaten up badly, but very messy and dirty. With that prospect in mind, the air echelon has been enlarged; there is even a nasty rumor that it will be a clean-up detail--and that a truckload of brooms and mops are going with them!

The last of our rear echelon came in from Strip 84 today--just in time to renew acquaintances with the advance echelon before the latter group leaves tomorrow. We got paid on time, in French francs again; but though we were in the heart of the champagne country, we had a great deal of trouble picking up any likker. So it was a comparatively dry and subdued New Year's Eve in our tents out on bleak strip 68.

Though only three missions were flown today, the 36 planes did proportionally more damage than usual. The assignment was armed reces over Trier-Cochem-Koblenz, and 2 of the squadrons worked with Ripsaw III. Several towns at the mouth of the breakthrough were worked over with bombs and strafing, buildings were destroyed, 9 guns destroyed or damaged, railroad tracks and roads cut, and some fires started. But our score on vehicles was much better: 9 tanks were destroyed, 81 M/T's destroyed and 25 damaged. Four planes were damaged by flak.

This wasn't the way we had hoped to end the year, but it could be a lot worse--and we looked forward to the New Year. We are confident that this European unpleasantness can be cleaned up before the year is too old.

As for a summary of the past year's work, let us look at the record:

Operational Record--March 14--December 31, 1944

| | Since D-day | For E.T.O. |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Group Missions | 666 | 721 |
| Sorties | 8875 | 10807 |
| Tons Bombs Dropped | 2467 | 3438 |
| Rockets fired | --- | 175 |
| Tanks (dest. & damaged) | 326-319 | 326-319 |
| M/T's, Armored Veh, staff cars, etc. | 3379-892 | 3392-909 |
| Locomotives | 111-13 | 186-30 |
| RR Cars | 792-626 | 837-666 |
| Enemy a/c (air) | | |
| (dest-prob-dam) | 99-9-44 | 106-10-51 |
| (ground) | --- | 25-10-7 |
| Personnel | | |
| Killed in Action | 9 | 9 |
| Missing " " | 35 | 38 |
| Prisoners of War | 7 | 8 |
| Wounded in Action | 9 | 9 |
| Injured in Action | 6 | 6 |

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R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

AFO 595, U. S. ARMY
2 December 1944

SPECIAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 144)

1. Pursuant to the auth contained in 3rd Ind fr Hq Ninth Air Force, 21 April 1944 to Ltr, Hq US Strategic Air Forces in Europe, 20 Mar 1944, file 245.8 x 954.7, subj: "Auth for Mont Alms at Air Force Rest Homes," and VCOG Ninth Air Force of 2 December 1944, the following named officers are placed on temp dy, will proceed fr Hq 368th Ftr Gp to AAF Sta 524, o/a 2 Dec 1944 for a period of seven (7) days, exclusive of travel time, for the purpose of carrying out the instructions of the CG, Ninth Air Force. Upon completion of this temp dy, they will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT, mil acft or rail.

Where Govt qrs and subs are not available in the UK, reimbursement for actual cost of qrs not to exceed \$4.00 per day and per diem \$1.25 in lieu of subs is atzd while in a travel status, in accordance w/Par 2, Cir 63, Hq European T of Ops, USA, 5 June 1944. 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425.

Air Force Combat crew personnel on temp dy as patients in Rest Homes are atzd reimbursement for additional cost of subs at the rate of \$1.25 per day for officers and \$2.25 per day for EM, irrespective of whether adequate Govt messing facilities are available in accordance w/Par 4, US Strategic AF in Europe Reg No. 30-3B, 29 Sept 1944.

1st Lt ALEXANDER E. LELOUF 0805642 AC
1st Lt FORREST D. MIDLAM 0681585 AC

2. The following named O and EM are placed on temp dy for a period of seven (7) days with Hq Com Zone, will proceed fr this sta o/a 3 Dec 1944 to 26 Ave Kleber, Paris, reporting prior to 1600 hours, 3 Dec 1944, to Capt Weaver, Office of the Signal Officer, for the purpose of attending AN/TRC-1 Maint School. Gas masks, blankets, mess gear and two K rations will be taken. Upon completion of this Temp dy, they will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT, mil acft or rail. 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425 and 60-114 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: TWX 70th Fighter Wing, D2J, 1 Dec 1944.

Capt RUSSELL H. MARKS 0578511 AC
M/Sgt (542) Horatio J. Zimmerman 15018852 396th Fighter Sq
T/Sgt (759) Samuel Loisey 33240328 397th Fighter Sq

3. The following named O and EM are placed on temp dy for a period of approx four (4) days, will proceed fr this sta o/a 4 Dec 1944 to Paris and Bayeux, France for the purpose of picking up rations. Upon completion of this TD, they will ret to proper orgn and sta. TDN by MT. 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: 2nd Ind fr IX TAC, 6 Nov 1944, to Ltr Hq US Strategic Air Forces in Europe (Main), 1 Nov 1944, subj: "Authority to issue Temporary Duty Travel Orders:"

1st Lt JOHN F. REGAN 0569887 AC
Cpl (405) Cyril F. Fey 35685284 Hq 368th Ftr Group
Pfc (345) Milburn A. Gilbertson 36297536 2499th QM Trk Co

SO 144, Hq 368th Ftr Gp, dtd 2 Dec 1944, Cont'd.

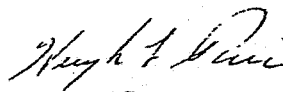
4. Sgt (677) Lawrence A. Cook, 17065080, 1293rd Military Police Co (Avn) is placed on temp dy for a period of approximately one (1) day, will proceed fr this sta o/a 4 Dec 1944 to Ninth Air Force Continental Stockade, APO 696, for the purpose of delivering Pvt Joseph A. Piper, 11021095, 29th MR&R Sq (Less Det A) and Pvt Robert B. Dunlap, 13009110, 397th Fighter Sq, for confinement thereat. Upon completion of this temp dy, guard will ret to proper orgn and sta. TIN by MP. 60-105 F 432-02 A 212/50425.

5. Capt MAURICE D. POTELL, 0650448, AC, is appointed Gp War Bond Officer and Gp Insurance Officer, (AD), vice 1st Lt JOHN F. REGAN, 0569887, AC, reld.

6. 1st Lt OSWALD DORIA, 01640399, AC, is appointed Army Air Forces Aid Society Officer (AD), vice 1st Lt JOHN F. REGAN, 0569887, AC, reld.

By order of Lt Col PEREGO:

OFFICIAL:



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
8 December 1944

SPECIAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 146)

1. 2d Lt CURTIS H. STEVENS, 0701192, AC, is placed on temp dy for an indefinite period, will proceed from this sta o/a 8 December 1944 to Hq IX TAC. Upon completion of this temp dy, O will ret to proper sta and orgn. TTN by MF, mil acft or rail. 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: VCOG IX TAC, 7 Dec 1944.

2. Pursuant to the auth contained in 3rd Ind fr Hq Ninth Air Force 21 April 1944 to Ltr, Hq US Strategic Air Forces in Europe, 20 Mar 1944, file 245,8 x 354,7, subj: "Auth for Mont Alws at Air Force Rest Homes," and VCOG Ninth Air Force of 8 December 1944, the following named officers are placed on temp dy, will proceed fr Hq 368th Ftr Gp to AAF Sta 524, o/a 9 Dec 1944 for a period of seven (7) days, exclusive of travel time, for the purpose of carrying out the instructions of the CG, Ninth Air Force. Upon completion of this temp dy, they will ret to proper sta and orgn. TTN by MF, mil acft or rail.

Where Govt qrs and subs are not available in the UK, reimbursement for actual cost of qrs not to exceed \$4.00 per day and per diem \$1.25 in lieu of subs is atzd while in a travel status, in accordance w/Par 2, Cir 63, Hq European T of Opns, USA, 5 June 1944. 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425.

Air Force Combat crew personnel on temp dy as patients in Rest Homes are atzd reimbursement for additional cost of subs at the rate of \$1.25 per day for officers and \$2.25 per day for EM, irrespective of whether adequate Govt messing facilities are available in accordance w/Par 4, US Strategic AF in Europe Reg No, 30-3B, 29 Sept 1944:

1st Lt ERWIN OSTW 0680065 AC
1st Lt JOHN M. LOEB 0681684 AC

3. The following named officers are placed on temp dy for an indefinite period, will proceed fr this sta o/a 8 Dec 1944 to 10th Air Depot reporting upon arrival to the Maintenance Officer for the purpose of rocket installation. Upon completion of this temp dy, O will ret to proper sta and orgn. TTN by MF, mil acft or rail. 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: TTX 10ADG D85U.

1st Lt HENRY L. OLSON 0815376 AC
1st Lt HOMER E. HAYES 0815331 AC
2d Lt JAMES E. FAULEY 0767174 AC
2d Lt GEORGE A. MYERS 0770108 AC
2d Lt ROBERT R. WAGGONER 0702869 AC

RESTRICTED

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SO 146, Hq 368th Ftr Gp, dtd 8 Dec 1944, Cont'd.

4. The following named officers are granted two (2) days operational leave, will proceed o/a 9 Dec 1944 to Paris, France reporting upon arrival to Ninth Air Force Liaison Officer, American Express Building, Auber and Scribe. Upon completion of this leave O's will report to 10th Air Depot for return transportation to their proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT, mil acft or rail. 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: Ltr, IX TAC, file 210.711 x 220.711, subj: "Combat Crew Leave," dated 28 Nov 1944.

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------|----------------|
| 1st Lt HENRY L. OLSON | 0815376 | AC (In charge) |
| 1st Lt HOMER E. HAYES | 0815391 | AC |
| 2d Lt JAMES E. FAULEY | 0767174 | AC |
| 2d Lt GEORGE A. MYERS | 0770108 | AC |
| 2d Lt ROBERT R. WAGGNER | 0702869 | AC |

5. Capt ERNEST R. PENDLETON, 01638240, AC, is appointed Investigating Officer to investigate Courts-Martial charges against Cpl Charles L. Daleman, 15334583, 397th Fighter Sq, Pfc William J. Scoville, 11038244, 397th Fighter Sq, and Pfc Robert A. Shaw, 18032513, 396th Fighter Sq. Complete report of Investigation on WD AGQ Form No 120 will be submitted to this Hq in triplicate.

6. The following named EM, orgns indicated, are placed on temp dy for approx three (3) days, will proceed from this sta o/a 11 Dec 1944 to Paris, France, reporting upon arrival to Miss Reed at Rainbow Corner, for the purpose of obtaining Red Cross Supplies. Upon completion of this temp dy, EM will ret to their proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT, 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425 and 60-114 P 432-02 A 212/50425.

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Sgt (756) Jacques E. Smith | 35286034 | 395th Fighter Sq |
| Pvt (345) Edward L. Pearson | 13113073 | 2499th QM Trucking Co |

7. The following named O and EM are placed on temp dy for approx three (3) days, will proceed fr this sta o/a 11 Dec 1944 to the 134th Repl Bn (AAF), for the purpose of picking up officers' baggage. Upon completion of this temp dy, O and EM will ret to proper orgn and sta. TDN by MT, 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425 and 60-114 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: Teletype 134th Repl Bn (AAF).

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1st Lt RALPH C. HUBBERT | 0860845 | AC |
| Cpl (345) Rene A. Deyon | 31119005 | 396th Fighter Sq. |

8. Lt Col JOHN D. W. HAESLER, 0432193, AC, is granted two (2) days oper lv of abs, will proceed fr this sta o/a 11 Dec 1944 to Paris, France, reporting upon arrival to Ninth Air Force Liaison Officer, American Express Bldg, Auber and Scribe. Upon completion of this oper lv of abs O will report to his proper orgn and sta. TDN by MT or mil acft. 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: Ltr, IX TAC, file 210.711 x 220.711, subj: "Combat Crew Leave," dtd 28 Nov 1944.

9. Par 3, SO 199, this Hq, cs, pertaining to aptent of Special Courts-Martial is rescinded.

CONFIDENTIAL

SO 146, Hq 368th Ftr Gp, dtd 8 Dec 1944, Cont'd.

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

DETAIL FOR THE COURT

| | | |
|----------------------------|----------|----------------------------|
| Major JAMES R. WERNLI | 0386976 | AC |
| Capt STANLEY C. JOHNSON JR | 0583430 | AC |
| Capt LEONARD L. KREMEN | 01578724 | QMC |
| Capt RICHARD R. WEISS | 0570712 | AC |
| Capt ROBERT G. BERGMAN | 0567286 | AC |
| Capt ERNEST R. LENDLETON | 01698240 | AC |
| 1st Lt SAMUEL KUSHNER | 0856309 | CWS (Trial Judge Advocate) |
| Capt FRANKLIN A. DICK | 0565197 | AC (Defense Counsel) |

11. The following named officers are placed on temp dy for an indefinite period, will proceed fr this sta o/a 11 Dec 1944 to 10th Air Depot reporting upon arrival to the Maintenance Officer for the purpose of rocket installation. Upon completion of this temp dy, O will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT, mil wft or rail. 60-105 P 432-02 & 212/50425. AUTH: TWX 10ADG D85U.

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------|----|
| 1st Lt DAVID M. SHARP | 0680093 | AC |
| 2d Lt JAMES F. HOGAN JR | 0767237 | AC |
| 2d Lt KENNETH E. KALEN | 0770302 | AC |

12. Having been asgd this Hq per par 4, SO 207, Hq IX TAC, dtd 4 Dec 1944, Pvt (405) William L. Stephens, 18160122, is further asgd 396th Ftr Sq.

13. In compliance with AAF Regulation No. 62-14, Part VI, an Aircraft Accident Committee is hereby established with members as follows:

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---------|----|-----------------------|
| Lt Col FRANK S. PEREGO | 0426422 | AC | President |
| Lt Col PAUL F. DOUGLAS JR | 0432187 | AC | Member |
| Lt Col JOHN D. W. HAESLER | 0432193 | AC | Aircraft Accident Off |
| Major DONALD A. DAVIS | 0477249 | MC | Member |
| Major HAROLD F. SLARKS | 0432726 | AC | Member |
| Major THOMAS J. CARBINE | 0392748 | AC | Member |
| Capt DENNIS CRIST | 0427531 | AC | Member |
| Capt CARLOS M. TALBOTT | 025797 | AC | Recorder |
| 1st Lt NEWTON I. STEERS JR | 0865646 | AC | Member |

14. Having been asgd this orgn per par 13, SO 51, Hq 134th Repl Bn (AAF), dtd 5 Dec 1944, the following named O's are further asgd to Sq as indicated:

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------|----|------------------|
| 2d Lt (1055) JACK E. MASS | 0830043 | AC | 395th Fighter Sq |
| 2d Lt (1055) JEROME S. THOROUGH | 0813087 | AC | 396th Fighter Sq |
| 2d Lt (1055) THURMAN N. MAULDIN | 0832633 | AC | 397th Fighter Sq |

R E S T R I C T E D

SO 146, Hq 368th Ftr Gp, dtd 8 Dec 1944, Cont'd.

15. Under the provisions of AR 210-65, 1 June 1944, a Post Exchange Council is aptd to meet at the call of the senior member thereof, for the purpose of considering and making recommendations on such matters as may be referred to it. Case proceedings of the council will be submitted to this Hq in triplicate:

| | | |
|---------------------------|----------|----------------|
| Capt ERNEST R. PENNINGTON | 01638240 | AC (President) |
| Capt ROBERT G. BERGMAN | 0567286 | AC (Member) |
| Capt FRANCIS E. WHITLEY | 0908108 | AC (Member) |
| 2d Lt MILTON LEON | 0663631 | AC (Recorder) |

16. 1st Lt OSWALD DORIA, 01640399, AC, is appointed Asst Gp War Bond Officer, in addition to his other duties.

17. 1st Lt JOSEPH E. BRUMFIELD JR, 0650363, AC, is detailed to audit the accounts of the Officers' Club Fund o/a 15 Dec 1944.

(Travel directed is pursuant to auth contained in Ltr, Hq European T of Opns US Army, file 300-4, MEM-GA, 25 October 1944)

By order of Lt Col PEREGO:

OFFICIAL:

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

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

DISTRIBUTION:

RESTRICTED

HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

APO 595, U. S. ARMY
15 December 1944

SPECIAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 148)

1. The following named officers are placed on temp dy for an indefinite period, will proceed fr this sta o/a 16 Dec 1944 to 10th Air Depot reporting upon arrival to the Maintenance Officer for the purpose of picking up aircraft. Upon completion of this temp dy, O will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT, mil acft or rail. 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: TWX 10ADG D85U.

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------|----|
| 1st Lt ROBERT H. HOWIE | 0696202 | AC |
| 2d Lt RICHARD C. COX | 0702770 | AC |
| 2d Lt KENNETH L. WILCOX | 0887225 | AC |

2. Major JAMES R. WERNLI, 0986975, AC, is appointed Investigating Officer to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of Cpl Michael T. Gaydos, 33666587, 997th Ftr Sq, which occurred on 15 December 1944. Complete report of investigation on WD AGO Form 51 will be submitted to this Hq in quintuplicate.

3. The following named officers are granted two (2) days operational leave, will proceed o/a 17 Dec 1944 to Paris, France, reporting upon arrival to Ninth Air Force Liaison Officer, American Express Building, Auber and Scribe. Upon completion of this leave O's will report to 10th Air Depot for return transportation to their proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT, mil acft or rail. 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: Ltr, IX TAC, file 210.711 x 220.711, subj: "Combat Crew Leave," dated 28 Nov 1944.

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------|----------------|
| 1st Lt ROBERT H. HOWIE | 0696202 | AC (In charge) |
| 2d Lt RICHARD C. COX | 0702770 | AC |
| 2d Lt KENNETH L. WILCOX | 0887225 | AC |

4. 1st Lt GERALD J. GRACE, 0702793, AC, is placed on temp dy for a period of three (3) days, will proceed fr this sta o/a 16 Dec 1944 to Shimay Rocket Range on matters pertaining to this command. TDN by MT. Upon completion of this TD, O will ret to proper sta and orgn. 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: VOCC 70th Ftr Wg.

5. The VOCC 368th Ftr Gp of 12 Dec 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 202, Hq IX TAC, dtd 29 Nov 1944, pfc (405) Henry L. Stark, 37329174, is further asgd Hq 368th Ftr Gp."

(Travel directed is pursuant to auth contained in Ltr, Hq European T of Opns US Army, file 300.4, MEM-GA. 25 October 1944)

By order of Lt Col FEREGO:

OFFICIAL:

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

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

3

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HEADQUARTERS
366TH FIGHTER GROUP

APO 595, U. S. Army
17 December 1944

SPECIAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 149)

1. Par 6, SO 147, this Hq, cs, pertaining to investigation of Courts-Martial is rescinded.

2. The VOCC 366th Ftr Gr of 14 Dec 1944, exigencies which prevented the issuance of advance orders are hereby confirmed and made of record.

Capt HAROLD J. KESSLER, 0561110, AG, is appointed Investigating Officer to investigate Courts-Martial charges against Pfc Fred C. Centolella, 32849728, 396th Fighter Squadron. Complete report of investigation on WD AGO Form 120 will be submitted to this Hq in triplicate.

3. Capt CARLOS M. TALBOTT, 025797, AG, is placed on temp dy for a period of approx one (1) day, will proceed fr this sta o/a 22 Dec 1944 to AG, USTAFF, APO 636 reporting before 1500 hours, 22 Dec 1944 to Col Scherer thereat. TDN by MT, mil acft or rail. 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: TWX IX TAC D420C, 17 Dec 1944.

4. Capt CARLOS M. TALBOTT, 025797, LC, is granted two (2) days opr Lv, will proceed o/a 23 Dec 1944 to Paris, France, reporting upon arrival to Ninth Air Force Liaison Officer, American Express Building, Librer and Scribe. Upon completion of this lv 0 will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT, mil acft or rail. 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: Ltr, IX TAC, file 210.711 x 220.711, subj: "Combat Crew Leave," dated 28 Nov 1944.

5. Under the provisions of AR 615-5, 30 June 1944 and upon the recommendation of his Orgn Comdr, Pfc (861) Alvin Castle, 35658021, Hq 366th Ftr Gr, atchd 396th Ftr Sq, is reduced to the gr of Pvt for misconduct.

6. Under the provisions of AR 615-5, 30 June 1944 and upon the recommendation of his Orgn Comdr, Cpl (960) Cloghan M. Heffner, 34432689, 397th Ftr Sq is reduced to the gr of Pvt for misconduct.

7. Having been asgd this orgn per par 17, SO 344, Hq Ninth Air Force, ctd 9 Dec 1944, 1st Lt (4450) EDGAR G. TCHIRKOW, 01544056, MAC, is further asgd Hq 366th Ftr Gr.

(Travel directed is pursuant to auth contained in Ltr, Hq European T of Opns US Army, file 300.4, MFM-GA, 25 October 1944)

By order of Lt Col PEREGO:

OFFICIAL:

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

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

RESTRICTED

R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

APO E5, U. S. Army
23 December 1944

SPECIAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 151)

1. The following named officers are placed on temp dy for an indefinite period, will proceed fr this sta o/a 23 December 1944 to Football Advance reporting upon arrival to Lt Col Morgan for the purpose of acting as Air Support Party. Upon completion of this temp dy, O's will ret to proper sta and orgn, TIN by MT, mil acft or rail. 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: VOCC IX TAC.

1st Lt JOSEPH S. NOLAN 0802337 AC
1st Lt DAVID M. SHARP 0620093 AC

2. The following named officers are appointed Class "A" Finance Agents to Major JOHN P. VOLIVA, ED, for Officers' Vouchers and enlisted men's payroll for the month of December for units as indicated:

| | | | |
|----------------------------|----------|-----|----------------------------------|
| 1st Lt JOHN F. REGAN | 0569887 | AC | Hq 368th Fighter Group |
| 1st Lt GEORGE J. CUBURN JR | 0863375 | AC | 395th Fighter Squadron |
| Capt MEREDITH W. HENRY | 0751588 | AC | 396th Fighter Squadron |
| 1st Lt GEORGE E. GINN | 0863973 | AC | 397th Fighter Squadron |
| 1st Lt WILLIAM R. RAMSAY | 0874008 | AC | 21st Weather Sq Det "R" |
| 1st Lt WILLIAM R. RAMSAY | 0874008 | AC | 40th Mobile Com Sq Det "R" |
| 1st Lt LEO N. CULKIN | 01555443 | CMP | 1233rd M P Co (Avn) Less Det "A" |
| 1st Lt HIRAM D. BLACK | 01558233 | ORD | 45th Ord Bomb Disposal Sq |
| 2d Lt ROBERT L. STARBUCK | 01108342 | CE | 2137th Engr (Avn) P/F Platoon |
| Capt WILLBUR F. SAUL | 0314264 | AC | Hq & Hq Sq, 84th Service Group |
| Capt ROBERT S. GRUNT | 01634850 | SC | 1074th Signal Co Less Det "A" |
| Capt CHARLES D. HILLER | 0422540 | AC | 29th MR&R Sq (Less Det "A") |
| 1st Lt JOHN S. DRYSCOLL | 01593547 | QMG | 382nd Air Service Squadron |
| 1st Lt JAMES W. WOODS | 0163689 | SC | 1074th Signal Co (Det "B") |
| 1st Lt JOHN P. BANYON | 01555340 | ORD | 1814th Ord S&M Co (Avn) |
| 1st Lt PAUL M. BORGES | 01581039 | QMG | 1221st QM Co Sv Gp (Avn) Det "A" |
| 1st Lt DALLAS D. MISUP | 01577055 | QMG | 2499th QM Trk Co Avn (Det A) |
| 1st Lt SAMUEL KUSENER | 0856309 | AC | 29th MR&R Sq Det "A" |

3. Capt STANLEY C. JOHNSON JR, 0583430, AC, is appointed Investigating Officer to investigate Courts-Martial charges against P/O John C. Bauer, T223157, AC, 397th Fighter Squadron. Complete report of Investigation on WD AGO Form 120 will be submitted to this Hq in triplicate.

(Travel directed in pursuant to auth contained in 1st Ind, Hq, U S Strategic Air Force in Europe, to Ltr, Hq, European T of Opns USA, file 300.4 KPM, 22 Nov 44)

By order of Lt Col PEREGO:

OFFICIAL:

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

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

R E S T R I C T E D