

GROUP 1 - EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC DOWNGRADING AND DECLASSIFICATION

GP-368-W
JAN 1945

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GP-368-W (11)
JAN, 1945

HISTORICAL DATA

HEADQUARTERS HISTORY
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

JANUARY 1945

HISTORICAL OFFICER
RECORDER
TYPIST

LT. WILLIAM S. ELAGEN
S/SGT. CLARENCE A. GLASRU
PFC. WILBERT R. AHOMAN

MICROFILMED

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HISTORICAL REPORT
1 JANUARY TO 31 JANUARY 1945

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 36th Fighter Group Headquarters, for the month of January 1 to 31, 1945.

1. ORGANIZATION

No Change.

2. STRENGTH AS OF 31 JANUARY 1945

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

<u>Assigned Personnel</u>	<u>Authorized Personnel</u>
Officers -----206	Officers -----181
Enlisted Men ----813	Enlisted Men ----826
1019	1007

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

Departed AIG 62, at Juvin-court, France, 5 January, for AIG Y-24, 1 1/2 miles SE of Metz, France, arriving 5 January 1945.

4. LOSSES IN ACTION:

Nil (For Group Headquarters)

5. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

Nil

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 RECORD OF EVENTS
 PAGE ONE

1 January 1945

We started out the New Year right today: we were operational, we were moving (toward Berlin), and we had made up our minds that the war wasn't over yet. Our New Years Eve celebrations were pretty subdued at Juvincourt, so we got up without headaches; and we were firmly convinced that our living and working quarters would improve greatly in a couple of days, as soon as we could reach our new strip Y-34.

But hardly had our air echelon left for Metz, this morning, when we heard rather disquieting news of our new base. Fifteen ME109's came in suddenly at such level with almost no warning and in 15 minutes of strafing destroyed 20 T-47's, sent 11 more to the Service Team for repairs, and inflicted some damage on a number of others. Two squadrons had already gone out on missions and attempts to call them back were fruitless. Our ack-ack knocked down 4 Meinies. Fourteen men were slightly injured in the attack and 4 others seriously wounded.

That news made quite a stir in Juvincourt, of course, and will hold up our moving for several days, at least until the extent of the damage at Metz can be accurately estimated. Lt. Col. Farrell, who was at Strip Y-34 when the attack came, says that it seemed as if all hell had broken loose for a while, with continual strafing passes, flak all over, and burning planes and resultant exploding of bombs and munitions.

It was just by the time our air echelon reached Metz, and the convoy pulled into our living quarters area on the outskirts of the city. The boys unloaded their personal belongings, got some chow, and settled down for the night. Our new home turned out to be a huge stone building which we will share with the 395th. The whole area is said to be a former French army cavalry school, and the Nazis used it as an OSS setup of some kind. Certainly, they left plenty of German signs and SS symbols, more than we have ever found; for the enemy considered this German soil, the last province of Lothringen (Lorraine).

The 368th Group started out the year by dispatching 70 planes from Strip A-60. The six squadron missions conducted armed recce over the Trier-Cochem-Ginzig area, working with Ripsaw III or finding their own targets. Though the visibility was good, the group found little enemy activity in the recce area. But each squadron made the best possible of its bombs, and the destruction record for the day was good. Besides strafing when suitable targets were found, the group dropped 126 bombs and fired 14 rockets. Four tanks were destroyed and 3 damaged; 146 V/W's were destroyed and 24 damaged; one locomotive and 57 freight cars were destroyed and 20 cars were damaged. A marshalling yard at Trier was beaten up, with fires started and a rordhouse and other buildings destroyed. At other points RR tracks were cut in a dozen places, a pair of mobile guns were hit, and 6-8 enemy soldiers were killed or wounded.

Though the Luftwaffe sent out 300 planes today to attack Allied airfields, our pilots encountered no enemy planes and sustained no flak damage.

2 January 1945

Word came from Metz today that our planes will move to Strip Y-34 on Thursday, January 4. So we continued to "disassemble" our headquarters setup at Juvincourt, loaded them (until 2200 hours), and then drew guard duty on the convoy which is

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2 January 1945 (cont'd)

due to leave in the morning.

At Metz the air echelon, who had slept their first night in our new living quarters, took their trucks out to Strip Y-34 for a look at the designated headquarters area. They were pleasantly surprised by not having to put up any tents; for the first time since we left England all our offices were moved into buildings. The Germans had conveniently left us a pair of long, low, temporary wooden buildings. All sections except S-4, Inspection, and part of Communications moved into one of the buildings, which was intact. The other structure had several rooms with their roofs bashed in, but most of it could be used. So the air echelon unloaded trucks, moved in, and were soon set up to operate.

Today's operations were actually a continuation of yesterday's, but only half as many planes were able to fly the Trier-Cochem-Sinzig recce area today. The 396th attacked rolling stock just north of Trier. Thirty-one cars were destroyed and 20 damaged, with many of the cars exploding and burning--and the tracks cut. Ripsaw III had a target for the 397th, and they dropped 15 bombs on the M/T southwest of St. Vith. Good hits were scored on the M/Y, with 13 cars destroyed and 12 damaged, and a power house was damaged. The squadron then attacked tanks, other armored vehicles, and M/T's south of St. Vith, with rockets and strafing. The destroyed-damaged score was 7-5 on tanks and 8-1 on M/T's and other vehicles. Ripsaw III also vectored the 395th to targets in the Trier area. They destroyed 9 M/T's and 7 freight cars, besides damaging 9 more cars, cutting tracks, and liquidating 5 Nazis.

3 January 1945

Our cold weather broke today; but though it was much warmer, it wasn't flying weather and our planes were grounded today. At Juvincourt we slipped around in mud and slush as we continued to break camp for the move to Metz.

The air echelon at Strip Y-34 found life much easier than on any previous move. With no tents to put up, their work was greatly simplified, though of course there was plenty of cleaning up to do. They began to wonder if the citizens of Metz were on our side or not. Part of it may have been imagination, but the people didn't seem to warm up very fast; the parts of the city which weren't beaten up were largely closed up. And the kids have the habit of clobbering passing vehicles with snowballs, so far there have been no rocks in the snowballs, so maybe the kids are just being playful. But German signs are more common than French, some of the people look and talk German, and the Heinies consider Metz to be part of the Fatherland. So we are not surprised that a strict 8 p.m. curfew is enforced, the guards are quick on the trigger, and the blackout has to be pretty complete, even for vehicles. Furthermore, the forests and foxholes around the city are still full of Germans--good Germans--dead Germans.

4 January 1945

This was supposed to be moving day for our planes from Strip A-68 to Strip Y-34, but we had both rain and snow to add to the mud at Juvincourt and our planes were grounded all day. The weatherman said we might make it tomorrow, however, so we made all possible last minute preparations for a move.

At Metz our setup was ready for the move--and waiting for the planes.

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4 January 1945 (cont'd)

The first special orders of the New Year, dated 1 January 1945, listed our first PW promotions in many months: 2 of our privates were made privates first class.

Supporting Document #1, Special Orders #1.

5 January 1945

Our planes made the jump today, taking off on 3 squadron missions from Strip A-68 and landing at Strip Y-34 after the completion of their missions. The assignment for the 396th was to support units of the XX Corps and to conduct an armed recon in the Trier-Saarbrücken area. Turpentine directed the squadron to bomb a pair of bridges, but the weather blotted out the target. A 9/10 coverage over the area and a strong NE wind were responsible for generally poor results, though the bombs dropped on a railroad between Trier and Saarbrücken damaged 3 cars and cut the tracks.

The 397th and 395th conducted armed recones over Bithurg-Trier-Homburg-Waiserlautern and had excellent results despite the weather. The 397th dropped 16 bombs on a 40-car train at Welschbillig, near Trier. The bombing was good, but results are listed NFO because of the weather. The 395th hit an airfield at Eiblis near Worms, which was believed to have been recently used. A hangar was seen to be hit. Eight more bombs were dropped on another active airfield at Engleheim, near Mainz, and again a building was hit.

6 January 1945

We were non-operative today because of the weather, and we have plenty of time to set up our normal working layout at Strip Y-34. Both the S-2 and S-3 trailers pulled in last night about 3:30 pm., without any mishap on the way, even though the steep, slippery hills on the last half of the journey had to be negotiated in the dark. Although several trucks belonging to different parts of the group had accidents on the dangerous roads from Reims to Metz, headquarters escaped unscathed this time. The only mishap occurred yesterday when "Lenny", the S-2 jeep, developed bearing trouble at Sulgpes, about 30 miles this side of Reims. T/Sgt Reese and Sgt. London laid over for the night with a paratroop outfit and pulled in just after noon today.

With the additional personnel and equipment which came in yesterday, we are now nearly completely set up. All that's left at Juvincourt now is some non-essential equipment (non-essential when we don't live in tents), and a rear-guard cleanup contingent. At Metz, even the PX was functioning, and we felt very much at home.

7 January 1945

We were non-operative again today because of the weather. The day was marked chiefly by the worst accident we have had. In the explosion of a German mine in the 395th area, T/Sgt. Joseph Michel and T/5 Paul F. Tyler, both of the 45th Ordnance Bomb Disposal Squadron, were instantly killed, and flying fragments of the bombs injured several 395th men who were on duty in the area at the time. Cpl. Harold D. Farley lost an eye, and S/sgt William Demchuk was seriously injured by pieces of shrapnel which entered his thigh and abdomen. Lesser shrapnel injuries were suffered by 1st Lt. Ralph C. Huebert, Jr., who was hit in the shoulder, and S/ Sgts. Joseph J. Hanson and Charles H. Richards, who were both struck in the head by fragments of the mine. Supporting Document #2, Special Orders #3.

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PAGE FOUR8 January 1945

There was plenty of snow at Metz when we arrived here, but we got more last night and it was still snowing today. For the third straight day we were non-operative. The brightest spot of the day was an issue of 11 long-sleeved, slipover sweaters which made us feel warmer immediately.

9 January 1945

Our non-operative string was cut today, but just barely. The best we could do was a weather recon. Major Carbine and Captain Lane of the 397th flew the mission, vectored by Ripshaw III over Luxembourg and past our front lines. They found 10/10 coverage generally, sometimes down to the hilltops, and occasional snow. The only breaks were at Metz, so we did no more flying today.

More men and equipment came in from Strip A-68 today, nearly wiping-out our rear guard there.

10 January 1945

Though the weather was not so good today, either, we did get in 3 squadron missions for a total of 32 planes dispatched. The assignment was armed recon and support for the XI Corps--their controller being "Failfull". The 395th flew a recon, and spotted a lot of enemy activity around Prum and many vehicles heading eastward. They dropped all their bombs in that area, with only fair results; but the strafing beat up a good share of the German transport. Fifty-two M/T's and vehicles were destroyed and 9 vehicles and 10 freight cars were damaged, besides a road cut and several buildings destroyed.

The 396th had poor bombing results at Bettingen and Glnadorf, but destroyed 3 and damaged 5 M/T's near Wittlich. Failfull found a target for the 397th, a supply depot and storehouses at Reinsbach. Some of the buildings were hit and damaged. Strafing and rockets accounted for more damage in the same area: 15 M/T's were destroyed and 50 freight cars damaged, besides tracks cut in 2 places and fires started.

11 January 1945

We were non-operative again today and had to sit back and count our past laurels. Several weeks ago the Ninth Air Force publicity department asked for our nominations for the Ninth Air Force "best" in several departments. Today we found out that we had picked 3 men (out of 9) on the first team and 5 on the second string. The records are unofficial, of course, and apply only to men who are still on active service. 1st Lt. Henry B. Hamilton of the 397th was first in trucks with an estimated 200-300 destroyed; 1st Lt. Irving Ostow of the 396th was rated first in destroyed buildings, with an estimated 75; and 1st Lt. William J. Garry of the 395th was first in tanks with 36 destroyed and 12 damaged.

Pilots who had the second best records in the Ninth Air Force were 1st Lt. Oliver S. Hyerson of the 397th who destroyed an estimated 12 to 15 bridges, and Capt. Harry J. Lazar of the 395th, who destroyed an estimated 36 gun positions. Other second stringers from the 36th Group are: bombardier--Sgt. Samuel J. Simon of the 397th Squadron; cook--Sgt. John S. Scherzer of the 397th Squadron and M--170 Samuel Jodon of the 1293rd I.P. Company.

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11 January 1945 (cont'd)

Reports that T/Sgt Don Facka, 368th publicity man, was named the best liar in the ETO are unconfirmed.

Our cwi Rube Goldberg shower is reported to have run into trouble on the way from Reims, so to help the boys clean up a shower run was started today. A daily quota of men go by truck to a quartermaster-operated shower setup on the other side of Metz. An added incentive is that we can exchange socks and underwear--used for unisex--in the dressing room.

Supporting Document #3, Copy FRC Teletype

12 January 1945

It was snowing again at Metz today, and our planes stayed on the ground--even though we had some leaflets to drop. The Germans will have to remain mis-informed for at least another day.

Our AIC section changed personnel today. Pvt. Sidney B. Jacques, who has been with the group since May 11, 1944, has been transferred to the Adjutant General's office, and will leave for Paris in the morning. His replacement, who came in today, is Pvt. George A. Capieho.

Our weatherman, 1st Lt. Newton I. Steers, will also go to Paris in the morning to attend the Army Information-Education Staff School at the Site Universitaire for one week.

Supporting Document #4, Special Orders #4.

13 January 1945

Today we really bounced back into the show, with 76 planes dispatched. Sixty-eight planes had the same assignment: armed recce by squadrons over Bitburg, Saarbrücken, and Guchen and several targets to attack in that area. The 396th had fair results with their bombing and strafing attacks on RR cars, M/Ts, and other vehicles near Trier. The 397th carried out the same type of attacks at Neuhirchen, but their results were more spectacular. Eight bombs dropped on a M/Y evidently hit an ammunition dump, because a terrific explosion followed with smoke rising to 5 or 6000 feet. The pilots, who felt the explosion in the air and thought at first it was flak coming up, reported that the explosion was the most violent they had ever observed. Tracks were also cut in at least 2 places and an embankment was damaged. 1st Lt. William C. Olden, who was leading the mission, ran into too much flak at Homburg and was forced to belly-land his plane in enemy territory, 4 miles southwest of Zweibrücken. He was seen to run about 30 yards from his plane and then return to it. He is listed MIA.

The 395th tried to work with Ripsaw V but got incorrect headings and had to go after targets on their own. They picked on the M/Y at Siegburg, southeast of Köln, and generally clobbered it. Two roundhouses were well hit, the tracks in the center of the M/Y were cut in at least 4 places, besides widespread damage to other buildings and rolling stock. The 396th attacked Bitburg, Guisdorf, and another town in the same vicinity with fair to good results, despite some weather difficulties. The 397th also had only fair results in attacks on buildings of a storage depot at Rodalbin, east of Zweibrücken. The 395th, getting no

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13 January 1945 (cont.)

targets from Ripsaw, conducted an armed recon east of Trum and caused considerable damage by bombing and strafing. Five horse-drawn guns and their personnel were destroyed and 25-30 vehicles of various types were destroyed or damaged. F/O John W. Russel belly-landed his flak-damaged plane in friendly territory, and though slightly wounded returned to the base. The total destroyed-damaged score for the day was: tanks 0-1, and freight cars 46-11.

We also had 2 other missions today. Four P-47's of the 395th escorted a B-17 on a calibration mission over Verdun, Liege, Namur, Dinant, and St. Vith. Nothing happened--that our pilots could see, at least. Four more P-47's of the 396th flew over what was left of the German break-through area and distributed leaflets, dropping 7 leaflet bombs each at 4 places.

There were two other developments today, one good and one bad. Many of us were suffering from what we call the GI's, some developing into hospital cases. The medics were unable to determine the cause, for the ailment was widespread, the 365th Group being also affected. On the brighter side, days off will start next Monday, January 15, with passes to Metz from 0800 to 2000 hours.

14 January 1945

Perhaps we had a day such as this coming, according to the law of averages. Perhaps we had been too lucky thus far to know how to take such losses, for our job since the group was activated has been to hand it out and not to take it. But today, while 10 planes of the 397th squadron were well inside Germany, between Karlsruhe and Mannheim, they were bounced by 50 plus ME109's and FW190's. The attack came without warning from the controller while one flight was down strafing RR cars, believed to be carrying troops. Though our planes had already successfully bombed their assigned target, the MT depot at St. Ingbert, they never had a chance in the uneven encounter. Lt Bauer shot down two FW190's, which were seen to crash, and the returning pilots think Lt. Huche may have destroyed another E/A. But the full story of that encounter we may never know. Listed MIA are 6 of our pilots: Major Richard E. Leary, who lead the mission, 1st Lts. Milton S. Bender and Roland C. Potter, and 2nd Lts. Charles J. Huche, Cyril J. Konesny, and James E. Polen. Lt. Potter was heard to say that his a/c was in danger and Lt. Polen reported that he might have to bail out. No other information is available.

The 395th came close to the same kind of trouble later in the day. After bombing an M/T park at Bad Kreuznach and destroying 5 buildings there, they also bombed a M/T at Alzen, scoring 3 direct hits; and by 15 minutes of strafing they destroyed a roundhouse, 5 locomotives, 8 cars, and damaged 7 cars. Still not satisfied, the squadron then strafed and destroyed 6 passenger cars and 4 box cars and damaged a locomotive in the same area. Then seeing 12 ME109's near Mainz, the 395th circled to attack but the enemy planes broke off eastward. About 10 miles NW of Kaiserlautern they spotted 40 to 60 enemy planes. While two flights circled to attack, 3 P-47's made a fast pass through the enemy formations and each pilot obliterated one ME109 (Lts. William Garry, Nealy Riemann, and L.P. Marsch). This seemed to discourage the rest of the Jerries and they took off, ending the encounter.

In all, 75 planes were dispatched today, including 4 Alert Patrol flights of 4 planes each, but the other missions were comparatively uneventful.

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14 January 1945 (cont'd)

On two missions the squadrons jettisoned their bombs when the controller called in bandits, but then failed to find any enemy planes. The day's destroyed-damaged total was: tanks 0-1, M/T's and other vehicles 11-2, locomotives 6-1, freight cars 27-7, B/A 5-0-0. In addition to other damage already listed, a supply dump was bombed, barracks were hit, and other miscellaneous damage was caused (including much that couldn't be evaluated).

There was one mission today which was in a class by itself. The 397th sent out 8 planes to support the III Corps in the northern tip of Luxembourg, and to work with a controller with the exotic name of "Finkpig". But our new friend had no targets so the squadron found their own, an assortment of M/T's, tanks, and other vehicles--starting fires, damaging 2 tanks, and destroying 11 of the other vehicles. A lone, strange free-lance P-47 bombed and strafed along with the squadron and then took off again. One plane was damaged by flak and crash-landed on its return to the base. The pilot was not injured.

15 January 1945

Slightly-three sorties were flown today, despite very uncertain weather conditions which finally forced the last squadron up to return to the base with high bombs at 1617 hours. Ripsaw V instructed the last 2 squadrons not to go more than 20 minutes from the base because of the weather conditions. But the other squadron mission assigned targets with excellent results. Despite low coverage which made bombing more difficult and observation of results impossible at times.

The 395th started the day right by hitting a three-span road bridge over the Moselle northeast of Trier. They got 3 direct hits on the center span, knocking it out, and also hit the northern approach to the bridge--and only 4 bombs were dropped on the bridge! The 26 bombs left were dropped on a supply depot at Mayen, with a good dispersal of bombs and 5 buildings hit. That bridge-blasting job was a rather impressive affair and made the Stars and Stripes for 21 January. What happened was that Capt. Caldwell, who was leading the squadron, turned over the mission to another pilot when fumes in his cockpit made him ill. As he was returning to Metz with his wingman, they attacked the bridge instead of returning their bombs to the base. The Stars and Stripes account will be found in a supporting document.

The 396th hit the second target, an ammunition depot at Ellweiler, between Trier and Homburg. Though the bombing was excellent, with good hits in the center of the dump, no fires were observed and the pilots believe the depot to be inactive. The 397th found nothing inactive about the M/Y at Neustadt and their excellent placement of 20 bombs produced plenty of smoke and fire. Seventy cars were hit, about half destroyed and the rest damaged. Ripsaw V twice tried to vector the second 395th mission to tanks around Trier, but no tanks were to be found. The squadron then dropped their 24 bombs on the M/Y at Merichutte, east of Trier. Very good bombing cut the track in 3 places, destroyed the station, destroyed or damaged 26 freight cars, and caused a large explosion along the RR north of the town. Strafing caused more damage in the same general area.

The 396th, who were instructed to stay close to the base because of weather conditions, dropped 24 bombs on a RR siding at Schopp, south of Kaiserlautern. The bombing was good, 12 cars being destroyed, tracks cut in 2 places, and 8 buildings hit. The 397th brought their bombs back when the solid overcast blotted out all possible targets. Only 3 M/T's were destroyed today and 1 damaged, but the freight car toll was 55-65 and one locomotive was destroyed and 3 second damaged.

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15 January 1945 (cont'd)

Fifteen P-47's were dispatched on 4 Alert Patrol missions, providing a continuous patrol over the airfield from first to last light. Though Ripsaw twice called in bogies, none could be found and the missions were entirely uneventful.

Passes to Metz started today, but the boys returned with discouraging reports on "our" city. The few stores and cafes which are open have very little to sell, the girls are often "inhospitable", and the city's "attractions" are limited to a Red Cross Club and a couple of movie theaters.

Eight more of our "old" pilots are returning to the states; some of them will return to the group, and others will be re-assigned after their 30-day leaves. Since a number of "wheels" are included in the group, two of the squadrons are undergoing changes of command. In the 395th Capt. Mazar takes over as CO, Capt. Jensen becomes Operations Officer, and Lt. Wayland is Asst. Ops. Officer. In the 396th, Capt. Henry is now Operations Officer and Lt. Lowie Asst. Ops.; in the 397th Capt. Krause is Operations Officer and Lt. Frisbie Asst. Ops. Names of the pilots who are going home will be found in Supporting Document #6.

Supporting Document #5, Extract from Stars and Stripes (Jan. 21, 1945)
Supporting Document #6, Extract - XIX TAC Special Orders #4.

16 January 1945

Today's operations were much like yesterday's: 9 planes flew the continuous patrol over the airfield on 4 missions--and saw nothing; 72 more planes took the air on 6 squadron missions to fly recce over Trier-Homburg-Kaiserslautern; the M/T score was 9-3 and freight cars 100-55. All of the armed recce missions except the first, flown by the 396th, attacked M/Y's. That first mission cut tracks in 2 places south of Koblenz, clobbered M/T's in several places, and attacked 14 barracks in the same area; 4 of the barracks buildings, which showed signs of activity, were destroyed by direct hits.

The 397th hit the M/Y's at Neustadt and Enkenbach (near Kaiserslautern), destroying 2 warehouses and cutting the tracks in 2 places at Neustadt and destroying 15 cars, blasting several buildings (which exploded), and cutting tracks in 4 places at Enkenbach. The 395th also hit two M/Y's, both near Bad Kreuznach. The tracks were cut in at least 4 places at each point, 40 RR cars were destroyed and 15 damaged, and at least one building destroyed. On their second mission the 396th hit a variety of targets between Trier and Koblenz, destroying or damaging M/T's and RR cars, destroying 2 barracks and damaging 2 near Simmern, and clobbering 10 cars in the M/Y at that point.

The 397th took another crack at the Neustadt M/Y, and their 24 bombs destroyed 43 RR cars and started 2 large fires. Then, without warning from the controller (Ripsaw I), 40 FW190's and 20 ME109's jumped the squadron from 10,000 feet, coming out of the sun. In a brief engagement two planes crashed into the ground--one ME109 and one P-47. 2nd Lt. James E. Hutcherson, who is credited with shooting down the enemy plane, is listed MIA. His plane was hit in the wing and crashed, and the pilot was not seen to bail out. Two other P-47's were damaged during the encounter. On the last mission the 395th destroyed a choke point in a M/Y 12 miles north of Neunkirchen and also bombed NE of Saarbrücken--NRO. The last 12 bombs were jettisoned when Ripsaw I called in a fight taking place; but the fight was over when the squadron reached the area, and no enemy a/c could be found.

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17 January 1945

The weather kept us on the ground again today after a 4-day operational string. Most of our attention was centered on the Russians, who announced a new large-scale offensive in Poland. Judging from intelligence reports, mostly from German sources, the Soviets were guilty of understatement when they said "large-scale offensive."

18 January 1945

Again we were non-operative and could do no more than cheer the Russians on. By this time the Soviet armies had taken both Warsaw and Cracow and were streaming across Poland.

19 January 1945

Thirty-six planes got off today on 3 squadron missions to support the 4th Infantry Division and conduct armed recon over the St. Vith-Eichternach areas. The 397th contacted the controller, Organ; and when they could not locate the targets assigned, they conducted an armed recon to the Trier area. Finding a 10/10 underground at 3500 to 6000 feet, the squadron returned all bombs to the base. But the 399th, who were vectored by Ripsaw V, spotted a train 2 miles long northwest of Kaiserslautern. Twenty-two bombs were dropped and at least 3 direct hits were scored, cutting the tracks in that many places besides destroying 25 and damaging 25 cars. The train, which appeared to be loaded with supplies, was also strafed. One F-47 dropped 2 bombs on the town of Wolfstein, destroying a 2-story building. When Organ had no target for the 396th, that squadron also found 2 long trains of at least 200 cars (including oil cars), in the same area. Four hits were scored by the 22 bombs dropped, 25 cars being destroyed and 2 large fires left burning. Darkness was closing in so no strafing was done.

We acquired 6 new pilots, all 2nd Lieutenants, and 2 were assigned to each squadron.

Supporting document #7, Special Order #6.

20 January 1945

About all we can report today is a snowstorm. We were non-operational--and the Russians are inside Germany proper in Silesia, as well as at 2 points in East Russia.

21 January 1945

Again we were non-operational. The Russians had taken Tilsit and were 100 miles west of Warsaw. On Luzon our troops were 35 miles inland on the road to Manila and had virtually cut the island's north-south communications.

22 January 1945

We got back into the fight with a vengeance today and rang up some kind of a record even in our specialty of cllobbering enemy vehicles. Six squadron mission destroyed 415 M/T's and other vehicles, damaged 177, destroyed 4 tanks and damaged 1, and destroyed 3 freight cars. In addition, at least 150 German troops were killed by strafing, a few buildings hit, and at least 6 guns destroyed.

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22 January 1945 (cont'd)

Besides the 13 P-47's sent out on 4 continuous patrol missions (all uneventful), 67 planes were dispatched on 6 squadron missions to support the 4th Infantry Division at one hour intervals and to conduct armed recesses over Vianden, Trier, and Wittlich. That was the operations assignment for today, but a more urgent matter came up early in the day, and we worked on it all day with the spectacular results already mentioned. We discovered later that over 2700 vehicles were destroyed or damaged by fighter-bombers today, besides 127 tanks and over 1000 freight cars. The KIA total for the day was 1743 motor transport, tanks, and armored vehicles destroyed or damaged--and our share of that was 600!

The full story on the day didn't unravel until later, but the main facts are now pretty well established. The Germans, evidently counting on plenty of cloud coverage, tried to pull off a mass exodus from their now almost-extinct bulge. But shortly after daybreak a cub spotted their long convoys of vehicles lined up bumper to bumper in the Vianden area. As the weather began to clear, the planes which the Cub's information had summoned to the "party" began to work over their fat target. The 395th squadron got there first at about 1000 hours, after the controller "Flabby" had directed them to a P-51 squadron--who, in turn, led our P-47's to the enemy vehicles. The 395th and the P-51's then called the 396th to get in on the massacre--and from then until the Jerry vehicles caught hell without letup. The P-51's continued to shepherd dive-bombers all day long, seeking out the enemy and leading other planes to them.

While the 396th was attacking the convoy on our second mission of the day, the medium bombers knocked out a road bridge 5 miles north of Vianden--and nearly bombed our planes on the wing! That made the already hopeless situation of the Heinies even worse and piled up more German vehicles for later missions to work on. Those missions made the most the situation, as the day's score indicates. In the debit side of the ledger, the Group had 14 w/c damaged by flak; one pilot is listed MIA and another SIA. 1st Lt. Robert D. Cassidy of the 397th belly-landed his flak-damaged P-47 near the front lines 3 or 4 miles NW of Vianden and is listed MIA. 2nd Lt. Walter W. Scott of the 395th was unable to get his wheels down because of flak damage, and when he landed his P-47 at Strip Y-24, the plane crashed into a parked P-24, severely injuring the pilot. 2nd Lt. William G. Dixon of the 396th bellied his plane in south of Luxembourg but returned to the base without injury.

Another incident of the day deserves recording. On the first mission Lt. Garry of the 395th spotted about 100 Jerries walking down a road; and as he prepared to attack, half of the Germans dispersed and sought cover. "The others though they could outrun me and started down the road," Lt. Garry reported, "so I said 'Remember Malmedy!' and let them have it." That accounted for 50 of the 150 Germans that were claimed "destroyed" today.

The day's work, which even came to the notice of Gen. Arnold, drew a commendation from Brig. Gen. Heyland, CO of XIX TAC. A copy will be found as a supporting document.

Supporting Document #8, Copy of Letter, from Hq. XIX TAC (24 Jan 45)

SECRET

SECRET
PAGE ELEVEN23 January 1945

Today we went back to the job which we couldn't finish yesterday, but we got only a half day's work done when the weather stopped us shortly after noon. Thirty-two planes got into the air on 3 squadron missions, though the 397th had only 8 planes left which would fly. The missions went off much the same as yesterday, but since the game was more scarce the totals were more modest: 6-0 on tanks, 109-44 on M/T's and vehicles, 4-4 on buildings, and 10-0 on AA guns. Eleven of our 32 planes were damaged by flak, but no pilots were injured. The 397th had only 4 planes ready for the afternoon's missions--which never came off, however.

24 January 1945

Though we had to clear the snow off the runways before our planes could take off, the 395th and 396th each flew a squadron mission today. The assignment was support for the 4th Infantry Division and to conduct reces over Trier-Vianden-Bitburg-Wittlich. The 395th, working south of St. Vith, destroyed 9 and damaged 11 m/T's and destroyed 3 light AA guns; but probably even better results could not be observed. Twenty-four bombs were dropped on a concentration of tanks and personnel, scoring at least 4 direct hits and starting a large fire in a wooded area--which prevented any careful evaluation of results. The 396th, working with "Organ" dropped 22 bombs on a concentration of 75 M/T's and a fuel dump just north of St. Vith. The bombing was good, a large gas fire resulting and 20 M/T's being destroyed. A large van was destroyed by strafing east of Trier.

Back at our base we had laundry trouble. Some of it finally came back, after more than 2 weeks, but it was all mixed together--a whole room full! From now on most of us will be wearing someone else's clothes.

25 January 1945

We were non-operational today so we gave most of our attention to the Russians again. The Red Army was 4 miles from Breslau, held a 100-mile front inside Silesia, were threatening to cut off East Prussia, and were 125 miles from Berlin. There were rumors that some of our EM might get back to the states on short leaves and 2 crew chiefs have been picked to "work their way" back on a hospital ship, get 10 days at home, and then come back to us.

26 January 1945

Three squadron missions (29 sorties) were flown today on the assignment "to cooperate with the 4th Infantry Division" and to "conduct armed reces over Trier, Vianden, Baden, Bitburg, and Wittlich areas." But the weather made some major changes in our plans: the first two missions had to be recalled and the third bombed through the overcast. That did not mean that our efforts were wasted, however.

The 396th was vectored by Ripsaw V to "Pulpit" first and then to "Organ". Both controllers had targets--but both were covered by a 10/10 overcast. On being recalled from the target area the squadron picked their own target and dumped their bombs on a town (believed to be Mustert) and bridge northeast of Trier. The bridge was cut in two and a direct hit damaged one end of the bridge. Two got hits were observed in the town and a fire was left burning. The 395th, also

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PAGE TWELVE

26 January 1945 (cont'd)

recalled from the target area by Ripsaw V, dropped their bombs on a variety of targets about 30 miles northeast of Trier. A bridge was badly damaged, a M/Y hit, 6 freight cars hit and 2 damaged, large supply boxes blown up, and tracks cut. Bombing was generally good. The 397th, vectored by Ripsaw III, bombed through the overcast near Birkenfeld--NRO.

In two other ways this was a big day for the 368th Fighter Group: 48 hour passes to Paris were arranged and we were informed that the Group has been awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for our pilots' work in blasting nearly 500 enemy vehicles on 3 September 1944, and aiding the Ground Forces in disrupting and then trapping large enemy forces around Mons. A copy of the citation itself and a IX Air Force press release on the G's activities are attached as supporting documents.

Supporting Document #9, Copy-Extract- Ninth Air Force General Orders #14.
Supporting Document #10, Copy-Ninth Air Force Release #137.

27 January 1945

We were non-operational today, but the first 2 Group representatives (and 8 more from the squadrons and attached units), took off for Paris. They are going by truck to Nancy, by train from there to Paris, and then return the same way next Monday evening, 29 January. The only fly in the ointment is that some of us will have to sweat out our trips to Paris for a long time. At this rate, a couple of men (who had the worst possible luck in drawing slips out of a hat), will get their turns about August 1, 1945!

We acquired 5 new pilots today, all 2nd lieutenants. They were assigned to the squadrons, 3 going to the 397th. Also, 2 men from Group Headquarters and 15 from the 395th Squadron were awarded Motor Vehicle Driver Badges or Motor Vehicle Mechanic Badges. Sgt. Edward W. Nieman was awarded the former and Pvt. Victor J. Rabideau the latter.

Supporting Document #11, Special Orders #8.

28 January 1945

We were non-operational again today. The war seems to be doing all right without us, however, On our front the ex-Ardennes Bulge is beginning to bulge in the other direction and the Russians are 80 miles from Berlin.

29 January 1945

Forty-seven planes were dispatched on 2 group missions today to conduct armed recesses as far as Frankfurt. The first 17 planes concentrated on marshalling yards in the Kaiserslautern area with very good results. Three M/Ys were well hit, tracks cut in many places, choke points destroyed, one locomotive blasted, and a 20-30 score packed up on freight cars. The second mission of 30 planes worked over M/T's in the area east of St. Vith, destroying 45 and damaging 33. Again the bombing was generally good; roads were cut and enemy traffic was snarled in a number of places.

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PAGE THIRTEEN

29 January 1945 (cont'd)

The cold weather added to our operational troubles today, when a number of planes were held up or kept on the ground entirely by frozen brakes and a variety of other mechanical difficulties.

30 January 1945

This was our most wintry day in many respects; in addition to the snow and the cold, a wind began to pile up drifts which reminded us that winter can be a lot more rugged than anything we have seen yet. We were non-operational.

Cpl. Frank S. Stowell was appointed "Education Advisor for the 368th Fighter Group and Attached Units", and the postwar education plans continued to go forward. This evening S/Sgt C.A. Glasrud gave the first of a series of lectures on "Geopolitics" at the 395th mess hall. The competition of a USO Show "Swing Time", which featured 4 girls, was pretty rough and the turnout was not large. And Pfc. Lamont W. Rubin of Special Services got his 368th Group basketball tournament started. Sixteen teams are lined up, representing officers and enlisted men of Group, the squadrons, and attached units; it will be run of as a combination round-robin and elimination affair, 2 defeats knocking a team out.

Supporting Document #12, Special Orders #9.

31 January 1945

Though we were operational again on the last day of the month, the weather did an abrupt and promising about-face today. It was warm, the snow was melting fast, and we had a little rain instead of the usual snow. We were paid on time, and the Russians showed no signs of slowing down on the road to Berlin.

We had been operational 15 days out of the last 31; but we had hopes that February would be a better month and that front would soon see an attack to match the Russian drive. This month included what may be called our best day-- January 22, when we clobbered 600 vehicles. And it also included our hardest blow--on January 14th we lost 6 pilots over Germany. To us, at Group Headquarters, the loss of Major Leary was most keenly felt, for he had been our Group Operations Officer for many months. No man was ever more respected, admired, and genuinely liked by officers and men. His performances as a pilot were already legendary with us, and for a long time we had worried about his daring, his willingness to disregard the risks involved if the need for fighter support was great enough. He was not just a good pilot: he was a great pilot, a fine gentleman, and a supremely courageous soldier. Our best hope now is that he may be a prisoner of war, and that we may see him again--before too long.

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R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

APO 595, U. S. Army
1 January 1945

SPECIAL ORDERS)
NUMBER 1)

1. Under the provisions of AR 615-5, 30 June 1943, and upon the recommendation of his Orgn Comdr, Cpl (901) George R. Michelson, 37666729, 396th Fighter Sq, is reduced to the gr of Pvt for misconduct.

2. Under the provisions of AR 615-5, 30 June 1943, and upon the recommendation of their Orgn Comdr, the following named EM, Hq 368th Fighter Gp, are promoted to the gr of Private First Class (Temp):

- Pvt (405) Paul E. Garski 13136327
- Pvt (590) Erasmo Garza 38230265
- Pvt (345) Donald D. Horning 33757225
- Pvt (297) James W. Hudson 34652166
- Pvt (657) Isaac S. Hutchins 32363036
- Pvt (590) Herbert J. Marelo 14071072
- Pvt (345) Clyde H. McNew 34729963
- Pvt (405) Jack W. Walters 34277047

3. Under the provisions of AR 615-5, 30 June 1943, and upon the recommendation of their Orgn Comdr, the following named EM, 395th Ftr Sq, are promoted to grades as indicated:

TO BE STAFF SERGEANT (TEMP)

Sgt (685) John T. Buncek 32608229

TO BE SERGEANT (TEMP)

Cpl (060) Herbert L. Reed 6537125

TO BE CORPORAL (TEMP)

Pfc (809) John T. Connolly 31290431

4. Under the provisions of AR 615-5, 30 June 1943, and upon the recommendation of their Orgn Comdr, the following named EM, 396th Ftr Sq, are promoted to grades as indicated:

TO BE SERGEANT (TEMP)

- Cpl (911) Clarence N. Fowler 14133889
- Cpl (747) Raymond Stumper 35448036
- Cpl (747) John A. Upham 31966251
- Cpl (911) John C. Wood Jr 14053200

TO BE CORPORAL (TEMP)

- Pfc (747) Clarence Helo 38485265
- Pfc (932) Jack L. Mercer 38089240

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SO 1, Hq 368th Ftr Gp, 1 Jan 1945. Cont'd.

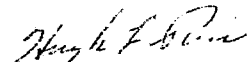
5. Under the provisions of AR 615-5, 30 June 1943, and upon the recommendation of his Org. Comdr, Cpl (932) Anthony J. Walczak, 32282257, 397 Ftr Sq, is promoted to the gr of Sergeant (temp).

(Travel dir is pursuant to auth contained in 1st Ind, Hq U S Strategic Air Forces in Europe, 2 Dec 44, to Ltr, Hq European TO, USA, file 300.4 MPM, 22 Nov 1944)

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

AFPO 141, U. S. ARMY
7 January 1945

SPECIAL ORDERS)
NUMBER 3)

1. Capt ERNEST R. FENDLETON, 01638240, AG, is appointed Investigating Office to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of T/Sgt Joseph Michel, 12061912, and T/5 Paul F. Tyler, 32305466, 45th Ord Bomb Disposal Sq (Sep), which occurred on 7 January 1945. Complete report of investigation on WD AGO Form 51 will be submitted to this Hq in quintuplicate.

2. So much of par 3, SO 152, this Hq, 29 Dec 1944, as reads, "are placed on temporary for approximately four (4) days," is amended to read, "are placed on temporary for an indefinite period." (Pertains to officers on TD at Villa Couble, Paris)

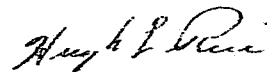
3. Having been asgd this organ per par 9, SO 6, HQ IX TAC, 6 Jan 1945, Major (1055) JOHN J. TUITE, 0424795, AG, is further asgd 397th Ftr Sq.

(Travel dir is pursuant to auth contained in 1st Ind, Hq US Strategic Air Forces in Europe, 2 Dec 44, to Ltr, Hq European TO, USA, file 300-4 MEM, 22 Nov 1944)

By order of Lt Col PEREGO:

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

OFFICIAL:



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

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From PRO 368TH FIGHTER GROUP 08/1700A
TO Public Relations Officer Headquarters Ninth TAC
BT

368FG D38 TD

Following unofficial records submitted as requested
Locomotives 1/Lt Edward W. Dame Kuttanning, Pa, 27
Trucks and V/T, 1/Lt Henry B. Hamilton, Winnetka, Ill. 250-300 est
Railcuts: Major Harold P. Sparks, Frankfort, Kentucky 23 est
Buildings: 1/Lt Irving Ostuw. Pascaic, N.H. 75 est
Tanks 1/Lt William J. Garry Winona, Minn., 36 dest 12 dam
Bridges 1/Lt Cliver S. Ryerson, McFarland Wis., 12 to 15
Gun Positions: Captain Henry J. Mazur, Lowell Mass., 36 est
Railway cars: 1/Lt David K. Sharp, Urbana, Ill., 75-80
Enemy troops 2/Lt William G. Dixon, Hollywood, Fla. 225 est

Grewchief: S Sgt Rudolph C. Mueller, Coupland, Texas, up to Dec 7th had 173 consecutive missions without abortive. "He Makes It Purr"

Armorer: Sgt Samuel J. Simon, 2901 Archer Ave. Chicago, Ill. 140 missions without bomb hangup. One plane flew 102 missions with same set of guns, fired over 100,000 rds ammo with only seven stoppages, four of which were due to hard primers, normally guns changed 15,000 rds. These guns destroyed seven E/A and hundreds M/T's. His pilot Major R.W. Hendricks says "Best armorer in FPO" of Sgt Simon.

Tech Supply Sgt: Tech Sgt Delmar C. Eicher, Ironton, Ohio-- "If it's in the ETO eicher will get it." group exec says.

AV supply: T/Sgt Bryant R. Fortner, Ebla, Ala. "My men never stand short" is his motto.

Cook: Sgt John S Schamber, 1130 South Kern, Los Angeles, Calif., 25 years experience cooking, 42 years old, has two sons in South Pacific, can whip up "creations" from C rations, his powdered eggs always cleaned up.. makes his own baking powder when necessary.

Military Policeman: PFC Samuel GordonxxxGordon, 1508 South 4th Philadelphia can handle traffic for landing airplanes and ground crew vehicles on taxi strips like a 42nd Street cop; remembers vehicles, faces, name trip tickets etc. Like a book, seldom gets a gripe.

Public Relations 368th Fighter Group

PEREGO.

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HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

APO 141, U. S. ARMY
12 January 1945

SPECIAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 4)

1. Sgt (677) Yates M. Hampton, 34036414, 1293rd Military Police Co (Avn) is placed on temp dy for a period of approximately two (2) days, will proceed fr this sta o/a 13 Jan 1945 to Ninth Air Force Continental Stockade, APO 696, for the purpose of picking up Pfc Fred G. Cantolella, 32849728, 396th Fighter Sq, confined thereat. Upon completion of this temp dy, guard will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT. 60-114 P 432-02 A 212/50425.

2. Pvt (055) Robert F. Lampe, 12214474, DS Hq 368th Ftr Gp, is placed on temp dy for a period of approximately two (2) days, will proceed fr this sta o/a 13 Jan 1945 to Hq ETOUSA, APO 887, for the purpose of driving Pvt Sidney B. Jacques, 33748138, thereto. Upon completion of this temp dy, EM will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT. 60-114 P 432-02 A 212/50425.

3. 1st Lt NEWTON I. STEERS, JR, 0865646, AC, is placed on temp dy for a period of approximately seven (7) days, will proceed fr this sta o/a 13 Jan 1945 to cite Universitaire, 9 Boulevard Jourdan, Paris, for the purpose of attending Army Information-Education Staff School. Upon completion of this temp dy, O will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT, nil acct or rail. 60-114 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: TWX XIX TAG (R) J 104.

4. Under the provisions of AR 420-5, the following board of officers is appointed to convene at the call of the senior member for the purpose of investigating the facts and recommending appropriate action in the case of P/O John C. Bauer, T223157, AC.

Lt Col FRANK S. PEREGO	0426422	AC
Lt Col JOHN D. W. HAESLER	0432193	AC
Maj THOMAS J. CARBINE	0392748	AC
Maj DONALD A. DAVIS	0447249	MC
Capt MAURICE D. POWELL	0650448	AC

5. Under the provisions of AR 615-5, 30 June 1943, and upon the recommendation of their Orgn Comdr, the following named EM, 396th Fighter Sq, are reduced to the gr of Pvt for misconduct:

Cpl (911) John D. Corcoleotes	39035496
Cpl (901) Robert T. Mead	18213986
Pfc (901) Frank E. Koblinski	15376023

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SO 4, Hq 368th Ftr GP, 12 Jan 1945, cont'd.

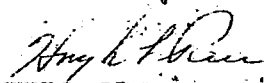
5. Capt WILLIAM R. QUINLAN, 0566474, AC, is placed on temp dy for a period of two (2) days, will proceed fr this sta o/a 16 Jan 1945 to Hq XIX TAC for the purpose of attending a Special Service conference, reporting thereat prior to 1000 hours, 17 Jan 1945. Upon completion of this temp dy, O will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by MF, mil acft or rail. 60-114 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: TWX XIX TAC (R) J-157-X.

(Travel dir is pursuant to auth contained in 1st Ind, Hq US Strategic Air Forces in Europe, 2 Dec 44, to Ltr, Hq European TO, USA, file 300.4 MFM, 22 Nov 1944)

By order of Lt Col FERREGO:

OFFICIAL:

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


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

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EXCERPT FROM STARS AND STRIPES

Excerpt from Stars and Stripes, Vol. I, No. 178 (Paris Edition), January 21, 1945
(page 8).

NOW THE NAZIS HAVE THE HEADACHE

NINTH AF HQ, Jan. 20.---The fumes creeping into the cockpit of his Thunderbolt were making him dizzy and sick, so Capt. Robert Caldwell, of Roseville, Calif., turned his squadron over to another pilot and headed home.

Still over Germany, Caldwell looked around for a target on which he could unload his bombs, and spotted a bridge. He let fly--and knocked out the center span.

He then returned to his field and sick call. "Boy, I had a terrible headache", he said.

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HEADQUARTERS
NINE TACTICAL AIR COMMAND

AGO 141, US Army
13 January 1945

SPECIAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 11)

EXTRACT

4. Pol named officers, 358th For Gp, are placed on TDY, WF 127th Repl Bn, Sta 591, o/a 13 Jan 45, to await transportation to EI for thirty (30) days rest. If transportation to WF required, officers of 134th Repl Bn. Upon compl of this TDY they will ret to proper orgn. TDY by WT, rail acft or rail. CO-114 F 432-02 A 212/50425. Auth: TTX U S Strategic Air Forces in Europe, WF 56485, 16 Aug 44, Par 5, Memo 35-25, Hq, Ninth AF, 2 Nov 44, and WCCG, Ninth AF.

MAJ HAROLD F SPARKS	CA32726	AC	CAPT IRVING OLSON	C680065	AC
CAPT JOHN L BARR	C25684	AC	CAPT OLIVER S RYERSON	C680095	AC
CAPT EDWARD W DAME	C745312	AC	1ST LT EDGAR M McCRONE	C6827204	AC
CAPT ROBERT MILLER	C680143	AC	1ST LT EUGENE L WESTING	C681632	AC

(Travel dir is pursuant to auth contained in 1st Ind, Hq, U S Strategic Air Forces in Europe, 2 Dec 44, to Ltr, Hq, European TO, USA, File 300.A ITM, 22 Nov 1944)

By command of Brigadier General WILLIAMS:

J. F. THOMPSON, JR.,
Colonel, AC,
Deputy Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

Francis M. Whitlock, Jr. /s/
FRANCIS M. WHITLOCK, JR.
Major, AGO,
Adjutant General

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HEADQUARTERS
363TH FIGHTER GROUP

APO 141, U. S. ARMY
19 January 1945

SPECIAL ORDERS)
:
NUMBER 6)

1. 1st Lt DAVID GOLDMANT, 0800836, AC, will proceed fr this sta o/a 19 Jan 45 to 19th Tactical control group (Proc) for a period of one day for the purpose of inspection. Upon completion of this dy C will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by RT, mil airt or rail. 60-114 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: TWX 100FW J 65 F.

2. Having been asgd this orgn per par 17, SO 14, Hq 134th Repl Bn (AAF), 14 Jan 45, the following named O's are further asgd to Sq as indicated:

2d Lt (1055) ROBERT S. WILKINSON	0832760	AC	396th Fighter Sq
2d Lt (1055) NEMEL B. WOODWORTH	0830695	AC	397th Fighter Sq

3. Having been asgd this orgn per par 12, SO 15, Hq 134th Repl Bn (AAF), 15 Jan 45, the following named O's are further asgd to Sq as indicated:

2d Lt (1055) ALFRED W. ANDERSON	0828366	AC	395th Fighter Sq
2d Lt (1055) LEON H. COUCHERY	0829323	AC	395th Fighter Sq
2d Lt (1055) FRANK F. CHIRO JR	0832575	AC	396th Fighter Sq
2d Lt (1055) EUGENE F. DUCK	0832782	AC	397th Fighter Sq

4. cpl (911) Walter J. Gatz, 12193399, 397th ptr Sq, will proceed fr this sta o/a 21 Jan 45 to cite Universitaire, 9 Boulevard Jourdan, Paris, for the purpose of picking up 1st Lt Newton I. Steers Jr, on temp dy threat. Upon completion of this dy, EM will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by RT. 60-114 P 02 A 212/50425.

5. The following named officers are aptd to the Officers club council, to meet at the call of the president thereof, for the purpose of considering and making recommendations on such matters as may be referred to it. Minutes of meeting will be submitted to this Headquarters in triplicate:

Lt Col LEMUEL R. GORRELL	0415495	AC	President
1st Lt DONALD C. HARPLE	0157689	AC	
Capt ERNEST R. PENNINGTON	0169824	AC	
Capt FRANKLIN A. DICK	0565197	AC	
1st Lt JOSEPH D. BRULFIELD JR	0650369	AC	
1st Lt DALE C. OLMSTED	0159376	AC	
1st Lt JOHN F. REGAN	0569887	AC	Recorder

(Travel dir is pursuant to auth contained in 1st Ind, Hq U S Strategic Air Forces in Europe, 2 Dec 1944, to Ltr, Hq European TC, USA, file 300.4 PEX, 22 Nov 1944)

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SO 6, Hq 368th Ftr Gp, 19 Jan 45, Cont'd.

By order of Lt Col PEREGO:

OFFICIAL:

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

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

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HEADQUARTERS (ADVANCED)
AIX TACTICAL AIR COMMAND
Office of the Commanding General

AFG 141, US Army
24 January 1945

SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO : Commanding Officers, 368th Fighter Group, AFG 141, US Army.

1. On 22 January 1945 the operational units of this Command achieved the greatest wholesale destruction of enemy transport since the beginning of our operations. On that day our fighter-bomber formation, attacking viciously despite heavy concentrations of enemy flak, destroyed or damaged 1747 motor transport, tanks and armored vehicles, doubling our previous best day's record of destruction. These tremendous losses by an enemy already pitifully lacking in transport, cannot but materially effect his ability further to resist.

2. The operations of your Group on that day were outstandingly effective. By accomplishing the destruction or damage of 589 motor vehicles, 4 armored vehicles and by killing of 150 enemy troops your units made a major contribution to the successes of the day. I feel sure that, as reported by your pilots, your claims of destruction and damage were very conservative and that undoubtedly many more losses were inflicted on the enemy than the official figures portray.

3. I am very pleased to commend the personnel of your Group highly for their outstanding part in this record day and to express my full confidence that their high devotion to duty, great courage and ability will continue to provide exceptional contributions to our ultimate victory.

J. P. Weyland /s/
C. P. WEYLAND,
Brig. Gen., USA,
Commanding.

1st Ind. A-1-1
HEADQUARTERS 368TH FIGHTER GROUP, AFG 141, U S Army, 31 Jan 1945.

TO: CO'S, 395th Ftr Sq, 396th Ftr Sq, 397th Ftr Sq, AFG 141, U S Army.

It is with a great deal of pride that I forward these commendations from General Arnold to you boys. I hope that all of you are as proud of the job you have accomplished, as I am of you as individuals. You fellows led the way in the mass destruction of the retreating Germans. You are all fighting "one hell of a war!". Many Thanks.

Frank S. Perego /s/
FRANK S. PEREGO,
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps,
Commanding.

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HEADQUARTERS
NINTH AIR FORCE

APO 696, U S Army,
22 January 1945.

GENERAL ORDERS)
:
NUMBER.....14)

BATTLE HONORS

1. Under the provisions of Section IV, Circular Number 333, WD, 1943, the following-named units of the Ninth Air Force are cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy. The citation reads as follows:

* * * * *

"The 368th Fighter Group. For outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy on 3 September 1944 in the execution of an air-ground effort in conjunction with units of the ground forces in the vicinity of Mons. In the face of a withering barrage of antiaircraft and small arms fire, flights of the 368th Fighter Group bombed and strafed enemy targets. The group destroyed 262 motor transport and damaged 30 more. In addition, 230 horse-drawn vehicles were destroyed as well as an undetermined number of enemy personnel in the target areas. The group was further successful in seeking out, strafing

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Par 1, GO No 14, Hq Ninth Air Force, 22 January 1945, contd.

and bombing targets of opportunity that impeded the advance of the ground forces. To accomplish their assigned task, eighty-three P-47 aircraft were dispatched on seven missions to strike a devastating blow in disrupting and battering the German defenses. The victorious exploits of the pilots of the 368th Fighter Group who struck a staggering blow to the enemy's supply of armored vehicles and motor transport, exemplify that leadership, teamwork and flying skill which is in keeping with the highest traditions of the service."

By command of Major General VANDENBERG:

F F MILLARD,
Colonel, GSC
C of S

OFFICIAL:

C. K. Seebach /s/
C K SEEBACH
Colonel, AGD
Adjutant General

A TRUE EXTRACT COPY:

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

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9TH AIR FORCE RELEASE NO. 157 (based on activities of 3 September 1944)

NINTH AIR FORCE BOMBERS DESTROY HUNDREDS OF GERMAN VEHICLES

NINTH AIR FORCE HEADQUARTERS, FRANCE (DELAYED)--Catching thousands of re-treating German vehicles in a tremendous traffic jam between Mons and Brussels. Thunderbolts and Lightnings on Sunday destroyed 919 trucks, 757 horse-drawn vehicles and 59 armored cars to set a new days record for the Ninth Air Force Tactical Air Command. The fighter bombers virtually were unopposed by the Luftwaffe.

The concentration of vehicles was discovered early Sunday morning by pilots of the Thunderbolt group commanded by Colonel Gilbert I. Meyers, Milford, Iowa. The group earned top honors for the day by knocking out 294 trucks and 230 horse-drawn vehicles and artillery pieces in the dawn to dusk attack.

"The Germans were using everything they can get hands on," said Captain William R. Gibson, Jeanette, Pa., a Thunderbolts squadron leader. "We caught a column of horse drawn artillery; some were four-wheeled long tons, and the rest were two wheeled field guns. When we strafed the column the horses bolted in every direction."

A squadron led by Captain John H. Lougee, 3 Cardinal Road, Worcester, Mass. flew a gunnery pattern which left 75 vehicles burning. Another led by Captain William R. Gibson, Jeanette, Pa. knocked out 140 vehicles southwest of Mons where they found a convoy estimated at 500 units.

"I've never seen anything like it," said Col. Ray J. Stecker, Hazelton, Pa. I-47 group commander. "In the small towns and villages, enemy vehicles were standing bumper to bumper. At one point, we were going down to strafe when a column of American tanks came racing along the road and we had to pull up."

While the pilots were strafing the columns, Allied tanks raced into the midst of the enemy convoys and within a few minutes dozens of vehicles were abandoned by their crews.

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R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

APO 141, U. S. Army
27 January 1945

SPECIAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 8)

1. CPL (911) Walter J. Gatz, 12193899, 397th Ftr Sq, is placed on TDY for a period of approximately two (2) days, WP fr this sta o/a 27 Jan 1945 to HQ XIX TAC for the purpose of delivering personnel thereto. Upon completion of this TDY, EM will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT. 60-114 P 432-02 A 212/50425.

2. Under the provisions of Par 7 b (1), AAF Regulation 50-7, 1 June 1944, the following board of officers is appointed to examine applicants for Aeronautical Ratings:

Lt Col FRANK S. PIERGO	0426422	AC
Lt Col JOHN D. W. HAESLER	0432193	AC
Maj THOMAS J. CARBINE	0392748	AC
Maj DONALD A. DAVIS	0447249	MC
Maj DENNIS CRISP	0427531	AC
Capt CARLOS E. TALBOTT	025797	AC

3. Having been ascd this orgn per par 3, SO 20, Hq 134th Repl Bn (AAF), 20 Jan 1945, the following named officers are further ascd to Sq indicated:

2d Lt (1055) HELMUT F. ONUSSEIT	0827262	AC	395th Ftr Sq
2d Lt (1055) ROBERT D. SHEEDY	0830341	AC	396th Ftr Sq
2d Lt (1055) MAURICE J. SHEA	0830340	AC	397th Ftr Sq
2d Lt (1055) CLIFFORD J. PRICE	0830070	AC	397th Ftr Sq
2d Lt (1055) WILLIAM A. SHEPARD	0830342	AC	397th Ftr Sq

4. The following named O & EM are placed on TDY for a period of approximately four (4) days, WP fr this sta o/a 29 Jan 1945 to Exposition Bldg, Brussels, Belgium, thence to Reims, France, for the purpose of picking up rations. Upon completion of this TDY, they will ret to proper sta and orgn. TDN by MT, mil acft or rail. 60-114 P 432-02 A 212/50425 and 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: VCCG XIX TAC.

1st Lt JOHN F. REGAN	0569887	AC
T/5 Wilson E. Holsinger	13145623	(Driver) 2499th MR&R Sq

5. 1st Lt HAROLD W. CHUICKSHANK, 0567799, AC, is detailed to conduct the monthly inventory of the Group Post Exchange on 31 Jan 1945.

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R E S T R I C T E D

SO 8, Hq 368th Ftr Gp, 27 Jan 45, cont'd.

6. Under the provisions of AR 600-81, Sgt (345) Edward W. Nieman, 16037001, Hq 368th Ftr Gp, having passed aptitude and drivers qualification tests, and having been assigned to duty as a driver or assistant driver of a vehicle or as an actual and active driver instructor, performed duty for a minimum of three months as a driver or assistant driver of an Army vehicle without traffic violations and with an accident-free record and with a rating of excellent is awarded the Motor Vehicle Driver Badge.

7. Under the provisions of AR 600-81, the following named EM, 395th Ftr Sq, having passed aptitude and drivers qualification tests, and having been assigned to duty as a driver or assistant driver of a vehicle or as an actual and active driver instructor, performed duty for a minimum of three months as a driver or assistant driver of an Army vehicle without traffic violations and with an accident-free record and rating of excellent, are awarded the Motor Vehicle Driver Badge.

S/Sgt John J. Murphy	11030874	Cpl John T. Connolly	31230431
Sgt David Palma	39297507	Cpl Henry L. Meidel	32282263
Sgt Alton A. Davidson	17110757	Pfc Clifford I. Stubinger	36642616
Cpl Ralph J. Flanick	33305245	Pfc Edmund L. DeForge	31291898
Cpl Chester E. Urie	36199366	Pfc Sidney Grossman	32495450
Cpl Charles W. Race	33760928	Pfc George J. Simpson	31268713
Cpl Victor I. Martin	31023537	Pvt William E. Newton	16093320
		Pvt Thomas F. Lynch	37329021

8. Under the provisions of AR 600-81, Pvt Victor J. Rabideau, Hq 368th Ftr Gp, having completed a standard vehicle mechanic's course with a rating of skilled or having sufficient previous experience as an automotive mechanic to justify a skilled rating, having been assigned to duty as an automotive mechanic, second echelon or higher, or as an actual and active instructor of such mechanics, and having performed duty for a minimum of three months as an automotive mechanic, second echelon or higher, with a rating of excellent, is awarded the Motor Vehicle Mechanic Badge.

9. Under the provisions of AR 600-81, the following named EM, 395th Ftr Sq, having completed a standard vehicle mechanic's course with a rating of skilled or having sufficient previous experience as an automotive mechanic to justify a skilled rating, having been assigned to duty as an automotive mechanic, second echelon or higher, or as an actual and active instructor of such mechanics, and having performed duty for a minimum of three months as an automotive mechanic, second echelon or higher, with a rating of excellent are awarded the Motor Vehicle Mechanic Badge.

S/Sgt John J. Murphy	11030874
Sgt David Palma	39297507
Cpl Ralph J. Flanick	33305245

(Travel dir is pursuant to auth contained in 1st Ind, Hq US Strategic Air Forces in Europe, 2 Dec 1944, to Ltr, Hq European TO, USA, file 300.4 MFM, 22 Nov 1944)

By order of Lt Col PEREGO:

OFFICIAL:

Hugh L. Rice
 HUGH L. RICE,
 Major, 1 Corps,
 Adjutant.

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

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R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

APO 141, U. S. ARMY
29 January 1945

SPECIAL ORDERS)
:
NUMBER 9)

1. 1st Lt CARL H. GUNDLACH, 0571886, AC, is appointed Investigating Officer to investigate courts-martial charges against Cpl Floyd T. Nelson, 39835675, 395th Ftr Sq. Complete report of investigation on WD AGO Form 120 will be submitted to this Hq in triplicate.

2. Under the provisions of Par 3a, AR 35-320, 17 June 43, the fol named officers are aptd Class "A" Agent Fin Officers, for orgn indicated, to Major JOHN P. VOLIVA, FD, Accountable Disbursing Off, 84th Service Group, for the pmt of officers and EM P/R for the month of Jan 45.

1st Lt CSWALD DORIA	01640399	SC	Hq 368th Fighter Group
1st Lt SAMUEL R. SCHOFIELD	0582942	AC	395th Fighter Squadron
2d Lt THOMAS G. MONAHAN	0583418	AC	396th Fighter Squadron
1st Lt GEORGE E. GILL	0863973	AC	397th Fighter Squadron
1st Lt NORBERT H. BRUSKY	0873663	AC	21st Weather Sq Det "R"
1st Lt NORBERT H. BRUSKY	0873663	AC	40th Mobile Com Sq Det "R"
1st Lt LEO N. CULKIN	0505551	CEP	1293rd M P Co (Avn) Less Det A
1st Lt HIRAM D. BLACK	01553233	ORD	45th Ord Bomb Disposal Sq
2d Lt ROBERT L. STARBUCK	01108342	CE	2137th Engr (Avn) F/F Platoon
CWO JAMES C. WEAKLEY	02104932	USA	Hq & Hq Sq, 84th Service Group
Capt ROBERT S. GRUHN	01634830	SC	1074th Signal Co Less Det A&B
1st Lt JOHN S. DRISCOLL	01593547	QMC	382nd Air Service Squadron
1st Lt JAMES W. WOODS	01636849	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	QMC	1221st QM Co Det "A"
1st Lt DALLAS D. ALSUP	01577050	QMC	2499th QM Trk Co Avn Det "A"
1st Lt GEORGE I. TIMBERLAKE	0860770	AC	29th MR&R Sq Less Det "A"

3. In accordance with Ltr Hq XIX TAC, subj: "Educational Advisement by Interview", file 352, dtd 24 Jan 45, Cpl (405) Frank S. Stowell, 39199927, Hq 368th Ftr GP, is appointd Education Advisor for the 368th Ftr GP and atchd units.

4. In accordance with Memo Hq XIX TAC, subj: "Movement by Motor Transport", dtd 27 Oct 1944, Capt MAURICE KING, 01553290, AC, is appointed "Call Unit" Commander for the 368th Fighter Group.

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