SECRET

HISTORICAL DATA

HEADQUARTERS HISTORY
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

JANUARY 1945

HISTORICAL OFFICER
RECORDER
TYPIST

LT. WILLIAM S. BLAKEY
S/Sgt. CLARENCE A. GLASRUD
Pfc. WILBERT R. AHGMAN

JAN 1945
HISTORICAL REPORT
1 JANUARY TO 31 JANUARY 1945

Information contained herein is written in compliance with ATG Tactical Air Command Memorandum Number 203, dated 5 February 1944. It is a resume of the activities of the 372nd Fighter Group Headquarters, for the month of January 1 to 31, 1945.

1. ACTIVATION
   No Change.

2. STRENGTH as of 31 January 1945
   Figures shown below are total strength for Group Headquarters and assigned squadrons:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assigned Personnel</th>
<th>Authorized Personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Officers ---------</td>
<td>Officers -----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enlisted Men -----</td>
<td>Enlisted Men ------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>213</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1019</td>
<td>1007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. DATE OF ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE FROM EACH STATION IN BTC:
   Departed ANC 02, at Juvincourt, France, 5 January, for ANC 1-52, 11 miles SE of Metz, France, arriving 5 January 1945.

4. LESSONS TO LEARN:
   M11 (for Group Headquarters)

5. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:
   M11
I 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’ Day celebrations were pretty subdued at Juvisy, as we got up early to get an early start. Food was plentiful, 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.

But hardly had our air echelon left for Metz, this morning, when we heard an alert. We were notified of air raids at our bases. Fifteen ME262s came in suddenly at low level with almost no warning and in 25 minutes destroyed 21 F-47s, sent 22 more to the reserve area for repairs, and inflicted some damage on a number of others. The squadron had already gone out on missions, and attempts to call them back were fruitless. Our anti-aircraft guns were in action. Fourteen men were slightly injured, and 4 others seriously wounded.

The news made quite a stir in Juvisy, of course, and will keep us busy for several days. At least until the extent of the damage at Metz can be accurately estimated. Colonel Swall, who was at StriP 1-34 when the attack came, says that it seemed as if all hell had broken loose for a while, with continual strafing, bombing, and machine-gunning.

It was not by the time our air echelon reached Metz, and the convoy pulled into the livelier quarters area on the outskirts of the city. The boys unloaded their personal belongings, and settled down for the night. We were later turned over to the 36th Group, which will share this strip.

The whole area is said to be a former French army cavalry school, and the Nazis used it as an MI center 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 school, the last province of Lorraine.

The 36th Group started out the year by dispatching 70 planes from StriP 1-32. The six squadron missions conducted armed races over the Trier-Oberma village area, working with Ripper and finding their own targets. Though the visibility was good, the group found little enemy activity in the race area. But each squadron used 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; 16 U.S. were destroyed and 24 damaged; one locomotive and 37 freight cars were destroyed, and 17 cars were damaged. A marshalling yard at Trier was hit, and a railroad and another building destroyed. No other points hit. Airplanes were shot in a dozen places, a pair of mobile guns were hit, and 4 crewmen 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.

*January 1945*
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-Gochem-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 out. Pipaw III had a target for the 397th, and they dropped 15 bombs on the W/S southwest of St. Vith. Good hits were scored on the W/Y, with 13 cars destroyed and 12 damaged, and a power house was damaged. The squadron then attacked tanks, other armored vehicles, and W/Y's south of St. Vith, with rockets and strafing. The destroyed-damaged score was 7-5 on tanks and 8-1 on W/Y's and other vehicles. Pipaw III also vectored the 395th to targets in the Trier area. They destroyed 9 W/Y'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. 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 clothing 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 Heinites 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-62 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.
4 January 1945 (cont'd)

The first special orders of the New Year, dated 1 January 1945, listed our first \textit{H} precedents in many months: 7 of our privates were made privates first class.

Supporting Document 12, Special Orders 12.

5 January 1945

Our planes made the jump today, taking off on 3 squadron missions from Strp 4-48 and landing at Strp 7-34 after the completion of their missions. The assignment for the 397th was to support units of the XX Corps and to conduct an armed recco in the Trier-Saarbrucken area. Turpentine directed the squadron to bomb a pair of bridges, but the weather blocked out the target. A 9/10 coverage over the area and strong W wind were responsible for generally poor results, though the bombs dropped on a railroad between Trier and Saarbrucken damaged 3 cars and cut the tracks.

The 397th and 395th conducted armed reccos over Bitburg-Trier-Nobsburg-Neidan and had excellent results despite the weather. The 397th dropped 16 bombs on a 10-car train at Wildehügel, near Trier. The bombing was good, but results are listed N/B because of the weather. The 397th hit an airfield at Böblis near Würz, which was believed to have been recently used. A hangar was seen to be hit. Eight more bombs were dropped on another active airstrip at Engleheim, near Mainz, and again a building was hit.

6 January 1945

We were non-operational today because of the weather, and we have plenty of time to set up our normal working layout at Strp 7-34. With the S-2 and S-3 trailers pulled in last night about 8:30 p.m., 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 Mainz to Nett, headquarters escaped unscathed this time. The only mishap occurred yesterday when "Dumpy," the S-2 jeep, developed bearing trouble at Sülz, about 30 miles this side of Mainz. 2/Sgt Reese and Sgt. Jordan left 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 Neumarkt now is some non-essential equipment (non-essential when we don't live in tents,) and a rear-guard cleanup contingent. At Nett, even the PX was functioning, and we felt very much at home.

7 January 1945

We were non-operational 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, 7/Sgt. Joseph Michel and 7/Sgt 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. Capt. Harold P. Farley lost an eye, and 5/Sgt. William Benschot was seriously injured by pieces of shrapnel which entered his thigh and abdomen. Lessor shrapnel injuries were suffered by lst Sgt. John C. Caney, Jr., who was hit in the shoulder, and 8/Sgts. Joseph J. Jascon and Charles E. Richner, Jr., who were both struck in the head by fragments of the mine.

Supporting Document 12, Special Orders 12.
8 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 17 long-sleeved, slipover sweaters which made us feel warmer immediately.

9 January 1945

An non-operative string was one today, but just barely. The best we could do was a weather recce. Lt. Valcke and Capt. Lejeune of the 397th flew the missing, vectored by F/A-13, in the direction of the 395th flying towards Ludendorf and past our front line. They found 10/20 coverage generally, sometimes down to the hilltops, and occasional snow. The bill was no more flying today.

More men and equipment were in the air. Strip A-60 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 16 planes dispatched. The mission was a recce and support for the 92nd—"Cores"—their controller being "Ballast". The 397th flew a recce, and spotted a lot of enemy activity around Furem and many vehicles heading southeast. 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 17's and vehicles were destroyed and 5 vehicles and 10 freight cars were damaged, besides a road cut and several buildings destroyed.

The 395th had poor bombing results at Solingen and Hildesheim, but destroyed 3 and damaged 8 17's near Hildesheim. Paul Holland scored a target for the 397th, a supply depot at Eisingen. Some of the buildings were hit and damaged. Strafing and rocketing caused more damage in the same area: 15 17's were destroyed and 30 freight cars and 125 17's were destroyed and 32 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 public relations department asked for our nominations for the Ninth Air Force "bull" in several departments. Today we found out that we had placed 3 on the first team and 5 on the second team. The records are confidential, of course, and apply only to men who are still on active service. 1st Lt. Harry B. Hamilton of the 397th was first in trucks with an estimated 28-30 destroyed; 1st Lt. Irving S. Suther of the 397th was rated first in destroyed buildings, with an estimated 75; and 1st Lt. William J. Perry of the 397th was first in tanks with 36 destroyed and 12 damaged.

Note: We had the second best returns in the Ninth Air Force were 1st Lt. Cliver S. Byers of the 397th, who destroyed an estimated 22 to 15 bridges, and Capt. Harry J. Lewis of the 397th, who destroyed an estimated 30 gun positions. Other second strings from the 396th Group are: Maj. E. B. S. Bower of the 397th, Maj. E. J. Schmitz of the 397th, Col. H. M. E. Johnson of the 397th, and Capt. J. R. Remington of the 397th squadron and Maj. V. J. B. Kennedy of the 397th squadron.
11 January 1945 (cont'd)

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

Our car radio "buzzy" picker is reported to have run into trouble out of town, so to help the boys, another picker was started today. A daily lunch is now served by truck in a letter-opener shower setup on the other side of Metz. An added incentive is that we can exchange socks and underwear—used for underlay, in the dressing room.

Supporting Document 3/3, Copy TIC Redtype

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 resumme for at least another day.

Our NCO section changed personnel today. Pvt. Clancy H. Jacques, who has been with the group since Oct 33, 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. Capriodo.

Our weatherman, Pvt. Mentor J. Steers, will also go to Paris in the morning to attend the Army Information-Instruction Staff School at the site University here for one week.

Supporting Document 4/4, Special Orders 4/4

13 January 1945

Today we really bounced back into the show, with 32 planes dispatched. Sixty-eight planes had the same assignment: arm the boxes by squadrons near Nijmegen, Schippenbeek, and Laken and several targets to attack in that area. The 354th had fair results with their bombing and strafing attacks on rail cars, 1/7s, and other vehicles near Trier. The 397th carried out the same type of attacks at Guir-chen; but their results were more spectacular. Eight bombs dropped on a 1/7 evidently hit an ammunition dump, because the terrific explosion followed with smoke rising to 5 or 6000 feet. The pilots, who felt the explosion in the air and though at first it was flak coming up, reported that the explosion was the most violent they had ever observed. Trains were also cut in at least 7 places and an ammunition was damaged. 1st Lt. William C. Camden, who was leading the mission, ran into too much flak at Hasselburg and was forced to belly-land his plane in enemy territory, 4 miles southwest of Zweibrucken. He was seen to run about 35 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 1/7 at Siegburg, southeast of Eln, and generally clobbered it. Two roundhouses were well hit, the tracks in the center of the 1/7 were cut in at least 4 places, besides widespread damage to other buildings and rolling stock. The 396th attacked Nijmegen, Simeil, 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 Zweibrucken. The 393rd, getting no
targets from Brest, conducted an armed reconnaissance of Trun 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.

The 42-56, flown by Captain R. Kindle, belly-landed his ship-damaged plane in friendly territory and though slightly wounded returned to the base. The total destroyed-damaged score for the day was: 4 tanks C-3, and freight cars 46-11.

We also had 2 other missions today. Four F-47’s of the 357th escorted a B-17 on a calibration mission over Verham, Liege, Namur, Dinant, and St. Vith. Nothing happened—our pilots could see at least, four more 47-1’s of the 356th flew over what was left of the German break-through area and distributed leaflets, dropping 7 leaflet bombs each at 4 places.

There were other developments today, and today we were suffering from what we call 47’s, some developing into hospital cases. The medics were unable to determine the cause, for the ailment was widespread, the 357th group being also affected. On the brighter side, 5 days off will start next Monday, January 15, with passes to Metz from 0900 to 2000 hours.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12

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 357th squadron were well inside Germany, between Karlsruhe and Mannheim, they were bounced by 50 plus P-47’s and F-105’s. The attack came without warning from the controller, while one flight was down strafing 80 cars, believed to be carrying troops. Though our planes had already successfully bombed their assigned target, the 47 depot at St. Ingbert, they never had a chance in the uneven encounter. Lt. Bauer shot down two P-47’s, which were seen to crash, and the returning pilots think Lt. Hucke may have destroyed another F-105. But the full story of that encounter we may never know.

Listed MIA are 6 of our pilots; Maj. Richard S. Leary, who led the mission, Lts. Milton S. Beatty, Roland G. Potter, and 2nd Lts. Charles J. Hucke, Cyril J. Fonesa, and James E. Folen. Lt. Potter was heard to say that his a/c was in flames. Lt. Folen reported that he might have to bail out. No other information is available.

The 357th came close to the same kind of trouble later in the day. After bombing an F-105 park at Verdun, and destroying 5 buildings there, they also bombed a 12-1/7 at Alzey, 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 357th circled to attack but the enemy planes broke off eastward. About 10 miles W of Frankenthal 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 claimed one Me109 (Lts. William Barry, Neal N. Heimann, and J.P. "S" Marshall). This seemed to discourage the rest of the Japanese 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.
14 January 1945 (cont'd)

On two missions the squadrons dropped their bombs when the controller called in bandits, but then failed to find any enemy planes. The day's destroyed-damaged total was: tanks C-1, 6/7's and other vehicles 11-2, locomotives 6-1, freight cars 27-7, 7/4 5-0. 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 395th sent out 8 planes to support the 11th Corps in the northern tip of Luxembourg, and to work with a controller with the exotic name of "Pinkpigeon." But our new friend had no targets as the squadron found their own, an assortment of 6/7's, tanks, and other vehicles--starting fires, damaging 2 tanks, and destroying 11 of the other vehicles. A lone, strange free-lance F-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

Thirty-three sorties were flown today, despite very uncertain weather conditions which finally forced the last group to cancel at the 6:00 hour, 6 1/2 hours late. Ripsaw instructed the last 2 squadrons not to go more than 20 minutes from the base because of weather conditions, but the other squadrons mission found 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. The bridge-blasting job was a rather impressive affair as made the Stars and Stripes for 21 January. That happened was that Capt. Caldwell, who was leading the squadron, turned over the mission to another pilot when he saw in his cockpit made him ill. As he was returning to base 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 Ellwangen, between Trier and Bonn. 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 inactivating about the 6/7 at Neustadt and their excellent placement of 27 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 397th mission to tanks around Trier, but no tanks were to be found. The squadron then dropped their 24 bombs on the 6/7 at Merichutes, east of Trier. Very good landing out the track in 3 places, destroyed the station, destroyed or damaged 2 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 26 bombs on a RR siding at Schopp, south of Kaiserlautern. The bombing was good, 12 cars being destroyed, tracks out in 2 places, and 8 buildings hit. The 397th brought their bombs back when the solid overcast thinned out all possible targets. Only 3 6/7's were destroyed today and 1 damaged, but the freight cars tell was 77-69 and the locomotive was destroyed and 5 second damaged.
15 January 1945 (cont'd)

Fifteen B-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.

Ripsaw 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 "wheel" are included in the group, two of the squadrons are undergoing changes of command. In the 395th Capt. Zamor takes over as CO, Capt. Jensen becomes Operations Officer, and Lt. Sayler is Asst. Ops. Officer. In the 396th, Capt. Henry is new Operations Officer and Lt. Swinc is Asst. Ops.; in the 397th Capt. Reuse is Operations Officer and Lt. Frisbie is 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 - IIX 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 recces over Trier-Homburg-Kaiserslautern; the M/Y score was 7-3 and freight cars 18-55. All of the armed recces missions except the first, flown by the 392nd, attacked M/Y's. That first mission cut tracks in 2 places south of Trier, clobbered M/Y'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 Had Fremarbach. 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 Kaiserslautern, destroying or damaging M/Y'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), 24 F-47's and 22 F-105's jumped the squadron from 10,000 feet, coming out of the sun. In a brief engagement two planes crashed into the ground—one MiG and one F-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, but the pilot was not seen to bail out. Two other F-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 NS of Saarbrucken-NRO. The last 12 tracks were set afire when Ripsaw I called in a fighter taking place; but the fight was over when the squadron reached the area, and no enemy s/c could be found.
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. Ranging from Poznan to Tarnopol from Polish sources, the Soviets were guilty of understatement and they ran large-scale offensive.

18 January 1945

Again, we were non-operational and could do no more than watch the Russians go. 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 squadrons to support the 4th Infantry Division and conduct armed recon over the St. Vith-Heerlen area. The 397th conducted the controller, 397th; and when they could not locate the targets assigned, they conducted an armed recon to the Stier area. Finding a 10/10 undercast at 5000 to 6000 feet, the squadron returned all bombs to the base. But the 397th, who were vectored by Viper and spotted a train 2 miles long northwest of Biersteiner, Twenty-two bombs were dropped and at least 2 direct hits were scored, setting the tracks in that area place besides destroying 25 and damaging 25 cars. The train, which appeared to be loaded with supplies, was also strafed. The F-47 dropped 2 bombs on the town of Wolfenstein, destroying a 1-storey building. Then Organ had no target for the 26th, but he dropped 6 bombs on the Stier area. Four hits were scored by the 26th. All bombs dropped, 20 cars being destroyed and 2 large fires burning. Darkness was closing in as no strafing was done.

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

Supporting Document No. 7, Special Order No.

20 January 1945

Most 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. So far our troops were 35 miles inland on the road to Warsaw 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 cluttering enemy vehicles. Six squadron missions destroyed 127 V-7's and other vehicles, damaged 177, destroyed 4 tanks and damaged 4, and destroyed 3 freight cars. In addition, at least 50 German troops were killed by strafing, a few buildings hit, and at least 6 guns destroyed.
22 January 1945 (cont'd)

Besides the 25 P-47's sent out on 4 continuous patrol missions (all uneventful), 67 planes were dispatched on 8 squadron missions to support the 1st Infantry Division as one hour intervals and to conduct armed rescue over Vianden, Trier, and Grimling. That was the operation 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 2700 vehicles were destroyed or damaged by fighter-bombers today, besides 127 tanks and over 1000 freight cars.

The full story of the day didn't unravel until later, but the main facts are now pretty well established. The German, evidently counting on plenty of cloud cover, tried to pull off a mass surprise 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 with the cub's information 'hopped' on them to the Saar that began to work over their left target. The 395th squadron got there first at about 1100 hours, after the controller "gouged" them into a F-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 German vehicles caught hell without letup. The P-51's continued to shower dive-bombers all day long, seeking out the enemy and leading other planes to their.

While the 396th was attacking the convoy on our second mission of the day, the medium bombers knocked out a road bridge 3 miles north of Vianden--and nearly landed our planes on the bridge. That made the already hopeless situation of the enemy even worse and piled up more German vehicles for later missions to work on. The missions made the worst the situation, as the day's score indicates. In the battle for the bridge, the group had 14 wounded by being hit; one pilot was listed MIA and another KIA. 1st Lt. William L. Casady of the 397th belly-landed his damaged P-47 near the front lines 3 or 4 miles N of Vianden and is listed MIA. 2nd Lt. Walter N. Scott of the 395th was unable to get his wheels down because of flash damage, then he landed his P-47 at Saar Y-2, the plane crashed into a parked P-47, severely injuring the pilot. 2nd Lt. William G. Bixen of the 396th bailed his plane south of Luxembourg but returned to the base without injury.

Another incident of the day deserves recording. On the first mission Lt. Gary of the 395th spotted about 100 Jerrys walking down a road, and as he prepared to attack, half of the German dispersed and sought cover. "The others though they could outrun me and start down the road," Lt. Gary reported, "so I said 'Remember Velmey!' 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. Armitage, drew a commendation from Brig. Gen. Teyland, CO of XXI TAC. A copy will be found as a supporting document.

Supporting document #6, Copy of Letter, from CO, XXI TAC (24 Jan 45)
22 January 1945

Today we went back to the job which we couldn't finish yesterday, but we got only half a 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 scattered the totals were more modest:

6-0 on tanks, 109-44 on 17mm'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 recce over Trier-Vianden-Bitburg-Vittlich. The 395th, working south of St. Vith, destroyed 7 and damaged 11 17mm'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 376th, working with 'Organ,' dropped 22 bombs on a concentration of 75 17mm's and a fuel dump just north of St. Vith. The bombing was good, a large gas fire resulting and 20 17mm'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 Tresla, 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 GI's might go back to the states on short leaves and 2 crew chiefs have been picked to 'work their way' back on hospital ships, 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 recce over Trier, Vianden, Baden, Bitburg, and Vittlich 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 'Bulldog' 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 a new target and dumped their bombs on a town (believed to be Hustedt) and bridge northeast of Trier. The bridge was cut in two and a direct hit damaged one end of the bridge. Two 500 lb bombs were observed in the town and a fire was left burning. The 395th, also
26 January 1945 (cont'd)

recalled from the target area by Ripell, 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 out. Bombing was generally good. The 397th, directed by Ripell, bombed through the overcast near Kirkenfeld—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 Trier. A copy of the citation itself and a U.S. Air Force press release on the award is attached as supporting documents.

Supporting Document #7, Copy-Extract- Ninth Air Force General Orders #11.
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, 27 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.

I'm acquiring 5 new pilots today, all 2nd lieutenant. 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 Mechanics' Badges. Sgt. Edward V. 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.

27 January 1945

Forty-seven planes were dispatched on 2 group missions today to conduct armed recce as far as Frankfurt. The first 17 planes concentrated on marshalling yards in the Main-Taunus area with very good results. Three M/Y's were wall 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/Y's in the area east of St. Yil, destroying 45 and damaging 33. Again the bombing was generally good; roads were cut and enemy traffic was snarled in a number of places.
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 Adviser for the 368th Fighter Group and Attached Units", and the postwar education plans continued to go forward. This evening S/Sgt C.A. Clairaud gave the first of a series of lectures on "Neopolitics" 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 Lt. Leonard V. [illegible] 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 on a combination round-robin and elimination affair, 2 defeats knocking a team out.

Supporting Document #12, Special Orders #7.

31 January 1945

Though we were operational again on the last day of the month, the weather did not prevent a few flights. It was warm, the snow was melting fast, and we had a little rain instead of the usual snow. We were kept on time, and the [illegible] 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 most disastrous blow—on January 14th we lost 6 pilots over Germany. To us, at Group headquarters, the loss of Maj. 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.
RESTRICTED
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 own Comdr, Cpl (9G1) George R. Nicholson, 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 own Comdr, the following named Em, Ht 368th Fighter Gr, are promoted to the Gr of Private First Class (Temp):

   Pvt (40S) Paul E. Garski 13136327
   Pvt (59G) R. Pan Garza 38230265
   Pvt (94S) Ronald D. Horning 33737225
   Pfc (23S) James W. Hudson 30642165
   Pvt (66S) James S. Hrushka 32363096
   Pvt (59G) Horace R. Herdol 10671072
   Pvt (36S) Crystal H. Houston 34729963
   Pvt (40S) Jack W. Walters 34277027

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

   TO BE STAFF SERGEANT (TEMP)
   Sg t (61S) John J. Biscoch 32606229

   TO BE SHERIFF (TEMP)
   Cpl (960) Herbert L. Reed 6537125

   TO BE CORPORAL (TEMP)
   Pfc (80S) John E. Connolly 31230131

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

   TO BE SERGEANT (TEMP)
   Cpl (911) Clarence N. Ressler 16133899
   Cpl (747) Raymond Stemple 35618046
   Cpl (747) John A. Upham 31024251
   Cpl (911) John C. Wood Jr. 14053200

   TO BE CORPORAL TEMP
   Pfc (747) Clarence Rhee 36685265
   Pfc (932) Jack L. Mercer 30089240

-1-
RESTRICTED
RESTRICTED

So 1, Hq 368th Ftr Gp, 1 Jan 1945, Contd.

5. Under the provisions of AR 615-5, 30 June 1943, and upon the recommendation of his Org. Condr, Cpl (992) Anthony J. Walczak, 32332287, 991 Ftr Sq, is promoted to the gr of Sgntens (Temp).

(Teavel dir in pursuant to such contained in 1st Ind, Hq U S Strategic Air Forces in Europe, 2 Dec 44, to Ltr, Hq European Tg, USA, filed 300.4 LEP, 22 Nov 1944)

By order of Lt Col PERREO:

OFFICIAL:

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

DISTRIBUTION:

Hugh L. Rice,
Major, Air Corps.
SPECIAL ORDERS

NUMBER 3

1. Capt. ERNEST R. PENDLETON, 01638240, AC, is appointed investigating officer to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of Cpl. Josep. Michel, 12061912, and T/5 Paul W. Tyler, 22905466, 75th Ord. Maint. Sq. (Sep.), which occurred on 7 January 1945. Complete report of investigation on AF Mun Form 51 will be submitted to this Hq. in quintuplicate.

2. So much of par. 3, 50 L52, this Hq. 29 Dec 1944, as reads, "are placed on temp dy for approximately four (4) days. e is extended to read: "are placed on temp dy for an indefinite period." (Pertains to officers on OP at Villa Double, Paris)

3. Having been said this orgn par. 9, 50 C56, Hq IX TAC, 6 Jan 1945, Major (1st Sg) JOHN J. TUMES, 0429745, CO: is further said 977th Ftr Sq.

(Travel dir is pursuant to such contained in 1st Ind, Hq U. S. Strategic Air Forces in Europe, 2 Dec 44, to Ltr, Hq European TO. USA, file 500-4, Mem. 22 Nov 1944)

By order of Lt Col. PENDLETON:

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

DISTRIBUTION:

"A"

RESTRICTED
From PRO 368TH FIGHTER GROUP 09/1700CA
TO Public Relations Officer Headquarters Ninth TAC
ET
36723 038 TD

Following unofficial records submitted as requested
Locomotives 1/1t toward 7. Danville, Ill., 27
Trucks and H/C, 1/1t Henry B. Hamilton, Tinley Park, Ill., 250-300 est
Railroads: Major Harold F. Sparks, Frankfort, Kentucky 25 est
Buildings: 1/1t Irving Ostrow, Pas. aic, N.H., 75 est
Tank 1/1t William J. Garry Lincoln, Ill., 36 dest 12 dam
Bridges 1/1t Oliver S. Ryerson, McFarland, Wis., 12 to 15
Gun Positions: Captain Henry J. Mazur, Lowell Mass., 36 est
Railway cars: 1/1t David K. Sharp, Urbana, Ill., 75-90
Enemy troops 2/1t William G. Dixon, Hollywood, Fla. 225 est

Crewchief: S/Sgt Ralph O. 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. 150 missions without
bomb hangup. One plane flew 102 missions with same set of guns, fired over 100,000
rds amm with only seven stoppages, four of which were due to hard primes, normally
guns changed 15,000 rds. These guns destroyed seven D/A and hundreds MFT's.
His pilot says "Best armorer in 368 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.

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

Cook: Sgt John S. Scharbourn, 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-ration, his powdered eggs always cleaned up... makes his own
baking powder when necessary.

Military Policeman: PFC Samuel G. Gordon, 1502 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

FRISCO.
SPECIAL ORDERS

1. Sgt (677) Yates Ma Hampton, 38036414, 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 656, for the purpose of picking up Pte Fred G Cantolilla, 38049728, 395th Fighter Sq, confined thereat. Upon completion of this temp dy, guard will ret to proper sta and orga. TIN by Ms 60-114 F 432-02 A 212/50425.

2. Pvt (655) Robert F. Laque, 12214474, DS HQ 398th 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, 38708126, thereto. Upon completion of this temp dy, EM will ret to proper sta and orga. TIN by Ms 60-114 F 432-02 A 212/50425.

3. 1st Lt Newton L. Steers, Jr, 065646, 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 Cote 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 orga. TIN by Ms nil acct or ratt. 60-114 F 432-02 A 212/50425. WITH TWO XII 2AC (N) 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 G. Bauer, 7232157, AC.

Lt Col Frank S. Perch 0426422 AC
Lt Col John D. T. Hessler 0432193 AC
Maj Thomas J. Carbine 0392748 AC
Maj Donald J. Davis 0447209 MC
Capt Maurice J. Powell 0650148 AC

5. Under the provisions of AR 615-5, 3 June 1943, and upon the recommendation of their Orgn Coer, the following named EM, 395th Fighter Sq, are reduced to the gr of Pvt for misconduct:

Chl (911) John P. Correll 39035496.
Chl (901) Robert T. Kees 10213986
Pte (901) Frank R. Koblinski 15376023

-1-

RESTRICTED
5. Capt William R. Quinnan, 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 thereaf prior to 1000 hours, 17 Jan 1945. Upon completion of this temp dy, O will ret to proper sta and orgn. TN: Ddy by Mf, will acft or rail. 60-114 F 432-02 A 212/50-25. AUTH: TIX XIX TAC (R) J-157-X.

(Tival dir is pursuant to auth contained in 1st Ddy, HQ US Strategic Air Forces in Europe, 2 Dec 44, to Ltr, HQ European TF, USA, file 3906 MEM, 22 Nov 1944.)

By order of Lt Col VEBOO:

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

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

DISTRIBUTION:

HUGH L RICE, Major, Air Corps, Adjutant.

-2-
NOW THE NAZIS HAVE THE HEADACHE

HINTH 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.
SPECIAL ORDERS

NUMBER 21

EXTRACT

4. Pol named officers, 26th Per Cp, are placed on TDY to 127th Repl
Mn, Sta 591, c/o 13 Jan 45, to await transportation to 21 for thirty (30)
days rest. If transportation to UR required, officers of 127th Repl Mn.
Upon completion of TDY they will return to proper orgn. TDY by TDY, rail or
rail. (2-114 F 432-20 A 212/324625.) Auth: TW 8 Strategic Air Forces in
Europe, WZ 5625, 16 Aug 44, Tar 5, Memo 35-45, Hq, Ninth AF, 27 Oct
44, and WFO, Ninth AF.

MAJ HARCROFF GRANT
CAPT JOHN A. BAGB
CAPT JAMES E. DAW
CAPT RUSSELL MILLER

(2172725, AC
226626, AC
2752312, AC
21632145, AC

2030265, AC
2080285, AC
21302382, AC
20502925, AC

(Travel dir is consistent to each contained in 1st Ind, Hq, 8 Strategic Air
Forces in Europe, 2 Nov 44, to Hq, WZ, European C), "31, WFO 300.417", 23
Nov 1944.)

By order of Brigadier General HALL:

J. F. THOMSON, JR.,
Col., AG, US
Deputy Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

Francis W. Whitlock, Jr. /s/
Francis W. Whitlock, Jr.
Major, AG
Adjutant General

RESTRICTED
RESTRICTED

HEADQUARTERS
363RD FIGHTER GROUP

AFO 111, J. S. AFRIC
19 January 1945

SPECIAL OFFICERS

NUMBER 6

1. Lt. DAVID GALLAGHER, 06-03-36, AC, will proceed fr this sta o/a 19 Jan 45 to 19th Tactical Control Group (prev) for a period of one day for the purpose of inspection. Upon completion of this duty he will ret to proper sta and orga.

TDM by MT, all auto or rail. 60-114 p 432-02 a 212/52-45. AUTH: TM 100F W 3 65 7.

2. Having been cld this orga per par 17, so 14, 5, 134th Repl Plan (LAF), 14 Jan 45, the following named o/s are further cld to S4, as indicated:

2Lt (1055) ROBERT J. JENKINS 032400 AC 396th Piher Sq
2Lt (1055) REIMANN B. JONEY 033425 AC 397th Fhter Sq

3. Having been cld this orga per par 17, so 15, 15, 134th Repl Plan (LAF), 15 Jan 45, the following named o/s are further cld to S4, as indicated:

2Lt (1055) ALFRED J. ALLENSON 032366 AC 395th Fhter Sq
2Lt (1055) LEO H. COCHIBY 029363 AC 395th Fhter Sq
2Lt (1055) FLEET F. CERVA 032825 AC 396th Fhter Sq
2Lt (1055) NELSON J. BUCK 032872 AC 397th Fhter Sq

4. Cdl (1111) Jd Lt: 4, gmt: 1289399, 397th Prs S4, will proceed fr this sta o/a 21 Jan 45 to cite universit, 9 boulevard rem u, Paris, for the purpose of picking up Lt. BURTON R. STEERS JR, on temp dy tour non. Upon completion of this duty, he will ret to proper sta and orga. TDM by MT. 60-114 P 213/52-45.

5. The following named officers are cld 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 LEON R. CORRELL 0415435 AC President
Lt COL DONALD G. HARCRO 0157603 AC
Capt HILBERT R. RAYMILL 0153028 AC
Capt FREDERICK H. ROSK 0326517 AC
1st Lt JOSEPH B. BUNKER JR 0650963 AC
1st Lt DALE C. GIBSON 0153028 JC
1st Lt JOHN F. ROGERS 0558007 AC Recorder

(Travel air is pursuant to cdl contained in 1st Ed. U.S. Strategic Air Forces in Europe, 2 Nov 1944, to Lt. Col. Europeon TC, USA, File 3-1-45 USA, 22 Feb 1944.)
SO 6, By 368th Ftr Sp, 19 Jan 45, cont'd.

By order of Lt Col PEREGO:

RICH L. RICH,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

DISTRIBUTION:

RICH L. RICH,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

- 2 -

R E S T R I C T I O N
HEADQUARTERS (ADVANCED)
XXI TACTICAL AIR COMMAND
Office of the Commanding General
AFO 141, US Army
24 January 1945

SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO: Commanding Colonel, 368th Fighter Group, AFO 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 affect his ability further to resist.

2. The operations of your Group on that day were outstandingly effective. By accomplishing the destruction or damage of 689 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. F. Meehan /s/
Col. MEEHAN,
Brig. Gen., USA,
Commanding.


TO: COS, 395th Ftr Sq, 396th Ftr Sq, 397th Ftr Sq, AFC 141, US 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.
RESTRICTED

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 de-
stroyed 382 motor transport and damaged 30 more. In addition, 220 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

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

Par 1, 60 No 14, Hq Ninth Air Force, 22 January 1945, cont'd.

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 VAN ZANDT:

77 MALLARD,
Colonel, GSC

OFFICIAL:

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

A TRUE EXTRACT COPY:

Hugh L. Hails,
Major, Air Corps.

RESTRICTED
NINTH AIR FORCE HEADQUARTERS, FRANCE (DULAYED)—Catching thousands of retreating German vehicles in a tremendous traffic jam between Mons and Brussels, Thunderbolts and Lightnings on Sunday destroyed 217 trucks, 757 horse-drawn vehicles and 59 armored cars to set a new day's 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 L. Meyers, Milford, Iowa. The group earned top honors for the day by knocking out 294 trucks and 236 horse-drawn vehicles and artillery pieces in the dawn to dusk attack.

"The Germans were using everything they could get hands on," said Captain William R. Gibson, Jeannette, 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. Then we started 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, Jeannette, 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.
SPECIAL ORDERS

NUMBER 8

1. Capt (Oll) Walter J. Gata, 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 org. TDY by MT 60-l14 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. DRESCO 24326522 AC
Lt Col JOHN M. HASSLER 2432193 AC
Maj THOMAS J. CARBOU 2499743 AC
Maj DONALD D. DAVIS 4447249 MC
Maj DENNIS CRISP 0427521 AC
Capt CARLOS E. TALBOT 025977 AC

3. Having been asg'd this orgn per par 3, SC 20, Hq 134th Repl En (AAF), 20 Jan 1945, the following named officers are further asg'd to Sq indicated:

2d Lt (1055) HELMSF. SCHREIBER 0327250 295th Ftr Sq
2d Lt (1055) ROBERT B. GRESH 0306241 AC 397th Ftr Sq
2d Lt (1055) MAURICE J. SHEA 0303010 AC 397th Ftr Sq
2d Lt (1055) CLIFFORD J. PRICE 0303070 AC 397th Ftr Sq
2d Lt (1055) WILLIAM A. SHEPHERD 0303042 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 org. TDY by MT, mil sort or rail. 60-114 P 432-02 A 212/50425 and 60-105 P 432-02 A 212/50425. AUTH: VCOG XIX Tac.

1st Lt JOHN F. HEGAN 0569987 AC
1st Lt HEGAR E. HOLSINGER 1315623 (Driver) 2499th MSR SQ

5. 1st Lt HERBERT W. CRUICKSHAUK, 0567799, AC, is detailed to conduct the monthly inventory of the group post exchange on 31 Jan 1945.
6. Under the provisions of AR 600-31, 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 with a rating of excellent is awarded the Motor Vehicle Driver Badge.

7. Under the provisions of AR 600-31, 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 with a rating of excellent are awarded the Motor Vehicle Driver Badge.

S/Sgt John J. Murphy 11090971 Cpl John T. Connolly 3129631
Sgt David Pana 39297507 Cpl Harry L. Meid 32320263
Sgt Alton A. Davidson 17110457 Pfc Clifford L. Stember 36642616
Cpl Ralph J. Flanick 33305245 Pfc Edmund L. DeForge 31321098
Cpl Chester E. Utie 36199966 Pfc Sidney Grossman 32695450
Cpl Charles W. Race 33769525 Pfc George J. Simpson 31265763
Cpl Victor L. Martin 31023397 Pvt William E. Newton 16093200
Pvt Thomas F. Lynch 3729221

8. Under the provisions of AR 600-31, 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, 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 600-31, 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, 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 11090971 Cpl Ralph J. Flanick 33305245
Sgt David Pana 39297507

(Travel dir is pursuant to stat contained in 1st Ind: Hq U.S. Strategic Air Forces in Europe, 2 Dec 1944, to Ltr, Hq European Theater: USAFFE 500:4 Ltr, 22 Nov 1944)

By order of Lt Col FERGUSON:

OFFICIAL:

HUGH L. RICE, Major, Air Corps, Adjutant.
HEADQUARTERS
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

APO 141, U. S. Army
29 January 1945

SPECIAL ORDERS

NUMBER 9

1. 1st Lt CARL H. GUNNACH, 0571386, AC, is appointed Investigating Officer to investigate court-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 as Agent in Officers, for orgn indicated, to MAJOR JOHN P. VOLLIVIA, FO, accountable disbursing Off, 84th Service Group, for the pay of officers and EM P/R for the month of Jan 45.

1st Lt OSWALD DORIA 01604399 SC
1st Lt SAMUEL R. SCHOFIELD 0582942 AC
2d Lt THOMAS G. MONAHAN 0582943 AC
1st Lt GEORGE E. GILL 0583973 AC
1st Lt NORBERT H. BUSKY 0583973 AC
1st Lt NORBERT H. BURZY 0583973 AC
1st Lt LEO W. CULKIN 0583973 AC
1st Lt HIRAM D. BLACK 0583973 AC
2d Lt ROBERT L. STARCHUCK 0583973 AC
CWO JAMES C. WEALEY 0582942 USA
Capt ROBERT S. CHUEN 0582942 USA
1st Lt JOHNN D. DREISCOLL 0582942 USA
1st Lt GEORGE E. TIMBERLAKE 0582942 USA

Hp 368th Fighter Group
395th Fighter Squadron
396th Fighter Squadron
397th Fighter Squadron
21st Weather Sq Det "A"
40th Mobile Com Sq Det "A"
1293rd MP Co (Avn) Less Det A
45th Ordn. Bomb Disposal Sq
2137th Engr (Avn) F/T Platoon
Hp & Hp Sq, 84th Service Group
107th Signal Co Less Det A/B
302d Air Service Squadron
107th Signal Co Det "A"
1814th Ord SAM Co (Avn)
1222st QM Co Det "A"
2999th QM Trk Co Avn Det "A"
29th MRR Sq Less Det "A"

3. In accordance with Ltr HQ XIX TAC, subj: "Educational Advisement by Interview", file 352, dtd 26 Jan 45, Cpl (405) Frank S. Stovall, 39199927, Hp 368th Ftr Gp, is appointed Education Advisor for the 368th Ftr Gp and attchd units.


By order of Lt Col PEREDO:

OFFICIAL:

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

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