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S E C R E TSQUADRON HISTORY
August 1944

I. Negative.

II. STRENGTH COMMISSIONED AND ENLISTED

1. At beginning of Period:		
	OFFICERS - - - - -	55
	ENLISTED MEN - - - - -	249
2. Net increase:		
	OFFICERS - - - - -	4
	ENLISTED MEN - - - - -	14
3. Net Decrease:		
	OFFICERS - - - - -	4
	ENLISTED MEN e e - - - - -	12
4. At end of Period:		
	OFFICERS - - - - -	55
	ENLISTED MEN - - - - -	251

III. On 23 August 1944 A Eschelon departed Strip number 3 by truck for the Airdrome at Chartres. This move was accomplished per Order of the Commanding General Ninth Air Force. This was to be a permanent change of station.

At 0700 25 August 1944 B Eschelon departed Strip number 3 for Chartres to complete the move of the entire Squadron. The Pilots made the trip by airplane, the Ground Personnel departing by truck. By 30 August 1944 the move was completed, all Personnel and equipment were established at Chartres Airdrome.

IV.

On 4 August 1944 at about 1342 Lt Col Quimby was leading his Squadron flying cover to Armored Columns in the vicinity of Flessy. While strafing a gun position, his airplane was struck by flak and he was seen to crash. Earlier reports indicated that he could not have possibly survived the crash. However investigation the following day revealed that Lt Col Quimby was in a front line Hospital under care for a broken arm, various lacerations and multiple bruises.

On 12 August 1944 at about 1800 Lt Charles R. Rife was flying in a flight led by Captain Henry J. Mazur. The flight was on an Armored Column Cover mission. While attempting to aid his element leader whose airplane had been damaged by exploding debris and flak, Lt Rife's airplane received two direct hits upon the wings. The exploding fragments went through the fuselage and canopy wounding Lt Rife in the back.

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On 14 August at about 1115 Captain Thomas N. Montag was leading the Squadron which was flying a Armed Reconnaissance mission in the vicinity of Falaise. While strafing a truck in the woods about five miles east of Domfront, he flew too low and crashed through trees scattering wreckage from his plane for a distance of fifty yards. He is not believed to have survived this crash.

First Lieutenant Pike B. Martin was leading his Element in the vicinity of Falaise flying cover to advancing Armored Columns. Spotting enemy tanks and motorized units fleeing the escape gap in the Bomb Line he flew low to definitely establish their identity. On the first pass his plane was struck by flak from gun positions and from the tanks. He made a second pass attacking them with bombs and strafing. He came off the target with his controls damaged and his airplane on fire. He tried to fly his airplane into friendly territory and twice made attempts to parachute unsuccessfully. On the second attempt his airplane went into a power dive from which he couldn't recover. The crash was reported at T-9003 on a road southwest of Caen. This accident took place on 16 August at about 1915 from an altitude of some two thousand feet.

On 17 August the British Forces called by telephone and informed Group Headquarters that Lt Pike B. Martin's body was found lying beside his airplane. On this information he is being carried as Killed in Action.

- V. The following Awards have been awarded to personnel of this organization during the month of August 1944:

2nd Lt., Jewkes, Dale B.	Air Medal
2nd Lt., Johnson, Walter R.	Air Medal
2nd Lt., Rife, Charles R.	Purple Heart
Pvt., Newton, William E.	Purple Heart

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SQUADRON HISTORY
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1. Another new month and we are still in the E.T.O. - I have written a similiar statement eight times now. We've got the Hun on the run so let's hope I don't have to write the statement eight more times.
The morning started auspiciously enough for F/O Charles Rife who became 2nd Lt., Charles Rife. Lt Rife has had an interesting service **career** and we are all glad to see him a full fledged officer. Nice going, Riff Raf.
We had a 0615 briefing for an Armored Column Patrol but it didn't materialize until 1624 due to weather conditions. The final tally shows, 2 tanks destroyed, 1 M/T destroyed, 10 plus M/T's damaged.
A second mission led by Col Quimby was recalled before the mission was completed due to the weather closing in. We called it a day at 2115.
2. The weather around here has been none to good for flying since we've been here. We get up at five o'clock for a 2 p.m. mission, so it seems about every other day.
Finally at 1400 an 8 ship flight took off to continue escorting an armored column and beat up enemy mechanized units. Captain Mumaw led this mission which was a successful one from all standpoints. Staff cars, Tanks, M/T's and busses were targets of opportunity and this flight reached a goodly tally score again.
Captain Bowlin led the second mission which took off at 1918. Though the final tally was not overly impressive, several enemy armored columns were destroyed and dispersed. Hitler certainly can't be too well pleased over this.
3. This was a disappointing day from many aspects. As usual an early morning briefing brought about a period of sweating out the weather. Finally Captain Mumaw took an 8 ship flight off of an armored column cover mission. After half an hour's flight he ordered his flight back to the base because of extremely poor weather and visibility. No further flying until late afternoon when Colonel Quimby tried to take an 8 ship flight off. The weather closed in so rapidly that four ships didn't get off the ground at all. The four ships which got off had to jettison their bombs in the Channel and then had to sweat out a landing on the strip. It was a rough deal all the way around. This weather sure has kept the Hun from taking a real beating.
4. An early briefing brought the same results - a late afternoon mission. The weather has been such that no morning flying has been possible.
At 1342 an 8 ship flight led by Lt Col. Quimby went out to do Armored Column cover in the Bomb Line area. A routine mission became a spectacular one in that Col Quimby did not return from this one. According to all reports he strafed a gun position after ordering his flight upstairs. This gun had been pecking away at the "Chief" so he decided to make a personal issue out of it. It was while strafing this position from deck level that our "Chief" was hit and

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his plane was seen to bellyland striking a tree losing a wing and the engine of his plane. We are all hoping that Col Quimby survived this crash despite it's severity. A daring leader, a skillful pilot he has set a high standard of achievement for the other pilots of our Group. Too without the "Chief" this squadron would not seem the same for inexplicable reasons. We are and have been a peculiarly characteristic squadron led by a ball of fire and energy in Col Quimby. Here's hoping any news of him will be good news.

The result of the mission pales in comparison with this significant loss because regardless of it's success, it would not be worth the cost. The few targets of opportunity found were knocked out of the picture by strafing and bombing. Lt Hayes and Lt Diman picked up 212k damage in the vicinity of Demfront. No further flying was scheduled for the day. The whole Group is impatiently sweating out further news of Col Quimby's fate.

5. An early morning briefing finally materialized in a mission getting off the ground. Led by Capt. in Muraw the 8 ship flight had a field day against enemy mechanized units. Final tally revealed, Destroyed 1 tank, 2 jeeps, 2 trucks, 1 half-track, 1 staff car and 1 tank, 2 jeeps, 4 M/T's and 1 half-track damaged. This was the one and only mission of the day for the weather closed in and washed out any further flying.

The afternoon brought good news of our Chief. He was located in a front line hospital with fairly serious injuries but alive. For a time this squadron was sweating out it's Colonel but apparently he's one of those men too tough to die which finds it's approval with us. Now if he can heal quickly enough to rejoin us everything will be as it was. For the present Captain Montag is acting C.O. with Captain Muraw taking over the Operations Officers job and Lt P.R. Martin acting as Asstt Operations Officer.

6. An accumulation of "highs" "lows" "Overcasts" and "Ground Sags" have kept this squadron fairly inactive. The Pilots have been sitting around all day sweating out one mission per day. On the basis of a Squadron strength of some forty three pilots and only one 8 ship flight a day too many pilots don't get to fly. Our pilots fly because they love to fly and how they grip to have to sit around. They are bored and have been when we had gruelling days of from five to twelve missions per day.

The whole situation is beginning to look better around here and the bomb line has been moving ahead by leaps and bounds. The optimism and morale of all the men is at an extremely high peak. Everyone is at a stage where they are marking days until the war in this theatre is over, May all their wishes come through.

The news reaching us concerning Col. Quimby continues to be gratifying. From what we have learned concerning the

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the accident, it is a miracle that our "Chief" lives to tell about it. His injuries are not as serious as was thought at first and a good possibility exists that he may join us in the very near future. From what we have heard our "Chief" suffered a broken arm and multiple cuts, bruises and lacerations. Well come on home "Chief" quicklike.

The late afternoon finally permitted our Squadron to take off. Led by Captain Monteg an 8 ship flight went out to escort tanks again. The mission was a success from every standpoint. A Church tower assigned as a target by outbreak was knocked out and enemy mechanized units took a further shellacking. Captain Monteg picked up some flak in his rightwing but got home in good shape. This was the lone mission for the day.

A highlight of the day was the return of punk our puppy who has been AWOL for some sixteen hours. However she was forgiven in that she was found tied to a tree in the Service Squadron making it appear that her AWOL was not a voluntary one.

7. Now that the weather has improved somewhat we are flying two missions perday. We still have our early morning briefing with late takeoffs but that's an improvement over no takeoff at all.

The first mission led by Captain Mumaw took off at 1215 returning to the base at 1350. It was not a successful mission in that very little damage to enemy installations was reported. Captain Mumaw's plane was hit by flak on his bomb run so he was forced to return to the strip. Lt Aldridge flying his wing returned with him. They both jettisoned their bombs in the Channel so there went four bombs. The four other bombs were near misses on moving targets. One flight was not loaded with bombs so they acted as top cover and did no strafing.

The second mission of the day was led by Captain Monteg and here the results were a little better. One flight acted as top cover again and carried no bombs. Ground Forces wanted a wooded area bombed and this assigned was carried out successfully. Other efforts as a result of strafing knocked out jeeps, staff cars, and motor trucks. This ended another day in Normandy.

8. Lt J.S. Nolan is on DS to the Ground Forces and his voice is being heard over the R/T assigning targets to our squadron. He should have many stories to tell us on his return if he has spent his time in tanks as we understand he is.

The first mission of the day led by Captain Mumaw was not particularly eventful. Lt Garry found a tank for a target and destroyed it.

The second mission was led by Col Perego and was more or less a haphazard one. Lt LeLoup had to return to the strip and as a result Lt Kesting has to escort him. Bomb hangups and radio difficulties hampered the usual coordination of the squadron. The Germans began a counterattack and apparently were making a great effort to break through but from all reports were unsuccessful. Our pilots commented on the heavy amount of enemy traffic on the roads from Sourdeval to Ger.

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The two mission day came to an end with a cheering mail call in that almost everyone received a letter. Now if the war would only end, none would ask for anything more.

9. Orders came through from Group appointing Captain Montag as Acting Commanding Officer, Captain Mumaw operations officer and Lt Martin assistant Operations Officer. This set up will operate until Col Quinby returns or until further changes take place. Lt Hill has been appointed Supply officer in addition to his other duties.

We are still operating on a two mission a day schedule. The first mission of the day was led by Captain Mumaw and it did not take off until late morning. The usual targets of M/T's, tanks and jeeps were encountered and bombed and strafed. Targets were scattered ones, no concentration were found anywhere.

The second mission led by Captain Montag was a more spectacular one in that a convoy of 25 M/T's were encountered and blasted. After disposing of this target, the boys covered the general Mortain area busting up individual targets on all roads. Lt Kik had a field day getting four M/T's a jeep and an oil truck before he ran out of ammunition. This mission brought the day to a close and we drew a release until daybreak.

Captain Montag drew Col Meyers plane for his since Sally was declared inoperational. Sally was a C5 and the fastest ship in the Group and Monty really hated to give her up but so it goes.

10. The morning dragged by very slowly for no mission was scheduled. A leisurely breakfast and just hanging around passed the time.

Then bang out of a clear sky and on ten minutes notice a mission was scheduled. A tank battle is going on and our squadron went out in strength to add it's share to the battle in progress.

Orders came through awarding the Purple Heart to Pvt. William E. Newton for injuries suffered when the truck he was driving ran over a Tellermine. He is the first EM or Officer in our squadron to be so decorated. War has it's ironical moments too.

The first mission of the day was led by Captain Mumaw and it's purpose was to intercede in a tank battle. When our boys arrived at the scene no battle could be found so targets of opportunity were attacked. Someone got a fuel dump on this deal that's for sure.

The second mission of the day was of the type where in results cannot be observed for 8 and 12 hour delay bombs were carried. We never know anything about this sort of mission except that the area is well covered with bombs. However Jerry really clobbered out planes for upon returning three planes revealed many battle scars. Our pilots reported that at least 4 other Groups were working in the same area and confusion was King. Thus ended another day.

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11. A decent waking hour and a leisurely breakfast began the day. Briefing was at 0618 but the flight was not Airborne until 1200. Captain Rowlin led this mission with targets of fuel dump and an ammunition dump. Reports indicate that all bombs were in the target and fires were started. The laws of nature sure take a beating with a war going on. How is all this fuel to be replaced after the war ends? Makes a very good question, I'm sure.
- The second mission led by Captain Montag accomplished one of the finest missions of it's kind. The target selected was a fuel dump in a Marshalling Yards. When our Squadron got there the area gave ample evidence of previous clobberings so they added to the rubble. Then they went on a Peccy flight and the observations they made were the most thorough ones I've ever recorded. It was splendid job well done.
- The third mission of the day was another one of those delayed fuse jobs. Four intersections were pointed out but only two of them were bombed. All twenty four bombs on the target area was reported which should have caused repercussions for some twelve hours. So ended another day.
12. What a day! What a day! It's not likely to be forgotten for some time. Nothing of much account happened during the morning not a plane left the ground. However from thereon things began to happen. Captain Mumaw and Captain Montag alternated leading the Squadron in clobbering the enemy.
- On two occasions a wooded area northeast of Mortain was plastered with bombs starting large fires indicating damage to enemy equipment, supplies. Then Captain Montag's flight went out and when they were done M/T's, tanks, half-tracks, troop carriers, ammunition trucks, oil trucks, gun positions, and mobile guns were no more. This was some mission. Lt Rife was wounded by flak yet brought his plane back and landed safely. He had two holes in each wing at least three feet long with damage to the fuselage and his canopy. The flak went through his back chute hitting him in the small of his back. At present he is in the hospital but we expect him back in a few days. Talk about your excitement too boot he had one 500 pound bomb hung up and he had to land with it. Then behind him in the same traffic pattern Lt Kik landed with two 500 pound bombs and flak damage to his motor. Lt Kik had talked and practically flown Lt Rife from the scene of mishap. It was some mission. Total damage from this mission was three airplanes to the Service Squadron.
- We had news of equal importance during the day. Major Sparks 396th Operations Officer is coming over here as our Commanding Officer replacing Captain Montag. Lt H. Jensen has been permanently transferred to Group. Lt P.R. Martin is on D.S. to Group. White Flight left on leave to the UK Black Flight returned from it's leave there. Lt J/S. (Noodles) Nolan came back from 8 days DS with Armored Troops and he looked beaten up. He said he had his shoes off twice in 8 days. Boy he's had it!

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13. The Sabbath came upon us with an 0515 briefing which didn't materialize into a mission until 1000. From thereonin there wasn't any rest for the weary or the wicked. Before the day was done our squadron had flown seven missions. A summary for the Group's effort for the day totalled 172 destroyed vehicles and 49 damaged. This was 24% of the Wing's destroyed and 31% of the damaged vehicles claimed by Group. Tanks, staff cars jeeps, M/T's, dumps anything crawling or moving served as targets throughout the day. The Ground Forces are on the move and the Air Force are on the move doing everything they can to speed this move.

Major Harold P. Sparks our new C.O. introduced himself to our squadron with a verbal discussion then led a flight on an unusual mission for us. He led a four ship flight which was vectored from St. Lo. to a point where they dropped delayed action bombs from 10,000 feet while flying straight and level. The Major is no stragner to us for he has been a member of this Group since the day of activation.

14. This was a day not to be soon forgotten by the Squadron or the Group. It began with a scheduled Armed recy missions for our squadron in the region of Falaise and Argentan. The first mission paid a price much too expensive for any accomplishment. While bombing and strafing a wooded area east of Domfront Captain T. N. Montag our ace and Operations Officer went down too low struck a tree and crashed. Accompanying pilots report that his possibilities of surviving this crash were practically nil if any. To analyze the loss of "Monty" is not something done on paper for he has been to our squadron what a heart is to a body. Loveable, likeable he served every capacity with the same devotion. To know him was to love him for he had no enemies anywhere. From the lowest rank of enlisted men to the highest ranking officer, he was held in the esteem. Monty wherever you are God Bless you and keep you for you were among the finest of men. No, no accomplishment was worth the cost in your case.

The rest of the day our Squadron drew three eight airplane missions continuing the armed recy in the region between Falaise and Argentan. The score of destroyed enemy vehicles is diminishing for lack of targets. Thus the missions served the purpose of patrolling the area and looking for targets of Opportunity. At 2000 we drew a release until daybreak of the 16th.

15. Our Squadron is on release until tomorrow morning. It's the first break in activity which we have had and it was a welcolm one. It gives the boys on the line an opportunity to get their planes into better shape. It allows for an accumulation of fuel, bombs and ammunition. Further for at least a day the pressure is off and one can work without the usual strain and tension when missions are going out.

16. This day oened with a flying schedule of four ship flights to fly cover to the 3rd Armored Column. Despite the fact that briefings were held all day, our pilots could not get off the ground because of poor weather. Finally late in the afternoon

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a flight was ordered into the blue. Captain Mazur was scheduled to lead the first flight but Major Sparks decided in view of all circumstances that it was his responsibility to do so. It is leadership of this kind which seldom if ever receives publicity or recognition which is indicative of esprit de corps and the reason why Americans are the fighting men they are. Personal safety and personal factors are subordinated to the common cause. Major Sparks does not have to prove his worth to this Squadron for he had displayed his abilities and capacities and worth in this Group since it's activation.

After a false start the flight took off and ran into a great deal of German activity around Renes. Then two more flights took off to continue pounding the enemy.

The second flight led by Lt. Staton was illfated in that only three ships returned from this mission. Lt. Pike B. Martin flying his ship Boomerang did not return. He was shot up attacking tanks near Falaise and his airplane caught on fire. Despite two attempts to parachute for some unknown reason, he was unable to leave his airplane. The plane was seen to strike the ground near Caen which had been a final resting point for many a good pilot. Pike is listed as K.I.A. since the British Forces called by phone to inform us that his body was found beside his plane where it crashed. How does one with mere words describe a loss such as this. Pike loved to fly, he loved the service and was planning to make a career out of it. Nothing he was ever called upon to do was too much or too little and he performed every task with a spirit and willingness typical to his way of life. Some must die so others may live and let us hope that the sacrifices of our youth die not with their deaths but find commeration in the spirit of liberty and love of freedom which typifies the American way of life. So long Pike may you rest in peace knowing that you carried out your last mission as you did so many others - to the very best of your ability. We'll miss you, we already do for there isn't anyone to take your place in our hearts.

So ended another unhappy day for our squadron waiting for a new day, more missions and a further desire to pound the enemy whenever they are found and wherever they are found.

17. Briefing at 0815 to continue the schedule of flying cover to Armored Column Elements. Our squadron is still with the 3rd Armored Division designated as Poodle and Bronco. The weather closed in and the morning was spent sweating out the first mission without any success.

Late in the afternoon the weather cleared up sufficiently to permit the completion of three flights. Captain Mazur, Captain Standifer and Lt Gamble took their flights. Two of the missions were fairly uneventful with targets of opportunity fairly restricted. Lt Gamble however ran into a troop concentration and it is said that some three hundred German soldiers won't fight in this war anymore.

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Captain Haywood returned with Lt Martin's body from the area where he crashed so positive identification was made. He was buried a short distance from the field at the La Cambe cemetery. Sherman was right about war.

18. This past week has been rather an unusual one in that we have gotten up at early hours for briefing yet it has been late afternoon before a flight has been able to take off. Yet we manage to get four flights operational in several hours left before darkness sets in.

The missions of this day were uneventful for targets are not as ample as they have been in the past. A tremendous toll of the enemy motorized equipment has already been taken so he must exercise greater caution with what he has left. Herr Goebbles still anticipates a German victory although events should becloud his optimism somewhat.

The various flights are alternating in a running schedule of five day leaves which are spent in England. This privilege is extended only to Combat crews and there's no question but that circumstances warrant this privilege.

Lt Charles Rife is on the road to recovery from his recent experience and within a week or so will be back in the air flying.

Some promotions ventured forth this day elevating to Captain, Lt Gamble, Lt Schulte and Lt Staton. This is a level in promotions pilots strive to achieve for what more could one ask as an indication of success among men. Nice going men.

19. This was one of those days for which the U of K. was so famous. A overcast prevailed all the day finally breaking out into rain in the afternoon. From the standpoint of carrying on a war not a thing was accomplished for not a ship left the ground.

A bit of news which we always dread to hear reached the Strip last night. Captain Montag's body was found near his plane by a Frenchman and buried nearby. We held out that by some miracle that he had escaped but it was not to be.

Our location on this strip is gradually taking us too far from the immediate battle zone and we should be on the move again very shortly. Let us get too comfortable and off we go again. Where to only the wheels know.

20. This day dawned with much rain and poor flying weather again. Despite this unfavorable aspect briefing was held for an armed reccey of the Seine River. After that take off time was left to the discretion of the winds.

The weather cleared over the target sufficiently for our squadron to take off on it's armed Reccey of the Seine River. Captain Standifer led them and off they went. Although targets were few in number, our squadron gave a good account of its'self Lt Kik loosened up two barges, Lt Earls hit a dock and Lt Wayland got hits on a good sized ship which should hamper it's sailing for a time.

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Then a second mission led by Major Sparks went out late in the afternoon to do another delayed action job on a ferry way on the Seine river. From all reports good dispersion resulted and one of the one hour delayed bombs went off. It was a good job well done and the pilots returned about 2045.

The civilians and strikers at home could very well profit by the attitude of our pilots in performing their tasks at home. Our boys never complain at the rising or sleeping hour, never ask odds of the enemy and the things they are called upon to do, involve a good deal more danger and personal hazard than any job at home. They fly into the muzzles of enemy guns day after day. They know not the meaning of the word impossible. They take risks beyond the call of immediate duty, they shirk not the foulest weather or task. When victory is chalked up the boys with wings can rightfully be proud that their efforts plowed a the path to victory.

The end of the day brought two paddlefoot shavetails into full fledged Lieutenant class. Lt's Wilbur L. Luker and Theodore F. Skalko have arisen from among the ranks. As I told Lt Luker I can't think of two nicer men it could have happened to though of course personal prejudice is evident in this case. So ends another day awaiting the events of the next day to come.

21. This day brought rain and mud and a good deal of both. Group optimistically called a briefing at 0845 which we doubtfully attended. It was one of the longest briefing I've ever attended but to no avail for the rain did not let up all day.

Major Sparks called for a weapon inspection which consumed several hours time.

Padre Cleary was to hold a mass for Captain Thomas N. Montag but the weather conditions prevented this. A substitute for this was a lecture on Jet Propulsion attended by all pilots. It was a long, long day.

22. 2 This morning opened with a release from "Ops" for us. As a result few of us got up for breakfast except those who were making preparations to go on leave.

The afternoon brought the announcement that our Group is on the move again with Chartres as the new operating base.

23. At 0530 "A" eschelon entrucked for our new field at Chartres with a whoop and a holler. Everyone will remember where the holler came from. Major Weiler and his jeep fell into the greese pit during the heaviest rainfall and a lot of sputtering and hollering resulted before he was freed. Finally the convoy was assembled and got out on the road. It seems every time our organization is ordered to move rain comes along to make it more difficult to do so.

A armed recy mission scheduled for our squadron could not take off for the soggness of the field. At midday we were released from "Ops" until daybreak.

The rest of the day was spent packing and getting personal and organizational equipment ready to go. Too most of us indulged in a final shower before that massive structure was torn down.

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Captain Staton, Lt Early and a few of the other pilots indulged in perfecting a secret weapon in the form of a rocket. That took up most of their afternoons leisure time.

We have three new pilots joining us today fresh from the UK, they are Lt's Paeper, Monger and Reiman. Welcolme men

24. This morning brought a further departure of personnel for Chartres by truck while the remainder carry on a full flying schedule. General Quesada demands mobility from his Groups and regardless of moves Groups must remain in Operations. An Airdrome Squadron moved in to replace the Service Group and our own personnel is carrying on the repair and servicing of airplanes.

The enemy is in retreat but he has been so badly beaten that targets for a time are few and far between. However our boys stay in the air forcing him to seek cover at all times.

We are back on C and K rations now that Quartermaster Supply has moved and an appreciable difference in food is noticeable. This condition should not exist for more than a week when we will be up at Chartres and fat again we hope.

25. It was briefing at 0600 with take off at 0700. The weather officer, The Group Operations officer both agreed that take off would be held up until late in the afternoon. So our Squadron took off at 0700. The army has an expression for a situation such as this - I hesitate to use it.

The first mission of the day led by Major Sparks hit as a target a double span railroad bridge which had good result. Handicapped by ground fog visual observation was made impossible. Still it was a satisfactory mission.

It was the second mission of the day led by Captain Mumaw which produced the excitement. On two roads leading to Rouen they found some four hundred enemy vehicles of various descriptions. Our pilots came back with the appropriate expression that "Jerry really had it". To hear our boys tell it they really clobbered the vehicles cooperating with other Groups. The Germans Can't take too much more of this sort of beating.

In the meantime we are operating with very limited personnel. Over half of our squadron is at Chartres getting that field ready for the rest of us. The stories coming back about our future home aren't too promising, but we will let future developments tell the stories. Who wants to be comfortable anyway? Makes for a good question, I would say.

Punk the squadron mascot has developed a unique habit of late. Dogs have been known to chase people, cars, bikes, birds and cats. Punk chases airplanes. This habit isn't a bad one until she starts to do so from the front then it's going to be too bad.

The last few days around here have felt like Sunday for the peace and quiet which has reigned. What really brings on the feeling is the lack of Tents, of men working in large groups, the general hustle, bustle of every working day. There is however a great deal of work being done only less noise doing it.

The last mission of the day was scrubbed to be led by Major Sparks with a take off time at 1910. Major Sparks could not take off due to difficulty with his airplane so Captain Standifer

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led the eleven planes into battle. This last flight did not run into the large concentration of enemy the second flight did, but it was a successful mission for they destroyed an obstacle for sweepstakes, destroyed two barges, damaged another and knocked out 15 M/T's by bombing. Lt Snyder was the only one to be bothered with flak picking up a small piece from heavy AA. At 2145 we called it a day having run three missions for a day's work.

26. Slowly but surely the rest of the Squadron is departing this strip for Chartres. All luggage was piled out in front of the tents this morning to be packed into C-47's and flown down. The rest of us are carrying on operationally until the last plane leaves the strip.

At 1015 briefing was called for an Armored Column Cover over our old friend the 3rd Armored who are operating east of Paris. Led by Captain Mumaw a 12 ship flight carrying belly tanks and no bombs set out. The enemy has kept pretty low these days so targets are not very plentiful. As a result the boys haven't had much trouble with flak these days. The two missions for today were uneventful.

27. We have overstayed our period at Strip 3 by one day according to orders but war is war. This morning brought a convoy departure for Chartres and a schedule of Armed Reccs to be flown. Group took over briefing and interrogation for the day because the pilots planed to land at Chartres in the afternoon.

The morning convoy was a small one with a larger one scheduled to leave at noon. It's quite a drive some 180 with traffic snarls jams all along the line. Still it had it's pleasant aspects in that the people throughout the drive seemed genuinely pleased to see Americans and plied them with cider, wine, apples, eggs and flowers. A slightly different reception from the one we received from the one we received when we arrived in Normandy for the first time.

Chartres airdrome was used by the enemy until our heavies blasted it out of the picture. As a result our men have to put it back in shape for use.

28. A Eschelon had a rough time of it when they arrived here for the first time. It was raining to beat the band, it was dark, no tents pitched, all in all not too good. However with the usual display of initiative and resourcefulness and despite the various handicaps, they moved and got the place ready for us.

Two missions were flown from this base today on each one only one bomb was carried. The first mission was a field day the boys destroying enemy guns, troops, tanks and M/T's. The second mission was a NRO for the target was so well camouflaged our pilots could not find it.

Late in the afternoon and early evening the rest of the squadron came straggling in from strip #3 to bring us up to full strength again. Our living area and our working areas are rounding into good shape and there hasn't been any interruption of the flying schedule. The war goes on from Chartres for the 395th Fighter Squadron.

29. The rains came again today washing out any possibility

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of flying while the rain did interfere with flying, the other departments were unable to go on with their work consolidating their positions on the new field.

The pilots continued to improve their living conditions, putting wooden floors for a foundation, securing lockers for their clothing and generally making themselves fat.

On the afternoon Wingsent through a release until day-break.

With the exception of Captain Elliott and Lt Schofield and a few enlisted men the Squadron is operating with full strength we are all anticipating another move but I don't feel it's going to come as soon as the time limit set by some. We are going to stay here until everything is shipshape and excellent working order - then we'll move, not before.

30. The rain and the mud are still with us today, with that a low ceiling so no flying again today. Work on the ground elements is progressing however. The pilots room is in pretty good shape. The pilot's snack bar is nearing completion. All the other Departments are all set up and in working order.

Most of the pilots have constructed elaborate tent dwellings. It is the hope of many that all their efforts have not been in vain for the way the Bomb Line is moving now er are already too far away to render the type of Group Support we are supposed to perform. Captain Staton and Lt Early have actually constructed a wooden hut in the preference to living in a tent and it's a dandy.

The rest of the day was spent wandering about the countryside looking for laundry and cleaning propositions. These items at best are a difficult situation.

Living in a forest as we do, we find ourselves forced to plow through a great deal of mud to go anywhere. As a result many of us are opposed to exercise have it forced upon us due to circumstances. Life in the raw is rough at times.

31. Today is the begining of the end of another month for us in the E.T.O. It is also payday which could be called incidental for we've been given very little if any opportunity to spend any money over here.

When we were awakened this morning, the mud still with us although the rain was gone. As a result back to work for our Squadron. Briefing at 0815 for a 12 ship mission led by Major Sparks our C.O. Of the twelve ships only two were bombed up carrying one 500 pound bomb apiece. We are still working with poodle and Bronco and these two outfits are racing like mad towards the German border. They can go faster than that and none of us will be angry, believe me.

Upon their return from this mission our pilots reported a satisfactory conclusion. The Major and Lt Miller were the only ones carrying bombs. Lt Miller lost his shortly after takeoff

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WHILE Major Sparks "lost" his on a convoy of seven vehicles including jeeps and armored cars. He continued his good work by clobbering some 15 enemy soldiers and four other vehicles. No field day but not a bad hour's work.

Second briefing scheduled for 1400 with Captain Mumaw leading the Squadron. In the same area in which the first Flight had it's fun, this mission had a field day against a large enemy tank. Twelve ships kept peeling off making passes at it until it was destroyed. In addition several other tanks and vehicles will be of no use to the enemy anymore. It's a crackerjack outfit headed by a crackerjack C.O. and it is making it's efforts felt over here.

These two missions were today's work. Although we were not released it was evident no more missions would be flown.

In the evening the pilots relaxed about their room generating up steam for a card game or some other form of amusement to while away the time. It's a rough war or as the French would put it "C'est la guerre".

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