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* * * * *
* HISTORY OF *
* THE 397TH *
* FIGHTER *
* SQUADRON *
* * * * *
* * * * *
* INSTALLMENT *
* EIGHTEEN *
* Covering the month of *
* July 1945 *
* * * * *
* HISTORICAL *
* OFFICER *
* 1st Lt Richard H. *
* Blickensderfer *
* * * * *

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Installment XVIII History of the 397th Fighter Squadron Section A

1. ORGANIZATION (e.g. changes effected by the transfer of the unit or new T/O's)
NEGATIVE

2. STRENGTH ON THE LAST DAY OF THE MONTH:
Unit strength on 31 July 1945

OFFICERS ASSIGNED.....	38
E.M. ASSIGNED.....	240
OFFICERS ATTACHED.....	0
E.M. ATTACHED.....	2

3. ARRIVAL AT OR DEPARTURE FROM EACH STATION OCCUPIED IN THE E.T.O.:
No changes in station.

4. LOSSES IN ACTION:
NEGATIVE.

5. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS TO MEMBERS OF THIS SQUADRON:

1st Lt. George L. Bauer - Silver Star			
Major John J. Tuite, Distinguished Flying Cross.			
1st Lt. Billy B. Arledge,	"	"	"
1st Lt. Dallas J. Clary,	"	"	"
1st Lt. Vernon O. Fein,	"	"	"
1st Lt. Norman H. Frisbie,	"	"	"
1st Lt. Stephen L. Halpin,	"	"	"
1st Lt. Lenn S. Hunt,	"	"	"
1st Lt. L.H. Kostrach,	"	"	"
1st Lt. L.R. Leavoy	"	"	"
1st Lt. Charles B. Patrick,	"	"	"
1st Lt. Robert D. Sharp,	"	"	"
1st Lt. R.W. Thornton,	"	"	"
1st Lt. C.W. Uterhart,	"	"	"
1st Lt. Harry A. Yandel,	"	"	"

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Installation XVIII	History of the 397th Fighter Squadron	Section B
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 * SCORES OF * July 1st - Today trucks took most of our new men back to their
 * NEW MEN * formen bases to say good-bye to their old buddies. Most of
 * ASSIGNED * their old outfits are headed directly for the east to battle
 * * the Japanese. The visit was a profitable one, for the men
 ***** returned with all sorts of things that couldn't be carried in
 a duffel bag, such as radios, cars, dogs and other luxuries.
 Captain Norman H. Frisbie was transferred to XIX TAC. (SO No
 163, Hq, XIX TAC, 28 June 1945)

Special orders just received show one hundred and two new
 enlisted men assigned to the squadron late last month. (SO No. 68, 368th Ftr. Gp, 27
 June 1945), (SO No. 69, 368th Ftr Gp, 29 June 1945), (SO No. 70, 368th Ftr Gp, 30 June
 1945)

S/Sgt. A.H. Nelson left on detached service for thirty days
 to crew a C-47. (SO No. 69, 368th Ftr Gp, 29 June 1945)

First Sergeant Cervera and Master Sergeant Orbie Owens flew
 to the Riviera for a seven day furlough. (SO No. 71, 368th Ftr Gp, 1 July 1945).

The crew for the squadron's C-47 is now S/Sgt. L.E. McDaniels,
 serial engineer - Sergeant W.N. Nesmith, asst. serial engineer - Cpl. John R. Barnard,
 radio operator and mechanic - S/Sgt. S.N. Barton, asst. radio operator and mechanic.
 (SO No. 71, 368th Ftr Gp, 1 July 1945).

July 2nd - Today one of our flight chiefs said that he had
 never seen so many changes of airplanes in and out of the squadron. As soon as the
 acceptance inspection is pulled and everything is going well, orders come in for a
 transfer inspection.

July 3rd - German Lugers and P-38's are becoming plentiful
 in the squadron.

July 4th - Today the squadron was given a half day of liberty.
 The Independence Day celebration was mild in comparison with similar celebrations in
 former years. Not a fire-cracker or artillery shell was heard, but the Red Cross and
 the Enlisted Men's Council gave a carnival. Games of luck and chance were provided.
 There was also a variety of good eats.

July 5th - Confirmation of victories over enemy aircraft was
 received for Major Richard E. Leary (two Me-109's, destroyed) as well as a shared victory
 for Lt's Duncan and Fein (one Me-108, destroyed). Two unconfirmed victories were given
 to Lt's Bender and Bechtold, and one to Lt. Rhinehart (all Me-109's, destroyed). (
 Report No. 79, Victory Credits Board, Hq, XIX TAC, 2 July 1945).

July 6th - Letters were received from men who were sent out of
 squadron on points and are now back in the States as civilians. Sgt's Aro, R.L. Davis,
 Dennis, Fortner, Hanna, Owens, Linville, and Sheridan with many more than a hundred
 points are very envious.

Three new enlisted men were assigned to the squadron today,
 and Lt. Dale C. Olmstead was appointed assistant Base Post Exchange Officer. (SO No. 73,
 368th Ftr Gp, 5 July 1945).

July 7th - The very successful officers' party held at Furth
 was the high spot of the evening. The usual "strong-arm" drinks were served, as well as
 gin punch for guest nurses. The fact that there were a score or more of "Frauleins"
 on the floor abovedid not ruin the party.

July 8th - This record will no doubt be broken, but the record
 catch of fish in the squadron is fifty-two. The record catchers, T/Sgt. Lehman, S/Sgt.
 C.W. Wood, and Sgt. Joseph Roman are very capable with an ordinary pole, string and
 hook. The most common catch is German brown, rainbow and speckled trout.

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Installment XVIII History of the 397th Fighter Squadron Section B
 July 20th - Captain Carl H. Gundlach is appointed President of the Board for Classification of Enlisted Men. (SO No. 81, 368th Ftr Gp, 20 July 1945)

July 21st - Before the drill session today the enlisted men gathered and elected officers for their club. The officers are: President - W.H. Hirshfield, Vice-president - R.L. Wildpert, Secretary-Treasurer - Melvyn L. Sattui. The Board of Governors is J.W. Jones, C.E. Linville, E.S. Womack, N.R. Billinger, and J.W. Zolin. V.E. Nacion and W.W. Myres are bar tenders. Captain Gundlach was appointed by the C.O. to audit the club funds each month. (SO No. 17, 397th Ftr. Sq, 21 July 1945).

July 22nd - Swimmers have found new delight in a very fine pool at Schwabach, a village close to the base. In preparation for the Tri-annual Inspection by the Tactical Air Command, scrubbing seemed to be the order of the day.

July 23rd - S/Sgt. D.E. Nelson was transferred to XIX TAC, located at Camp Miami, France. (SO No. 83, 368th Ftr Gp, 23 July 1945).

Lt. Chancellor returned to the States for a thirty day leave and to attend aerial gunnery school for two months.

July 25th - Drawings were made by enlisted men for three day passes to Brussels and Paris.

July 26th - Confirmation for a shared victory over a FW-190 (destroyed) came in today for Lt. F.C. Stoll Jr. and Lt. V.V. Murphy. (Victory Credits Board, report No. 46, amendment No. 1, Hq, IX TAC, 8 July 1945).

Two officers and two enlisted men left for the Riviera on seven day passes. (SO No. 84, 368th Ftr. Gp, 24th July 1945).

July 27th - Five enlisted men and one officer went to England on seven day furloughs. (SO No. 85, 368th Ftr Gp, 25th July 1945).

July 28th - Final confirmation has been received of the number of enemy aircraft this squadron has destroyed in the air during operations in the ETO. The total for the squadron is 53 destroyed, 4 probably destroyed, 17 damaged. The total for the entire group is 144 destroyed, 19 probably destroyed, and 59 damaged.

In "Stars and Stripes" there appeared an article entitled "Gen. 'Hap' Arnold Keeps Promise and Maimed Eagles Fly Again". Among these maimed eagles is Lt. Ruben C. Bork, formerly of this squadron. While flying on an important combat mission on 27 July 1944, over St. Lo, France, Lt. Bork's plane was damaged, and he was forced to bail out. In this action he lost an arm. When he returned to the States, he and three other pilots with amputated legs were promised by General Arnold to fly again. Today the promise is fulfilled, as all are now flying as observation instructors at Drew Field, Tampa, Florida.

July 29th - S/Sgt. W.E. Hirschfield left on detached service to Paris for fourteen days to appear in the AAF Exposition.

July 30th - 1st Lt Clary, asst. operation officer, and Lt. Lewis were promoted to Captain today.

July 31st - Many hated to see our old C.O. leave today. Major Tuite has been transferred to another group and Major Freund, our operations officer takes over the job as squadron commanding officer.

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Installation XVIII History of the 397th Fighter Squadron Section B

July 9th - A "fire-side" chat by our squadron C.O. on the policies and the status of the squadron ended in joy for all when Major Tuite announced that the 0630 roll call would cease. The "sack-artist" received the news with great concern. On the spot, their mathematical heads started to work on a schedule that would allow more sleep, time to dress, clean up, eat breakfast, make their beds, and get to work by eight o'clock. Major Tuite also announced that there would be furloughs and leaves to England starting this week for four enlisted men and one officer per week.

July 10th - The Enlisted Men's Club may not be on a par with the famous "Stork Club", but to everyone's delight it opened tonight. Cognac, Belgian coke, beer, and orange soda were served by the new bar tender S/Sgt Nacion. It was a good time to open, for everyone was tired after the first day of our drill and calisthenic program.

July 11th - After two sun-baking days, we thought that the runway would certainly be solid enough for take-off but the rains came again. Up to two days ago, it had rained everyday for three weeks.

July 12th - Twelve of our old pilots left for home today. They are Captain Barker, Lts. Fein, Hord, Yandel, Hunt, Kostrach, Uterhart, Thornton, Malpin, Keil, Le Grand, and Roozen. (SO No. 75, 368th Ftr Gp, 9 July 1945).

With Lt. Dixon in a hospital plant and all the old pilots going home there was a big change in officers' duty assignments today. (SO No. 16, 397th Ftr Sq, 8 July 1945).

July 13th - The order for awarding the Silver Star to 1st Lt. George L. Bauer (KIA) came in today. (GO No. 114, IX AF, 25 June 1945).

Orders for awarding of the DFC's to Major Tuite and fourteen of our other pilots were received today.

Captain Magnus left for England, and Captain Howard and Lt. Handlin flew to the Riviera on seven day leaves. Two enlisted men went to the Riviera and four to England on seven day furloughs. (SO No. 76, 368th Ftr Gp, 10 July 1945)

1st Lt. R.H. Blickensderfer departed for England to attend the School of Architecture in London under the Army Education Program.

July 14th - Today was the first big day of outdoor training. One hour of infantry drill and two hours of free play gave all an idea of what to expect on future Saturdays.

Great news came over the radio today that the powerful third fleet is hammering the Japanese mainland.

July 15th - On this day of rest men disappeared in all directions for the purpose of swimming, fishing, sun bathing, taking pictures, going to ball games and to picture shows. A lot of the men took walks to try out the relaxation on the non-fraternization policy.

July 16th - T/Sgt. Wilford R. Read was assigned to the squadron and Sgt. H.E. Walton was transferred to the 48th Ftr. Gp. (SO No. 79, 16 July 1945, 368th Ftr Gp.)

July 17th - Nothing to report.

July 18th - Nothing to report.

July 19th - Three enlisted men and one officer left for the Riviera for furloughs. Five enlisted men and one officer went to England on seven day furloughs. (SO No. 80, 17 July 1945).

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