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FILE #

SG-11-363-11

Dec 1942 -

Dec 1943

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MICROFILMED

SG-11-363-11

Classified "SECRET" auth
VIII Ftr Command Memo 125-1
Dated 13 November 1943

SECRET

INITIAL INCORPORATION

UNIT HISTORY

363rd FIGHTER SQUADRON

SECRET

363-FT-363-41
Dec 1943

Classified "SECRET" auth
VIII Ftr Comd Memo 126-1
Dated 13 November 1963

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UNIT HISTORY

303rd Fighter Squadron

INITIAL INSTALLMENT

The 303rd Fighter Squadron was activated at Hamilton Field, California, per War Department Letter, AG 320.2 (12-6-42), dated 8 Dec 42, as amended by War Department Letter, subject, "Constitution and Activation of Certain Army Air Force Units", dated 1 Dec 42, showing the date of constitution of this organization as 1 Dec 42.

The original cadre of the unit was obtained from the 320th Fighter Group, Hamilton Field, California. Personnel of the original cadre were assigned to the unit on 8 Jan 43. Later additions to the personnel of the unit were from the Fourth Air Force Replacement Depot, Hammer Field, California.

The original organization of the squadron included:

STUART R. LAULER, Capt, AG, Commanding
L. WHITING WELCH, 1st Lt, AG, Adjutant
LEONARD F. DE NIGRIS, 2nd Lt, AG, Intelligence Officer
ROBERT J. ROBERTSON, 2nd Lt, AG, Communications Officer
HAROLD W. WELCH, 2nd Lt, AG, Ass't Communications Officer

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S E C R E T

Stations occupied in the United States are as follows:

1. Hamilton Field, California, from activation and organization to 5 Mar 43.
2. Bombing & Gunnery Range, Tonopah, Nevada, from 6 Mar 43 to 1 Jun 43.
(Movement from Hamilton Field to Bombing & Gunnery Range pursuant to Special Orders Number 80, Hq, Air Base, Hamilton, Field California, Dated 1 Mar 43)
3. Army Airdrome, Santa Rosa, California, from 2 Jun 43 to 18 Jul 43.
(Movement from Bombing & Gunnery Range to Army Airdrome, Santa Rosa, California, pursuant to Special Orders Number 104, Hq, Bombing & Gunnery Range, Dated 29 May 43)
4. Army Airdrome, Croville, California, from 18 Jul 43 to 4 Oct 43.
(Movement from Army Airdrome, Santa Rosa, California to Army Airdrome, Croville, California, pursuant to Special Orders Number 226, Air Base Headquarters, Hamilton Field, California, Dated 14 Aug 43)
5. Army Air Base, Casper, Wyoming from 7 Oct 43 to 9 Nov 43.
(Movement from Army Airdrome, Croville, California, to Army Air Base, Casper, Wyoming, pursuant to Special Orders Number 271, Air Base Headquarters, Hamilton Field, California, Dated 28 September 1943)
6. Port of Embarkation, Camp Chanks, New York from 12 November 1943 to 22 November 1943 at 0200 hours.
(Movement from Army Air Base, Casper Wyoming to P of E, Camp Chanks, New York, pursuant to Special Orders Number 311, Air Base Headquarters, Casper, Wyoming, Dated 7 November 1943)

NOTE - THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS PERTAINING TO ABOVE MOVEMENTS ARE NOT AVAILABLE

Pilots of the unit have completed prescribed courses and have demonstrated proficiency in each of the following subjects:

Ground Training.

Flying Regulations	High Altitude Flying
Weather - Meteorology	Gunnery - Aerial, Ground and Camera
Navigation	Aircraft Maintenance and Engineering
Personal Problems	Junglecraft and Woodcraft
Communications	Seamanship

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Intelligence
 Night Flying
 Chemical Warfare
 Street
 Small Arms Training
 Employment of Fighter Aircraft - Tactics
 Armament
 Physical Training
 Medical Training

Flying Training

Transition
 Formation - Combat
 Formation - Altitude
 Formation - Gunnery
 Ground Gunnery
 Aerial Gunnery - Low Altitude
 Aerial Gunnery - High Altitude
 Dive Bombing
 Acrobatics
 Navigation
 Strafing
 Cloud Flying
 Night Flying

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Instrument Flying

Gunnery - Camera

Skip Bombing

Interception

The training of the enlisted men of the unit - the ground crews - has likewise been very thorough. In addition to the Basic Military Training received before becoming part of the unit's personnel, and to the skills learned in Army Air Forces Technical Training Schools, and to the proficiency at the jobs assigned them in the unit gained through working at those jobs during the course of training of the pilots of the Unit, the enlisted men of the Unit received the following training in the Unit:

Articles of War	2 hours
Organization of Army and Air Corps	1 hour
Military Discipline, Courtesy and Customs	6 hours
First Aid	14 hours
Infantry Drill (Close Order)	14 hours
Extended Order Drill	19 hours
Interior Guard Duty	15 hours
Physical Training and Obstacle Course -b	4 hours per week
Care of Clothing, Equipment and Tent Pitching	5 hours
Safeguarding Military Information	9 hours
Marksmanship Course (Principal Weapon, elementary knowledge of.)	4 hours

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Mechanical Training (Weapon, small bore)	4 hours
Marksmanship, Preparatory, one Course, Par 47 FM 23-10	14 hours
Marksmanship (Instruction practice, Record Practice)	8 hours
Field Target Firing	4 hours
Individual Security and Camouflage	10 hours
Defense against Chemical Attack	13 hours
Defense against Air Attack	4 hours
Marches and Bivouacs	24 hours
Night Operations	4 hours
Inspections	8 hours
Aerial Photo and Map Reading	4 hours
Commando Tactics	10 hours
Booby Traps	4 hours
"Know Your Enemy"	8 hours
Camouflage, Airdrome	20 hours
Identification of Tanks, planes etc.	6 hours
Aircraft, Engines etc.	16 hours
Overhead Firing -- Infiltration Course, Camp Beale, California	
Censorship	2 hours
Care of Carbine	2 hours
Chemical Warfare	7 hours

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On 24 October 1943, the unit was inspected for overseas movement. The successful passing of the Preparation for Overseas Movement Inspection at this time was the first event in the movement overseas of the Squadron. On 9 November 1943, the unit entrained from Army Air Base at Casper, Wyoming, for Port of Embarkation, and on 12 November 1943, arrived at Camp Shanks, New York. During an interim of nine days spent at Camp Shanks, the physical condition of Officers and Enlisted Men was thoroughly checked, as was the condition of the clothing and equipment of the officers enlisted men and of the unit as a whole was thoroughly checked.

On 21 November 1943, at 2100 hours, the Squadron commenced movement from Camp Shanks, New York - and at 0200 hours on 22 November 1943 was aboard H.M.S. Queen Elizabeth for movement overseas.

The voyage on the Queen Elizabeth was uneventful - the only other craft seen being three Norwegian Tankers and daily visits by Catalina Flying Boats.

On 29 November 1943, the Queen Elizabeth slipped anchor in the Firth of Clyde, and on 30 November 1943, the Squadron disembarked from the ship and was carried by tender to the railway station at Curlock, Scotland. At Curlock the unit immediately entrained for its base in the European Theater of Operations.

On 1 December 1943, the unit arrived at USAAF Station 157, the Raydon Airdrome, in Southeast England. The Squadron was at home in the E. T. C.

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Following is a Roster of the Officers and Enlisted Men who arrived
with the unit in the E.T.O. Command and Staff Officers are shown.
R O S T E R

303rd Fighter Squadron as of 1 Dec 43

Captain	Joe H. Giltner	0416296	Commanding Officer
Captain	Edwin W. Hino	0728661	Pilot - Operations Officer
Captain	Dan L. Evander	0332194	Executive Officer
Captain	Clarence E. Anderson	0730324	Pilot - Gunnery O. - Flt Cmdr
Captain	Paul K. De Vries	0728607	Pilot - Asst Exec O. - Flt Cmdr
Captain	Lloyd M. Hubbard	0730498	Pilot - Wgt & Bal O. - Flt Cmdr
Captain	William R. O'Brien	0730583	Pilot - Asst Exec O. - Flt Cmdr
Captain	Paul C. Tramp	0476825	Flight Surgeon
Captain	Dave C. Willett	0915258	Adjutant - Mess O. - Stat. O.
			Censor - Admin Insp. O.
1st Lt.	Donald H. Bochkay	0742834	Pilot - Arm. O. (Asst)
1st Lt.	Alfred R. Boyle	0740335	Pilot - Asst Comm. O.
1st Lt.	James W. Browning	0740361	Pilot - Asst Eng O.
1st Lt.	Ernest F. De Nigris	0565185	Intelligence Officer
1st Lt.	William W. Gambill	0743000	Pilot - Arm. O. (Asst)
1st Lt.	Howard S. Hinman	0740422	Pilot - Asst Ope O.
1st Lt.	Howard D. Kirby	0568920	Supply O. - Gas O. Personnel
			Equip Insp. O.
1st Lt.	William M. McGinley	0743058	Pilot - Asst Comm. O.
1st Lt.	John B. Myers, Jr.	0575737	Intelligence Officer
1st Lt.	Joseph F. Pierce	0742889	Pilot - Asst Mes O.
1st Lt.	Frederick W. Reust	0743093	Pilot - Asst Mess O.
1st Lt.	Harold T. Reynolds	0856798	Communications O.
1st Lt.	Ellis A. Rogers	0739339	Pilot - Asst Opns O.
1st Lt.	John E. Swan	0481534	Ordnance O.
2nd Lt.	Norman M. Badger	0861568	Engineering O. Tech Insp.
2nd Lt.	Robert W. Foy	0745340	Pilot - Asst Opns & Arm O.
2nd Lt.	William D. Michaely	0745456	Pilot - Asst Supply O.
2nd Lt.	Charles E. McKee	0540379	Pilot - Asst Supply O.
2nd Lt.	Robert M. Moore	0745466	Pilot - Asst Supply O.
2nd Lt.	William B. Overstreet	0745487	Pilot - Asst Transportation O.
2nd Lt.	Herschel T. Pascoe	0745490	Pilot - Asst Opns O.
2nd Lt.	Charles R. Peters	0745495	Pilot - Asst Eng O.
2nd Lt.	Morris Rothstein	0866095	Weather O., War Bond O. Asst
			Supply O.
2nd Lt.	Irving A. Smith	0681719	Pilot, Asst Radio O.
2nd Lt.	Raymond W. Staudte	0745533	Pilot - A. Insp.
2nd Lt.	Ernest C. Tiede	0681743	Pilot - Asst Stat O.
2nd Lt.	Mosely H. Webb	0861518	Radio O., Spec Serv O.
2nd Lt.	Lawrence D. Wood	0745559	Pilot - Asst Opns O.
F/O	Charles E. Yeager	T-970	Pilot - Asst Eng O.

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MASTER SERGEANTS

Collet, Marvin E.	3727558	1st Sergeant
Crawford, Ralph H.	6845582	Armament Chief
Miller, Samuel A.	6976417	AP Line Chief
Asaca, Frank A.	6587256	A & E Mechanic

TECHNICAL SERGEANTS

Bienvenu, DeVince J.	14066652	AP & E Mechanic
Blondine, Max	6554640	Armament Inspector
Farley, William M.	39390726	AP Mech
Lewis, Robert W. Jr	6956839	Sergeant Major
Ottlinger, Charles F.	14071591	AP Flight Chief
Partrick, George F.	32332434	Radio Oper and Mech
Setzer, Walter M.	6553921	Supply MCC
Smuda, John J.	36342987	Radio Oper & Mech
Stitt, Donald A.	6915877	AP Line Chief
Tanner, Sumner A.	16024472	Ammunition MCC
Tull, William E.	6859613	Motor & Trans MCC
Watt, Andrew D.	6956550	AP Flight Chief

STAFF SERGEANTS

Augugliaro, Idolo E.	32473955	Armorer
Barker, Jack C.	39033518	AP & E Mech
Barth, Eugene J.	12061679	AP & E Mech
Bender, Roger A.	33059950	"
Bleunt, Percy E.	3630614	"
Bryant, Lucian	35301707	AP Electrical Spec
Cline, Vernon G.	39157402	Ada MCC
Clark, Loren M.	37198726	AP & Mech
Coniff, John P.	37143964	Armorer
Godsworth, William H.	32288732	AP & E Mech
Dunn, Carroll J.	31126432	"
Grosbo, Fred	36339503	"
Heino, Otto	31109402	"
Hansen, Earl C.	19139086	Tech Supply MCC
Kelley, George R.	36198952	AP & E Mech
Kiser, Isaac D.	R-3241573	Armorer
Kuhn, Rupert C.	1209321	Ada MCC
Kunelius, John E.	37243178	AP & E Mech
Kuykendall, Milburn E.	35477294	AP Inspector
Kveselis, John E.	31141192	AP & E Mech
Laliberte, Julian J.	37029879	Mess Sgt
Linberg, Ralph H.	32475221	Armorer
Loter, James W.	18129953	AP & E Mech
Luukkonen, Lloyd E.	37282560	Tech Supply MCC

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STAFF SERGEANTS cont.

Marorano, Albert G.	32411716	AP E Mech.
Malinas, Harry H.	16064769	"
Martin, Earl D.	38115154	"
Mayo, John E.	34351235	Radio Mech
Mills, R. A.	38140349	AP E Mech
Ollerton, Roldo L.	39024077	"
O'Malley, Clair B.	35666745	Sheet Metal Worker
Parker, Clarence C.	16044187	Ap E Mech
Prange, Emil H.	37383701	Ammunition NCO
Price, Charles L.	39607322	AP E Mech
Rourke, George M.	33321565	Electrical Spec.
Scales, Sammy O.	20445974	AP & E. Mech
Schalick, Arthur P.	32077677	Radio Mech CNS
Schueneman, Melvin H.	36150530	AP & E Mech
Smith, Robert H.	35308119	Adm NCO
Staas, Robert F.	16071272	AP E Mech
Vandenberg, John D.	32327704	"
Walker, James T.	34198988	"
Webber, Harry E.	36071502	"
Weith, William F.	16096806	Electrical Spec.
Wood, Carl E.	33125440	AP E Mech

SERGEANTS

Adams, Warren R.	33185168	Radio Oper & Mech
Adelman, Jacob F.	32499648	Am and Tech Clerk
Anderson, Jerome A.	17070549	Teletype Mech
Barratt, Reginald A.	37231606	Adm & Tech Clerk
Barry, Louis W.	38236259	Armorer
Beaumont, Maurice S.	39252706	Ord Armorer
Beary, Chester A.	35589259	AP E Mech
Bennett, Harold E.	31054399	Prop Spec.
Bertram, John F.	32473025	Armorer
Bienemann, Herman J.	36431959	Carpenter
Bloser, Lester V.	33239875	Armorer
Blanco, Michael, L.	12158989	Radio Mech F
Boraczek, Benedict M.	32570271	AP E Mech
Bryan, Cecil B.	35568945	"
Carpenter, William B.	33253570	Armorer
Clark, William W.	32383737	Radio Mech
Clements, Clifford S.	36427826	Radio Mech F.
Clarke, Francis B.	32287011	AP E Mech
Classens, Leonarn N.	32345715	"
Cooper, Ben T.	35495847	Radio Mech F.
Cornelius, Clyde J.	38249846	AP E Mech

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SERGEANTS cont.

Craig, Thomas C.	33274429	Armorer
Curtis, Kenneth W.	16072660	"
Fah, Francis	37433282	"
Farquhar, Donald I.	31078380	Carpenter
Fertsch, Robert W.	32298037	Tech Supply NCO
Finley, Robert E.	38239506	Welder
Glasson, Charles J.	37295223	Decont Equip Oper
Goldstein, Murray	32443800	Armorer
Ham el, Charles H.	32159310	Auto Equip Mech
Hammond, Phillip S.	18121072	AP E Mech
Holt, Reuben C.	38208150	"
Holtz, Arthur J.	36700304	Adm & Tech Clerk
Jankowski, Joseph	6717136	Duty NCO
Keller, Robert H.	33323918	Radio Mech
Kidd, Marshall D., Jr	15324708	AP E Mech
Knowles, Earl R.	34336756	Cook
Lamont, James R.	37270099	AP E Mech
Leonard, Charles F.	7033011	"
Miller, Ernest E.	33370386	Refuel Unit Oper
Moen, Elmo K.	37128559	Radio Mech
Moody, Calvin C.	34255794	Cook
Myers, Aschol S.	35038367	AP E Mech
Muskin, Sidney	13073008	Radio Oper & Mech
Nelson, Cyril I.	36368845	Adm & Tech Clerk
Orpallio, Eugene	12031690	Tech Supply NCO
Owoc, Leo L.	37383486	Radio Mech P.
Palmer, Jack W.	34315012	Armorer
Peterson, Elmer W.	37280436	"
Pisani, Joseph L.	32378823	Radio Mech & Oper
Punshon, Leo B.	36701098	Ammunition NCO
Rabich, George H.	3265249	AP & E Mech
Reichel, Paul K.	32378117	"
Renfro, Chester E.	38202955	Cook
Ritchie, Elmer J.	11094854	Ord Armorer
Ritter, Ervin E.	35686538	Radio Mech CNS
Rogers, Fred D.	12155860	Instrument Spec
Salvesen, Roy	32284121	Sheet Metal
Schrader, Leo J.	37012906	Section Leader - Medics
Schutkowski, Leo	36537621	Radio Mech CNS
Smith, Harry M.	13153558	Ord
Smithhisler, Lawrence D.	37353996	Armorer
Spencer, Frederick D.	39303693	Cook
Stanley, Wilbur L.	19040983	Radio Mech CNS
Stevens, Ellsworth F.	11116857	AP E Mech
Stoddard, Robert D.	37457026	"
Sutherland, William R.	33195768	Armorer
Toomey, George V. Jr.	31083775	"

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SERGEANTS cont.

Vanchina, Tony P.	35640196	Tech Supply NCO
Van Tine, Thomas A.	32571747	AP E Mech
Wilson, Roy E.	38296797	Cook
Winfrey, Robert L.	38225730	Armorer

CORPORALS

Alexander, William	39829728	Radio Mech
Allen, Claude L.	35715534	Armorer
Allen, Ralph	35612124	Ord Armorer
Baumgartner, George W.	37213894	Armorer
Bell, Ralph E.	19109633	Cook
Bierschwale, Frederick Jr.	38250048	Adm & Tech Clerk
Bingaman, Jay	13153012	Ammunition NCO
Bland, Floyd L.	38163078	Armorer
Blasena, Victor	17080621	Cook
Bolin, Oren C.	35090588	Ammunition NCO
Drehm, Robert	36611154	Tech Supply
Britton, John J.	32465801	Armorer
Chassar, Joseph W.	32460787	"
Christensen, George A.	36374669	"
Cirillo, John R.	33193750	"
Cooper, Bernard H.	37491784	Dope & Fabric Worker
Cowan, Wilbur E.	37228220	Radio Mech F.
Day, Jasper, B.	34684697	Cooks Helper
Di Falco, Thomas A.	32480109	AP E Mech
Doss, Donald H.	37417472	Camera Technician
DuJack, Floyd J.	31277585	Instrument Spec
Eichhorn, Leslie I.	33383693	Adm & Tech Clerk
Firkins, Bud	39393018	Refuel Unit Oper
Fleming, Joseph J.	33285246	Radio Mech
Gysel, Henry J, Jr.,	32585860	Camera Tech
Hanson, Raymond	11110675	AP E Mech
Harris, Sheldon	12181500	Adm Tech Clerk
Harter, Thomas E.	34382124	Radio Mech
Hunt, James R.	32741709	Decont Oper
Isom, Leonard G.	37318891	Teletype Oper
Jallo, Alvin O.	37175214	Auto Equip Oper
Jennings, James W.	7004878	Armorer
Jewell, Leslie	17069585	"
Johnson, Filmore E.	31312706	Adm & Tech Clerk
Kinsell, Leland M.	15331724	Armorer
Kovacs, Halman	32574052	AP E Mech
Langer, Carl J.	32438342	Utility Repairman
Lanoue, Joseph D.	11017987	AP E Mech
Laterza, Agostino	32495032	Machinist
Lewis, Clyde E.	37382604	Radio Mech
LeBrun, Felix J.	31176359	Armorer

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CORPORALS cont.

Iethbetter, Alva Q.	38025498	R fuel Unit Oper
Loersch, James C.	36284751	Armorer
Louk, Marvin L.	39850183	Sheet Metal Worker
Marcotte, Donald H.	11105904	Armorer
Matyas, Harvey C.	33461245	Fainter
McCain, Robert E.	36384292	Armorer
McEuen, David H.	33739911	Classif Spec.
McKain, Raymond L.	35716139	AP E Mech
Mikalunas, Phillip	36618325	"
Ostermann, Fred F.	12135143	Armorer
Paulding, John E.	36438394	Teletype Oper
Petree, Clarence W.	34036860	Armorer
Quinn, Thomas J.	34405343	AP E Mech
Redfield, Henry W.	31500249	Armorer
Ribas, Vincent	11102685	Radio Mech CMS
Rob, John N.	36349068	Instrument Spec
Rogers, Donald J.	32790928	Adm & Tech Clerk
Rosenthal, Samuel	18191352	Radio Mech CMS
Russo, Frank J.	32529186	Armorer
Sanford, Oda D.	39830483	"
Settles, Charles H.	34379391	Radio Mech CMS
Signer, Percy J.	36265688	Armorer
Skreptack, Paul	33618878	Adm & Tech Clerk
Smith, William D.	34437435	Radio Mech CMS
Sipe, Roland G.	19203211	" " "
Spon, William R.	33406887	Cooks Helper
Spradling, Noble D.	1108484	Prop Spec
Steen, Wayne O.	19192868	Radio Mech CMS
Stein, Bernard	36618340	Adm & Tech Clerk
Sullivan, George H.	31196771	" " "
Tyler, Comis	35448108	AP E Mech
Tuffarella, Anthony J.	32720883	Lineman Tel & Teleg
Urton, Brady B.	37224246	Messenger
Wilson, Horace D.	36531141	Armorer
Winfield, James C.	38317754	Adm & Tech Clerk
Zimmerman, Leon L.	38249924	Armorer

T-5s

Lonero, Joseph J.	36618956	Surgical Tech
Stains, Russell H.	31173741	" "

PRIVATEES, FIRST CLASS

Barnes, Charles I.	12200165	Med Tech
Browne, Daniel E.	32546709	Clk
Bucaman, Raymond, S.	39685031	Auto Equip Mech

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PRIVATE, FIRST CLASS cont

Vaison, James R.	34665881	Ammunition Handler
Fairman, Roy R.	34415940	Auto Equip Oper
Hillis, Arthur I.	47503861	Ammunition Handler
Pojnonski, John F.	33059742	Cooks Helper
Kliman, Joseph	34403709	Radio Mech
Palaszcuk, Anton C.	32752824	" "
Slaughter, Rex E.	16134554	Armorer
Vogt, Karl L.	37647819	Prop Spec
Weeks, George	36564737	Telephone Oper

PRIVATE

Berridge, Roy C.	19039595	AP E Mech
Bradley, Vassar M.	38398469	Cooks Helper
Calvano, Cesare	32582834	Ammunition Handler
Carroll, Tom	38421139	Truck Driver Heavy
Clampitt, Eli H.	35090605	Ammunition Handler
Copee, Paul	36537911	Armorer
Grant, James R.	34255099	Medic Tech
Guillory, Leo	38486506	Cooks Helper
Hendrickson, Ole J.	37271506	AP E Mech
Holzinger, Elmer F.	35545678	Ammunition Handler
Hyde, William C.	34586705	Auto Equip Oper
Innis, John Jr	18044021	Refuel Unit Oper
Lewis, William H.	18077070	Cook
Martin, Bertis E.	18098518	Cooks Helper
Myers, William	34205928	Tech Supply
Pfeifer, Howard G.	31221697	Refuel Unit Oper
Ruhl, Joe C.	35483906	AP E Mech
Reinecker, Harry W.	33512130	Draftsman
Rodriguez, Ramon V.	39858759	Cooks Helper
Smith, Richard C.	15338476	Truck Driver Heavy
Smith, Richard E.	35418787	Armorer
Small, Harold W.	19055769	Cook
Tobin, David	32404333	AP E Mech
Ungerleider, Louis	12203951	Switchboard Oper
Vaden, Horace A.	34605293	Ammunition Handler
Winsor, David A.	16055788	Sheet Metal Worker

SECRET

S E C R E T

CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

Month of December

- 1 December 1943 -- 363rd Fighter Squadron arrives at USAAF Station 157, Raydon Airfield, in Southeast England.
- 7 December 1943 -- Letter, Hq USAAF, UK, 370.2, dated 7 December 1943, assigns unit to Ninth Air Force.
- 16 December 1943 -- General Orders, Number 146, Hq Ninth Air Force, dated 16 December 1943, further assigns unit to IX Fighter Command, assignment effective as of 7 December 1943.
- 19 December 1943 -- First flight in a P-51, in the E.T.O. by a pilot of this squadron --made by Captain Clarence E. Anderson in an airship assigned to 354th Fighter Group.
- 20 December 1943 -- First airplane to be assigned to the Squadron in the E.T.O., is flown in by Captain Lloyd M. Hubbard. The airplane was an P-51B-C-WA. Captain Hubbard was, thus, the first pilot of the 363rd Fighter Squadron to fly an airplane assigned to the Squadron in the E.T.O.
- 31 December 1943 -- As of this date, six airplanes (P-51s) had been assigned to this unit in the E.T.O.

S E C R E T

CONFIDENTIAL

GENERAL (ADM):

NUMBER 147)

HEADQUARTERS FOURTH AIR FORCE,
San Francisco, California,
December 16, 1942.CONSTITUTION AND ACTIVATION OF CERTAIN ARMY AIR FORCE UNITS

1. Pursuant to instructions contained in Confidential letter AG 340.2 (12-8-42), OS-I-AF-A, W. D., A. G. O., December 8, 1942, subject: "Constitution and Activation of Certain Army Air Force Units", the following named unit, having been constituted and assigned to the Fourth Air Force, is activated as indicated, effective December 1, 1942:

UNIT	STATION OF ACTIVATION AND TRAINING STATION	ORGANIZED UNDER T/C
Hq, 357th Fighter Gp	Hamilton Field, Calif.	1-14 (7-1-42)
362nd Fighter Sq		1-27 (7-1-42) w/c 1 (10-10-42)
363rd Fighter Sq		1-27 (7-1-42) w/c 1 (10-10-42)
364th Fighter Sq		1-27 (7-1-42) w/c 1 (10-10-42)

2. Priority rating for controlled items of equipment will be 3-1-1057

3. Specific authorization of enlisted grades will be published in a separate communication

4. These units should be organized as nearly as practicable according to the following schedule:

Date to reach 75% Strength	Date to reach 100% Strength	Date to reach 100% Strength & Commence Training
January 1, 1943	February 1, 1943	March 1, 1943

5. Cadre personnel for the activation of this unit will be secured from the 328th Fighter Group, Hamilton Field, California.

6. Filler personnel will be requisitioned in the usual manner.

7. Equipment will be in accordance with Table of Basic Allowances 1, July 1, 1942.

8. Reports will be submitted without delay to the Commanding Officer, Army Air Base, Hamilton Field, California, to The Adjutant General, Commanding General, Army Air Forces (Attention: AFMAG - Publications Section - 20 copies), and the Commanding General, Air Service Command, Peterson Field, Fairfield Ohio, through this Headquarters, giving the following information:

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G.O. #147, Hq., 4th AF, 10-16-42 - CONFIDENTIAL
continued

- a. Unit activated
- b. Unit furnishing cadre
- c. Size of cadre
- d. Date of activation
- e. Permanent station

9. Army Air Forces Regulation 1-17, September 15, 14-107, June 8, 11-128, May 8, 15-108, July 9, and 15-108A, August 24, 1942, and Technical Order 00-45-3, will be complied with immediately.

10. The procurement allotment cited below will be obligated to the extent necessary. (See Section VI, Circular No. 381, W. D., 1942, as amended by Section II, Circular No. 279, W. D., 1942, and Section IV, Circular No. 344, W.D., 1942)

FINANCE SERVICE, ARMY

FD 33 F 433-01, 433-02, 433-03, 433-04, 433-05, 433-07, 433-08 A 0425-23

(For travel of personnel, including dependents; for packing, crating, unpacking and shipping equipment, impediments and household goods; tolls and for fares en route; gasoline, oil and repairs to motor vehicles en route; communication service; rental of camp sites and procurement of utility service.)

11. The provisions of letter AAF 220.2, Headquarters of the Army Air Forces, dated September 21, 1942, subject: "Promotion of Unlisted Men Based on authorized Grades and Strengths", will be adhered to in bringing unit to full authorized strength.

By command of Major General GILES:

EMIL C. KILL,
Colonel, General Staff Corps,
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

/s/ I.B. Summers,
/t/ I.B. Summers,
Colonel, Adjutant General's Department
Adjutant General

A TRUE COPY:

/s/ George H. Roswell
/t/ George H. Roswell,
1st Lt, AC.

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HEADQUARTERS FOURTH AIR FORCE
Office of the Commanding General
180 New Montgomery St.
San Francisco, Calif.

4AFAT-9

170.5/W194

238 Aug 1943

SUBJECT: Warning Orders 357th Fighter Group

TO : Commanding General, IV Fighter Command, Oakland, California.

1. The 357th Fighter Group (Headquarters and Squadrons (3)) has been designated by the Commanding General, Army Air Forces, for overseas shipment of personnel, individual equipment, organizational equipment normally issued to individuals and housekeeping equipment, on or about 1 November 1943. All other organizational equipment for the unit will be transferred to depots at destination and will be issued in accordance with instructions from the Commander of Theater of destination.

2. This unit is being transferred to the Second Air Force in the near future and will be moved overseas by that Headquarters. The unit will move to the control of the Second Air Force with full organizational equipment less motor vehicles.

3. It is desired that action be initiated immediately to fully prepare this unit for overseas movement with the exception of submission of shortage lists for equipment, as the unit should be ready for overseas movement in every particular when transferred to the Second Air Force. All ordinary items of preparation as indicated in POW, Air-POW and other existing directives, such as elimination of physically unqualified personnel, physical examination and immunization, personal affairs and all other items normally required of alerted units should be accomplished prior to movement from this Air Force.

By command of Brigadier General LYND:

/s/ M. T. Anderson
/t/ M. T. ANDERSON
WORLD USA
Asst Adj Genl

A TRUE COPY,
George H. Boswell
George H. BOSWELL,
1st Lt., AC.

CONFIDENTIAL

War Department
Washington 25, D. C.

WD 370.5 (7 Oct 43) OB-S-E-M

MEB/maj 2B 939 Pentagon

EXTRACT

9 October 1943

SUBJECT: Movement Orders, Shipment 8849

TO : The Commanding Generals,
Air Service Command
First, Second and Fourth
Air Forces
New York Port of Embarkation
Boston Port of Embarkation
The Chief of Transportation, Army Service Forces
The Chiefs of Technical Services, Army Service Forces

1. It is desired that you take without delay the action for which you are responsible to prepare for foreign service and to move the units listed below to the New York or Boston Port of Embarkation (for further movement by water transportation) so as to arrive at a time to be determined by the appropriate Port Commander. (See paragraph 10a (2).)

Unit	Shipment Number	Station	Agency to issue Movement Orders	Strength Off NO G EM T/O & E
357th Fighter Gp (SE) Hq (Less Adv Det)	8849-JJJ	Casper AAFld Casper, Wyo.	CG, Second Air Force	19 1 *1 50 T/O 1-12 1 Jul 42 (3) C-1 10 Feb 43
***362d Fighter Sq (SE)	8849-KKK	Pocatello AAFld Pocatello, Idaho	"	39 252 T/O 1-27 1 Jul 42 C-1 23 Nov 42 C-2 25 Jan 43 C-3 7 May 43
***363d Fighter Sq (SE)	8849-LLL	Casper AAFld Casper, Wyo.	"	39 252 "
***364th Fighter Sq (SE)	8849-MMM	Ainsworth AAFld Ainsworth, Neb.	"	39 252 "
**	**	**	**	** ** **

By order of the Secretary of War:

THOS. T. HANDY,
Assistant Chief of Staff
Operations Division, W.D.G.S.

CONFIDENTIAL Movement Orders, Shipment 8849 (cont'd)

/s/ J. A. Ulio
J. A. ULIO
Major General
The Adjutant General

COPIES FURNISHED:

The Commanding Generals
Army Air Forces
Army Service Forces
Eastern and Western Defense Commands
First, Second, Third, Seventh, Eighth
and Ninth Service Commands
The Inspector General
The Divisions of the War Department
General Staff

Each station listed in paragraph 1,
FOR INFORMATION ONLY.

A TRUE AND EXACT COPY:

George H. Bobwell
GEORGE H. BOBWEILL,
1st. Lt., Air Corps,
Ass't S-2.

CONFIDENTIAL

IMMEDIATE ACTION
CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS SECOND AIR FORCE
Office of the Commanding General

RJC/mn

370.5 G

12 October 1943

SUBJECT: MOVEMENT ORDERS, Shipments 8849-JJJ, -KKK, -LLL, -MMM

To : See Distribution.

1. Pursuant to the authority contained in immediate action, Confidential War Department Letter, file WD 370.5 (7 Oct 43) OB-S-E-M, subject: "Movement Orders, Shipment 8849," dated 9 October 1943, it is directed that you take the necessary action and/or issue the necessary orders applicable to you to prepare for foreign service and to move the units listed below from their present indicated stations to the NEW YORK PORT OF EMBARKATION or the BOSTON PORT OF EMBARKATION (for further movement by water transportation), so as to arrive at a time to be determined by the appropriate Port Commanding. The Commanding General, port of embarkation to which ordered (New York or Boston Ports of Embarkation) will inform this headquarters of the time and date it is desired that these units and/or their accompanying equipment will arrive at the Port. This information will be relayed to you as soon as received at this Headquarters. (See paragraph 13 g (2) below).

Unit	SHIPMENT NUMBER	PRESENT STATION	STRENGTH				T/O & E
			OFF	WO	C	EM	
357th Fighter Gp (SE) Hq (Less Adv Det)	8849-JJJ	AAB, Casper, Wyo	19	1	1	50	T/O 1-12 1 Jul 42 C-1 10 Feb 43
362d Fighter Sq (SE)	8849-KKK	AAB, Pocatello, Idaho	39			252	T/O 1-27 1 Jul 42 C-1 23 Nov 42 C-2 25 Jan 43 C-3 7 May 43
363rd Fighter Sq (SE)	8849-LLL	AAB, Casper, Wyo.	39			252	"
364th Fighter Sq (SE)	8849-MMM	AAB, Ainsworth, Nebr.	39			252	"

By command of Major General STREETT:

JOHN S. LUCAS JR.
1st Lieut., A. G. D.,
Asst. Adjutant General

A TRUE EXTRACT:

Henry D. Boswell
HENRY D. BOSWELL,
1st Lt., AC

IMMEDIATE ACTION
CONFIDENTIAL

EXTRACT

SECRET

SECRET
Auth: CG, USAAF, UK
Date: 7 Dec 1943
Initials _____

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMY AIR FORCES
UNITED KINGDOM

320.2

7 December 1943.

SUBJECT: Assignment of Troops (No. 7)

TO : Commanding General, Ninth Air Force
VIII Bomber Command
VIII Fighter Command

1. The following units having recently arrived in this theater
are assigned to the commands indicated:

Ninth Air Force

* * * * *

363rd Fighter Squadron

* * * * *

2. * * * * *

3. * * * * *

By command of Lieutenant General EAKER:

/s/ JAMES B. GORDON
/t/ JAMES B. GORDON
Lt. Col. AGD
Asst Adj General

DISTRIBUTION:

* * * * *
CG, Each Unit Concerned
* * * * *

SECRET

A TRUE EXTRACT
John B. Myers Jr.
1st Lt. AC

EXTRACT

SECRET

SECRET

AUTH: CG 9AF

DATE 16 Dec 43

INIT: _____

HEADQUARTERS
NINTH AIR FORCE

APC 676, U.S. ARMY
16 December 1943.

GENERAL ORDERS)

NUMBER 146,

Section I.....Assignment of Units
Section II.....Amendment to General Orders

SECTION I

1. The following units having been assigned to the Ninth Air Force by Letter, USAAF OK, file 320.2, dated 7 December 1943, subject, "Assignment of Troops (No. 7)" are further assigned to the IX Fighter Command, effective 0001 hours, 7 December 1943.

* * * * *

363rd Fighter Squadron

* * * * *

2. * * * * *

3. * * * * *

* * * * *

1. * * * * *

By command of Major General BRERETON:

A TRUE EXTRACT

John B. Myer
1st Lt AC

/t/ V H STRAHM
Brig Gen USA

OFFICIAL:

/s/ C M SEEBACH
/t/ C.M. SEEBACH
Col AGD
Adj Gen

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TO BE RETURNED
TO THE ARCHIVES
OF THE AAF
HISTORICAL OFFICE

FILE NO.

DECLASSIFIED
DOD DIR 5200.9HISTORY OF
363rd FIGHTER SQUADRON

8 January 1943 to 18 August 1943

FORMER DESIGNATIONS

None

PRESENT ASSIGNMENT

To 357th Fighter Group, IV Fighter Command, Fourth Air Force

PRESENT STATION

Army Airbase, Oroville, California.

UNITS ASSIGNED OR ATTACHED

None

DECLASSIFIED
DOD DIR 5200.9

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

HEADQUARTERS FOURTH AIR FORCE
Historical Section
UNIT HISTORICAL DATA SHEET

363RD FIGHTER SQUADRON OF 357TH FIGHTER GROUP

(History transmitted for period 8 January 1943 to 18 August 1943.)

Activated: 1 December 1942 (per GO 147, Hq Fourth Air Force 16 December 1942, T/O 1-27, 1 July 1942, w/C 1, 10 October 1942).*

Organized At: Hamilton Field, Calif., under Fourth Air Force.*

Source Of Cadre: 328th Fighter Group, Hamilton Field, Calif.*

Mission: Operational Training Unit (P-39 aircraft).***

Assigned To: 357th Fighter Group.*

Permanent Station In Fourth Air Force: Hamilton Field, Calif.*

Commanding Officers: Capt. Stuart R. Lawler was appointed CO on 8 January 1943. Capt. Clay R. Davis was appointed CO on 20 May 1943. 1st Lt. Wesley S. Mink was appointed CO on 13 July 1943.**

Strength Report: 31 January 1943--9 Officers and 137 Enlisted Men.
2 June 1943--27 Officers and 264 Enlisted Men.
21 August 1943--41 Officers and 251 Enlisted Men.
4 October 1943--15 Officers and 250 Enlisted Men.* **

Squadron Movements: Hamilton Field, Calif., to Tonopah, Nev., 7 March 1943 (temporary change of station).*
Tonopah, Nev., to Santa Rosa, Calif., 1 June 1943 (temporary change of station).*
Santa Rosa, Calif., to Oroville, Calif., 18 August 1943 (temporary change of station).*

Transferred: From Oroville, Calif., to Casper, Wyoming 4 October 1943 with reassignment from Fourth to Second Air Force (permanent change of station).*

* Unit File, A-3 Division, Hq Fourth Air Force
** History of 363rd Fighter Squadron
*** History of 357th Fighter Group

C O N F I D E N T I A L

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History of the 353rd Fighter Squadron, 8 January 1943 to 18 August 1943

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHRONOLOGY

NARRATIVE HISTORY

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History of the 363rd Light Squadron from 8 January 1943 to 1 September 1943

CHRONOLOGY

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF EVENT	REFERENCE IN NARRATIVE
8 Jan 1943	Squadron activated at Hamilton Field, Calif. Capt. Stuart L. Lasker assumed command.	Page 1
5 March 1943	Squadron moves from Hamilton Field, Calif., to Tonopah Bombing and Gunnery Range, Nev.	Page 5
20 May 1943	Capt. Clay R. Davis assumes command.	Page 7
1 June 1943	Squadron moves from Tonopah, Nev., to Army Airfield, Santa Rosa, Calif.	Page 8
13 July 1943	1st Lt. Wesley C. Wink assumes command.	Page 10
13 Aug 1943	Squadron moves from Santa Rosa, Calif., to Oroville, Calif.	Page 10

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FOREWORD

Herewith is presented a brief summary of the history of the 363rd Fighter Squadron, a tactical unit of the 357th Fighter Group, Army Air Forces. An attempt has been made to present in an interesting style, the story of the activation of the squadron and of its period of training - the story of the organization up until the time when it became a truly a Fighter Squadron - ready and eager to take its place on the fighting fronts and to prove to friend and foe alike that it is:

"THE BEST DAMN SQUADRON IN THE WORLD!"

Compiled for the Squadron Historian,

363rd Fighter Squadron,

by

R. K. Barratt,

Cpl, AC.

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THE 363RD FIGHTER SQUADRON

1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029 2030 2031 2032 2033 2034 2035 2036 2037 2038 2039 2040 2041 2042 2043 2044 2045 2046 2047 2048 2049 2050 2051 2052 2053 2054 2055 2056 2057 2058 2059 2060 2061 2062 2063 2064 2065 2066 2067 2068 2069 2070 2071 2072 2073 2074 2075 2076 2077 2078 2079 2080 2081 2082 2083 2084 2085 2086 2087 2088 2089 2090 2091 2092 2093 2094 2095 2096 2097 2098 2099 2100 2101 2102 2103 2104 2105 2106 2107 2108 2109 2110 2111 2112 2113 2114 2115 2116 2117 2118 2119 2120 2121 2122 2123 2124 2125 2126 2127 2128 2129 2130 2131 2132 2133 2134 2135 2136 2137 2138 2139 2140 2141 2142 2143 2144 2145 2146 2147 2148 2149 2150 2151 2152 2153 2154 2155 2156 2157 2158 2159 2160 2161 2162 2163 2164 2165 2166 2167 2168 2169 2170 2171 2172 2173 2174 2175 2176 2177 2178 2179 2180 2181 2182 2183 2184 2185 2186 2187 2188 2189 2190 2191 2192 2193 2194 2195 2196 2197 2198 2199 2200 2201 2202 2203 2204 2205 2206 2207 2208 2209 2210 2211 2212 2213 2214 2215 2216 2217 2218 2219 2220 2221 2222 2223 2224 2225 2226 2227 2228 2229 2230 2231 2232 2233 2234 2235 2236 2237 2238 2239 2240 2241 2242 2243 2244 2245 2246 2247 2248 2249 2250 2251 2252 2253 2254 2255 2256 2257 2258 2259 2260 2261 2262 2263 2264 2265 2266 2267 2268 2269 2270 2271 2272 2273 2274 2275 2276 2277 2278 2279 2280 2281 2282 2283 2284 2285 2286 2287 2288 2289 2290 2291 2292 2293 2294 2295 2296 2297 2298 2299 2300 2301 2302 2303 2304 2305 2306 2307 2308 2309 2310 2311 2312 2313 2314 2315 2316 2317 2318 2319 2320 2321 2322 2323 2324 2325 2326 2327 2328 2329 2330 2331 2332 2333 2334 2335 2336 2337 2338 2339 2340 2341 2342 2343 2344 2345 2346 2347 2348 2349 2350 2351 2352 2353 2354 2355 2356 2357 2358 2359 2360 2361 2362 2363 2364 2365 2366 2367 2368 2369 2370 2371 2372 2373 2374 2375 2376 2377 2378 2379 2380 2381 2382 2383 2384 2385 2386 2387 2388 2389 2390 2391 2392 2393 2394 2395 2396 2397 2398 2399 2400 2401 2402 2403 2404 2405 2406 2407 2408 2409 2410 2411 2412 2413 2414 2415 2416 2417 2418 2419 2420 2421 2422 2423 2424 2425 2426 2427 2428 2429 2430 2431 2432 2433 2434 2435 2436 2437 2438 2439 2440 2441 2442 2443 2444 2445 2446 2447 2448 2449 2450 2451 2452 2453 2454 2455 2456 2457 2458 2459 2460 2461 2462 2463 2464 2465 2466 2467 2468 2469 2470 2471 2472 2473 2474 2475 2476 2477 2478 2479 2480 2481 2482 2483 2484 2485 2486 2487 2488 2489 2490 2491 2492 2493 2494 2495 2496 2497 2498 2499 2500 2501 2502 2503 2504 2505 2506 2507 2508 2509 2510 2511 2512 2513 2514 2515 2516 2517 2518 2519 2520 2521 2522 2523 2524 2525 2526 2527 2528 2529 2530 2531 2532 2533 2534 2535 2536 2537 2538 2539 2540 2541 2542 2543 2544 2545 2546 2547 2548 2549 2550 2551 2552 2553 2554 2555 2556 2557 2558 2559 2560 2561 2562 2563 2564 2565 2566 2567 2568 2569 2570 2571 2572 2573 2574 2575 2576 2577 2578 2579 2580 2581 2582 2583 2584 2585 2586 2587 2588 2589 2590 2591 2592 2593 2594 2595 2596 2597 2598 2599 2600 2601 2602 2603 2604 2605 2606 2607 2608 2609 2610 2611 2612 2613 2614 2615 2616 2617 2618 2619 2620 2621 2622 2623 2624 2625 2626 2627 2628 2629 2630 2631 2632 2633 2634 2635 2636 2637 2638 2639 2640 2641 2642 2643 2644 2645 2646 2647 2648 2649 2650 2651 2652 2653 2654 2655 2656 2657 2658 2659 2660 2661 2662 2663 2664 2665 2666 2667 2668 2669 2670 2671 2672 2673 2674 2675 2676 2677 2678 2679 2680 2681 2682 2683 2684 2685 2686 2687 2688 2689 2690 2691 2692 2693 2694 2695 2696 2697 2698 2699 2700 2701 2702 2703 2704 2705 2706 2707 2708 2709 2710 2711 2712 2713 2714 2715 2716 2717 2718 2719 2720 2721 2722 2723 2724 2725 2726 2727 2728 2729 2730 2731 2732 2733 2734 2735 2736 2737 2738 2739 2740 2741 2742 2743 2744 2745 2746 2747 2748 2749 2750 2751 2752 2753 2754 2755 2756 2757 2758 2759 2760 2761 2762 2763 2764 2765 2766 2767 2768 2769 2770 2771 2772 2773 2774 2775 2776 2777 2778 2779 2780 2781 2782 2783 2784 2785 2786 2787 2788 2789 2790 2791 2792 2793 2794 2795 2796 2797 2798 2799 2800 2801 2802 2803 2804 2805 2806 2807 2808 2809 2810 2811 2812 2813 2814 2815 2

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Clifford, Jesse, Herman S. Friedman, Louis J. Lando, Robert
 A. Fisher, John S. Green, Fred Green, Glenn E. Hill,
 Earl A. Hines, Albert A. Hines II, Alexander S.
 Hines, Harry A. Hines, Edwin C. Hines, Sidney
 Hines, Blair A. Hines, Edwin A. Hines, Harry A.
 Hines, John A. Hines, John J. Hines, Robert Hines,
 Roy A. Hines.

From the very beginning the squadron was a unit, a family unit.
 Its first days were spent in the mud and rain of the Pacific
 Field. It was, in effect, a child living in the street with almost
 no shelter and no food. The children were the only ones who lived.
 and as the children grew up, it was their duty to help
 the rest - to become "The Best Damn Squadron in the Air".

While there were no rules of the squad, it was the goal
 toward which the squadron constantly strove. It was the
 guiding light of the squadron.

On January 20th, Sergeant Peter Hines joined one of those objectives
 toward which every member is constantly striving - he received a bar-
 room. That was the first bar room in the squadron and follow-
 ing its publication all of the enlisted men were to plan on the bar-
 room that they expected to get. There were no disappointments in
 the squadron when it was evident that Sergeant Hines's barroom was
 not a criterion for the squadron, but was granted in view of the
 fact that Sergeant Hines had recently returned from foreign service
 and was entitled to a barroom.

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and almost every hour of every day a number of flights were made. The flights were not just short hops but were made at high altitudes. The planes seemed to be in the air virtually every minute of daylight. The ground crews were keeping the planes in almost perfect shape and the pilots, it seemed, were flying them constantly and perfectly. Perfect teamwork had been developed amongst all of the various elements of the squadron.

The list of pilots had been increased by the assignment to the squadron of Lt. James M. Brown, Lt. Howard G. Brown, Lt. Joseph M. Wright, Lt. Willie A. Moore, Lt. Robert G. Grey, Lt. Robert G. Snodgrass, and S/O Charles A. Taylor. A few days later the following additional pilots were assigned: S/O Wade H. Jones, Lt. William A. McGinley, Lt. William A. Campbell, Lt. Frederick M. Root, Lt. Joseph F. Pierce, Lt. John W. Wallace, S/O James W. Wallace, and Lt. Donald B. Locking.

The first flight of the new pilots - the Junior Pilots - just out of flying school - in P-37 airplanes, was a remarkable one for the squadron. To the Junior Pilots it must have seemed that there were more 'cracks' and 'weakness' in the line than there were airplanes. Evidently the base officials did not have the faith in the flying abilities of these young pilots that we who had worked with them in their preliminary P-37 training had learned to have.

As a matter of fact, the training, the cooperation, the morale, and the spirit of the squadron showed itself very vividly in the lack of aircraft accidents sustained by the squadron. It was not until

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March told that the squadron had no other accident of any kind. On that date Lt. Simpson crashed up in landing - 1-30. The right landing gear of the airplane was torn off and the right wing damaged - but the pilot escaped with no personal injury of any kind. In fact there were no personal injuries to any of the pilots of the squadron during the entire twelve weeks stay at Tonopah.

Through March, April and May the squadron continued to pile up hours in the air for the pilots and for the aircraft. The pilots became better and better flyers and the ground crew became more and more efficient and accurate in their work.

In May Captain Stuart A. Leister, who as Commanding Officer of the squadron was actually responsible for the good strides that the squadron had made in its training program, for the excellent morale of the personnel and for its out and out efficiency, was relieved of his duties as Commanding Officer due to ill health. There was a feeling of great loss in the squadron on his departure. Captain Leister had so endeared himself to the personnel - officers and enlisted men alike - that it was with no small amount of sorrow that it was realized that he was no longer to be the 'Old Man' of the unit he had built into the "Best Damn Squadron in the Corps."

On May 20th, Capt. in Chief A. Davis was assigned from the 33rd Fighter Group to take over the leadership of the squadron. From the very beginning it could be seen that he had the ability to capably fill the job left to him by Captain Leister. The modesty of his first greeting to the enlisted men of the squadron - underlain with the very definite assurance that, as he himself put it, .

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while. And when we were in the air, we were in the air of white
 as we had to fall with us in the air of white. And when we
 were in the air, we were in the air of white.

Flight weather - But, now we had a problem as it had been at
 Tampa. In May - the May - days the field was closed by fog until
 late in the month. This also time was viewed with mixed emotions
 by the personnel of the squadron. It was nice, for, like a ground
 crane like, to crawl out of their holes early in the morning, take
 look at the fog, and then to crawl back under the apron covers for another
 couple of hours. On the other hand, the officers and the men alike,
 didn't like the idea of losing all that flying time - they wanted to
 get those airplanes airborne. They wanted the 33rd to complete its
 training so that it could begin getting in a few hours of that what-
 ever enemy the Air had chosen for our particular squadron to annihilate.

The first fatality suffered by the squadron occurred at approximately
 1900, 7 June 1943. On that date, Lt. Virgil C. Joss, on a routine
 transition flight, lost control of his plane and spun to the ground.
 Lt. bailed out at approximately four hundred feet, but his parachute
 failed to open. The entire squadron was very saddened by this tragedy.
 Lt. Joss was a fine leader and a fine pilot, well liked by all of the
 personnel of the squadron.

The first candidate for the 'Caterpillar Club' in the unit was
 Lt. William B. Overstreet. On June 26th, while on a routine flight,
 his plane went into a tumble at approximately 10,000 feet. The plane
 tumbled and spun to about five hundred feet before Lt. Overstreet was

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to fall out. Billie, out at last, Lt. Overstreet made a beautiful three-point parachute landing - the first and his last. Lt. Overstreet however received no injuries.

July 7th was one of the saddest days in the history of the squadron. On that day, the squadron lost, through fatal accident, both the Commanding Officer and one of its most popular young pilots. While on a routine aerial gunnery flight over the Pacific Ocean, planes piloted by Captain Clay R. Davis, Commanding Officer of the squadron, and by Lt. Kyle J. Baker, collided in mid air. The squadron suffered the loss of both officers.

On July 13th, Wesley S. Sims, 1st Lt, reported to the squadron as its new Commanding Officer. Lt. Sims was a veteran of nearly a year of actual combat experience as a fighter pilot. He had served in Alaska, in Australia, in New Guinea. Under his leadership the squadron continued its rapid progress. Goals continued to climb, the efficiency of the ground crew reached a new high, the flying abilities of the pilots continued to improve. All in all, the squadron was rapidly fulfilling its ambition to be the "Best Damn Squadron in the World!"

And so the squadron reached young manhood - a virginal young manhood. A young manhood eager for battle - eager to prove its ability to take it and to kick it out.

At the Army Airbase, Ordville, California, since 16 August 1943, the squadron has caught up on all of the odds and ends that remained of its training program. And now the training period is over. The squadron is ready - it is on its toes awaiting orders for its next move. It knows not whether it will go nor when the time cometh -

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but it knows that when the time comes - no matter where, it will give
such an account of itself to justify its conduct of being - - - - -

"THE MORE YOU KNOW THE MORE YOU WANT!"

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SO-FI-363-HI
8 DEC 1942-
Nov 1945

History
363-2
5-1801-6
Register
John

Classification changed
to Restricted by authority of C.O.
33 Jo 19 9p
7M Lantley, Caporal

HISTORY

363RD FIGHTER SQUADRON

5-1801-6

UNIT HISTORY 363rd Fighter Squadron

On the 8 December, 1942, at Hamilton Field, California, a squadron was born. At that moment it was only a paper squadron, but it was a start. The start of the 363rd Fighter Squadron, a tactical unit of the 357th Fighter Group, a squadron that was destined to take its place among the famous fighting units of World War II.

It wasn't until 8 January, that the original complement of officers and enlisted men were assigned to the Squadron. This original cadre was obtained from the 328th Fighter Group, Hamilton Field, California. So now the 363rd had a Commanding Officer, Captain Stuart R. Lauler, and a few men to start it on the road to the glory it was to attain.

The next few days were spent gathering personnel, getting organized and spreading rumors. Everyone had his own pet ideas as to what kind of an outfit it was going to be, where they were going next and when. But they were all agreed on one thing, they were going to make it the best damn Squadron in the world. So that aim became the motto of the 363rd Fighter Squadron and every new-comer was greeted with, "This is the Best Damn Squadron in the World, Mister." and they all set to work to make good their boast.

The end of February brought the first pilots to the Squadron and 2nd Lt. Edwin W. Hise was appointed first Operations Officer. This was the sign that all the men had been waiting for, it was going to be a combat outfit so the enthusiasm and will to work took a leap upwards. Even the news that they were going to Tonopha, Nevada-"The Last Place on Earth"- couldn't dampen the high spirits of the Squadron. Tonopha was merely a means to an end. The end being overseas duty and combat. So on 6 March, 1943, they arrived at Tonopha and the real work started.

More pilots arrived and the training began making rapid strides. Every hour of the day was a flying hour. The pilots and ships piled up time and the ground crews worked at a feverish pitch to keep the ships in the air. At last everyone was actually putting into practice what he had been studying so many months. Throughout March, April and May the training went on. Everything and everyone was improving. The rate of accidents was very low and the Squadron was becoming a team.

In May, Captain Lauler was relieved of his command due to ill health and the members of the Squadron felt they were losing a personal friend as well as a fine Commanding Officer, but on 20 May, Captain Clay R. Davis took the reins of the Squadron and soon proved to all the personnel that he was just the man to fill the vacancy and the Squadron continued its rapid improvement.

On 1 June, the 363rd completed its first phase of the big job ahead and left Tonopha to go back to the lovely green of California. And a wonderful place was Santa Rosa, California, the next stop or rather the next step toward becoming a combat team. The base was located in the middle of an orchard. Fit reward to the men who had spent the last twelve weeks on the desert. However, Santa Rosa brought some extremely bad luck to the Squadron. Here it suffered its first fatality, Lt. Virgil C. Wyss on 9 June, 1943. Lt. William B. Overstreet became the first Squadron member of the Gatapillar Club when his ship tumbled at 10,000 feet. To continue the bad luck on 7 July, a midair collision claimed both the Commanding Officer, Captain Davis, and one of the best young pilots, Lt. Lyle

J. Maher. This was a bitter pill for the young Squadron and the losses were deeply felt, but it will take much more than this to take the spirit out of this Squadron.

July 13, 1st Lt. Wesley S. Wink took command. With his year of actual combat flying, he was able to continue the wonderful progress. In spite of its losses the Squadron showed that it had what it takes to become "The Best Damn Squadron in the World", and rapidly improved. So when the time for the next move came, 18 August, it had reached the point where it was a well co-ordinated, smooth functioning unit. The stay at Groville, California, was just to pick up the odds and ends of the training program. The Squadron had become "Hot" and was becoming stronger all the time. Any weak links were replaced so that the Squadron was ready, willing and able for that overseas assignment.

Major Donald W. Graham, formerly of the 357th Fighter Group, took command on 27 September, 1943 and was recognized immediately as an able and respected Commanding Officer. When all the ships took off, for what was termed along cross country flight, on 3 October, everyone knew that things were beginning to happen. So the rest of the Squadron entrained on 4 October, for a trip that lasted until 7 October and took them to Casper, Wyoming.

The short stay at Casper was one of mixed feelings. It was a large base and had many conveniences that were welcomed, but the strict discipline of the base and the cold climate were hard on the boys that had spent the nine previous months in Sunny California and the Desert. Life at Casper was one lecture and inspection after another. The final ends were tied up and everyone was eagerly waiting for the big POW inspection and the word to go. On 24 October the POW inspection was passed with flying colors and from then on it was just a question of how long.

At high noon, the 9 November, came the train trip that was the beginning of the BIG trip. And on 12 November, the Squadron arrived at Camp Shanks, New York - the Port of Embarkation. The next nine days were the hardest, yet the happiest the Squadron had known so far. They were inspected and examined time and time again. The suspense was hard on nerves but the time eventually passed and by 0200 hours, 22 November, all were aboard ship. AND what a ship. The Queen Mary Elizabeth. It was only fitting that the finest ship in the world should carry the best damn Squadron in the world. The crossing was fast and uneventful. The monotony of the waves broken only by an occasional freighter or the Catalina Flying Boat that served as an escort. On the 29, November, the ship anchored at Gullack, Scotland, on the Firth of Clyde, below Glasgow. The next day the Squadrons left the boats and boarded the train for the Raydon Air Drome. The 1 December saw the Squadron, with the rest of the 357th Fighter Group, in their Messon Huts at Station 157, Raydon, England. Thus it became the Squadrons first overseas home. The Group was assigned to the IX Fighter Command, of the Ninth Air Force, on the 7 December.

Other than the usual training, lectures and getting settled nothing happened until 19 December when the first flight was made in a P-51 type airplane by a member of the Squadron. Captain Clarence E. Anderson flew a ship assigned to the 354 Fighter Group and the next day, a member of the Squadron, Captain Lloyd W. Hubbard, flew the first ship assigned to the Squadron. By 31 December, the Squadron had a total of six ships and the boys were getting very impatient for that first mission.

But the first mission was still a long way off. It wasn't until 24 January, that any member of the Squadron flew any mission and that had a tragic ending.

Captain Joe H. Giltner, Commanding Officer of the 363rd, flew a mission with the 353rd Fighter Group, and he failed to return. So he was the first to be listed as Missing In Action.

On the 28 January, 1st Lt. Montgomery H. Troop took Command and he was received with open arms because he had a record of sixty-nine combat missions and the experience proved invaluable to the pilots of the Squadron.

February was a month of action. The first day saw the Squadron make its first change of stations in the ETO. It moved to Station 373, Leiston, England, and was transferred to the VIII Fighter Command of the Eighth Air Force. Leiston was famous for its mud and it certainly lived up to its reputation. The second pilot of the Squadron to fly a mission, Captain Lloyd C. Hubbard, went out with the 354th Fighter Group on the 10 February. As they were making a strafing run over an enemy air field he got a direct hit from a burst of flak and crashed. So of the two first pilots to fly missions, they were both listed as M.I.A. and bad luck seemed to be dogging the Squadron. But even a bad day like the 10 February had its bright side because as of 2400 hours, the Squadron became an operational outfit. At Last!

The first mission took to the air 11 February for an area support over Rouen, and all the pilots returned. Maybe they had the jinx beat now. Three missions, a weeks time out for maintenance and training, and on 20 February, the 363rd tasted its first blood. On an escort mission to Leipzig, Lt. Ross destroyed a Me 109 and Captain Anderson got a damage on the same type of enemy aircraft. Lt. Ross got into trouble and had to bail out but was seen to get out safely. The next day the Squadron got two more Me 109's and it appeared to be actually making good its boast. The next day a destroyed and a damage again, and that was the end of the scoring for the first month of operation. The Jerries refused to come up on the following missions during February.

March, the first full month on operational status, held a variety of experiences for the young Squadron. Lt. Robert D. Foy became the first member of the Goldfish Club when he was forced to bail out in the icy waters of the English Channel. 4 March brought a mission to Big B-Berlin, and F/O Charles E. Yeager two Me 109's. 6 March gave the Squadron a glimpse of the future glory they were to attain when they brought in five kills and one damage with no losses. To show the results that the Squadron was getting, on March 14 the first decorations were awarded to members of the unit. Captains Hiro and Anderson received the Air Medal. The rest of the month went along the same lines, flying as often as possible and adding kills to their growing record.

By April the flying of missions had become routine. More awards and decorations were made including a Purple Heart to Lt. Foy and the Distinguished Flying Cross to Lt.s Ellis A. Rogers and Donald H. Bechky. The 11 April was the day the boys really opened up gathering eight kills and five damages.

On 28 May, the fighting 363rd got a new Commanding Officer. Captain Hiro took over from Major Troop. May was another month of many missions, many kills and a few losses. Good news came this month, F/O Yeager who made such a wonderful start, and was reported missing in action on 5 March, returned to the Squadron today. He had been forced to bail out over occupied territory and had successfully evaded and escaped. Nothing can stop this Squadron or the men in it. Already it had become established as a good outfit and everyone could see that it was going places.

D-day, 6 June, 1944. The big day at last. For days everyone knew something was in the air and the tension was terrific. At 0215 hours, the first ships sprang into the air and there were 363rd ships in the air all the rest of the day, bombing and strafing enemy troops and convoys. Jerry was afraid to come into the air that day and for many days to come. Our boys had it all their own way. The supporting of ground troops continued for days and much credit was given to the pilots for the fine flying and even more to the ground crews that put up as many as three missions a day.

Everyone worked hard and long to give the boys on the ground in the front lines the maximum of protection and aid from the air. The successful invasion meant that we would all be home much sooner and all was done that could be to make it a success. Cats were put up in the ready room at the flight line and everyone caught a little sleep when and where they could. It wasn't until 29 June that Jerry decided to come up again and was promptly slapped back down with twelve kills for the boys and no losses. Now who can contest the claim that this is the "Best Damn Squadron in the World".

The tension of the invasion lifted and was replaced by the calm assurance of a veteran outfit as the Squadron moved into the month of July. Going back to the old job of escorting the "Big Friends" and daring the Jerries to come up. There were two more firsts for the boys during this month. Captain Anderson was the first pilot to complete a tour of duty and be sent back to the States for a little vacation. At the time Captain Anderson went home, he was leading the group with a record of 14 destroyed and 2 damaged. And Staff Sergeant Otto Heino was awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services from 11 February to 11 June, 1944. S/Sgt. Heino is the first member of the Squadron to be so honored.

You can tell now that this is really a "veteran outfit". During the month of August more and more pilots CTD and were returned to the good old USA. August was another historical month for the Squadron as they flew the "Shuttle Run" from England to Russia to Italy and back to England. This run was completed without loss of a man or ship except that Lt. Williams S. Davis had to remain in Russia due to engine trouble. Otherwise it was a dull month, filled with milk runs and Jerry was conspicuous by his absence.

It begins to appear that Jerry has had enough. Milk run after milk run and the pilots are getting very well "browned off". It isn't until around the 18 September that they show up and in two days the Squadron collected twelve more to add to their growing bag of kills. Could that be the reason that they don't come up so often any more? This was marred by the loss of Major Hiro who had been Commanding Officer of the 363rd for the past four months. Major Guernsey I. Carlisle took command on 21 September. Major Carlisle had been flying with the Squadron for quite some time and it appears that we have another good Commanding Officer. During this month, romance crept into the Squadron. 1st Lt. George G. George and Sergeant Robert M. Fertch found themselves "the One" here in England and were married this month. Anglo-American relations seem to be definitely on the upgrade now.

Now we can go all the way to Berlin without seeing enemy fighters. October was made up entirely of milk runs. It was highlighted only by "Yeager" day on 12 October. Lt. Yeager got five Me 109's out of the eight that were collected by the Squadron that day. Not bad for a young lad. And he followed right up by getting the first "Jet" that was claimed by the Squadron the next month. With the exception of 27 November when the boys got nine FW 190's it's the same old story, no Jerries. A party that lasted for two days was begun on the 25 November to celebrate the end of the first year in the EWO. The party did not interfere with the flying of missions or the running of the base but the boys had a time that very few will ever forget.

If they will only come up, we'll put them down as evidenced by 5 December. After so many milk runs, twenty FW 190's came up and eight of them promptly went down under the hot guns of the 363rd. And the boys got their Christmas presents on 24 December by collecting seven more. Christmas Day was spent searching the skies for some more gifts but as usual, no Jerry. The two fat days were all the opposition encountered during the entire month of December.

So came the New Year, with the hopes of everyone that this would be the year that marked the end of the Nazi regime and war on this Earth. And on 14 January, 1945 the boys did their best to end the German Air Force. A record was set that day by the 357th Fighter Group, a record that will be standing for years to come. The Group destroyed fifty-nine and one-half enemy fighters in the air in one single engagement. The Squadron collected thirteen kills of this wonderful total. For this achievement the Group was awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation, fit reward for a very, very fine job, and many commendations from higher Headquarters. January marred by the death of the first enlisted man of the Squadron to be killed in the line of duty. Staff Sergeant Melvin H. Schueneman was killed when the AT-6 in which he was a passenger, crashed near Dover, England, along with the pilot, 1st Lt. William E. Corby. S/Sgt. Schueneman had been on the continent repairing some P-51's and was returning to the Squadron when they became lost in a fog, and the engine failed while they were trying to gain some altitude.

Lt. Colonel Carlisle completed his tour of duty the last part of January, and Captain Donald C. McGee took command of the Squadron 2 February. Captain McGee comes to us with a fine record. He completed a tour in the Southwest Pacific and holds a string of five kills, six probables and two damages. February was extremely all due to poor weather and the usual lack of Jerries. As the saying goes "they have had it".

March and April pass with so little action that everyone is mad and sure that the end is nearly in sight. Jerry just won't come up at all. The 19 April did four kills and four damages and these were all the new Me 262. So even Jerries best ship is no match for our P-51's and our fighting pilots.

Little did we realize when we took off on April 25, 1945 that this was the last combat mission the fighting 363rd was to fly. With May came the long awaited Victory Day. At last the foe is beaten. And we of the 363rd Fighter Squadron can rightfully say that we did our share and more. We are proud to be a unit of the Victorious Allied Forces. Our record for one year, two months and fourteen days of combat flying was 161 destroyed, 11 probable destroyed and 33 damages in the air and an additional 11 destroyed and 12 damages on the ground. With the best that could be hoped for in maintenance and flying ability, we can say, "This is the Best Squadron in the World" and feel that we have proved it.

Now that the fighting is over, the men of the 363rd are going to keep it the best, in training. It's back to the OTU status now, with a full training program laid out for every one. Of course, there are the expected rumors - "Pacific via the States" - is the favored one by everyone because this is a fighting Squadron and we want to see the job done.

In May, Major Donald H. Boshkay took over the command from Major McGee, who was transferred to the 364 Fighter Squadron as Commanding Officer. Major Boshkay is one of the Squadrons own. He has been with it since it was in its swaddling clothes at Tonopah, Nevada and everyone was greatly pleased with the new Commanding Officer. He is one of the leading Aces of the Group and one of the most liked members of the Squadron by both the officers and enlisted men.

Our dream of home and Pacific was dashed 14 June by the announcement that the Group was slated for the Occupational Air Force, we are to be stationed near Munich, Germany, instead of Hometown, USA. And there is much disappointment and unhappiness about this bad break. But this is a good Squadron and the men are good soldiers and there is no doubt that the job assigned to us will be done with the thoroughness that can be expected from "The Best Damn Squadron in the World".

Since the end of hostilities a full time training program has been in full swing

Everything from firing on the .45 Cal. Automatic to the Carbine for record; to Air Craft Identification(Japanese); along with constant flying has been carried on. Redeployment has started, slowly, but started nevertheless and that helps moral a lot.

After so many months, the Squadron leaves England. For most it is a sad parting because many of the personnel have made firm attachments here and the Squadron came to glory from this little field on the coast of the North Sea. But now it must start a new life, in England we were among friends, and in Germany we must enter as victors and make no attempt to be friendly. On 20 July, we were at R-65, Munich-Neubiburg, Germany, and a member of the Ninth Air Force.

The new life is very nice, good quarters, good food and a noticeable lack of mud. The personnel of the Squadron is changing fast, particularly among the enlisted men. As they climb aboard the trucks or planes that start them on the trip home, they are all very glad to be at last on the way to their loved ones, but everyone of them expressed a true regret at leaving the boys and the Squadron.

With the news of V-J day, there were a few parties and much discussions on the atomic bomb. But still the main topic on the minds of all was the length of time before they could expect to get home. The training program was still going strong and leaves and passes were coming through with regularity, but there didn't seem to be large enough quotas. Some of the men were taking advantage of the Educational facilities offered here on the Continent and in England.

The bad starts coming in and the flying hours drop off a little but everything else continues as before. The base football team started to work out in September and they plan to open their season during the first of October. Redeployment is beginning to hit pretty hard now and no replacements are coming in. A rest home on the North Sea is very popular with everyone now.

Major Bochkay went home during the month of October and Captain John R. Stern Jr. was appointed to the post of Squadron Commander. Captain Stern has already proved his ability as he has been Operations Officer during the time Major Bochkay was the Commanding Officer. Redeployment is sweeping the strength of the squadron and pilots have taken over practically all of the departments. 1st Lt. Guy D. Bender took one of our Mustangs and flew up to Amsterdam, Holland, to represent our Group in the Army Air Forces Exposition there. We had a bad tragedy during October when a C-47 carrying personnel to the leave center at the Riviera crashed into the mountains in southeastern France and killed all aboard. The ship was piloted by two of the 363rd men, Lt. Rice and Lt. Volf. Three Red Cross girls, two from our base, were in the crash. This was really a hard blow to all of us.

November brought the end or rather the temporary end of the 363rd as an operational outfit. So many of our personnel have gone back to the States that it is impossible to carry on three Squadrons here on this base, so all the Squadrons of the Group have consolidated under the head of the 362nd Fighter Squadron for the time being. This arrangement will only last until some replacements arrive and we can go back to regular set-up.

This is a short history of the 363rd Fighter Squadron from the time of its activation until the present time. There are few Squadrons that can come close to the mark set by this Squadron during the time it has been activated. We claim no Super-qualities, just a fine group of men who had their heart in their job. Never has there been a man that passed through this organization that could not be proud to say that he was a member of it. We have our Heroes, and for those of them that are not alive today, we miss them. Then names like, Anderson, Hise, O'Brien, Bochkay, Roy, Yeager and many many more will always be brought up when the great pilots of

this war are mentioned. The crew-chiefs, armorers, radio men, E-2's and everyone that was assigned to the organization did a wonderful job and can be very proud of the part they played in winning this total victory. The 363rd Fighter Squadron has had a short history, but a glorious one. Surely no one can argue the fact that this is, "THE BEST BATTAL SQUADRON IN THE WORLD".

Frank A. Kyle
1st. Lt. A.C.

DECLASSIFIED
DOD DIR 5200.9

363rd Fighter Squadron
(357th Fighter Group)

SSG-FI-863 HI
Jan-Feb 1944

RETURN TO
Director Air Corps Station Inst Attn: Airbus & Stenich Meyers, AF3, Airborne

DECLASSIFIED
DOD DIR 5200.9

MICROFILMED

6794-36H

THIS PAGE IS UNCLASSIFIED

S E C R E T

CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

of

E V E N T S

Month of January 1944

12 January 1944 - HENCOCK R. QUSSADA, Brigadier General, USA, Commanding IX Fighter Command, inspects the Squadron and addresses Officers of the Squadron.

24 January 1944 - JOE M. GILTHNER, Captain, AC, Commanding officer of the Squadron, Missing in Action. Captain Giltner, flying the first Combat Mission of Pilots of the Squadron, but flying with the 363rd Fighter Squadron, 354th Fighter Group. EDWIN L. HIRO, Captain, AC, Operations Officer of the 363rd Fighter Squadron was also on this mission. Captain Giltner was flying wing-man to Captain Friser, Commanding Officer of the 363rd Fighter Squadron. Both Captain Giltner and Captain Friser failed to return from this mission. Captain Giltner was reported as "Missing in Action". (See letter, 363rd Fighter Squadron, dated 25 January 1944, Subject: Report on M.I.A. Personnel - attached.)

26 January 1944 - Meeting of all personnel of the Squadron. Captain Hiro related to the personnel of the Squadron all that was known of the mission upon which Captain Giltner and himself went with the 354th Fighter Group, and all of the circumstances which might have accounted for the failure of Captain Giltner to return from this mission.

28 January 1944 - MONTGOMERY H. THROOP, 1st Lt, AC assigned to this Squadron. (See Special Order No. 25, 357th Fighter Group, dated 28 January 1944, attached)

MONTGOMERY H. THROOP, 1st Lt, AC, appointed Commanding Officer, 363rd Fighter Squadron. (See Special Order No. 25, 357th Fighter Group, dated 28 January 1944, attached)

S E C R E T

SECRET

OTU Training in the United Kingdom has been such that the Pilots of the unit have completed the prescribed courses and demonstrated proficiency in the following subjects:-

Air Training

Map Reading
Engineering Missions
Formation Flying
Individual Astern Attacks
Navigation - Individual
Air Flight
Cloud Flying
Air-to-Ground Fire
Air-to-Air Fire
Navigation II - Bad Weather
Altitude Climb - Squadron or Group
Night Flying
Dive Bombing

Ground Training

Geography of England
Geography of European Coastline
Flak
Prisoner of War
Escape & Evasion
Dissemination of Intelligence

SECRET

SECRET

Geography of Europe
 Combat Films
 Aircraft Recognition
 Competitive Aircraft Recognition Series
 Capabilities of German Air Force
 German Uniforms
 French Phrases
 Elementary French
 Air/Sea Rescue
 Current Events
 Maps
 Enemy Order of Battle
 Pilot's Encounter Reports

Training given the Enlisted Men of the Squadron during their first two months in the United Kingdom comprised - in addition to the training that they received through experience, in servicing and repairing the planes used by the unit's pilots in their flying training - consisted of:-

Identification of Aircraft	16 hours
Bomb Reconnaissance	2 hours

SECRET

S E C R E T

Extended Order Drill	2 hours
Close Order Drill	2 hours
Chemical Warfare	2 hours
Defense Against Chemical Attack	2 hours
Small Arms and Care of Weapons	2 hours
Enemy and Allied Uniforms	2 hours
First Aid	1 hour

S E C R E T

SECRET

363rd FIGHTER SQUADRON
357th Fighter Group, Army Air Forces
USAAF Station 157

D-2

APC 638,
25 Jan 44.

SUBJECT: Report of MIA Personnel.

TO : C-2 Officer, 357th Fighter Group, Station 157, APC 638.
U. S. Army.

1. The following information is furnished on Captain JOE F. GILTMAN, reported missing in action:

- a. JOE FARLEY GILTMAN, Captain, 0416296
- b. January 4, 1919
- c. May 30, 1941
- d. May 30, 1941
- e. 5 ft, 10 in -- 150 lbs -- slender.
- f. brown -blue
- g. Scar about 5/8 in. by 1/8 in. on corner of each side of mouth.

ERNEST F. DE WIGGIE,
1st Lt, AC,
C-2 O.

SECRET

RESTRICTED

HQ 357TH FIGHTER GROUP,
APO 656, U S ARMY
28 January 1946

EXTRACT

30)
:)
NO 25)

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9. 1st LT MONTGOMERY H. THROOP, 0433426, AC, held fr asgt 364th
Fighter Sq, and asgt to 363rd Fighter Sq.

10. Pursuant to VCCG IX Fighter Command, 28 Jan 46, 1st LT MONTGOMERY
H. THROOP, 0433426, AC, is aptd Commanding Officer, 363rd Fighter Sq.

*

*

*

By order of Lieutenant Colonel CHICKERING:

ROBERT T. ROWINS,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

OFFICIAL:

/s/ ROBERT T. ROWINS
/t/ ROBERT T. ROWINS,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

A TRUE EXTRACT

John B. Meyer
1ST LT, AC

RESTRICTED

SECRET

SECRET
 AUTH: 30 70FW
 DATE: 29 Jan 44
 INIT: *Deed*

363rd FIGHTER SQUADRON
 357th Fighter Group, Army Air Forces
 USAAF Station 157

D-2

13 Jan 44

SUBJECT: Unit History.

TO : Historical Officer, 357th Fighter Group, Army Air
 Forces, USAAF Station 157.

1. In compliance with IX Fighter Command Memorandum 20-4,
 dated 22 Dec 43, December installment of the Unit History of this
 organization is inclosed.

John B. Myers, Jr.
 JOHN B. MYERS, JR.,
 1st Lt, AC,
 Historical Officer.

Incls: Three

1st Incl: Dec. install. Unit History (in trip)
 2nd Incl: Extract Ltr, USAAF, WK, 320.2 7 Dec 43 (in trip)
 3rd Incl: Extract Gen Orders, 9AF, No. 146 (in trip)

SECRET

1142-16
14-1-44
281-I

S E C R E T

U N I T H I S T O R Y

363rd FIGHTER SQUADRON

DECEMBER INSTALLMENT

1. ORGANIZATION - Negative
2. STRENGTH - On 31 Dec 43, 50 Officers. 251 Men.
3. DATES OF ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE - STATIONS IN ETO
-- Unit arrived at USAF Station 157, London
air zone, on 1 Dec 43.
4. Losses in action - Negative
5. Awards and Decorations - Negative

7 Dec 43 -- Letter, Hq USAFTR, SAC.2, dated 7 Dec 43,
assigns Squadron to IX Air Force.

16 Dec 43 -- General Orders, Number 146, IX Air Force,
dated 16 Dec 43, further assigns Squadron to IX
Fighter Command, assignment effective as of 7 Dec 43.

19 Dec 43 -- First Flight in a P-51, in the ETO by a pilot
of this Squadron - made by Captain Clarence Anderson
in ship assigned to 354th Fighter group.

20 Dec 43 -- First airplane to be assigned to Squadron in the
ETO, is flown in by Captain Floyd Luccard. The airplane
an P-51B-3-NA. Captain Russell was, thus, the first
pilot of the 363rd Fighter Squadron to fly one of the
airplane assigned to the Squadron, in the ETO.

31 Dec 43 -- As of this date, six airplanes (P-51) had been
assigned to this organization.

EXTRACT

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS
IX AIR FORCE

SECRET

AUTH: 38 9 AF

LA 2: 18 Dec 43

1 1:

APO 66, D. I. ARMY
18 Dec 1943.

GENERAL ORDERS:

NUMBER 146

Section I.....A 1st of Units
Section II.....A 2nd of General OrdersSECTION I

1. The following units having been assigned to the 1st Air Force by letter, USAF, HQ, File 33.2, dated 7 December 1943, subject: "Assignment of Troops (to T)" are further assigned to the IX Fighter Command, effective 0001 hours, 7 December 1943.

36th Fighter Squadron

2. *****

3. *****

1. *****

By command of Major General WERLICH:

/s/ V H STRAND
Brig Gen USA
C of C

OFFICIAL:

/s/ C H SEEBACH
/t/ C H SEEBACH
Col AGD
Adj Gen.DISTRIBUTION "A"

md inc (2)

SECRET 1.

EXTRACTSECRET

: : : : :
 : SECRET :
 : Auth 6G, USAAF, UK: :
 : Date: 7 Dec 1943 :
 : Initials :
 : : : : :

NINTH AIR FORCE
 UNITED STATES ARMY AIR FORCES
 UNITED KINGDOM

320.2

7 December 1943.

SUBJECT: Assignment of Troops (No. 7)

TO : Commanding General, Ninth Air Force
 VIII Bomber Command
 VIII Fighter Command

1. The following units having recently arrived in this theater are assigned to commands indicated:

Ninth Air Force

36th Fighter Squadron

2. *****

3. *****

By command of Lieutenant General LAKER:

/s/ JAMES B. GORDON
 /t/ JAMES B. GORDON
 Lt. Col. AGD.,
 Asst Adj General

DISTRIBUTION: *****

 CO, Each Unit Concerned

SECRET

3rd June 11

SECRET

SECRET
AUTH: CG 70F
DATE: 29 Jan 44
INIT: *Dec*

D-2

362nd FIGHTER SQUADRON
357th Fighter Group, Army Air Forces
WPAFB Station 157

Release / Mar

13 Jan 44

SUBJECT: Unit History.

TO : Historical Officer, 357th Fighter Group, Army Air
Forces, WPAFB Station 157.

1. In compliance with IX Fighter Command Memorandum 20-4,
dated 22 Dec 43, December installment of the Unit History of this
organization is inclosed.

JOHN B. MYERS, JR.,
1st Lt, AG,
Historical Officer.

Incls: Three

1st Incl: Dec. install. Unit History (in trip)
2nd Incl: Extract Ltr, WPAFB, DE, 320.2 7 Dec 43 (in trip)
3rd Incl: Extract Gen Orders, 9AF, No. 146 (in trip)

SECRET

281-I

S E C R E T

UNIT HISTORY

363rd FIGHTER SQUADRON

DECEMBER INSTALLMENT

1. ORGANIZATION - Negative
2. STRENGTH - On 31 Dec 43, 50 Officers, 251 Men.
3. ~~UNIT OF ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE~~ - STATIONS IN ETC
 - - Unit arrived at USAF Station 157, Dayton
 Airbase, on 1 Dec 43.
4. Losses in action - Negative
5. Awards and Decorations - Negative

7 Dec 43 -- Letter, Sq USAAFUK, 320.2, dated 7 Dec 43,
 assigns Squadron to IX Air Force.

16 Dec 43 -- General Orders, Number 146, IX Air Force,
 dated 16 Dec 43, further assigns Squadron to IX
 Fighter Command, assignment effective as of 7 Dec 43.

19 Dec 43 -- First Flight in a P-51, in the ETC by a pilot
 of this Squadron - made by Captain Clarence Anderson
 in ship assigned to 354th Fighter Group.

20 Dec 43 -- First airplane to be assigned to Squadron in the
 ETC, is flown in by Captain Lloyd Hubbard. The airplane
 an P-51B-S-NA. Captain Hubbard was, thus, the first
 pilot of the 363rd Fighter Squadron to fly one of the
 airplanes assigned to the Squadron, in the ETC.

31 Dec 43 -- As of this date, six airplanes (P-51) had been
 assigned to this organization.

EXTRACT

SECRET

.....
: SECRET :
: Auth 6G, USAAF, UK:
: Date: 7 Dec 1943 :
: Initials :
:.....

BRITISH AIR FORCE
UNITED STATES AIR FORCES
UNITED KINGDOM

320.2

7 December 1943.

SUBJECT: Assignment of Troops (No. 7)

TO : Commanding General, Ninth Air Force
VIII Bomber Command
VIII Fighter Command

1. The following units having recently arrived in this theater are assigned to commands indicated:

Ninth Air Force

36th Fighter Squadron

2. *****

3. *****

By command of Lieutenant General BAKER:

/s/ JAMES B. GORDON
/c/ JAMES B. GORDON
Lt. Col. AGD.,
Asst Adj General

DISTRIBUTION: *****

CO, Each Unit Concerned

SECRET

3rd Incl (2)

EXTRACTSECRETHEADQUARTERS
INTER AIR FORCE

<u>SECRET</u>
AUTH: CG 9 AF
DATE: 16 Dec 43
INIT: _____

APO 696, U. S. ARMY
16 December 1943.

GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER 146

Section I.....Assignment of Units
 Section II.....Amendment of General Orders

SECTION I

1. The following units having been assigned to the Ninth Air Force by letter, USAF, UK, file 320.2, dated 7 December 1943, subject: "Assignment of Troops (No 7)" are further assigned to the IX Fighter Command, effective 0001 hours, 7 December 1943.

363rd Fighter Squadron

2. *****

3. *****

1. *****

By command of Major General BREWSTER:

/s/ V H STRAHM
 Brig Gen USA
 C of C

OFFICIAL:

/s/ C M SEEBACH
 /t/ C M SEEBACH
 Col AGD
 AD Gen.

DISTRIBUTION "A"
*****1.
SECRET

2nd Dec 43

Immediate
SECRET

SECRET
AUTH: 30 70 FW
DATE: 29 Jan 44
INIT: *Bel*.....

363rd FIGHTER SQUADRON
357th Fighter Group, Army Air Forces
USAAF Station 157

D-2

13 Jan 43

SUBJECT: Unit History.

TO : Historical Officer, 357th Fighter Group, Army Air Forces, USAAF Station 157.

1. In compliance with IX Fighter Command Memorandum 20-4, dated 22 Dec 42, Initial Installment of Unit History of this organization is inclosed.

John B. Myers Jr.
JOHN B. MYERS, JR.,
1st Lt, AC,
Historical Officer.

Incl: One (In trip)
1st Incl: Initial Installment,
Unit History.

SECRET

SECRET

UNIT HISTORY

363rd FIGHTER SQUADRON

INITIAL INSTALLMENT

1. Unit was originally designated as the 363rd Fighter Squadron. There has been no change in the designation of the unit.

2. Squadron was activated at Hamilton Field, California, per War Department Letter, AG 320.2 (12-6-42), dated 8 December 1942, as amended by War Department Letter, subject, "Constitution and Activation of Certain Army Air Force Units", dated 1 December 1942, showing the date of constitution of this organization as 1 December 1942. The original organization included:

STUART R. LAULER, CAPT, AC, COMMANDING
L. WILFING WELCH, 1ST LT, AC, ADJUTANT
ERNEST F. DE NIORIS, 2ND LT, AC, INTELLIGENCE OFFICER
ROLLAND J. ROBERTSON, 2ND LT, AC, COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
HAROLD REYNOLDS, 2ND LT, AC, ASST COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

3. The original cadre of the unit was obtained from the 323rd Fighter Group, Hamilton Field, California. Personnel of the original cadre were assigned to the unit on 8 January 1943. Later additions to the personnel of the unit were from the IV Air Force Replacement Depot, Hammer Field, California.

4. A resume of the movements of the unit from the time of activation to its arrival in the ETO:

a. On 5 March 1943, the Squadron entrained from Hamilton Field, California, and on 6 March 1943 arrived at Bombing and Gunnery Range at Tonopah, Nevada, for the first phase of its training.

b. On 1 June 1943, the unit left Bombing and Gunnery Range at Tonopah, Nevada, and on 2 June 1943 arrived at Army Airdrome, Santa Rosa, California for the second phase of its training.

c. On 18 Aug 1943, the unit left Army Airdrome, Santa Rosa, California, arriving at Army Airdrome, Oroville, California on the same day. Here the squadron undertook the third and final phase of its training.

S E C R E T

d. On 4 October 1943, the squadron departed from Army Airfield, Groville, California, and on 7 October 1943 arrived at Army Air Base, Casper, Wyoming. At this base the Squadron cooperated with Bombardment organizations for the mutual benefit of the organizations in training in fighter escort of bombers and in fighter interception of bombers. At this base, on 24 October 1943, the unit successfully passed the 'Preparation for Overseas Movement' Inspection.

e. On 9 November 1943, the unit moved from Army Air Base, Casper, Wyoming and on 12 November 1943 arrived at Port of Embarkation at Camp Shanks, New York.

f. On 21 November 1943, at 2100 hours, the squadron commenced movement from Camp Shanks, New York, and at 22 November 1943, at 0200 hours was on board H. M. S. Queen Elizabeth for movement overseas.

g. On 29 November 1943, H. M. S. Queen Elizabeth slipped anchor in Firth of Clyde.

h. On 30 November 1943, the unit left ship and entrained.

i. On 1 December 1943, Unit arrived at USAAF Station 157, Raydon Airfield, in Southeast England.

SECRET

UNIT HISTORY

363rd FIGHTER SQUADRON

INITIAL INSTALLMENT

1. Unit was originally designated as the 363rd Fighter Squadron. There has been no change in the designation of the unit.

2. Squadron was activated at Hamilton Field, California, per War Department Letter, AG 320.2 (12-6-42), dated 8 December 1942, as amended by War Department Letter, subject, "Constitution and Activation of Certain Army Air Force Units", dated 1 December 1942, showing the date of constitution of this organization as 1 December 1942. The original organization included:

STUART R. LAHLER, CAPT, AG, COMMANDING
L. WHITING WELCH, 1ST LT, AG, ADJUTANT
ERNEST F. DE NIGRIS, 2ND LT, AG, INTELLIGENCE OFFICER
ROLLAND J. ROBERTSON, 2ND LT, AG, COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
HAROLD REYNOLDS, 2ND LT, AG, ASST COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

3. The original cadre of the unit was obtained from the 328th Fighter Group, Hamilton Field, California. Personnel of the original cadre were assigned to the unit on 8 January 1943. Later additions to the personnel of the unit were from the IV Air Force Replacement Depot, Hammer Field, California.

4. A resume of the movements of the unit from the time of activation to its arrival in the ETO:

a. On 5 March 1943, the Squadron entrained from Hamilton Field, California, and on 6 March 1943 arrived at Bombing and Gunnery Range at Tonopah, Nevada, for the first phase of its training.

b. On 1 June 1943, the unit left Bombing and Gunnery Range at Tonopah, Nevada, and on 2 June 1943 arrived at Army Airdrome, Santa Rosa, California for the second phase of its training.

c. On 18 Aug. 1943, the unit left Army Airdrome, Santa Rosa, California, arriving at Army Airdrome, Oroville, California on the same day. Here the squadron undertook the third and final phase of its training.

1.

SECRET

S E C R E T

d. On 4 October 1943, the squadron departed from Army Airdrome, Oroville, California, and on 7 October 1943 arrived at Army Air Base, Casper, Wyoming. At this base the Squadron cooperated with Bombardment organizations for the mutual benefit of the organizations in training in 'fighter escort of Bombers and in Fighter interception of Bombers. At this base, on 24 October 1943, the unit successfully passed the 'Preparation for Overseas Movement' inspection.

e. On 9 November 1943, the unit moved from Army Air Base, Casper, Wyoming and on 12 November 1943 arrived at Port of Embarkation at Camp Thanks, New York.

f. On 21 November 1943, at 2100 hours, the squadron commenced movement from Camp Thanks, New York, and at 22 November 1943, at 0200 hours was on board H. M. S. Queen Elizabeth for movement overseas.

g. On 29 November 1943, H. M. S. Queen Elizabeth slipped anchor in Firth of Clyde.

h. On 30 November 1943, the unit left ship and entrained.

i. On 1 December 1943, Unit arrived at USAF Station 157, Raydon Airdrome, in Southeast England.

SECRET

SECRET

UNIT HISTORY

353rd Fighter Squadron

JANUARY 1944

1. GROUNDING - 1ST LT. JERRY H. THOMP, AC, assigned to squadron on 23 Jan 44 (See Special Order No. 25, 357th Fighter Group, dated 23 Jan 44, attached).
- 1ST LT. JERRY H. THOMP, AC, died Commanding Officer, 353rd Fighter Squadron on 23 Jan 44 (See Special Order No. 25, 357th Fighter Group, dated 23 Jan 44, attached).
2. STRENGTH - On 31 Jan 44, 52 Officer; 252 Men.
3. DATES OF ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE, OVERSEAS IN AYO - NEGATIVE
4. LOSSES IN ACTION - CAPTAIN JOE H. GILMER, COORDINATING OFFICER, Missing in Action on 24 January 1944. Captain GILMER, flying the first combat mission of pilots of the squadron - with Captain Wiro, Operations Officer of the squadron. Captain GILMER was flying with the 353rd Fighter Squadron of the 354th Fighter Group. He was flying wing man to Captain FRISER, Commanding Officer of the 353rd Fighter Squadron. Both Captain GILMER and Captain FRISER failed to return from this mission. Captain GILMER was reported as Missing in Action. (See Letter 353rd Fighter Squadron, dated 25 Jan 44, Subject - Report on MIA Personnel - , attached)
5. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS - NEGATIVE
6. OTHER DATA
 - a. 12 January 1944 - Brigadier General QUEGADA, Commanding General of IX Fighter Command, inspected the Squadron and spoke to the Officers and Pilots of the Squadron.
 - b. 26 January 1944 - Meeting of all personnel of the squadron. Captain Wiro related to the Officers and enlisted Men of the Squadron all that he knew of the mission upon which he and Captain Giltner went with the 354th Fighter Group and of the circumstances relating to the failure of Captain Giltner to return from this mission. Films of combat operations were shown to the squadron.

1.

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SECRET

307th FIGHTER SQ. ADRON
307th Fighter Group, Army Air Forces
Post Station 197

D-2

APG 638,
21 JAN 44.

SUBJECT: Report on KIA Period 41

TO : 1. Officer, 307th Fighter Group, Station 197,
APG 638, U. S. Army.

2. Following information is furnished on Captain
JOE H. MILLNER, reported KIA in action:

*Hn

- a. JOE HARVEY MILLNER, Captain, 0416296.
- b. January 4, 1919.
- c. May 30, 1941.
- d. May 30, 1941.
- e. 5 ft, 10 in - 150 lbs - slender.
- f. Brown - Blue.
- g. Scar about 5/8 in. by 1/8 in. on corner of
each side of mouth.

ERNEST F. DE KRAK,
1st Lt, AC,
-2 C.

A True Copy:

Jerry N. Bonnell
1st Lt, AC

1.

SECRET

R E S T R I C T E D

HQ 357TH FIGHTER GROUP
APO 638, U S ARMY
28 January 1944

E X T R A C T

CO)
:
NO 25)

*

*

*

9. 1ST LT MONTGOMERY H. THROOP, 0433426, AC, reld fr
sgt 364th Fighter Sq, and asgd to 363rd Fighter Sq.

10. Pursuant to VOGG LX Fighter Command, 28 Jan 44, 1st
LT MONTGOMERY H T ROOP, 0433426, AC, 1st aptd Commanding
Officer, 363rd Fighter Sq.

*

*

*

By order of Lieutenant Colonel CRICKERING:

ROBERT T. ROMINE,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

OFFICIAL:

s/ ROBERT T. ROMINE
t/ ROBERT T. ROMINE
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

A True Copy:

James A. Bonnell,
1st Lt., AC

R E S T R I C T E D

SECRET

UNCLASSIFIED

357th FIGHTER SQUADRON

JANUARY 1944

1. ORGANIZATION - 1ST LT ROY HENRY H. TROOP, AC, asgd to squadron on 28 Jan 44 (See Special Order No. 25, 357th Fighter Group, dated 28 Jan 44, attached)
 - 1ST LT ROY HENRY H. TROOP, AC, asgd Commanding Officer, 357th Fighter Squadron on 28 Jan 44 (See Special Order No. 25, 357th Fighter Group, dated 28 Jan 44, attached)
2. STRENGTH - On 31 Jan 44, 52 Officer; 252 Men.
3. DATES OF ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE, STATION IN KTO - NEGATIVE
4. LOSS IN ACTION - CAPTAIN JOE A. GILNER, Commanding Officer, Missing in action on 24 January 1944. Captain Gilner, flying the first combat mission of pilots of the squadron - with Captain Wiro, Operations Officer of the squadron. Captain Gilner was flying with the 357th Fighter Squadron of the 354th Fighter Group. He was flying wing man to Captain WILSON, Commanding Officer of the 357th Fighter Squadron. Both Captain Gilner and Captain WILSON failed to return from this mission. Captain Gilner was reported as Missing in action. (See Letter 357th Fighter Squadron, dated 25 Jan 44, Subject - Report on KIA Personnel - attached)
5. AWARD OF DISTINCTION - NEGATIVE
6. OTHER DATA
 - a. 12 January 1944 - Brigadier General QUEBADA, Commanding General of IX Fighter Command, inspected the squadron and spoke to the Officers and Pilots of the squadron.
 - b. 26 January 1944 - Meeting of all personnel of the squadron. Captain Wiro related to the Officers and Enlisted Men of the squadron all that he knew of the mission upon which he and Captain Gilner went with the 354th Fighter Group and of the circumstances relating to the failure of Captain Gilner to return from this mission. Films of combat operations were shown to the squadron.

1.

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SECRET

307th FIGHTER BATTALION
307th Fighter Group, Army Air Forces
Station 157

1-2

AGO 638,
25 Jan 44.

FROM: Report on KIA Person. el

TO : 1st Officer, 307th Fighter Gr up, Station 157,
AGO 638, U. S. Army.

1. Following information is furnished by Captain
JOE H. GILNER, reported KIA in action:

- JOE HARVEY GILNER, Captain, 0416296.
- January 4, 1944.
- By 30, 1941
- By 30, 1941
- 5 ft, 10 in - 150 lbs - slender.
- Brown - blue.
- Scar about 2/3 in. by 1/3 in. on corner of
each side of mouth.

JOE H. GILNER,
1st Lt, AG,
-2-

A True Copy:

Joe H. Gilner
1st Lt, AG

1.

SECRET

RESTRICTED

HQ 357TH FIGHTER GROUP
APO 636, ARMY
28 January 1944

EXTRA 22

TO :
NO 25)

9. 1ST LT MONTGOMERY H. THORNTON, O43426, AG, reld fr
angst 364th Fighter Sq, and asgd to 363rd Fighter Sq.

10. Pursuant to VOGS LX Fighter Command, 28 Jan 44, 1ST
LT MONTGOMERY H. THORNTON, O43426, AG, is asgd commanding
officer, 363rd Fighter Sq.

By order of Lieutenant Colonel C. J. ...

ROBERT T. ROMINE,
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

OFFICIAL:
s/ ROBERT T. ROMINE
t/ ROBERT T. ROMINE
Major, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

A True Copy:
James L. Barnwell
1st Lt. AC

RESTRICTED

1.

SECRET

Classified "SECRET"
auth VIII Ftr Cmd
Memorandum 125-1
Dated 13 November 43.

DECLASSIFIED

DOD DIR 5200.9

UNIT HISTORY

363rd Fighter Squadron

CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

OF

EVENTS

Month of February 1944

1 February - On this day the Squadron had its first change of station in the E.T.O. The Squadron moved from USA F Station 157, Raydon Airrome to USAAF Station F-373, near Leiston. The Squadron moved by motor convoy, leaving Raydon at 1000 hours and arriving at Leiston at 1300 hours. Units of the 366 Fighter Group, a P-47 unit, who were to replace us at Raydon as we replaced them at Leiston, moved out of Station F-373 as we moved in. The rumors that had been spread by the advance units of the 366th as to the mud that we would find at Leiston were found to be more than true. The movement of the Squadron from Raydon to Leiston was in compliance with Special Orders Number 12, Headquarters, USAAF Station 157, dated 5 February 1944. (See Document "A" appended)

Also effective this date, the Squadron was transferred from the IX Fighter Command of the Ninth Air Force to the VIII Fighter Command of the Eighth Air Force. This transfer was by V O C O orders from ELWOOD R. QUESADA, Brigadier General, USA.

2 February - The Squadron settles down to real hard work at Station F-373. Our airplanes arrive at this station, and with twenty four planes assigned to the Squadron, as of this date, it really is necessary that the Squadron get down to business.

DECLASSIFIED
DOD DIR 5200.9

S E C R E T

- 5 February - MONTGOMERY H. THROOP, Commanding Officer of the Squadron, is promoted from 1st Lieutenant to Captain. This promotion by Special Orders Number 34, Headquarters, Eighth Air Force, Dated 5 February 1944. (See Document "A-1" appended)
- 10 February - On this date, Captain Lloyd C. Hubbard, one of the real 'old timers' amongst the pilots of the Squadron, in as much as he had come to the unit on 3 March 1943, was reported "Missing in Action" following his participation in a mission with the 354th Fighter Group. Captain Hubbard was Flight Commander of "A" Flight of the Squadron, and had proven himself to be one of the best pilots of the unit. On this date he was flying wingman to the flight leader - the flight consisting of four ships. The flight was flying at tree-top level, strafing ground installations of an airdrome in occupied France. About one-third of the way over the run-way, the flight ran into a sudden "Wall of Flak" thrown up in front of them. A large burst of this flak struck Captain Hubbard's ship and the ship crashed to the ground. None of the other ships of the flight crashed, though they were all hit by flak. (See Document "B" appended)
- And also on this date - 10 February - the Squadron became of age. For on this date at 2400 hours, the Squadron became an OPERATIONAL UNIT. Now, at long last, the Squadron would have the opportunity of showing to the world, and particularly to the Nazi world, that all of the rigid and strenuous training that the Squadron had gone through was to result in many victories for the Squadron in the air. The Squadron was now to do its part in the winning of the war.
- 11 February - This was the date of the first OPERATIONAL FLIGHT of the Squadron. This flight was a mission of area support over ROUEN. All of the pilots of the Squadron were much elated that we were at last taking part in things, at last seeing action as a Squadron, at last starting off for our share of 'history making'. (See Document "C" attached)
- 12 February - The Squadron takes off on its second Operational Mission. This time the mission is Bomber Escort - "Penetration - Target Support - Withdrawal" with the objective of the bombers being ST POL. It was the type of mission for which the P-51 was designed and for which the pilots of this Squadron were so carefully trained. (See Document "D" appended)
- 13 February - The third Operational Mission of the Squadron is area support over ROUEN - AMIENS - ABBEVILLE. Operational missions are beginning to take on the aspect of routine affairs with the Unit. (See Document "E" appended)

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

- 20 February - After a week of rest and maintenance and training, the Squadron goes on a really b-i-g operational mission. This is a bomber escort mission on a long haul to BEIRUT (See Document "F" appended). On this mission the Squadron marked up its first claim of enemy aircraft destroyed, as Lt. Donald H. Ross, assigned to the 357th Fighter Group, but attached to this Squadron for flying, shot down an Me. 109. (See Document "G" appended and Document "H" appended). And also the first claim of enemy aircraft damaged came on this mission - an Me. 109 damaged by Captain Clarence E. Anderson. (See Documents "J" and "K" appended). The first pilot missing on the Squadron's own operational missions came about as Lt Donald H. Ross failed to return from this mission. Lt. Ross had pressed home an attack on one of five or six Me. 109s which were attacking the lead box of bombers. 1st Lt. Alfred R. Boyle, flying Lt. Ross' wing, observed strikes on the wing roots of the enemy aircraft. Lt Ross continued his attack until the 109 was last seen by Lt. Boyle to descend in a long spiral with smoke issuing from the ship. Lt. Ross was last seen by Lt. Boyle to roll his ship, and to parachute out. The parachute was observed to open. (See Documents "F" "G" "H" appended)
- 21 February - Another long Bomber Escort Mission for the Squadron (See Document "L" appended). This time the mission was to Brunswick. Our claims for this mission: one Me. 109 destroyed by Captain William R. O'Brien, (See Documents "I", "N", "O" appended) and one Me. 109 destroyed by 1st Lt. Alfred R. Boyle (See Document "M" appended). 1st Lt. Alfred R. Boyle failed to return from this mission. This was the first time that a pilot actually assigned to the Squadron had failed to return from a combat mission of the Squadron. Lt Wood who was flying Lt. Boyle's wing, saw the latter engage an Me. 109 at 20,000 feet and to follow the enemy aircraft down to 7,000 feet. The tail of the enemy aircraft was observed to fall off. Lt Boyle was last seen by Lt. Wood to be still diving through the wreckage of the enemy aircraft at 7,000 feet. (See Document "M" appended)
- 22 February - This was the third successive day of bomber escort for the Squadron. It was the third day of "maximum effort by the air forces of the United Nations against the aircraft manufacturing plants of the Reich. (See Document "Q" appended). The target for this mission was BERG. On this mission, claim was made for the destruction of an Me. 109 by Lt. Rogers (See Document "P" appended) and for the damage of an Me. 109 or Me. 209 by Captain Edwin W. Hiro, the Squadron Operations Officer (See Documents "R" and "S" appended)
- 24 February - After a day for maintenance and training, the Squadron again made a long bomber escort trip - a mission to GOTHALD on this trip. (See Document "T" appended). On this mission the Squadron made claim

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

for two enemy ships. Lt. William D. Michaely claimed one FW 190 destroyed (See Document "V" appended) and Captain Paul A. DeVries, Flight Commander of "D" flight of the Squadron claimed one FW 190 damaged (See Document "V" appended). And another pilot of the Squadron failed to return from this mission. 1st Lt. Charles L. McKee was flying the right wing of Captain Paul A. DeVries and Lt. William D. Michaely was flying the left wing, when a Focke-Wulf dove in front of them and they followed it down. Lt. Michaely destroyed the enemy aircraft and pulled up (See Document "V" appended). Lt. McKee was last seen giving a little to his rear. (See Document "U", "V" and "W" appended)

Also on this day, AAF Technicians badges were awarded to members of the Squadron as indicated on Special Orders Number 54, USAF Station F-373. (See Document "X" appended)

February 25 - Today the Squadron went on another long bomber escort mission, on the long, long haul to ROSENBERG. (See Document "Y" appended) And the pilots of the Squadron are really "browned off" in that they saw no action at all on this mission. Other Squadrons, it seems were in the midst of things. Naturally there were no claims of damage to enemy aircraft, as the Squadron saw no enemy aircraft except at a distance and that plane had been shot down by other fighters so that all our men had to do was to watch it go down. The Squadron acted as top-cover on this mission. And it was not necessary to call the top cover into battle nor did any enemy aircraft come up to the altitude of 25,000 feet where our ships were cruising around. But the Squadron did show how thoroughly disciplined in that it did keep its appointed place as ordered. "They also serve who only stand and wait". And perhaps on the next go our ships will have the honor of being in the midst of things -- and will then be able to demonstrate that their fighting ability is well in line with their ability to obey orders even though they are "browned-off" at the necessity of obeying them.

29 February - Another long operational mission as the Squadron provides bomber escort at BRUNSWICK. The mission involved Target support and Target Withdrawal as well as penetration support by the pilots and P-51s of the Squadron. Again, this time, no enemy aircraft were seen by the pilots of the Squadron. But at least there was the consolation that no enemy aircraft were seen by any of the pilots on this mission. What is the matter with the Jerries? (See Document "Z" appended)

S E C R E T