

SQ. FI-66-HI
Mar 44 - Apr 44

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5. Following are pilots who have received the Distinguished Flying Cross during the period March 1 thru March 31, 1944 for having distinguished themselves in action against the enemy in this theatre:

Captain Robert Looney
Captain John W. Santry
Captain Robert C. Schuren
1st Lieut. William C. Ballew

6. The following named pilot of this organization is missing in action:

1st Lieut. David F. Coughlin

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66th Fighter Squadron
Outline History, April, 1944

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By Auth CO

66th Ftr. Sq.

30 April, 1944

Initials *WMP/B*

HQ. SIXTY-SIXTH FIGHTER SQUADRON
A.P.O. 650

30 April, 1944

AG 314.7

SUBJECT: Historical Records.

TO : Commanding General, XII Tactical Air Command, A.P.O. 650.

1. Outline History of the 66th Fighter Squadron for the period
1 April, 1944 to 30 April, 1944:

a. Present Designation: 66th F.S., 57th F.G., 87th F.W.,
12 T.A.C., 12th A.F.

b. Changes in organization: None.

c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted.

(1) Month of April, 1944.

(a) At beginning: Commissioned; 44; Enlisted, 216.

(b) Net increase: Commissioned, 9; Enlisted, 13.

(c) Net decrease: Commissioned, 0; Enlisted, 0.

(d) At end: Commissioned, 53; Enlisted, 229.

d. Stations:

(1) Name of station: Cercola Landing Ground, Italy.

(a) Date of arrival of "A" Party: 1 March, 1944.

Date of arrival of "B" Party: 5 March, 1944.

(b) Date of departure of "A" Party: 23 March, 1944.

Date of departure of "B" Party: 1 April, 1944.

(2) Name of station: Alto Landing Ground, Corsica.

(a) Date of arrival of "A" Party: 28 March, 1944.

Date of arrival of "B" Party: 6 April, 1944.

(b) The squadron remained on Alto L. G., Corsica
thru 30 April, 1944.

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e. Movements:

- (1) From Cercola L. G., Italy to Alto L. G., Corsica.
 - (a) Purpose: Change of station.
 - (b) Dates: Shown above under "d. Stations".
 - (c) Mode of travel: Motor Convoy and Landing Ship, Tank.
 - (d) Condition of roads, conveyances and weather: General conditions good.

f. Campaigns:

- (1) Name: Italian.
- (2) Duration: Still in progress.

g. Operations:

- (1) Campaign: Italian.
- (2) Nature of operations: Dive-bombing and strafing of enemy lines of communication.
- (3) Number of missions for period 1 April, 1944 thru 30 April, 1944: 45. Number of sorties for same period: 581.
- (4) Results of most important missions:
 - (a) Mission: To dive-bomb railway tracks and bridges between Siena and Sinalunga, Italy.
 1. Target; why important: The target was important as it is on one of the supply lines used by the enemy in support of their forces in Italy.
 2. Probability of success: -
 3. How mission aids in ground force operations: The mission fits in with ground force operations in so far that it interrupts the flow of material, for a time, along that particular route to the enemy forces which oppose our own forces.
 4. The evidence that bombs were effective: Two bridges were seen to have been destroyed by the members of that formation after bombing.

h. Commanding officer in important mission:

- (1) 1st Lieut. Joseph F. Reynolds led the squadron on mission mentioned above to dive-bomb bridges between Siena and Sinalunga, Italy.

i. Losses in action: None.

j. The following named former member of this organization has distinguished himself in action against the enemy:

- (1) Name: 1st Lieut. Joe L. Longenecker.
 - (a) Engagement: Anti-shipping mission on 13 January, 1944.
 - (b) Act: Destruction of enemy motor vessel.
 - (c) Reward: Distinguished Flying Cross.

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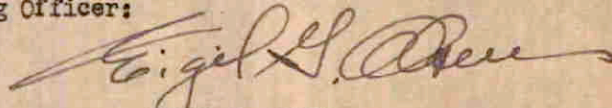
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2. Inclosed is the War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Squadron for the period 1 April, 1944 thru 30 April, 1944.

For the Commanding Officer:



EIGIL G. OLSEN
Captain, A. C.,
Intelligence Officer.

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Incl:
War Diary

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Sheet No. 1, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Sqdn., A.P.O. 650, N.Y.

Month of March, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

DAY	EVENTS
1	<p>"A" Party left Amendola L. G. by MT for Cercola L. G., Italy which is only three or four miles from Naples and at the foot of Mt. Vesuvius. We moved in vehicles loaned by a service group as most of our trucks were turned over to a service unit a month ago. Rain fell during most of the six hours of the trip and much of our equipment was thoroughly soaked by the time we had arrived here, not to mention ourselves. "B" Party remains at Amendola L. G. We are told that this is to be only a temporary set up and that we should return to Amendola in not more than a month's time. "B" Party ran one mission from Amendola today.</p>
2	<p>"A" Party is set up on Cercola L. G. and rain has fallen ever since our arrival here. The camp area is at least one mile from our Ops and it is situated in a grape arbor. This grape arbor is an area which is covered with trees which are cut off about 15 ft. above the ground with barren vines strung from tree to tree. The ground is extremely damp and already the tracks made by our trucks are nearly impassable because of the deep mud. No one has been to town nor do we expect to be going soon for the city is out of bounds. We do hope to be allowed to visit Pompei and other points of interest though. "B" Party ran one mission today from Amendola L. G.</p>
3	<p>The a/c arrived here this morning. The sky was very cloudy and it was raining when they landed but the pilots report that the sky was clear when they left Amendola. No missions were flown today from either Cercola or Amendola L. G.</p>
4	<p>No missions today for the weather continues to be cloudy and rain falls most of the time. The taxi strips are simply strips of deep mud. Some men of "B" Party arrived here bringing equipment; included were the tank and other apparatus for the shower as well as the tables for the mess. The high point for the day came this evening when Coca-Cola in bottles was issued at the orderly room. This is the first "Coke" we have had since our departure from the States. The officers have found a house in the near-by town of Cercola where they plan to live.</p>

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Sheet No. 2, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Sqdn., A.P.O. 650, N.Y.

Month of March, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

DAY	EVENTS
5	The remainder of "B" Party arrived here today from Amendola L. G. There were no missions from here today. Four new pilots came to join the squadron this afternoon. A meeting of the squadron enlisted men was held at the mess after supper tonight and 1st Sgt. Pettis gave us the story on passes; he is going to arrange for one day passes.
6	A training flight for the new pilots was the only flying for the day. Tents have been set up for the EM's mess and the tables have been put together and are now in service. There was a large mail call in the evening.
7	No operations today - weather inclement. Our present landing ground, Cercola, is located north and at the foot of Mt. Vesuvius and only about six miles from the center of Naples. On this same field is stationed the 324th Fighter Group and many of the men in this unit have old acquaintances in the 324th and this provides an opportunity to renew them. The 314th Squadron of the 324th Group was with the 57th in Africa. They joined us at Zuara, Libya and remained with us until Kairouan, Tunisia when their own group came up and they re-joined it. Canteen supplies were sold this afternoon and smallpox vaccinations were given by the Medics. Squadron assembly after supper tonight and so the day ended.
8	Two fighter-bomber missions to bomb gun emplacements were flown today. The P-47's each carried two five hundred pound bombs, one under each wing. At supper tonight Capt. Benedict announced that we are to move out soon to destination "X". Packing boxes are being built for our equipment. He also announced that some of the men will be given passes to Naples each day.
9	One mission as fighter escort to B-25's to bomb Porto San Stefano was flown today. There was a little mail which was given out in the evening.

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Sheet No. 3, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Sqdn., A.P.O. 650, N.Y.

Month of March, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

DAY	EVENTS
10	The weather was none too good today but one mission as escort to B-25's was flown. This show was to bomb the marshalling yards at Rome Littorio. Canteen Supplies were sold at the orderly room this afternoon. At nine o'clock this morning several men left for Capri where they will spend three days of leave.
11	One mission to dive bomb RR at Civita Castellano. The squadron's shower has been put up and today was the first day of operation for it. There is a fine shower not far from our camp at a service squadron which is open to us.
12	No missions today. Weather is not suitable. Squadron carpenter keeps busy building boxes for our move. At about 2400 hrs. AA fire went up over Naples and a/c were heard over head. This got some of us up for a while and it was a fine show.
13	One mission today as escort to B-25's. The sky was clear today. A movie was scheduled for tonight at the 315th Squadron but the projection machine broke down and as a result no movie was shown. A small mail call was held in the evening after supper.
14	Four pilots from an Air Force unit in England arrived here today. They are to fly with this squadron in order to observe close support tactics. The sort of operations we have been engaged in for the past 20 months is altogether new to them for they have stayed in England during their entire tour and have not moved from landing ground to landing ground behind the army as we have done. One dive-bombing show was flown today.
15	Two dive-bombing missions today. In the evening coffee and doughnuts were served by the Red Cross girls in the RM's mess. They brought three musicians along who entertained. There was a heavy raid over Naples harbour tonight - we learned later that it was the heaviest raid since the Allies took the city.

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Sheet No. 4, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Sqdn., A.P.O. 650, N.Y.

Month of March, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

DAY	EVENTS
16	One mission today. Weather is as yet not favourable for flying as there are cloudy skies. Movie was shown in the 324th Group area in the evening. A standing invitation to attend the movies shown by the 324th has been posted on our bulletin board. Col. Lyden who commands the 324th Group was CO of the 66th Squadron just before we left the States.
17	One show today to dive-bomb. A truck went to Pompei today to take men on pass there for the day. Passes also left for Naples for the day.
18	Mt. Vesuvius has been spouting great clouds of red hotashes today after a period of more or less inactivity over the past few days. Now we can see what appears to be a great river of fire running down this side of the mountain. Mail call was held in the evening.
19	Mt. Vesuvius continues to throw red hot coals down the sides. Some men of this unit have driven up to the point where the great river of hot coals is closest to a small village. The village where the officers have been living is said to be in danger of being cut off from the road if not engulfed, they may be forced to abandon their home for safer quarters; perhaps tents in our camp. A movie was shown in the 324th Group area this evening. One mission today.
20	One mission today but no events out of the ordinary except for the eruption of Vesuvius which does not seem to be abating. A little town on this side of the mountain is being evacuated today. Army trucks, both British and American, are helping in this work. Foot lockers of local manufacture are available for purchase by the men at the Orderly Room and they are going fast at \$4:50.

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Sheet No. 5, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Sqdn., A.P.O. 650, N.Y.

Month of March, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

- | DAY | EVENTS |
|-----|--|
| 21 | <p>A truck left this morning at 0900 hrs. to take men to Pompei for the day as well as the truck which runs to Naples daily. One mission was scheduled to take off at 0930 hrs. this morning but it was postponed due to the weather. We hope rain falls for the field has dried so in the past week of sunshine that the a/c and vehicles stir up great clouds of dust. The base sprinkler trucks wet down the runway and taxi strips each night but they are dry again before noon the next day and the dust is blown around as much as ever. At 1110 hrs. the mission got off as the weather had improved sufficiently by then. At about 1400 hrs. word came from Group Ops that some of our a/c had landed at an aerodrome north of here and a few minutes later Lt. Bailey, who was on the flight landed here; he had lost the rest of the a/c. Later word was received that two of our a/c had crashed. Lt. Robert C. Schuren and Lt. James Carrick, Jr. were killed in the crashes. One other of our a/c was badly damaged when it ran into an A-20 after it had made it's landing but the pilot was not injured. Our a/c returned to this field and landed safely just before a very heavy sleet storm began. Mt. Vesuvius emitted an immense cloud of smoke at 1730 hrs. The flow of ashes is nearing the officers' villa and they are moving out this afternoon.</p> |
| 22 | <p>The new Engineering Officer has arrived here to take the place of Lt. C. A. Riley who has returned to the U. S. A., he is Captain Benjamin H. King. Orders have come in for the advance party to be ready to move out at noon tomorrow. Funeral services were held today for Lt. Schuren and Lt. Carrick. The a/c of this group and of the 324th Group took off from this field and flew to fields farther from Mt. Vesuvius. It is feared that the wind may change and cause ashes from the erupting mountain to fall on this field. A few crew chiefs are leaving by MT for the other field to take care of the maintenance of the a/c. The bulk of the squadron remains here.</p> |
| 23 | <p>No missions today and the a/c remain at Marchanise L. G. The officers have evacuated their villa and have moved into tents in the camp area. Word from Group Ops that there may be two shows tomorrow. The pilots are to be taken to Marchanise L. G. by truck for take-off from there. The mission will return to land on Cercola L. G. to be</p> |

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Sheet No. 6, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Sqdn., A.P.O. 650, N.Y.

Month of March, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

DAY

EVENTS

bombed up and serviced and then take-off on another mission which will land on Marchanise L. G. for Vesuvius continues to hurl ashes into the air. Tonight the maountain threw great clouds of ashes which glowed red against the background of the darkened sky and the cloud was almost constantly alight with flashes of lightning. "A" Party moved out this noon and went to Naples where they spent the afternoon and night on the palace grounds.

- 24 Two missions were flown today. On the first miâsion of the day enemy fighters were encountered and Lt. Donald A. Smith shot down one Me-109 for his first victory. On the second mission of the day the formation was attacked by Spitfires, their pilots thinking our a/c to be enemy. Lieut., David F. Coughlin was shot down and his plane was seen to crash into the sea about six miles off the coast SE of Rome. Vesuvius seems to be slowing down, there are no more bursts of fire to be seen and only a great deal of gray coloured smoke rises from the crater now.
- "A" Party had breakfast and spent the morning on the palace grounds and after a lunch of "C" rations they went down to the docks where they loaded their equipment onto a British IST, the "Buster" and spent the night uncomfortably there for the Germans came over and dropped bombs off and on during the night.

- 25 "B" Party at Cercola L. G. had no operational missions today but the a/c flew to Marchanise L. G. We are turning in our 180 lb. tents and they are to be replaced with GI pyramidals.
- "A" Party sailed out of Naples harbor at 1300 hrs. after lunch of "C" rations. The sea was very rough and rain fell all day; most of the men were quite seasick. At night no one was allowed to sleep on deck for fear that some of the moorings on the trucks might give way. The men went below to sleep in overcrowded quarters.

- 26 "B" Party at Cercola L. G. received orders from Group to bomb up the a/c for a take-off early in the afternoon. This was done and as soon as the pilots had been briefed and were ready to go out to the a/c for take-off Group Ops called and released us for the day - So it goes.

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Sheet No. 7, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Sqdn., A.P. O. 650, N.Y.

Month of March, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

DAY

EVENTS

"A" Party, after a rough voyage arrived at Ajaccio, Corsica at about 1600 hrs. They unloaded their equipment and drove to a point three miles outside the town where they made camp for the night and enjoyed the first hot food since their departure from Cercola.

27 Two missions were flown from Cercola L. G. today. The weather was fair and warm.

"A" Party broke camp at 0930 hrs. and drove all day traveling south along the coast after they had experienced considerable difficulty in finding the right road. By evening they had reached a point two or three miles north of Bonifacio where they made camp for the night.

28 "B" Party at Cercola was released from operations for the day in order that much needed maintenance work might be accomplished on the a/c before their departure for Corsica. Beautiful day, weather ideal for the work at hand.

"A" Party broke camp and drove to Alto L. G. where they arrived at 1500 hrs. They set up camp and enjoyed "C" rations for supper.

29 Sixteen of the a/c were ordered to leave Cercola L. G. and fly to Alto L. G., Corsica to join "A" Party. They took off from Cercola at 1030 hrs. One returned to Cercola because of engine trouble. "A" Party at Alto L. G. received the a/c, all of which landed safely there at 1300 hrs. The a/c were serviced and one mission was flown - an armed recce over the Italian coast.

30 The remaining a/c took-off from Cercola L. G. at 1110 hrs. for Alto L. G., Corsica and "B" Party is making ready for their departure; packing equipment in wooden boxes, as we have done in the past in preparation for moves across water.

"A" Party received the a/c at 1305 hrs. - all a/c arrived safely at the new landing ground. One recce was flown to the Western coast of Italy.

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Sheet No. 8, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Sqdn., A.P.O. 650, N.Y.

Month of March, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

DAY

EVENTS

31 "B" Party is busy packing in preparation for the move which should be made any day. We are restricted to the camp area.
"A" Party at Alto L. G. flew no missions today, inclement weather being the reason.

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Sheet No. 1, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Squadron, A.P.O. 650,

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

DAY	EVENTS
1	<p>"B" Party at Cercola L. G., Italy is packed up and ready to move to the ship for all that remains standing of the camp are our sleeping tents and the kitchen tent. To tear these down is but the work of an hour or so with the help of all the men. We are waiting for orders.</p> <p>"A" Party at Alto L. G., Corsica was released for the day at 1430 hrs. after one mission was flown to N Italy in the morning.</p>
2	<p>"B" Party at Cercola received orders to move out at one o'clock to the docks in Naples. In the morning, very early a few men went to Pompei where they attended mass at the magnificent church there. The service group trucks arrived shortly before lunch and after "C" Rations we got busy and broke camp and at one o'clock moved out for the docks. Loading of the ship "Thruster", an LST, began at about 1500 hrs. and continues until after dark.</p> <p>"A" Party at Alto had one mission today and was released for the day at 1415 hrs.</p>
3	<p>"B" Party after spending the night on the ship in Naples harbour got up at 0400 hrs. to complete the job of loading the squadron's equipment onto the ship; the other squadrons of the group are to load after our loading has been accomplished. Since we are not to leave port until tomorrow liberty to Naples was given for a few hours this afternoon. This may be the last look at Naples for us.</p> <p>"A" Party flew one mission in the morning and was released for the day at 1220 hrs.</p>
4	<p>The loading of the ship having been completed and other factors being favourable the "bridge way" was hauled into the ship and the great doors in the bow were closed and we sailed out of the harbour at about 1400 hrs. We waited outside of the harbour for the sister ship of the "Thruster" to join us and together with one destroyer as our escort we sailed out of the Bay of Naples past Capri and the island of Ischia for Corsica. The sea was blue cool and sparkling in the fading sunlight.</p> <p>"A" Party was to have a mission in the morning and the a/c were bombed up in preparation for it but due to bad weather this mission did not get off and the squadron was released for the day.</p>

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Sheet No. 2, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Sqdn., A.P.O. 650, N.Y.

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

DAY

EVENTS

-
- 5 We awoke this morning under a gray sky and it remained so all thru the morning. During the morning we passed thru the Straits of Bonifacio, between the islands of Corsica and Sardinia. We surveyed the land from the deck of the ship and the sight of land was welcome even after only a few hours at sea. We ate our "C" Rations, which have been our only food since our departure from Cercola L.G. At about 1400 hrs. we made the port of Ajaccio, Corsica and the ship made her way to dock where we unloaded our property. As the trucks were unloaded they were driven to a point about three miles outside of the town where we made camp and enjoyed the first hot food since Cercola. There were plenty of volunteer "KP's". Weather inclement at Alto and "A" Party was released until noon. There being no improvement in the weather by noon they were released for the day.
-
- 6 "B" Party got up early in the morning and enjoyed a hot breakfast and made ready to move out of camp which is just outside of Ajaccio. We waited until noon for a convoy from the north to pass and at 1300 hrs. we set out by MT for Alto L. G. over the road which runs from Ajaccio to Corte in the center of the island and on to Bastia on the NE of the island. This road took us up over the very rugged and beautiful mountains in the interior of the island. We drove on the smooth but narrow road beside the swift and clear mountain streams in the valleys and up over the snow capped mountains and down the E side to a point S of Bastia. Here we turned S and drove to Alto L. G. arriving there at about 1830 hrs. By 2000 hrs. the cooks of "B" Party had a hot supper ready for us and we were back with the rest of the squadron and glad of it.
-
- 7 Everyone was up early here this morning as there was an early mission and a good deal of straightening out and setting-up of equipment for "B" Party to accomplish. A second mission went out in the afternoon. One a/c of one of the other squadrons returned from a mission bringing bombs back. In landing one bomb was shaken off the wing. The bomb exploded showering the area along the runway with schrapnel and one man of the 64th Sqdn. was killed and another man of the same squadron was injured.
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Sheet No. 3, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Sqdn., A.P.O. 650, N.Y.

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

DAY	EVENTS
8	The squadron went on one hour's readiness from 0830 hrs. but no missions were flown and we were released for the day at 1430 hrs. Capt. R. M. Bell and Lt's. W. L. Shaw and G. L. Polk, Jr. left the squadron to return to the U.S.A. All three of these pilots joined the squadron at Hani Main L. G., near Kairouan, Tunisia.
9	Easter Sunday and church services were held at Group Hq. as is the case each Sunday. Other activities went along as on any weekday though and we were put on one hour's readiness from 0800 hrs. and released for the day at 1430 hrs. for the weather is none too good.
10	Beautiful day and advantage of the fine weather was taken. This squadron flew three missions over N Italy to bomb and straf rail and road communications. Our present landing ground, Alto, is located about 18 miles S of the town of Bastia and we are between the beach and the mountains. The earth here is of slightly lighter shade in colour than brick red and so at the end of a busy day everything near the runway is covered with reddish dust. We are restricted to the area of the landing ground for the time being.
11	Fair weather today and three missions were flown over N Italy. This squadron alone during the day's operations dropped 18 tons of bombs and shot up over 33,000 rounds of ammunition.
12	Clear sky again today and again three missions were flown. Two of these were over N Italy and the other one to S France, our first mission to that country.
13	One mission was scheduled to take-off at 0800 hrs. but it was called off because of inclement weather. At 1900 hrs. the Red Cross girls served coffee and doughnuts in the mess and at 2000 hrs. a movie was begun in the Hq. area.

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Sheet No. 4, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Sqdn., A.P.O. 650, N.Y.

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

DAY

EVENTS

- 14 Not much activity today, there was some flying and the weather was fair. A small amount of mail came in today. The mail has not been coming in very well since our arrival at Alto L. G. and we are still restricted to the area of the landing ground so there is little to divert our thought from the business at hand.
- 15 Windy day today. On the first mission Captain W. P. Benedict's a/c was badly damaged when it was caught in the blast from an explosion while he was strafing at low altitude. He managed to keep the ship in the air until he got out over the sea off the W coast of Italy where he was forced to land in the sea and take to his rubber boat. While other a/c of the flight patrolled over him the Air-Sea Rescue "Walrus", an amphibious a/c, came out and picked him up. Another bomb was dropped on the runway by an a/c of one of the other squadrons. This bomb exploded and shrapnel struck M/Sgt. Howard D. Beck of this squadron in his back as he stood by our operations tent. He was taken to a field hospital where the fragments of steel were removed from the wounds. He is not seriously injured and should be back in a day or so. Our tents here at operations are perforated in a very few places but no other damage is apparent, save perhaps, for an occasional tremor of a hand or flinching at the sound of some article carelessly dropped on to the ground.
- 16 A take-off was scheduled for 0845 hrs. but by that time the sky was cloudy and a fine rain was falling so the show was called off. The weather remained bad all day and no flying was done.
- 17 One hour's readiness until mid-morning when we were released for the day. In the afternoon a writer from "Yank" magazine was here and photographs were taken of the men and of some of our a/c for a story which is to appear in that magazine soon. At 1545 hrs. word came from Group Ops that we were to have a show at 1645 hrs. The a/c went off but were back here an hour later bringing their bombs with them for they had met with bad weather over Italy. Just before sundown the sky was clear and the visibility was good. We could see the islands of Elba, Pianosa and Mountecristo quite clearly.

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Sheet No. 5, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Sqdn., A.P.C. 650, N.Y.

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

- | DAY | EVENTS |
|-----|--|
| 18 | Summer clothing is being issued by QM Supply. These are the summer uniforms which we turned in last fall. Canteen supplies were sold near the orderly room today. One year ago today this group had it's biggest show of the war which was also one of the largest aerial engagements of the entire war. We were operating from El Djem L. G., Tunisia. A group show went out to patrol over Cape Bon led by Major James G. Curl, then captain, who was a flight leader in this squadron. Seventy five German a/c were destroyed on that show. |
| 19 | The Squadron Commander has received a promotion and now he is Major William P. Benedict. We have begun to take atabrine again and to sleep under mosquito nets for there is malaria here. |
| 20 | Two missions today and good weather for them though in the late afternoon the sky clouded up and rain fell at suppertime. An alert was sounded during last night and an enemy a/c was heard circling over this area. Movie in the 65th Sqdn. area tonight. |
| 21 | Squadron released until noon for rain has been falling all morning. At noon we were released for the rest of the day for the runway is too muddy for use even though there was sunshine this afternoon. |
| 22 | Busy day in contrast with yesterday's inactivity. The weather was good and we had three missions out over N Italy to dive-bomb and straf enemy communication lines. Major Benedict on one of these missions slid a 1000 lb. into a RR tunnel and the explosion wrecked the tunnel. |
| 23 | Three missions today and there were also three accidents on the field though no persons were injured. Lt. Corlandt McCoy of this squadron went off the runway as he was taking-off and the a/c struck and went over a great mound of earth. The landing gear, belly-tank and two 500 lb bombs were torn from the ship but fortunately the bombs did not explode and Lt. McCoy is all right. The a/c is a washout. Later |

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Sheet No. 6, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Sqdn., A.P.O. 650, N.Y.

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

DAY

EVENTS

- in the morning two a/c of one of the other squadrons ran together and one a/c is a complete wreck but neither of the pilots was injured. The gun fire we heard last night is reported to have been that of enemy ships shelling Bastia. We heard e/a overhead last night and saw many flares in the sky N of here.
-
- 24 Anti-shipping missions were flown today to the Italian coast and near misses were scored on enemy shipping. We are now able to get one day passes to go off the field. There is a Red Cross club in Bastia which we may visit.
-
- 25 Two missions were flown today over Italy and in the evening a movie was shown in the 65th Sqdn. area. Late yesterday afternoon 12 new pilots arrived here to bring the squadron's strength up. Many of our older pilots have nearly enough time to allow them to return to the U.S.A. and so may be leaving before long.
-
- 26 There was a steady downpour of rain all day today and the field is a sea of muddy water. The shows that were scheduled for today were called off. Major William J. Yates is back with this group. Maj. Yates was CO of this squadron for a time back in Africa. He left us at Kairouan, Tunisia to return to the U.S.A. after having come over from the States with us and flying operations against the enemy from Egypt to Tunis with the British 8th Army.
-
- 27 Released for the entire day. Rain fell all during last night and this morning. Canteen supplies were sold in the afternoon and by evening the weather had cleared and a movie was shown.
-
- 28 Clear weather today and we flew two missions; one at 0700 hrs. and another at 1030 hrs. We are told that there is to be a sham landing operation made somewhere on the island by French forces during the night. Capt. Charles C. Leaf left the squadron to return to the States. He is the first pilot to leave the squadron under a new plan whereby pilots are given 30 days travel time and 30 days furlough and then return to their own units overseas.
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Sheet No. 7, War Diary of the Sixty-Sixth Fighter Sqdn., A.P.O. 650, N.Y.

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by Eigil G. Olsen, Captain, Air Corps.

DAY

EVENTS

29 Once again we are back on our schedule of three missions daily to N Italy. Pilots are commenting on the lack of rolling stock seen, which seems to indicate that our constant hammering is now paying dividends. Ten more enlisted men and two officers were flown to Naples in the B-25 from where they will proceed to Capri for five days. A schedule is set up whereby one squadron of the group has a quota of men at Capri at all times; so about once amonth our squadron has it's turn.

30 Our turn for the "milk run" this morning so the planes were off at 0600 hrs. on an anti-shipping mission off the coast of Italy. The results of our second mission of the day were most satisfactory as two bridges were put out due to better than usual bombing. In the evening a movie was shown. Our movie set up is the best we have yet encountered overseas. We now have a regular schedule of three pictures a week plus the novelty of a projector and sound system that really work all the time.

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