

SG-1-47-11
APRIL 1945

47th Fighter Squadron, 15th Fighter Group, VII Fighter Command, Army
Air Forces, Pacific Ocean Area.

RETURN TO
RESEARCH STUDIES
U.S.A.F.
HISTORICAL DIVISION
ARCHIVES BRANCH

1. Date of arrival and departure from each station occupied in this theater:

Negative.

2. Losses in action:

2nd Lt. Maurice F. Gourley Jr., killed in action while on Escort Mission to Tokyo on 12 April 1945.

2nd Lt. Richard M. Long, killed in action while on Strafing Mission to Suzuka Naval Air Base, Honshu, on 22 April 1945.

1st Lt. Dave G. Stelling, killed in action while on Strafing Mission to Suzuka Naval Air Base, Honshu, on 22 April 1945.

3. Awards to and decorations of members of this organization:

Negative.

4. Organizational changes:

Negative.

5. Strength, Personnel:

a. First day of month: 67 Officers, 248 Enlisted Men.

b. Last day of month: 68 Officers, 251 Enlisted Men.

6. Strength of Aircraft:

a. First day of month: 35 P-51's (D)

b. Last day of month: 27 P-51's (D)

7. Losses, operational:

1 P-51D

P.P.C.

MICROFILMED

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MICROFILMED
6564-43

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Historical Division AAFPOA
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SECRET


ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY

1 - 30 April 1945

Just one month from the day that our pilots pancaked on Motoyama Airfield No. 1, they flew their first mission to Tokyo. The first XXI Bomber Command escorted mission was flown on 7 April when the 73d Wing attacked the Nakajima Aircraft Engine Plant at Tokyo.

For the three hundred Superfortresses of the XXI Bomber Command this was just another mission to Tokyo. For the eighty Mustangs of the VII Fighter Command, this mission will go down as the longest over water escort flight on record, with Major Piper leading the 47th Dogpatchers as they add another record to their flying history. On the return Lt. Ayres was our only casualty bailing out forty miles north of Chichi. He was rescued by a destroyer and returned to the Squadron a few days later. Our record for our first mission was five destroyed in air, two probables, and one damaged.

12 April, when the second escort mission to Tokyo was scheduled, the pilots who were not so fortunate to go on this mission were at least red alerted to Angels 10, P George, when seven P-51's were scrambled to intercept bogies while the Tokyo pilots were returning from their mission. Another Tokyo mission was scheduled for the 15th but was postponed until the following day because of inclement weather. The next day sixteen of our pilots took to the air for the first fighter sweep - target - Kanoya Airfield, Kyushu. On this mission Lt. Gourley was lost after bailing out of his plane several hours after leaving the target. He was the first pilot to be lost while on a mission to Japan.



SECRET

Organizational History, 47th Ftr
Sq, AAF, 1 - 30 April 1945, contd

In the general setup of the sections a change which had been anticipated for a long time took place during the month of April. Several of the sections were consolidated with the corresponding 15th Fighter Group sections. For the medical section it meant an actual physical consolidation. That is, there existed no longer separate Squadron dispensaries. All three Squadron dispensaries were consolidated with general Group dispensary. This was true also for the Officers' mess. For other sections such as Intelligence and Communications there was more or less of a cooperative system initiated between these sections and the corresponding Group sections. In the future there will be an even more extensive consolidation of all sections on a Group status.

1st Lieutenants Bright, Brunette, and Hintermeier were promoted to the rank of Captain as of the 6th of April. 2d Lieutenants O'Mara, Tyler, and Grover were promoted to 1st Lieutenant the same day.

SECRET


HISTORY OF THE COMMAND SECTION

1 - 30 April 1945

The month of April found the Command Section operating to its fullest capacity. Perhaps the biggest job of the month was handled by Sgt Wilcox who continued the preparation of a pay roll covering a period of four months and reaching a total of \$55,185.41. This was the largest pay roll ever prepared in the history of the Squadron. As a result of this large pay roll, Soldiers' Deposits reached a new high of \$9,155.00. Personal Transfer Accounts, a new system for sending money home, was initiated and amounted to a grand total of \$28,710.00. Approximately fifty per cent of the Squadron personnel took advantage of this new and convenient way of sending money back to the States.

There were six officers and one enlisted man promoted during the month. 1st Lieutenants Bright, Brunette, and Hintermeier were promoted to the rank of Captain, while 2d Lieutenants Grover, O'Mara, and Tyler were promoted to 1st Lieutenant. Cpl Novalich of the Armament section was promoted to the grade of sergeant.

Eight officers were placed on Detached Service to AAFPOA Rest and Recreation Center, APO 953, for a well earned ten days' rest. The first group to leave was made up of the following pilots: Captain Pepin, 1st Lt. Jennings, and 2d Lieutenants Scamara and Sher. Upon their return, four more pilots, Major Piper, 1st Lts. Cameron and Grover, and 2d Lt. Worton were placed on Detached Service to the Rest and Recreation Center. Major Piper, commanding officer, was replaced during his absence by Captain Markham who assumed command on the 28th of April.



SECRET

History of the Command Section,
47th Ptr Sq, AAF, 1 - 30 April
1945, contd

Morale was influenced considerably by work done in the special service field. S Sgt Wylie, in addition to his regular duties, acted as squadron librarian. His activities in caring for records and a record player were also very commendable. Pfc Sgroi was detailed to care for an athletics' section. A basket ball goal, punching bags, horse shoes, and volley ball court were all set up for the use of the men in their leisure hours. The above mentioned recreational facilities coupled with the special efforts of the Mess Sergeant, S Sgt Peter De Fusco, to provide good food resulted in a Squadron morale considerably higher than average.

ORMAL E. KIESLING,
Captain, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

SECRET

HISTORY OF THE OPERATIONS SECTION


1 - 30 April 1945

The month of April opened with four days of rainy weather during which no flying was conducted. A strike mission to Chichi Jima was conducted on the 5th. Throughout the month, six strikes were made on Chichi Jima. These strikes were considered effective but not as successful as could be expected. Usually bad weather hampered the sighting of targets and made it impossible to observe any direct hits we may have had. Most strikes were composed of one flight only and with life raft and escort. No enemy aircraft were sighted in the air over Chichi and we sustained no losses. Frequently, moderate anti-aircraft fire met our fighters over Chichi.

Considerable excitement prevailed on April 7, for this day marked our first fighter escort over Tokyo with B-29's from Saipan. We had fifteen aircraft airborne over Tokyo escorting three hundred B-29's. Major Piper led our flights. All together, four escort missions were run throughout the month with Superfortresses. Missions became less effective each trip to Japan.

On 16 April, our fighters conducted their first fighter sweep over Kyushu. Captain Markham led our flights. Two other fighter sweeps were made on the 19th and 22d of April. As with the escort missions, these missions became less effective since no enemy interception was encountered and no military objects sighted.

No notable remarks can be made on CAP missions for the month other than CAP was reduced to four aircraft instead of eight. On 12 April, a special alert occurred at 1400 and seven of our aircraft took off 1420 led by Captain Markham. No enemy aircraft were sighted and our fighters pancaked at home base 1530. Total CAP time for the month: 233:40.



SECRET

History of Operations Section,
47th Ftr Sq, AAF, 1 - 30 Apr
45, contd

Pilot status was very changeable throughout the month. 8 April Captain Pepin, Lts. Jennings, Sher and Scamara were placed on Detached Service to Oahu for a rest period. 23 April, four second lieutenants were assigned to the Squadron - Lts. Petrouleas, Tillman, Olivier, Kiggins, as well as F/O Jones. All five pilots had P-51 time, but no actual combat flying. Five new pilots were given flights the latter part of the month. Major Piper, Lts. Worton, Cameron and Grover were placed on Detached Service to Oahu for a rest period on the 28th. Lt. Condrick left for the mainland to attend gunnery school on 30 April.

There were three noteworthy accidents during the month. Captain Powell's landing gear collapsed on take off but he escaped uninjured. While on a strike mission over Suzuku Airbase, Captain Robert Down hit high tension lines but was able to make a safe return. On the 29th of April Lt. Trodahl attempted an emergency landing but crashed one hundred fifty feet short of Runway 24 and was killed.

Total flying time for the month was 1326:35.

SECRET

HISTORY OF TECHNICAL SUPPLY

1 - 30 April 1945

This was an extremely busy month for Tech Supply. Great difficulty was met when the planes started to go out of commission for "Radiator assembly engine coolant". As we had none in stock, they had to be ordered from the Service Group. The Service Group, being in a like position, ordered them from the Guam Air Depot. To make matters worse the Air Depot at Guam had none in stock and had to order them from the States. The planes were grounded for ten days waiting the parts. Once the Air Depot found out what was causing the leaks in the radiators they immediately ordered more to prevent the planes from again being grounded.

Part of the month was spent fixing up Tech Supply to accomodate more parts. The rear tent was fixed so that the boxes could be placed in such a way that parts would be easily accessible. The front tent holding all the important parts, was also rearranged so that anyone could find the item they needed as soon as they walked in the door. This proved to be a good idea and it was also found that a stock balance could be kept more easily. In this way the Supply Clerk can readily see what has to be reordered.

A new Supply Officer was assigned to this Section on 29 March but did not take over his duties until the first of this month. The Supply Officer at present is 2d Lt. John R. Evans. The former Supply Officer, 1st Lt. Eugene A. Broadbent, was relieved from this duty and assigned the duties of Mess Officer.

Carburetor difficulty was encountered in ten planes during the month. Fuel consumption was too high and therefore carburetors had to be changed since the changing of control units did not help any. The Service Group had some carburetors on hand and were able to obtain the remaining ones that were needed from

SECRET

History of Technical Supply,
47th Ftr Sq, AAF, 1 - 30 Apr
45, contd

another Service Group on the second Air Field. This was one time the Service Group was able to help us from keeping the planes grounded for parts to come from the Air Depot At Guam.

JOHN R. EVANS,
2d Lt., Air Corps,
Tech Supply Officer.

SECRET

HISTORY OF THE CHEMICAL WARFARE SECTION

1 - 30 April 1945

The two boys in the section have been busy since the day we landed hauling salt water for showers, mess kit laundries, and for all personal washing clothes, etc.

The DANC solution and lime have been put into a dump where it can be reached easily if needed. Gas alarms have been hung in both the line and living area. All the boxes have been piled out of the weather and covered with canvas.

A gas mask inspection was made of all Squadron enlisted personnel and officers. All masks have been put in A-1 shape if not already so.

As soon as capsules are available all personnel will go through the gas chamber.

THOMAS M. LEAVER,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Chemical Officer.

SECRET

HISTORY OF THE COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

1 - 30 April 1945

During April the Communications section of the 47th Fighter Squadron carried on the routine duties necessary for maintaining efficient communication facilities in the Squadron. The radios in the planes were inspected for compliance with Technical Orders, mechanical performance, appearance and general efficiency. Special effort is being made by the Communications section to keep the radios in the planes ready for top performance on any mission that the planes may be called upon to make.

Telephone and teletype communication was also maintained and all miscellaneous equipment such as spare radio and IFF sets, spare telephones, test equipment, typewriters, and switchboards were inspected by men assigned to that work. Any defects noted were corrected.

Three of our recent additions to the sections's personnel, who last month were assigned to work with older members of the section until they became familiar with section policies and methods, were placed in charge of the flights on the line. T/Sgt. Gaunt was given charge of "A" Flight, T/Sgt. King of "B" Flight and T/Sgt. Drapeau of "C" Flight. It is their duty to supervise and regulate the maintenance of all communication equipment on the planes.

During April Sgt. Wiszuk of the 47th Fighter Squadron Communications section was assigned to work a shift on the 15th Fighter Group switchboard. This was done as a cooperative measure with the other squadrons of the Group and with the Communication section of the 15th Fighter Group.

SECRET

HISTORY OF THE ARMAMENT SECTION

1 - 30 April 1945

April found everything running smoothly in the section. All equipment was set up and operating normally. The month was spent pulling guns at least every five days and when we had them, after each mission.

A boresight range was built and all the ships were checked. For lack of space it is only a one thousand inch range but has served the purpose well. In time we hope to build a one thousand foot range where we can fire in, as we feel this system is best. The one thousand inch range will be kept then merely to check sights.

The section has also built a coffee shop in the back of the Armament tent from a salvaged Japanese carbide cooker. Each man has his cup (beer can with a wire handle) hung on its proper nail. It really goes good on cold mornings and has proven to be a popular meeting place for most of the men on the line.

We lost Pfc Robert D. Adams to the 549th Night Fighter Squadron. Adams was an aerial gunner and with the possibility of power turrets coming he asked for the transfer. We are all pulling for him and are glad that he has finally been able to make some use of his training.

THOMAS M. LEAVER,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Armament Officer.

SECRET

HISTORY OF THE TRANSPORTATION SECTION

1 - 30 April 1945

For the month of April 1945 this section performed the usual first and second echelon maintenance on Squadron vehicles.

All vehicles were given weekly inspections and monthly maintenance as required.

The transportation parking area and workshop have been reconditioned by the 386th Air Service Group. This consisted of spreading clay over the area which had been sand.

Maintenance parts for vehicles have been a great problem due to the fact that there seems to be a shortage of parts on the island.

ALBERT J. CARLETTI,
1st Lt., Ordnance,
Automotive Officer.

SECRET

HISTORY OF THE MEDICAL SECTION


1 - 30 April 1945

On 12 April 1945 the section was consolidated with Group Dispensary. Equipment and supplies were pooled with three of the other Squadrons and Group. All medical personnel with the exception of the officers, were moved into a separate area adjacent to the Dispensary, thus making them readily available for any emergencies. The consolidated Group Dispensary has functioned very smoothly to date.

There has been no undue prevalence of acute communicable diseases during the month of April. Seventy seven patients were seen and two hundred and sixteen treatments were given during the month. Three patients were hospitalized at the 41st Station Hospital.

On 7 April Lt. Ayres was forced to bail out of his plane while returning from a mission to Tokyo. He was rescued by a destroyer and returned to the Squadron after several days. He was treated for abrasions of the face and exposure. On 12 April Lt. Gourley was lost after bailing out of his plane several hours after leaving the target. Lts. Stelling and Long were lost during a mission to Tokyo area. Lt. Long was shot down over the target; Lt. Stelling disappeared while flying cover for a submarine. Lt. Trodahl was killed in an aircraft accident on 29 April.

Certain conclusions can be drawn from the missions conducted thus far. It is apparent that the main complaint of all the pilots is tenderness in the region of the buttocks. This condition occurs because of the fact that the pilots are forced to sit in one position for a period of from six to seven hours. No remedy for this condition has been produced to date. Benzedrine, in doses varying from five to ten milligrams, is being used to combat generalized fatigue. All pilots are given this drug and are requested to take it



SECRET

History of the Medical Section,
47th Ftr Sq, AAF, 1 - 30 April,
1945, contd

about one half hour before going over the target. No pilot is forced to take the drug. Ninety-five per cent of the pilots have been utilizing the drug and ninety eight per cent of them taking the drug report beneficial effects. Some of the effects are due to the physiological properties of Benzedrine and other beneficial effects are psychogenii in origin - power of suggestion.

There have been no cases of flying fatigue to date. Pilots are being sent to Hawaii for ten day rest leaves, on an average of four men every three weeks. Much physical and mental relaxation have been obtained by the pilots from the construction of the Officers' Club.

JACK LAPIDES
Captain, MC,
Flight Surgeon

SECRET

HISTORY OF THE ORDNANCE SECTION

1 - 30 April 1945

During the month of April 1945 this section carried out its normal duties, servicing aircraft for missions and maintenance of Ordnance major items in the Squadron.

The following amounts of ammunition were expended during the month:

Cartridge, Caliber .50, AC, belted, 2 AP -2 INC -1 TR	14,089
Cartridge, Caliber .50, AC, belted, 1 API - 1 INC - 1 API - 1 INC - 1TR	40,230
Bomb, AN-M64 (500 lb)	66
Fuze, nose, AN-M103	28
Fuze, tail, AN-M101A2, 025 Delay	48
Fuze, tail, AN-M113A1	24

ALBERT J. CARLETTI,
1st Lt., Ordnance, Ordnance Officer.

SECRET

HISTORY OF THE ENGINEERING SECTION

1 - 30 April 1945

Many things have happened during this month, mainly the starting of the long range escort missions to Japan. Our first mission cost us one airplane. It was number 168, crewed by S Sgt Winiasz and flown by Lt. Frank L. Ayres. The pilot parachuted out and was picked up by a destroyer. The trouble was attributed to high gas consumption. High gas consumption and lead fouling of spark plugs have been the main source of all troubles. All planes showing indications of excessive consumption had carburetor changes and the old carburetor flow checked. There were very few found to actually have high gas consumption. It started as a result of lean carburetors and when the setting was raised to normal it appeared to be using too much gas. The plug fouling has been cleared up. The plugs are changed after every second mission and checked after each mission. Also, pilots are more concerned with the proper clearing of engines and the use of the best settings.

A change of Engineering Officers was made - Captain Oster taking the Squadron and Lt. Edens going to 15th Group. As this month ends we have lost four airplanes on long range missions and three pilots - Lt. Gourley, Lt. Stelling and Lt. Long. We lost one plane on the field, the cause of the accident has never been determined. Lt. Trodahl was the pilot and was killed in the crash. This weather here at Iwo Jima is not the best for flying or the maintenance of aircraft.

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HISTORY OF THE INTELLIGENCE SECTION

1 - 30 April 1945

On 6 April we were alerted for a long distance mission. It appeared that the long cherished desire of the Squadron to go over Tokyo was to be realized. In the afternoon, Colonel Beckwith had a meeting and it was disclosed that Tokyo was to be our target, although complete details were not available as Fighter Command officers were still in Guam arranging the flight and would not be back until that night. The 47th was honored by having General Moore of the VII Fighter Command, Colonel Beckwith and Major Kearney of the 15th Group in our flights. That night at a briefing held at 2100 and lasting two hours additional details were revealed. Staff officers of the Fighter Command conducted the briefing and it was attended by all the squadrons of the 15th and 21st Groups. The mission was escort of the 73d Wing of B-29's over Tokyo.

Briefly the plan for the mission was as follows: Fighters were to be airborne at 0700 and to rendezvous with B-29's over Kita Rock, thirty nine miles north, at ten thousand feet. These B-29's, three in number, were to navigate the fighters to Kozu Island off Tokyo Harbor. There the fighters would have altitude and would pick up the bombers and start inland. After escorting the bombers over their target, fighters would rendezvous with navigating B-29's fifty miles to sea southeast of Tokyo and they would bring them home. Air-sea rescue units provided were to be a DD ninety miles north of Iwo on course, a DD two hundred miles out on course, a Dumbo three hundred twenty five miles out on course, a Superdumbo (B-29) four hundred fifty miles out, a submarine at the rally point southeast of Tokyo, a Superdumbo and submarine four hundred forty miles from Iwo on course back and the DD's two hundred and ninety miles from Iwo.

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History of the Intelligence Section,
47th Ftr Sq, AAF, 1 - 30 Apr 45, contd

After last minute changes, which switched the target of the 21st Group from Nagoya to Tokyo, the briefing was adjourned and details left to Squadron S-2's who worked in this Squadron most of the night preparing maps and target charts.

At 0530 of the 7th, our pilots who were to go on the flight met in the Squadron S-2's office for coffee and doughnuts and to receive target charts and maps and survival handkerchiefs and to leave their bill folds and other identification material. The mission had been planned so hurriedly that there was no time for breakfast. Final briefing was held by the Group at 0630 and prayer was offered by the Chaplain for all creeds and religions. At 0655 the 47th Fighter Squadron began taking off on this historic mission. In a matter of minutes they were gone on the longest over water mission ever made by fighters, the longest tactical mission ever undertaken by fighters and the first mission over the Japanese mainland and over Tokyo by Army Air Force fighters.

The entire formation was led by the 47th's Commanding Officer, Major Piper, after Colonel Beckwith aborted. Over Tokyo Captain Down and Lt. Hintermeier shot down a Nick which was the first plane destroyed over Japan by Army Air Force fighters. In addition Captain Down shot down a Tojo, Lt. Condrick a Myrt, Lt. Bright a Zeke, a Tony and one unidentified and Captain Markham a Nick. The Squadron accomplished their mission of escorting B-29's and did not attack bogies unless they were attacking the bombers. On the return trip, Lt. Frank L. Ayres was out of gas so he bailed out in an overcast two hundred miles from Iwo. He was picked up by a DD after about twenty

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History of the Intelligence Section,
47th Ftr Sq, AAF, 1 - 30 Apr 45, contd

minutes in the water and returned to the Squadron four days later. All other planes returned safely.

The interrogation for this mission was held in a large air raid shelter. All three Squadrons of the Group were present. Also present were the ranking officers of the Fighter Command and Group and a host of flight surgeons, weather officers, communication officers, public relation officers and photographers and everyone else who could get in. The pilots were tired, thirsty, hungry and excited after the grueling flight. We provided coffee, sandwiches, and pie and the flight surgeon furnished beer and combat liquor. The S-2 section having by this time become inured to working in a bedlam of noise and excitement was only mildly surprised that they were able to write another mission report under these conditions. (See Mission Report 4-2 attached).

On 11 April we were again alerted for a long range mission and once again the S-2 section worked feverishly to get information and maps out to the Squadron. Briefing was again by Fighter Command but was attended by so many people that the Squadron had to repeat in detail for our boys. The mission was led by Major Kearney and the primary purpose of escorting bombers was accomplished and six enemy planes were destroyed.

On the return trip we lost 2d Lt. Maurice F. Gourley, Jr. one of our best liked pilots better known as "Moe". He bailed out over a DD due to oil leakage but sunk before he could be picked up. Captain Betner had a trying return trip as he experienced vibrations so severe that at times he could not see his instrument panel and would have bailed out if he could have found a rescue vessel. While four hundred fifty miles from base he was vectored to a DD by

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History of the Intelligence Section,
47th Ftr Sq, AAF, 1 - 30 Apr 45, contd

navigating B-29 but was unable to locate the DD which was actually non-existent as there was no DD where he was vectored. So he flew all the way to Iwo by himself prepared to jump over each DD only he could not find them. Having no DU he flew a vector to Iwo.

On 16 April a fruitless mission was made to Kyushu in an attempt to destroy planes which were raiding Okinawa. Over Kyushu a thick haze was encountered reducing visibility to a few miles and making impossible a run on the target which could not be located. As a result of this mission briefing technique was changed to allow each group to brief their own pilots. Also, each mission report carried comments made by pilots as to inadequacy of maps carried which for this mission had been prepared by Fighter Command. Fortunately all our planes returned.

On 19 April this Squadron was high cover for a fighter sweep on Atsugi Airfield, Tokyo area. No enemy planes were encountered and all our planes returned.

On 22 April a fighter sweep was run on Suzuka Airfield southwest of Nagoya. A thick haze was encountered and there is some doubt as to whether Suzuka was hit or Akenogahara, the alternate target. However, the 47th, led by Lt. Colonel Spain, did strafe an airfield and destroyed three planes on the ground with one probable and four damaged. Also, three planes were destroyed in the air. 2d Lieutenant Richard M. Long was shot down over the field and 1st Lieutenant Dave G. Stelling was seen to parachute and hit water at the rally point but was not rescued.

On 30 April an escort mission was run to Tokyo but the bombers were

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History of the Intelligence Section,
47th Ftr Sq, AAF, 1 - 30 Apr 45, contd

never seen. The entire fighter formation was about fifteen minutes late in getting to DP. The 47th was at eighteen thousand feet and patrolled from Tokyo to Fujis without ever seeing an enemy plane. All of our planes returned safely.

Previous to this, on 26 April, an escort mission over Kyushu was run but again very bad weather was encountered. There was a solid undercast up to fourteen thousand feet and an overcast from eighteen thousand up. Squadron went in between these layers and escorted twelve B-29's from target back to rally point. The main force of bombers was never seen and no enemy planes or flak was encountered. All our planes returned safely.

During the month the crying need for more pictures of Japan was our greatest one. At first none were furnished but later they began to trickle into the Squadrons. The mammoth briefings tried at first were not too successful especially on fighter sweeps on new territories as on these missions intensive study of the target and geography of the area is needed. Later in the month as Fighter Command quit trying to brief all the pilots and more photographs were received the situation improved.

Squadron S-2's prepared strip maps for all except one mission and this took quite a bit of time. The biggest worry of Squadron S-2's was receiving complete information as to route, Air-Sea rescue, etc., in time to prepare maps for Squadron briefing. This situation was also somewhat improved by the end of the month.

Interrogation continues to be a problem as yet unsolved. Planes are parked about a mile from the shelter used for interrogations and the minimum time for pilots to get to interrogation was one half hour. Arriving at

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History of the Intelligence Section,
47th Ftr Sq, AAF, 1 - 30 Apr 45, contd

interrogation pilots are detained outside by ranking officers and friends for conversation. Finally the interrogation takes place in the midst of a din that makes hearing almost impossible. These obstacles prevent a speedy mission report to higher headquarters.

Our pilots have a lot of time on their hands and S-2 continued to show full length movies in the afternoon when they could be secured. Also, S-2 sponsored a group picture before each mission and a copy is given to each pilot on the mission. Copies of these are attached to this history.

Copies of all mission reports for April are attached along with strip maps prepared for each long range mission.

HENRY G. SANDERS,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Intelligence Officer.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~15TH FIGHTER GROUP AAF
A.P.O. # 86

5 April 1945

MISSION REPORT

47TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 4-1
15TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 4-1

1. A. Eighteen (18) P-51's of the 47th Fighter Squadron.
B. None
2. A. None
B. None
3. Abortive Mission (Dive Bomb and Strafe Chichi Jima)
4. RED FLIGHT: Capt. Markham, Lts., Jones, Mitchell, Locke.
YELLOW FLIGHT: Lts., Condrick, Fitzgerald, Baccus, Long.
BLUE FLIGHT: Capt. Powell, Lts., Sher, Bjorseth, Weaver.
GREEN FLIGHT: Lts., Brunette, Barlow, Baldwin, Trodahl.
JOSEPHINE: Capt. Pepin, Lt. June.

Take Off: 0930

Pancaked: 1030

Lt. Long's engine cut out on take off and Capt. Powell's engine would not start. While Squadron was joining Capt. Pepin's left wheel would not retract so he returned and landed. Squadron was on course of 22 degrees at 0940 at an altitude of 2,000'. Flew for 17 minutes trying to keep under overcast which kept descending down to 1,500'. Going up through a break, Squadron climbed to 7,000' where the clouds were 10/10ths and appeared to extend up to approximately 18,000'. There were no breaks. Squadron returned to hit alternate target

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission #4-1
5 April 1945 cont'd.

Kita Rock but found it socked in with deiling of less than 1,000'.

Bombs were jettisioned into the ocean and Squadron landed at Iwo
at 1030. Ceiling at Iwo was 700'.

5. A. Clouds 10/10ths - Overcast 1500' to approximately 18,000'.

B. Satisfactory.

6. None

7. 1125 gals. of gas consumed.

14-500# AN-M-64 bombs with AN-M103 .1 sec. nose fuse and AN-M101A2
.025 sec, tail fuse.

8. None.

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15TH FIGHTER GROUP AAF
A.P.O. # 86

7 April 1945

MISSION REPORT

47TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 4-2
15TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 4-2

1. A. Fifteen (15) P-51's of the 47th Fighter Squadron.
B. Seventeen Nicks
Five Tojos
Two Jacks
Two Zekes
One Myrt
Five Tonys
Thirteen Unidentified.
2. A. One (1) P-51
B. One (1) Tojo destroyed
One (1) Zeke destroyed
Two (2) Nicks destroyed
One (1) Myrt destroyed
One (1) unidentified twin engine fighter and one (1) Tony probable.
One (1) Jack damaged
3. Escort to Tokyo.
4. RED FLIGHT: Major Piper, Lts., Brunette, Capt. Powell, Lt. Ayres.
YELLOW FLIGHT: Capt. Obenshain, Lts., Cameron, Mitchell, Ryniker.
BLUE FLIGHT: Capt. Markham, Lts., Baccus, Condrick, Baldwin.
GREEN FLIGHT: Capt. Down, Lts., Bright, Hintermeier, Bjorseth.

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission #4-2
7 April 1945 cont'd.

Take Off: 0655 Over Target: 1040-1130 Pancaked: 1430

Squadron began taking off at 0655. After flights formed they headed for Kita where the overcast was at 7 to 8,000'. Col. Beckwith's oxygen system was out so he returned to base after turning the mission over to Major Piper. Gen. Moore's gas switch was stuck so he turned the flight over to Major Kearney and returned. Major Kearney and the element were separated in the overcast and unable to effect a rendezvous with the mission. Major Kearney returned and landed. After rendezvousing with the Navigating B-29's the Squadron was on course at 0745 at altitude of 9,000'. Lts. Mitchell and Ryniker from Red Reserve joined Capt. Obenshain's flight and Capt. Down and Lt. Bright joined Capt. Betner's flight. Capt. Pepin and Lt. Bjorseth followed the Squadron for 145 miles but were unable to join a flight so they returned to base. Ten minutes later Capt. Betner returned with his wingman because of rough engine.

Rpm. settings were from 1750 to 1900 with from 34 to 35 inches. Trip to Kozu was uneventful and only island seen was Sofu Rock. Over Kozu at 1020 Red Flight climbed to 22,000' orbiting. Picked up B-29's and headed inland at 21,800', 6,000' over the bombers.

Over Sagami Wan at 1040 a Nick encountered 900' above climbing in the same direction as our fighters. Red Flight chased him for 2 minutes, was just getting into range when he Split 3 and dived away. Red Flight stayed at altitude to protect the bombers. Turning

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission #4-2
7 April 1945 cont'd.

back toward Tokyo, 4 Tojos were seen coming head on. They were 1500' below and painted dark green. When $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile away they Split S and dived away. Red Flight held on to altitude over the bombers until Major Piper's engine quit directly over bay just off Tokyo. He headed out to sea and his engine caught. Element had been separated. Major Piper and his wingman headed to Rally Point, leaving mainland at 1130 spotted sub which was easy to see. Capt. Powell and Lt. Ayres continued over target until Lt. Ayres gas got low and they went to Rally Point joining Red 1 and 2. Orbited point until Lt. Ayres had to leave. Came back with B-29 Cyclone Charlie Speed 210. Two hundred miles from Tokyo overcast from 7,000' to 200'. Flew in this for one hour on instruments. Lt. Ayres was running out of gas so he bailed out while 200 miles from Iwo over Warcloud. The overcast was down to 100' and Lt. Ayres buzzed the DD and pulling up into the overcast bailed out. The DD called that they saw him in the water and then that he had been picked up unharmed.

At Kozu Rock, Yellow Flight climbed to 20,000', picked up bombers about 600' below and headed in toward the mainland. When over the coast a Jack was seen flying diagonally across their path from the West. Flight turned into him and all 4 planes fired. Hits were observed in right side of engine nacelle and right wing. He Split S at 500' and dove away. Flight did not follow. Jack was dark green with surprisingly large meatballs. Four Nicks passed 6,000' above heading toward the

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission #4-2
7 April 1945 cont'd.

harbor. They did not attack and Yellow Flight could not get up to them. Continued into target over bombers a Nick passed in front in a dive toward the harbor. Yellow Leader fired but out of range. Turned back and left him to another element from another Squadron. Over target flak was very intense and accurate at bombers height. Two B-29's were seen to blow up over target. No parachutes. Went back and picked up another wave of bombers and escorted them over the target. Three bursts of flak were 25 feet and 75 feet away from Yellow Flight. Saw one single engine fighter go down in flames. Pilot bailed out. A Zeke was sighted to North but not chased as Lt. Cameron only had 170 gallons of gas left. DU out on all channels. Capt. Obenshain plotted a course to Rally Point. Orbit@d sub which was plainly visible and returned to Iwo without further incident.

While over target, Yellow Flight were only fighters around. No other flight at same altitude or near. Shipping seen was very little. About 5 or 6 fields around Tokyo were seen and approximately 150 planes parked on runways.

All Jap planes encountered in air were unagressive and used no particular tactics or maneuvers.

Blue Flight was over Koju at 1020 and took position over second group of B-29's. Proceeded to first group and ahead and above about 2,000' at about 17,000'. Flak encountered 5 miles off shore which was intense but below fighters. Phosphorous bombs were see to the side

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. #4-2
7 April 1945 cont'd.

inaccurate and trailing. Flak was intense up to and over target. T
Thousands of bursts over target at 12,000' and 17,000'. Twenty miles
South of target, one Myrt was seen at 15,000' to the side of the bombers
and ahead. Myrt was bracketed by the elements and it turned into the
second element. Element turned into it and Lt. Condrick fired two
bursts at 1000' and hits were seen on left wing root. Blue 3 and 4
saw Myrt start down vertically smoking, and Blue 3 saw Myrt hit ground.
One Myrt confirmed for Lt. Condrick. At this point the elements
became separated but followed a course out of range of flak and North
of bombers. Over the target vapor trails of approximately 10 planes
were seen above 25,000' and ahead of bombers. Two single engine planes
were seen 20 miles to the North of the target. Also 8 Nicks were
seen making poor uncoordinated passes on the lead bombers from above.
One B-29 was seen to blow up over target. Blue 1 and 2 saw two Nicks
over Tokyo 1000' below and going in same direction. Capt. Markham
closed in to 250' firing a long burst. Nick was seen by Bluel and 2
to go down disintergrading. One Nick confirmed foe Capt. Markham.
Blue 2 fired three bursts on second Nick, no hits were observed.
Ten miles past target four Tonys were seen making coordinated overhead
passes on bombers. One B-29 was seen to blow up and no parachutes
were seen. Fifteen miles past the target area at 17,000' the second
element made an element pass on a Jack 2,000' below and hits were
observed from both planes and from planes from another flight. Jack

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. #4-2
7 April 1945 cont'd.

did a split S apparently undamaged. Both elements proceeded to Rally Point and joined up with B-29's at 1130 at 13,000'. Lest altitude slowly back to base and landed at 1435.

Green Flight left Kozu at 18,000'. Over Sagami Wan, Capt. Down and Lt. Hintermeier observed a single Nick approaching from NE at 7 or 8 o'clock. Lt. Hintermeier made a high frontal pass and smoke was seen coming from the right engine. Capt. Down made a line astern pass. The first burst struck on the canopy and the second burst hit the right engine. The Nick went down in flames. One Nick confirmed for Capt. Down and Lt. Hintermeier. This was the first plane shot down over Tokyo and Japan by AAF Fighters. A single Tojo was then observed approaching from 12 o'clock. Green Leader made a 180 degree overhead to stern pass opening fire at approximately 700' closing to 50' hitting the canopy and engine. The Tojo went down in flames. One Tojo confirmed for Capt. Down. Lt. Bright overtook a Tony from the rear and opened fire setting it afire and pieces in every direction. Lt. Bright overran him so he pulled up and when he saw him again he was going down smoking and burning. One probable unconfirmed for Lt. Bright. A Zeke then made a pass at Lt. Bright who turned away and then followed the Zeke in a dive. When directly behind he opened fire. The Zeke pulled up then went down burning. One Zeke destroyed for Lt. Bright confirmed by Yellow 1. Lt. Bright then attacked a twin engine plane unidentified from the rear and it went down burning. One

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. #4-2
7 April 1945 cont'd.

probable unconfirmed. Camera film should confirm Tony and unidentified plane for Lt. Bright. Lt. Bright then tried to follow another Zeke in a split S but overshot and lost him.

Green Flight proceeded to Rally Point and returned to Iwo with a B-29 without further incident.

5. A. Over target broken clouds at 22,000'. Visibility unlimited.

Overcast from 200 miles from Japan and 150 miles north of Iwo up to 7,000 feet.

B. Good VHF not jammed.

6. None by this Squadron.

7. 6751 gals gas used (Ave. of 450 per plane leaving an ave. of 30 gals per plane remaining in plane)

6919 rds. .50 cal ammun. used.

8. Squadron thanks B-29's for the good job they did, extremely efficient and helpful. Pilots credit B-29's with their safe return.

Impressed by the necessity to thoroughly know all vectors, navigational aids, and target information. Cannot consult maps over Tokyo. Also stressed need for better flight coordination to prevent flights spreading over Tokyo area. Had difficulty identifying first wing of bombers. Recommend that 180 gals. be very least in tanks when starting home.

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15TH FIGHTER GROUP AAF
A.P.O. # 86

12 April 1945

MISSION REPORT

47TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION #4-3
15TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION #4-3

1. A. Nineteen (19) P-51's of the 47th Fighter Squadron.
 - B. Six Nicks
 - Six Tojos
 - Five Zekes
 - One Hamp
 - One Jack
2. A. 2nd Lt. Gourley and P-51 lost operationally.
 - B. Destroyed: One (1) Hamp by Major Kearney.
One (1) Nick by Major Kearney.
One (1) Nick by Major Kearney and Lt. Tyler.
One (1) Nick by Major Piper and Lt. Worton.
One (1) Nick by Lt. Cameron.
One (1) Nick by Lt. O'Mara and Lt. Grover.

Probable: None

Damaged: One (1) Jack by Lt. Stelling and Lt. McCormick.
3. Escort over Tokyo.
4. RED FLIGHT: Major Kearney, Lts., Tyler, Baldwin, Trodahl.
YELLOW FLIGHT: Major Piper, Lts., Worton, O'Mara, Grover.
BLUE FLIGHT: Capt. Obenshain, Lts., Gourley, Cameron, A. White.

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. #4-3
12 April 1945 cont'd.

GREEN FLIGHT: Capt. Betner, Lts., Balak, Stelling, McCormick.

PURPLE FLIGHT: Lts., Hintermeier, Elliott, Brunette, Long.

RED RESERVE : Capt. Powell, Lts., Dibelka, Bjorseth, Heintz.

Fights as they actually went on the mission:

RED FLIGHT: Major Kearney, Lts., Tyler, Trodahl.

YELLOW, BLUE, GREEN and PURPLE - Same as above.

Time of Take Off: 0755

Time of Landing: 1602

Time Over Target: Over Rendezvous: 1130

Landfall: 1150

Over Target: 1215-1236

Landfall: 1300

At Rally Point: 1305

On Course: 1315

NOTE: Times vary with each flight.

Flights began taking off at 0800. Capt. Powell's engine cut out and he did not take off. Lt. Heintz could not gain altitude and almost landed in the water. His fuselage was blown off under the engine and he managed to land at 0810. Lt. Bjorseth and Lt. Dibelka followed formation for 140 miles until 0900 until reserve was dismissed and landed at 0930. Lt. Baldwin's Rpm's would not reduce after clearing his engine and he left formation at 0905 and landed at 1000.

Flights rendezvoused with Navigating B-29's at Kita and were on course at 0845.

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. #4-3
12 April 1945 cont'd.

RED FLIGHT: Flew to rendezvous point 13,000'. Climbed to 20,000' and left rendezvous point at 1140 over first group of B-29's. Landfall at 1150. Weaved over bombers until just beyond turning point when they ran into a single Nick going in the opposite direction behind and below them. Went down for a tail shot by Major Kearney and Lt. Tyler. Hits were observed and the Nick started smoking and went straight down for 10,000' trailing smoke. The flight pulled up and 2 Nicks were seen behind and below. A 180 degree diving turn was made and Major Kearney and Lt. Tyler fired at the left Nick and saw hits. The left engine burst into flame and it went straight down trailing smoke. Lt. Trodahl saw it hit the ground. One half each for Major Kearney and Lt. Tyler. Lt. Trodahl fired at right Nick but was out of range. Red Flight pulled off and saw a Zeke at 10 o'clock slightly above. They closed and Major Kearney fired a long burst. Hits were observed and he started smoking and flames were seen in left wing root. Lt. Tyler took a burst at him as he went down. Lt. Trodahl saw him hit the ground. Returning to target area took a vector to rally point. While on the way 4 Zekes were sighted behind, 2 apparently tried to chase but didn't close. DU was used to rally point. Landfall was 1300 and were at rally point at 1310. Came home with Cyclone Able. Landed at 1545.

YELLOW FLIGHT: At rendezvous point with bombers, climbed to 22,000' and was on course to target at 1115 over middle group of bombers which

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. #4-3
12 April 1945 cont'd.

were at 15,000'. Wing tanks were dropped at landfall at 1200. Lt. O'Mara and Lt. Grover observed a Nick to the right and below. They made a 90 degree to stern pass and fired a 3 second burst. There were hits on wings and fuselage and the right engine burst into flames and he fell off in a steep spiral to the left. The right wing fell off and he crashed into the side of a mountain. Flak over the target was moderate seemed to be above the bombers. No bombers seen hit. Were over target at approximately 1230. Just after turning saw a Nick at 4 o'clock. While 75' just in front of Blue Flight out at 22,000'. Major Piper and Lt. Worton turned to the right to go in on him as he started a dive. They got him in sight at 100 degree deflection shot and followed around to 10 degrees. His left engine began to smoke and small pieces came off the left engine. A small fire started between the left engine and the fuselage. They pulled up and came in again. He was in a vertical dive and the Major and Lt. Worton fired a burst until their air speed reached 450 mph and they were down to 17,000'. Other planes made passes but Yellow 1 and 2 were first on this Nick. The plane was last seen going straight down with engine on fire. Just beyond Fuji Mt. Major Piper and Lt. Worton turned to rally point reaching landfall at 1300. Two orbits were made and left rally point 1315 with Cyclone Baker and 15 other fighters. Landed at 1515.

After becoming separated from their leader and shooting down the Nick, Lts., O'Mara and Grover pulled up and joined Blue Flight staying

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. #4-3
12 April 1945 cont'd.

with it until a bogie was spotted 1500' below headed NW. They were unable to get within range so they returned to Omae Point and took a vector of 170 degrees to the sub. Met formation of strike force and bombers over sub and T square 41 pulled out and brought them home with 14 other P-51's landing at 1550.

BLUE FLIGHT: Rendezvoused over Kita at 0820 and at 10,000' on a vector of 350 degrees headed for Dragon 32. After orbiting for 20 minutes over rendezvous point at 24,000', B-29's escort started on bombing run at 1150. Escorting bombers over target area Blue 3 while weaving back and forth over bombers at 22,000' observed a Nick at 1200 o'clock and at 90 degrees to his course and approximately 500' above. Blue 3 then climbed and turned on the Nick's tail, firing from approximately 850'. Hits were observed on the right engine as it broke into flames. Blue 3 then made a second pass on the Nick observed at the same time pieces flying off. The Nick was then seen to go down in a vertical dive and smoking. This was the only enemy plane observed. At 1300 Blue Flight headed for rally point with strike force.

Blue Leader observed flak over target at 22,000'. It was intense but inaccurate as to lead. Flak. was observed at bombers height.

About 290 miles from home base Blue 2 called to his flight leader that he had an oil leak and would soon have to bail out. Blue Leader then took his flight over to Vigilante at 190 miles from home base.

Lt. Gourley, after circling Dumbo 2, bailed out at about 2,500', hitting

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. #4-3
12 April 1945 cont'd.

the water at the rear of the destroyer. It was reported that subsequently by Agate Control that the destroyer said that he reached Lt. Gourley 8 seconds after he hit the water. However, Lt. Gourley was apparently injured when he hit the water because 2 seconds later he went under.

GREEN FLIGHT: At rendezvous point, Capt. Betner's blower wouldn't work and he began to orbit the point. When the blower came in and he saw 26 bombers below escorted by the 45th Fighter Squadron he gave high cover with Green Flight. Landfall was at 1145 and at target 1205. Two Nicks were seen to the North trailed by a Zeke 1,000' below. A turn was made into the Nicks and they were just getting into range when a twin engine fighter was observed 200' below, too close for a shot. Rather than continue to the front of the twin engine fighter, the flight chandelled to the right and Lt. Stelling called 4 Tojos 3,000' above in the sun. At the same time Capt. Betner saw another string of 4 unidentified Jap planes below to the East. Had Capt. Betner continued on to the Nick there would have been then fighters who could have gotten on his tail.

Returning over the bombers they continued over the target. Flak was moderate about 2,000' above the bombers. Two phosphorous bombs were seen. Bombs hits could not be seen because of the haze. Covering bombers along the route a Nick was observed going North, West of Mt. Fuji. Too far away to intercept. The leading element dropped their wing tanks between Mt. Fuji and the coast. The second element was

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. #4-3
12 April 1945 cont'd.

weaving over the bombers when a Jack began an attack on the bombers. He saw them diving down on him and pulled up into them and then rolled to the right. Lts., Stelling and McCormick rolled to the left on his tail and closed on him. Lt. Stelling's windshield was covered with oil and he could only see through a spot he had made by sticking his hand out and wiping. At the second burst particles flew off. Lt. McCormick was also firing and saw hits. The Jack (or Tojo) nosed over and was last seen going straight down. There was no smoke. One Jack damaged.

Lt. Stelling and Lt. McCormick pulled up and saw a silver Jap making a pass at the bombers. They turned into him and he pulled off, never closing. Continuing to the rally point at 21,000', they saw B-29's and fighters at 13,000'. Started for home covering the flight gradually losing altitude until they joined the flight 75 miles out.

Capt. Betner continued out to the sub and joined a B-29 on course. Capt. Betner experienced severe vibrations of his plane for 15 minutes so great that he could not see his instrument panel. The vibrations continued every few seconds and the engine would not run on right mag. at 250 miles out the B-29 gave them a vector to Dragon 34 but he didn't go because the distance was too great. At 350 miles the B-29 gave him a vector of 70 degrees and distance of 30 miles to Dumbo 1 with information that the destroyer was there. Although not shown on our map, Capt. Betner took this vector and searched for the destroyer to bail out. He went down to 1,000' but couldn't find a DD. Visibility was 5 miles. Taking a vector of 170 degrees, flew all the way to Iwo Jima

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. #4-3
12 April 1945 cont'd.

by himself, a distance of 450 miles. He contacted Dumbo 2 and Vigilante on the radio but couldn't see them. He would have bailed out over Vigilante but couldn't see him. He then contacted P-61's who confirmed his vector. He had by now decided to sweat out the ride to Iwo Jima and did not try Auction. Landed at Iwo Jima at 1600 with 40 gallons of gasoline. Capt. Betner had no DU.

Capt. Betner had seen three planes in flames hit the ground between landfall and the target although he did not see who knocked them down.

PURPLE FLIGHT: Took off from Iwo Jima as second cover flight for Sub Dragon 2. After rendezvousing over the island with B-29 (Cyclone 1) made a vector of 355 degrees and between 8,000' to 10,000' headed for Dragon 32. Cyclone 1 brought flight 40 miles due West of Sub. After locating sub at 1250, they orbited over it for 25 minutes. Purple 2 had previously released his wing tanks at 1150 so he only orbited with the flight for 10 minutes leaving it at 1500 and returned to Iwo Jima with Cyclone Charlie pancaking at 1330. At 1315 Purple 1, 3, and 4 left sub at 1315 and returned to base with Cyclone 21, pancaking at 1600.

During the patrolling there was no enemy sighted.

5. A. Weather - Overcast 9,000' on way up. Very hazy over Japan.

Vis. 4 to 8 miles.

B. Channels jammed, too crowded.

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. #4-3
12 April 1945 cont'd.

6. None
7. 7,462 gals. consumed (aver. of 414.6 gals. per plane leaving aver. of 74.6 gals per plane.
6,875 rds. of .50 cal. ammo expended.
8. All pilots mentioned that route over land was too long making flight last over 8 hours for most. Suggest return to rally point be shorter route. Communications channels were over crowded. Suggest DD be more on return trip. 16 planes cannot detour to take one plane to DD. Many of the other planes are low on gas or have other troubles.

Major Kearney commends Lt. Trodahl who flew second element alone, for always being in perfect supporting position. Also Major Kearney strongly recommends that something be done to relieve continuance of gun stoppages. Lt. Trodahl had only two (2) guns firing and Major Kearney had only (4). According to all information available to Squadron there was no DD at the spot where the B-29 vectored Capt. Betner and he managed to return to Iwo Jima only by own initiative and the grace of God.

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A.F.O. # 86

12 April 1945

MISSION REPORT

47TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 4-4
15TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 4-4

1. A. Seven (7) P-51's of the 47th Fighter Squadron.
B. Undeterminable.
2. A. None.
B. None.
3. Alert Scramble.
4. FLIGHT 1: Capt. Markham, Lts. Baccus, Mitchell, Reed.
FLIGHT 2: Lts. Bjorseth, Kinsey, D. O. White.

Time of Take-Off: 1415

Time of Landing: 1500

At about 1405 an alert was sounded on the island of Iwo necessitating a scramble of all available planes. The flights were ordered to George 10. Flight 1 was then given a vector of 270 which they flew for three minutes, then on a vector of 180 for four minutes. Lt. Reed saw a bogie on the vector of 180 and the flight proceeded to chase this unidentified plane. By the time the flight arrived at its approximate position the bogie had disappeared. The flight was then given a vector of 320 to Iwo and pancaked base.

Flight 2 went to George 10 but did not receive any vector from there. Due to the poor visibility the flight climbed to 1700 feet on a vector of 270 and 90 flying three to four minutes on course. The

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission # 4-4
12 April 1945 cont'd.

flight was then ordered to pancake base.

5. A. 8 to 10 tenths. Visibility 15 miles above overcast, 5 miles
below overcast.

B. Good.

6. None.

7. 350 gals. of gasoline consumed.

8. None.

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15TH FIGHTER GROUP AAF
A.P.O. # 86

16 April 1945

MISSION REPORT

47TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 4-5
15TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 4-7

1. A. Sixteen (16) P-51's of 47th Fighter Squadron.

B. None.

2. A. None.

B. None.

3. Strafing Kanoya Field - Kyushu.

4. Take off: 0934

Landfall: 1320

Over Target Area: 1330-1350

Landfall: 1355

Rally Point: 1400-1415

Landing Time: 1735

RED FLIGHT: Capt. Markham, Lts. Jones, Mitchell, Locke.

YELLOW FLIGHT: Capt. Down, Lt. D.O. White, Major Wells, Lt. Kriss.

BLUE FLIGHT: Lts. Condrick, Long, Baccus, June.

GREEN FLIGHT: Lts. Bright, Ryniker, Bjorseth, Reed.

RED RESERVE: Capt. Powell, Lts. Grover, Stelling.

Flights on Mission: RED, YELLOW and BLUE FLIGHTS - Same as above.

GREEN FLIGHT: Lts. Bright, Grover, Capt. Powell,

Lt. Reed.

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission # 4-5
16 April 1945 cont'd.

Lt. Bjorseth's engine cut out on take off. Lt. Ryniker's right wing tank would not operate. Lt. Stelling had no hydraulic pressure.

Flights began taking off at 0934. Left rendezvous point at 1030 on course at 11,000 feet. The 21st Group was 45 minutes late and Squadron had to reduce speed losing gasoline and time. Arrived at rendezvous point and had to orbit waiting over target area. Visibility 2 or 3 miles at best. Elements some times got separated from each other in haze. Squadron orbited over Ariake Wan and westward. Could not see target and did not know where it lay due to insufficient briefing. Heard 45th Fighter Squadron call that they were going in but didn't know where as they were in the haze. Squadron had become separated and coordination was impossible. Squadron continued to orbit never seeing the target or any enemy planes. Were confused as to whether they were over Ariake Wan or Kagoshima Kaiwan. After being in the area for 25 minutes and not being sure where they were, where other squadrons were, or where the target was, Squadron returned to rally point and then to Iwo Jima. There was no flak and no observations. At 200 miles from Iwo Jima, a 78th pilot bailed out. B-29 and all planes orbited. Red Flight saw PBY Dumbo off in distance and brought him to area. Another Superdumbo on way. Lt. White's engine quit for 3 minutes and he lost 2500 feet. It caught but only would run at 2500 RPM and 45 inches. He came home with Maj. Wells at 450 mph. B-29 with about 60 planes continued to orbit pilot so all P-51's left and came home on their own.

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission # 4-5
16 April 1945 cont'd.

5. A. Overcast 200 miles out up. Extremely hazy over Japanese mainland from 6,000 ft. down. Hazy on return trip up to 6,000 ft.
Overcast 200 miles out.
B. O.K. except for individual failures. 21st Group heavy on B Channel.
6. None.
7. 6,627 gals total used (average 414 gals). 71 gals average left in planes. No ammunition expended.
8. Briefing inadequate. Map inadequate. No contours shown on map. Essential for strafing mission on new area that sufficient notice be given to study valleys, mountains, rivers and general lay of the land. None were shown on the strip carried. Not sufficient time to study the field and it's AA positions. The Squadron depends on the Squadron S-2 more than anyone else to actually study these items with them and the Squadron S-2s were not given any dope until the last moment and then it was incomplete. Some pilots did not receive strip map until takeoff time and as mentioned they were entirely inadequate on the target area. All pilots feel that they took off without sufficient preparation.

After Dumbo arrived on the scene and another on the way, pilots believe B-29 should have brought them home instead of continuing to orbit the area where 78th pilot bailed out and letting them come home alone.

It is essential that both groups get started together on time.

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A.P.O. # 86

17 April 1945

MISSION REPORT

47TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 4-6
15TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 4-8

1. A. Six (6) P-51's of the 47th Fighter Squadron.
B. None.
2. A. None.
B. None.
3. Strafe and Dive Bomb Shipping in Futami Harbor, Chichi Jima.
4. INVADER RED FLIGHT: Capt. Obenshain, Lts. Dibelka, Cameron, Frick.
INVADER GREEN FLIGHT: Lts. Baldwin and Ryniker.

Take-Off: 0930 Time Over Target: 1010 Pancake: 1059

Capt. Obenshain took off at 0930 with six ships picking up 3 P-51's from 78th Fighter Squadron and 3 P-51's from the 45th Fighter Squadron and continuing on course at 0935. Flights proceeded to Chichi Jima at 10,000 feet. Susaki air field observed to be inoperational. Approximately six cargo vessels, 100-150 feet long, were observed in square 246 B. Invader Red Flight made a strafing and dive bombing run from 10,000 feet and all bombs were seen to hit in target area but no direct hits were observed. A second strafing run was made from NE to SW and hits were seen along coast and buiding area in square 245. No return fire was observed.

Invader Green Flight circled five miles off shore with Josephine. Flight rendezvoused 10 miles south of Chichi Jima and returned to Iwo

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission # 4-6
17 April 1945 cont'd.

Jima landing at 1059.

5. A. 5/10 cloud coverage at 2,500 feet. Visibility unlimited.
B. No contact made with Warcloud or Dumbo 1.
6. Unknown.
7. 776 gals of gas consumed, 5359 rds. of ammo. fired, 8 x 500# AN-M-64 bombs dropped with AN-N-113 tail fuse with 45 second delay.
8. None.

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A.P.O. # 86

18 April 1945

MISSION REPORT

47TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION #4-7
15TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION #4-11

1. A. Ten (10) P-51's of the 47th Fighter Squadron.

B. None

2. A. None

B. None

3. Strafe and Dive Bomb Chichi Jima.

4. RED FLIGHT: Capt. Markham, Lts., Jones, Mitchell, Grover.

YELLOW FLIGHT: Lts., Hintermeier, Elliott, Schroeder, Van Zandt.

BLUE FLIGHT: Lts., Bright and Heintz. (Josephine Escort)

Take Off: 1249 Time Over Target: 1410-1425 Pancaked: 1500

Red, Yellow and Blue Flights took off from Iwo Jima at 1249 and proceeded on a vector of 20 degrees at 10,000' to Chichi Jima. Because of the haze over the island, Red Leader decided to continue North to find a possible opening. After circling Muko Island the three flights started South and approached Chichi Jima from the NE. Landfall was 1355.

Red Flight flew to the South of the island and then made their bomb run from the SE on Omura Town and dock area. The bombing run was started from 10,000' at an angle of 55 degrees and speed of 450 mph. Release was at 3500'. However Capt. Markham's bombs did not release on this and they made another run in the same manner so that Red Leader could drop his bombs. Again the flight strafed on the way down. Red Leader dropped

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. #4-7
18 April 1945 cont'd.

on this run. No hits were observed because of poor weather. Red Flight recovered 4 miles West of the island at 7,000'. At this point Red Leader observed a vessel in T A 246G which was about 350' long. No AA was received on the mission.

Yellow Flight because of the cloud coverage the original targets could not be seen so the buildings in T A 245H, I, M, N, R, S were selected by Yellow Leader. On the first run all but Yellow Leader dropped their bombs and strafed the target through a hole in the clouds starting their run from 9,000' with release at 4,000' passing over the target at 350 mph. Continuing on Yellow Leader picked out Susaki Airfield for his target. He circled it once. On the second pass he dropped his bombs and strafed also through a hole in the clouds from about 8000' to release at 4000' at the same Yellow 2,3 and 4 strafed the airfield. Yellow Leader observed hits in T A 212X. One plane was observed in T A 198C on Southwest corner of runway. Runway appeared to be inoperational. No AA received.

The flights reformed 4 miles West of the island at 5,000' with Josephine and proceeded to Iwo on a vector of 210 degrees. Pancaked at 1503.

5. A. 9/10ths cloud coverage - Visibility 5 miles.
- B. Good.
6. Unknown.
7. 4,598 rds. .50 cal ammo. expended

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. #4-7
18 April 1945 cogt'd.

1200 gals. of gas consumed.

16 - 500 pound bombs AN-M-64, with AN-M103 nose fuse .1 delay and
AN-M101A2 tail fuse .025 delay.

8. None.

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 15TH FIGHTER GROUP AAF
 A.P.O. # 86

19 April 1945

MISSION REPORT

47TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION #4-8
 15TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION #4-12

1. A. Sixteen P-51's from 47th Fighter Squadron.

B. None

2. A, None

B. None

3. Fighter Sweep (Cover for 21st Group Strafing Atsugi Airfield)

4. RED FLIGHT: Major Piper, Lts., Worton, O'Mara, Scanlan.

YELLOW FLIGHT: Capt. Obenshain, Lts., Dibelka, Cameron, Frick.

BLUE FLIGHT: Capt. Betner, Lts., Kinsey, Stelling, McCormick.

GREEN FLIGHT: Lts., Brunette, Barlow, Baldwin, Trodahl.

RED RESERVE: Lts., Bjorseth, Ayres.

Flights as they went on the mission: RED, YELLOW and GREEN FLIGHTS
 same as above.

BLUE FLIGHT: Capt. Betner, Lts., Kinsey, Bjorseth, McCormick.

Take Off: 0751 Time Over Target: 1120 Pancaked: 1437

Lt. Stelling had a rough engine and returned and landed at 0910.

Lt. Bjorseth took his place. Lt. Ayres the other reserve pilot was
 released and landed at 0915.

Squadron began taking off at 0751 and was airborne at 0755. Ren-
 dezvoused over Kita at 10,000' and on course at 0830 at an altitude of

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. #4-8
19 April 1945 cont'd.

8,000'. Fifty miles from Koze they climbed to 15,000' and arrived at Koze at 1105. They continued to climb in overcast to 17,000' when it was seen that there were clouds on up to above 20,000' so the Squadron let down to 15,000' just under the clouds. Were over target at 1120. The target could be seen but due to haze the 21st Group was not seen. Squadron continued to patrol over the target area in mutual support formation until 1145. Area covered was from Mt. Fuji to Yokohama with several orbits over Sagami Wan. No enemy planes were sighted. A flash of light as from a mirror was noticed from Hiratsuka and immediately afterward 9 black flak bursts were received 1500' below. Squadron DU'd to rally point arriving there at 1155 at 10,000'. Returned to Iwo Jima without incident at 230 IAS. Capt. Brunette's engine was running on one mag so he left Squadron with wingman at Kita and came in with landing priority.

5. A. Overcast on way up at 9,000' for 300 miles. For 200 miles clear. 100 miles from target another overcast. Over target overcast from 15,000' to above 20,000'. Broken clouds at 5,000' and above.
Hazy - Visibility 10 miles.

B. O.K. except for individual failures.

6. None

7. 6,223 total gas consumed (aver. of 366 gals per plane, aver left in planes 122 gals.)

8. None

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 15TH FIGHTER GROUP AAF
 A.P.O. # 86

22 April 1945

MISSION REPORT

47TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 4-9
 15TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 4-14

1. A. Twenty (20) P-51's of the 47th Fighter Squadron.
 B. Three Zekes, one Tojo, and one Oscar airborne. One Tony, and about ten (10) unidentified planes on the ground.
2. A. 1st Lt. Dave Stelling and 2nd Lt. Long killed. Two (2) P-51's.
 B. Destroyed: One Tojo by Capt. Hintermeier
 One Oscar by Capt. Markham
 One Oscar by Lt. Baccus
 One Zeke by Capt. Markham and Lt. Ryniker
 One Tojo by Lt. Col. Spain (non-airborne)
 One Tojo by Capt. Down (non-airborne)
 One Tony by Lt. Sidebottom (non-airborne)
 Probables: One Tojo by Lt. D. White and Lt. Ayres
 Damaged: Two (2) Tojos, one Nick, one Zeke, and one unidentified
3. Strafing Suzuka Airfield.
4. RED FLIGHT: Lt. Col. Spain, Lts. Long, Condrick, Fitzgerald.
 YELLOW FLIGHT: Capt. Down, Lts. White, D., Ayres, Kriss.
 BLUE FLIGHT: Capt. Markham, Lts. Jones, Mitchell, Locke.
 GREEN FLIGHT: Capt. Hintermeier, Lts. Schroeder, Baccus, Van Zandt.
 PURPLE FLIGHT: Capt. Betner, Lts. Balak, Stelling, Kinsey.

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. # 4-9
22 April cont'd.

RED RESERVE: Capt. Bright, Wagner, Ryniker, Sidebottom.

Flights as they went on the mission:

RED and GREEN were the same.

YELLOW FLIGHT: Capt. Down, Lts. White, D., Ayres, Sidebottom.

BLUE FLIGHT: Capt. Markham, Lts. Jones, Ryniker, Locke.

PURPLE FLIGHT: Capt. Betner, Lts. Wagner, Stelling, Kinsey.

Time of Take-Off: 0825 Dep. Point: 1205 Over Target: 1220-1230

Rally Point: 1245 Landed: 1530

Squadron began taking off at 0825 and was airborne at 0832. Lt. Mitchell returned and landed at 0900 with rough engine. Lt. Ryniker took his place. Lt. Balak returned and landed at 0920 with a rough engine. Lt. Wagner took his place. Lt. Kriss returned and landed at 0930 with a rough engine and Lt. Sidebottom took his place. Capt. Bright of Red Reserve was released and landed at 1000.

RED FLIGHT: Red Flight joined up over field at 0835 and proceeded to rendezvous with navigating B-29's at 0925 at 10,000'. Red Flight proceeded uneventfully to Departure Point at 1215. Lt. Condrick ran low on gas and returned with Lt. Fitzgerald to orbit with navigator B-29. At 1240 orbiting with B-29 Red 3 saw one (1) pilot bail out hitting water 1/2 mile toward land from sub. The plane landed close by and sub was seen heading to position. Due to haze at landfall Lt. Col. Spain and Lt. Long let down along shore to 5,000 feet trying to get oriented. Then headed North letting down to 3,000 feet and recognized river to the left. Lt. Col. Spain spotted target and proceeded East of the field in a

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. # 4-9
22 April cont'd.

northerly direction and dropped external tanks over the river. At this point, 10 miles north east of the field, three Jap single engine fighters were seen heading north 5 miles to east. However, Red Flight continued to turn to the left and made a strafing run on the target. The plant was strafed NE of the field from an altitude of 50 feet. Hits were observed. Three Tojos were strafed on the airfield. The wing of one Tojo blew off and damage was seen to other two. After passing field, Lt. Long was missing. Red 1 still on the deck continued along the coast firing at buildings and hit a power line tower north of Toba. He then turned east over the water firing on a 200 foot surface vessel and observed several hits. Turning to the north he fired on a dredge observing several hits but no damage was observed. He then proceeded to Rally Point climbing to 10,000 feet and headed on course for base at 1240. Lt. Condrick and Fitzgerald joined flight at Rally Point. At 150 miles from base on return flight, one engine on Navigator B-29 burst in flames and Red Flight returned alone to base and landed at 1515.

YELLOW FLIGHT: Flight came in on Suzuka directly from the north flying west of Yokkaichi coming in on the deck at 450 mph and firing on engine assembly plant first hitting the largest maintenance buildings. Capt. Down strafed the buildings in the center of field and then hit a Tojo taking off observing the wing blow off and the plane starting to burn. Hit personnel just south of field. Lt. White after hitting the center of buildings, hit a twin engine plane believed to be a Nick and hits were seen on the plane. He then strafed and observed hits on a

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. # 4-9
22 April cont'd.

Zeke parked on the field and personnel. A number of planes were seen parked in the SW corner of the field but he could not bear on them.

Lt. Ayres after strafing the buildings, hit an unidentified plane in the NW corner of the South field observing hits. He saw several planes burning in revetments to the west of the field. In the SW corner a silver Zeke was parked with motor running but he couldn't get on it.

Lt. Sidebottom strafed the buildings and then hit a Tony parked outside a revetment to the west of the field and it burst into flame. When half way across the field Capt. Down saw hits on Lt. Long's plane. Lt. Long pulled up in a 40 degree climb with engine smoking.

The entire flight proceeded to the coast on the deck strafing buildings. Capt. Down hit several soldiers in the middle of a road. At the entrance to the bay they strafed a small gun boat and left it smoking and sinking. A radio station was observed on the island at the entrance of the bay. They then hit a dredge and left it smoking. Climbing to 8,000 feet they arrived at the Rally Point at 1245. After one orbit, they came home with a B-29 whose engine started to burn when 100 miles from Iwo Jima, so they DU'd home and landed at 1510.

BLUE FLIGHT: Leaving Departure Point flight let down to 4,000 feet over land. The flight proceeded north of the target seeing two single engine enemy planes at nine o'clock and 2,000 feet above. Flight proceeded to target and lost sight of enemy planes. A strafing run was made from 6,000 feet from north to south with squadron in abreast formation. Hangers and buildings were strafed from 50 feet. Intense

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. # 4-9
22 April cont'd.

small arms fire was observed in a line just north of the target. Blue Flight pulled off the target to the south and climbed to 4,000 feet. Three Zekes were seen, one on the deck and two 1,000 feet above and pulling away. The flight followed one Zeke and closed fast. Blue 1, 2, & 3 fired in string scoring hits. Blue 3 saw pieces flying off from Blue 1's fire and saw plane roll over. At this point Blue 3 fired and Zeke was seen to hit the ground by Blue 2 and 3. Immediately a Zeke was sighted low to the right and Blue 1 and 2 made a deflection shot closing into 200 foot range. The Zeke went into a shallow dive and Blue 3 and 4 scored hits and observed smoke from previous hits. Blue 1, 2, 3, & 4 saw the Zeke hit the ground and explode. Blue 1 thinks pilot was injured by his fire. Blue Flight then climbed to 10,000 feet and proceeded to Rally Point arriving at 1245. They then returned on course to base at 10,000 feet and landed at 1520.

GREEN FLIGHT: As the Squadron started their strafing run at 8,000 feet, Green Flight was on the extreme left of the line abreast formation. As a result, Green Flight was crowded off the strafing course and due to the thick haze didn't see the airfield.

However, during their approach Capt. Hintermeier saw an Oscar pass directly in front of him. He gave it a burst but could not pull through. Lt. Baccus, Green 3, in the meantime got a good burst in from 90 degree to about 20 degree causing the Oscar to smoke. As Capt. Hintermeier looked back to find his element leader, he could see the Oscar still smoking. Confirmed by Capt. Campbell of the 45th Fighter Squadron.

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. # 4-9
22 April cont'd.

Later on, as the flight was finishing the run, Capt. Hintermeier saw a Tojo directly in front of him and as he closed in on the Tojo the second or third burst caused it turn on its back and fall to the ground exploding as it hit the ground. Lt. Baccus also saw the Tojo hit the ground and explode. The flight strafed buildings all the way to the coast and reached Rally Point at 1245. Landed at Iwo Jima at 1520.

PURPLE FLIGHT: The flight went from the departure point to the Rally Point with the B-29's to cover the sub. Arriving there at 12,000 feet the flight began spiraling down over the sub. At 8,000 feet Lt. Kinsey dropped his wing tanks and overshot Lt. Stelling going under him. Making a 360 degree to get back in formation, he lost the entire formation in the haze. A parachute was seen below by all of Purple Flight, probably Lt. Stelling, although Lt. Kinsey thought he saw the chute before he lost the flight. The parachute was seen by Capt. Betner and wingman to hit the water and sink. The sub arrived in about 5 minute and the Super Dumbo was directly above. No call was ever heard from Lt. Stelling. Lt. Kinsey, after being unable to find flight, climbed to Rally altitude and unable to contact Lt. Stelling on radio, returned to Iwo Jima with a B-29 landing at 1515. Capt. Betner and wingman joined two B-29s at 1300 and landed at Iwo Jima at 1530. Capt. Betner's radio was out for almost the entire flight.

5. A. Extremely hazy over the target. No clouds, visibility 2 1/2 miles.
- B. Comm. O.K. except for individual failures.
6. See paragraph 2. Strafed engine assembly plant and buildings on field

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. # 4-9
22 April cont'd.

and between field and coast. Sunk small gun boat and left dredge smoking. Strafed personnel on field and adjacent areas.

7. Ammo: 15,039 rds. .50 cal. expended.

Gas: 6,897 gals. of gas consumed (18 planes) Average 383.1 gals. used per plane, leaving average of 110.3 gals. left in each plane.

8. Capt. Moore of the 78th Fighter Squadron reports that he saw a P-51 crash on the field in flames. He reports that he saw an object leave the plane 500 feet which he thought was the pilot. No chute was seen. Another report has been received that someone in the 21st Group saw a P-51 explode on the target. As Lt. Long's plane was the only one lost at the target, he is listed as killed. Verbal report has been received that Boxkite 31 reported that the submarine was unsuccessful in picking up pilot in the water. It is not known if the submarine picked up a dead body or none at all. Therefore Lt. Stelling is listed as killed.

Squadron was not entirely convinced that they had hit the right target, but on examining photographs they thought that it was Suzuka. Target was too narrow for entire Squadron to go over line abreast. Green Flight was crowded off. Pilots thought the briefing had been complete but that the haze 'screwed up' the mission.

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A.P.O. # 86

23 April 1945

MISSION REPORT

47TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 4-10
15TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 4-15

1. A. Four (4) P-51's from 47th Fighter Squadron.
B. None.
2. A. None.
B. None.
3. Strafe and bomb Chichi Jima. (Abortive)
4. INVADER BLUE: Capt. Brunette, Lts. Barlow, Baldwin, Tyler.

Time of Take-Off: 0934 Over Target: 1030 Pancaked: 1115

The flight took off at 0930 and was on course at 0935 taking a vector of 18 degrees at 10,000 feet. When reaching the approximate area of Chichi Jima, the target, it was obscured by 9/10ths cloud coverage. The flight went down to the deck and flew on vector but were unable to locate Chichi Jima. The visibility was from 1/4 of a mile to 1 mile. Not being able to locate the target, the flight climbed through the overcast to 10,000 feet and returned on vector of 197 degrees.

Kita Rock, last resort target, was partially obscured but the southern part of the island could be seen. The flight made a run from east to west from 10,000 feet and dropped their bombs at 2,000 feet. Capt. Brunette saw the bombs hit on the beach opposite village approximately 50 yards in from the shore. The flight then proceeded back to

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. # 4-10
23 April cont'd.

base on the deck and pancaked at 1115.

5. A. At Chichi. - 8/10ths to 9/10ths cloud coverage. (entirely closed
in)

At Kita. - 8/10ths cloud coverage.

6. Unknown.

7. 440 gals of gas consumed, 150 rds. of .50 cal. expended, 8 x 500#
bombs AN-M-64 with AN-M 103 nose fuse .1 second delay, and AN-M 101A2
tail fuse .025 second delay.

8. None.

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A.P.O. # 86

24 April 1945

MISSION REPORT

47TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 4-11
15TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 4-16

1. A. Six (6) P-51's from 47th Fighter Squadron.

B. None.

2. A. None.

B. None.

3. Strafe and Dive Bomb Chichi Jima.

4. RED INVADER: Capt. Down, Lts. Doughty, Ayres, Klessig.

GREEN INVADER: Lt. Bjorseth (Josephine Escort) Lt. Col. Mitchell.

Time of Take-Off: 1000 Time Over Target: 1100-1115 Pancake: 1145

Red and Green Invader of 47th Fighter Squadron, Yellow Invader of 78th Fighter Squadron and Blue Invader of 45th Fighter Squadron were airborne at 1005. Flights proceeded at 330 m.p.h. on a vector of 010 at 10,000 feet to Chichi Jima. Five miles southwest of Chichi, the flights changed from squadron formation to string formation. Red Invader approached the target (Supply Dumps in TA A, F, V) from the southwest. Bombing and strafing run was started from 10,000 feet. Pullout was at 4,000 feet. Because of the fact that the bombs were dropped through a hole in the clouds over the target observation of hits was unobserved. However, Lt. Col. Mitchell, who had joined the flight as Invader Red 3, saw several bomb hits in TA 246 J, O. After making one run over target flight joined up with Yellow and Blue flights about 5 miles south fo Chichi and

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. 4-11
24 April 1945 cont'd.

returned to base between 8,500 feet and deck at 240 m.p.h. pancaking at 1145.

Green Invader orbited with Dumbo between 3,000 and 7,000 feet six or seven miles due south of Chichi. Visual and radio communication was good with Dumbo. No flak was observed; no enemy interception.

5. A. 8/10 cloud coverage, visibility 10 miles.
B. Good.
6. Unknown.
7. 690 gals. of gas consumed, 661 rds. of .50 cal. expended, 10 x 500# AN-M-64 Bombs with AN-M-113 tail fuse 4 to 5 second delay.
8. Lt. Col. Mitchell observed gun flashes in TA 247 A, apparently from heavy AA.

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15TH FIGHTER GROUP AAF
A.P.O. # 86

26 April 1945

MISSION REPORT

47TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 4-12
15TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 4-17

1. A. Nineteen (19) P-51's of the 47th Fighter Squadron.
B. None.
2. A. None.
B. None.
3. Escort over Kyushu - Kokubu.
4. RED FLIGHT: Major Piper, Lts. Worton, O'Mara, Grover,
YELLOW FLIGHT: Capt. Brunette, Lts. Tyler, Baldwin, Van Zandt.
BLUE FLIGHT: Capt. Powell, Lts. June, Bjorseth, Weaver.
GREEN FLIGHT: Capt. Bright, Lts. Cameron, Ryniker, Frick.
PURPLE FLIGHT: Lts. Condrick, Wagner, Mitchell, Scanlan.
Take-Off: 0640 Over Target: 1115-1130
Rally: 1130-1135 Pancaked: 1415

Squadron began taking off at 0640. Lt. Reed did not take off due to rough engine. Lt. Klessig could not retract his landing gear and landed at 0702, Lt. Frick taking his place. Lt. Cameron took Lt. Reed's place.

Squadron rendezvoused at 0755 over Vigilante 600 miles on course climbed from 10,000 feet to 15,000 feet. Arrived at rendezvous point at 1055. Kyushu was entirely covered by overcast up to 14,000 feet and another overcast 17,000 feet and above. Fighters were only able to see ground through rare holes. Left rendezvous point at 1100 and flew to

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. 4-12
26 April 1945 cont'd.

vicinity of Kokubu with exception of Blue Flight and 3 and 4 of Yellow Flight who remained with navigating B-29's because of gasoline shortage. Purple Flight remained to cover submarine. At Kokubu picked up 12 B-29's flying east at 15,000 feet and escorted them back to Ariake Wan arriving at 1130. Purple Flight in the meantime had been unable to locate submarine due to overcast and had remained with navigating B-29's. No enemy planes and no flak was encountered.

Entire Squadron left rally point at 1130 on course for base at air speed of 240 m.p.h. gradually letting down from 15,000' to 10,000'. At 100 miles from base left bombers and DU'd home at speed of 270 m.p.h. Landed at 1415.

5. A. Over target solid overcast up to 14,000 feet and from 18,000 feet on up. Overcast extended approximately 50 miles from Japan. Broken clouds at 5,000 feet to 6,000 feet back to Iwo Jima.

B. Good except for individual failures.

6. None.

7. Total gas used - 7414 gals., Average gas used per plane - 390.2 gals.,
Total gas left - 1875 gals., Average gas left per plane - 98.2 gals.,
Ammo. - 1395 rds. .50 cal., all but 20 rds. of the 1395 rds expended were expended by Lt. Baldwin to lighten his plane. He landed with 5 gals. registered.

8. Squadron and Flight Leaders stress need for more accurate weather information over target. Squadron request Navigating B-29's do not fly through overcast. On this mission B-29's flew through overcast while fighters flew over it and luckily planes met.

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A.P.O. # 86

29 April 1945

MISSION REPORT

47TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 4-13
15TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 4-19

1. A. Four (4) P-51's of the 47th Fighter Squadron.
B. None.
2. A. None.
B. None.
3. Dive Bomb and Strafe Chichi Jima.
4. INVADER YELLOW: Capt. Powell, Lts. June, Tyler, Weaver.

Take-Off 1045 Over Target: 1135-1145 Pancake: 1229

Invader Yellow of the 47th Fighter Squadron and Invader Red of the 78th Fighter Squadron were airborne at 1045. Flights proceeded north at 11,000 feet at 230 m.p.h. After flights separated east of Chichi Jima, each proceeded to its respective target. Invader Yellow approached the target from NE making strafing and bombing run on shipping in TA 245 O and 246 F, B, G. Bombs were released at 6,000 feet and pull-out was made at 5,000 feet. Because of cloud coverage hits on target were not observed. Lt. Tyler and Lt. Weaver, Yellow 3 and 4, made their bombing and strafing runs with red flight of Invader Red, as Yellow 3 and 4 found it too difficult to continue with Yellow 1 and 2 after trying to avert a collision. Four (4) unidentified planes were observed on SW corner of Susaki Airfield. Time over target area was 1135-1145.

On their return Capt. Powell observed a large 100 foot oil tanker

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. # 4-13
29 April 1945 cont'd.

off Yama Point, Higashi Harbor, Hahi Jima.

5. A. 2/10 cloud coverage. Visibility good.

B. Good.

6. Unknown.

7. 434 gals. of gas consumed, 911 rds. of .50 cal. expended, 8 x 500#

AN-M-64 bombs with AN-M-103 nose fuse 1/10 second delay and

AN-M-101 A2 tail fuse 25/1000 second delay.

8. None.

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A.P.O. # 86

30 April 1945

MISSION REPORT

47TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION # 4-14
15TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION # 4-20

1. A. Sixteen (16) P-51's of 47th Fighter Squadron.

B. None.

2. A. None.

B. None.

3. Escort Mission over Tokyo.

4. Flights as they went on the mission:

RED FLIGHT: Capt. Obenshain, Lts. Dibelka, O'Mara, Frick.

YELLOW FLIGHT: Capt. Betner, Lts. Balak, McCormick, Kinsey.

BLUE FLIGHT: Capt. Down, Lts. D. White, Ayres, Doughty.

GREEN FLIGHT: Lts. Bjorseth, Elliott, Schroeder, Fitzgerald.

Take-Off: 0749 Rendezvous: 1105 Over Target: 1115-1145

Rally: 1205 Pancaked: 1431

Squadron was airborne at 0749 and at rendezvous point at 0829 and on course at 0840 at an altitude of 10,000 feet and speed of 205 m.p.h. There were scattered clouds about 3/10ths at from 4 to 8 thousand feet. Twenty minutes from departure point climbed to 15,000 feet and arrived at D.P. at 1105. There was a layer of clouds from 7,500 to 9,000 feet extending inland with scattered holes. Visibility was unlimited above the clouds. Squadron made two orbits and climbed to 18,000 feet and

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47th Fighter Sq. Mission Rpt. # 4-14
30 April 1945 cont'd.

started on course for target at 1215. Arrived at target area and found the undercast solid and no sign of the bombers. Squadron patrolled over the entire area from north of Tokyo to Mt. Fuji until 1145 without seeing an enemy plane. Left landfall at 1200 and arrived at rally point at 1210 at an altitude of 10,000 feet. On trip to rally point 9 B-29's were observed heading over Mt. Fuji at an altitude of approximately 20,000 feet. Blue Flight received one flak burst SE of Mt. Fuji which was accurate as to altitude and would have been in flight if course had not just been changed. After leaving rally point on course for Iwo Jima, wing tanks were dropped. Due to excess gas consumption of 2 planes Yellow Flight asked B-29 for faster return trip and came home at 300 mph landing at 1402. The rest of the Squadron returned at 270 mph and landed at 1430.

5. A. 3/10ths scattered clouds 4 to 8,000 feet to mainland. Undercast over Japan 10/10ths from shoreline inland, at from 7,500 to 9,000 feet.

B. Excellent except for individual failures.

6. None.

7. Ammo: 1443 (used to clear guns and drop tanks)

Gas: Total consumed - 5,637 Average used per plane - 352.3 gals.

Average left per plane - 136.6 gals.

8. All flights commented that Navigating B-29's did a good job. Red Leader requests that B-29's in pairs not fly so far apart. The two he was with were 10 miles apart.

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Squadron Mission No. 4-12

26 April 1945

Escort over Kyushu

1st Row - L to R- Lt. June, Lt. Tyler, Lt. Frick, Capt. Brunette,
Lt. O'Mara.
2nd Row - L to R- Lt. Wagner, Lt. Cameron, Lt. Bjorseth,
Lt. Scanlan, Lt. Klessig, Lt. Van Zandt.
3rd Row - L to R- Lt. Grover, Lt. Rymiker, Lt. Mitchell,
Capt. Powell, Capt. Bright, Lt. Condrick,
Lt. Baldwin, Lt. Weaver, Lt. Worton,
Major Piper, Commanding Officer.



Squadron Mission No. 4-9

22 April 1945

Strafing Suzuka Airfield, Honshu

1st Row - L to R- Lt. Fitzgerald, Capt. Betner, Lt. Long,
Lt. Balak, Lt. Kinsey, Lt. Stelling,
Lt. Condrick, Lt. Schroeder, Lt. Kriss.
2nd Row - L to R- Lt. Wagner, Lt. Mitchell, Capt. Markham,
Lt. Col. Spain, Lt. Locke, Capt. Hintermeier,
Lt. Van Zandt.
3rd Row - L to R- Lt. Jones, Lt. Baccus, Capt. Bright,
Capt. Down, Lt. Ayres, Lt. D. White,
Lt. Ryniker, Lt. Sidebottom.



Squadron Mission No. 4-2

7 April 1945

Escort of B-29's over Tokyo

1st Row - L to R- Lt. Baccus, Capt. Hintermeier,
Capt. Obenshain, Lt. Condrick.

2nd Row - L to R- Commanding Officer, Major Piper,
and Capt. Markham.

3rd Row - L to R- Lt. Ryniker, Capt. Bright, Lt. Ayres,
Lt. Mitchell, Lt. Cameron, Capt. Down,
Capt. Brunette, and Capt. Powell.

Lt. Baldwin also on mission but not
in picture.

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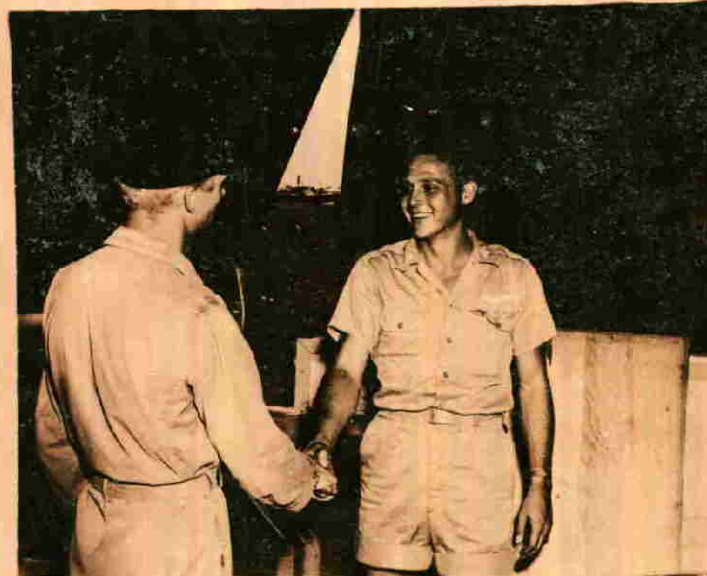


Lt. Ayres and Capt. Down being interrogated by
Lt. Sanders.



Lt. Sanders interrogating Lt. Baccus after another
Fighter Strike.

Lt. Baccus is describing how he shot down a Jap.



Squadron Mission No. 4-2

7 April 1945

Escort of B-29's over Tokyo
Lt. Baccus, left, welcoming Lt. Ayres, right, back to Squadron
after being rescued from bailing out in water.



Squadron Mission No. 4-2

7 April 1945

Escort of B-29's over Tokyo

Briefing of the Fighter pilots before the take off of
first mission over Tokyo

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Sulphur pits near Motoyama Village and 3rd Airfield
Operations Tower



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Entrance to a Jap cave in Northwestern part
of the island



One of the many high ridges on the
Northern part of island



Coming down from the top of Mt. Suribachi



Looking North from Mt. Suribachi with 1st
Airfield in the background



Jagged terrain on Northern part of island



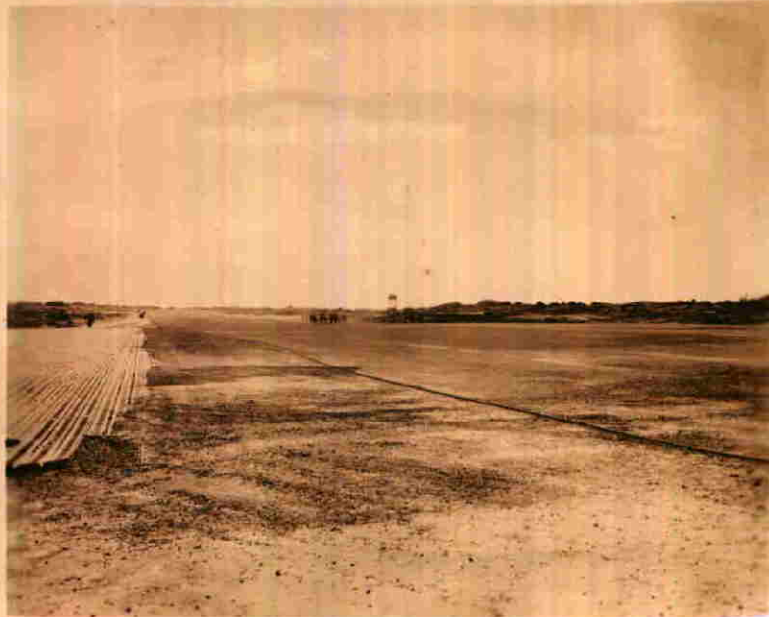
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Wrecked ships on Iwo's East Beach



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Third Airfield

