

HISTORY

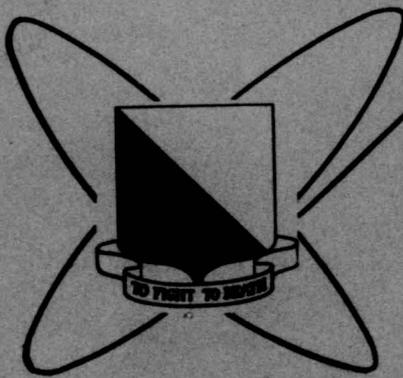
OF

THE

FOURTEENTH

FIGHTER

GROUP



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This edition of the  
HISTORY  
OF  
THE  
FOURTEENTH  
FIGHTER  
GROUP

is a reproduction  
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HISTORY  
OF  
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FOURTEENTH  
FIGHTER  
GROUP

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Compiled by  
Headquarters, 14th Fighter Group (Air Defense) (ADC)  
Ethan Allen Air Force Base  
Winooski, Vermont



**DEDICATED**

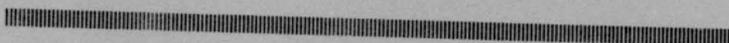
To Those Who Have Gone Before

And

For Those

Yet To Come . . . . .

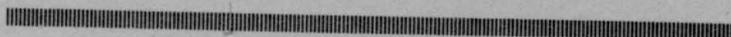
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PUBLISHED

ANNO DOMINI 1959

WINOOSKI, VERMONT



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H I G H F L I G H T

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth  
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;  
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth  
Of sun-split clouds - and done a hundred things  
You have not dreamed of - wheeled and soared and swung  
High in the sunlit silence. Ho'ring there,  
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung  
My eager craft through footless halls of air . . .

Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue  
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace,  
Where never lark, or even eagle flew -  
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod  
The high untrepassed sanctity of space,  
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.

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This poem written by John G. Magee, Jr., a nineteen-year-old American pilot killed in December, 1941, in service with the Royal Canadian Air Force.

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F O R E W O R D



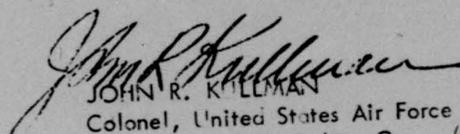
Ethan Allen Air Force Base  
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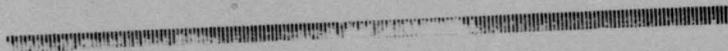
During what are perhaps the twilight days of an era and the dawn of another, it is quite proper that we pause and reflect on the illustrious accomplishments of the officers and airmen who have manned the 14th Fighter Group during its long and distinguished service.

As sponsors of the 14th Cadet Squadron, we look forward expectantly to the day when you ... future air commanders ... will join with us in the service of our Country.

Happenstance has decreed that I, as its present Commander, pass on to you, in both an official and a personal sense, this 14th Fighter Group History.

It is with great pride and honor that I do so . . .

  
JOHN R. KILLMAN  
Colonel, United States Air Force  
Commander, 14th Fighter Group (Air Defense)



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T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

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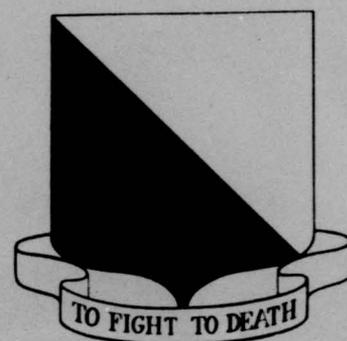
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HISTORICAL  
SYNOPSIS



tremendous odds. The record of this distinguished Group is also a versatile record, in that many types of missions were flown, including escort jobs for medium and heavy bombers, strafing and bombing attacks and patrol and reconnaissance duty. Whatever the job was, the men of the 14th Fighter Group did it in an efficient and competent manner.

The 14th Fighter Group was awarded the Unit Citation for outstanding performance of duty while escorting bombers to an important target in Austria on 2 April 1944. The Group was also honored with battle streamers for battle credits at Naples-Foggia in 1944; Algeria-French Morocco in 1945; Tunisia in 1945; Air Offensive, Europe in 1945; Southern France in 1945; Sicily in 1945; Po Valley in 1945; North Apennines in 1945; Roma-Arno in 1945; Northern France in 1945; Central Europe in 1945; and the Air Combat, European-African-Middle Eastern Theatre in 1945.

The 14th Fighter Group was inactivated at Lesina, Italy on 9 September 1945. It was again activated on 20 November 1946 at Dow Field, Maine, until 2 October 1949 when once again it was inactivated. On 18 August 1955, this organization, now designated as the 14th Fighter Group (Air Defense), was reactivated for the second time at Ethan Allen Air Force Base, Winooski, Vermont. Today it stands

ready to fulfill its air defense obligation to the Northern New England Area. The mission of air defense is best stated in these words: "To train, constantly, for the moment when, without warning, we will provide air defense for our homes, our families, our countrymen and our nation."

In fulfilling this mission, the men of the 14th Fighter Group (Air Defense) fly the supersonic Convair F-102 Delta Dagger interceptor, armed with Facon missiles.

The 14th Fighter Group is presently stationed at Ethan Allen Air Force Base in Windsor, Vermont, just 6 miles from Burlington and Lake Champlain. The strategy of its location is emphasized by its proximity to the Strategic Air Command base located at Plattsburgh, New York. The 14th Fighter Group is within 1 hour and 20 minutes commercial flight time distance from the major North Eastern cities of New York, Boston, Albany, and Montreal; and is located along possible air lanes from the Polar ice cap.

Whatever the job may be, the fighting men of the 14th Fighter Group today stand ready once again to defend the great American principles of peace, freedom, and democracy for which their predecessors so valiantly compiled an admirable record of military

achievements in the past.

TO  
FIGHT  
TO  
DEATH!

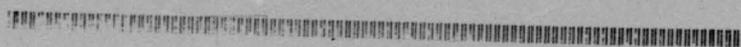
-motto of the 14th Fighter Group ✓  
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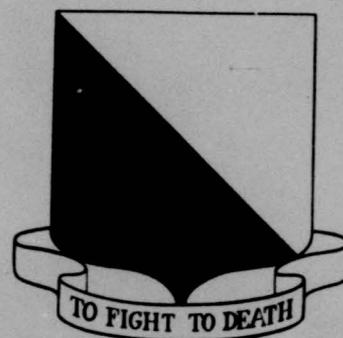
THE CONVAIR F-102A "DELTA DAGGER" INTERCEPTOR . . .

The supersonic Convair F-102A "Delta Dagger" interceptor is the present fighting ship of the 14th Fighter Group. The aircraft is powered by a powerful Pratt & Whitney J-57 jet engine and is included in the 10,000 pound thrust class. This is the world's first supersonic all-weather jet interceptor and the prime weapon of the Air Defense Command. The first F-102A was flown on 27 December 1954 and became the air defense weapon of the 14th Fighter Group's airfleet early in 1957.

The F-102A is capable of flying at altitudes in excess of 50,000 feet. Compared to the fighter plane of yesterday, the F-102A is a big aircraft—about the same size as a World War II medium bomber (wingspan: over 58 feet; length: over 68 feet; maximum height: over 41 feet). The size is necessary because of its space requirements for the massive jet engine, more than 1700 pounds of electronic eyes, muscles and brain and potent armament of guided missiles and rockets. Magnitude of this big aircraft is easily seen by comparing it with the pilot in white helmet.



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GENERAL  
HISTORY

The 14th Pursuit Group (Fighter) began its historic role in the mission of world peace when it was activated on 15 January 1941 at Hamilton Field, California, under the command of First Lieutenant Troy Keith. During the first few months following activation, the 14th Group acquired its first personnel and equipment. After a movement to March Field, California, in June of 1941, the Group embarked upon an intensive training program.

It was 7 December 1941 when 12 Officers and 102 Enlisted Men of the Group's 49th Squadron arrived at North Island, San Diego for manouvers. With news of Pearl Harbor attack, the Squadron was restricted and placed on a 24-hour alert. The 49th Squadron ships were used for patrol duty immediately.

The outbreak of the war also created extreme tension at March Field when civilians repeatedly reported enemy planes headed for the airfield. Although these reports never proved to be true, they nevertheless created an atmosphere of excitement and fear. Tension was increased when Japanese farmers located near March Field were suspected of sabotage. Exacting security measures were consequently necessitated and blackout procedures were adopted at the field.

One immediate effect of the outbreak of the war was the dispatch

of the Group's various squadrons for defensive air duty along the West Coast. The 43th Squadron went to North Island, San Diego, California; the 49th Squadron to Mills Field on the outskirts of San Francisco; and the 50th Squadron to the Municipal Airport at Oakland, California. From these stations, the squadrons, equipped with the new P-38 Lockheed Lightning aircraft, patrolled hundreds of miles of American coastline.

The scarcity of P-38's at that time resulted in many pilots not receiving the necessary training while in the United States, though this lack of training subsequently was made up in England. However, the pilots of the 14th Group became acquainted with the P-38's on their defensive patrols of the West Coast. At the beginning they regarded the plane with considerable skepticism and the death of several pilots who were learning how to handle the plane reinforced this skepticism. The technical skill of the flying men of the 14th Group quickly mastered the difficulties encountered with the aircraft and the obstacle of skepticism was precociously dispelled.

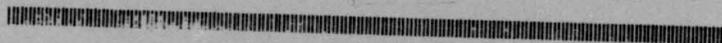
The P-38 was an excellent aircraft for ground strafing, fighter sweeps, and reconnaissance. For the greater part of World War II the P-38 was the best long-range escort fighter available. The

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#### THE P-66 AIRCRAFT

The P-66 was used by the 14th Fighter Group during the period between 1941 and 1942. The P-66 was a powerful airship, powered with a 1200 h. p. Pratt & Whitney radial engine. The plane was originally manufactured for export but because of the outbreak of the War a limited number of the aircraft were diverted to the squadrons of the 14th Fighter Group.



equipping of the 14th Group with these planes was a momentous event which foreshadowed the importance of the Group in the forthcoming campaigns which would be waged in North Africa, Italy, France, and eastern Europe.

Parol activity for the 14th Group was brought to an end in June 1942, when the air echelon returned to March Field to prepare for the movement to England. On 1 July, the air echelon left the Pacific coast, shortly thereafter arriving at Bradley Field, Connecticut. The ground echelon left Hamilton Field on 16 July; arrived at the staging area, Fort Dix, New Jersey on the 23rd; and on 4 August, boarded the USS Westpoint at Staten Island. On 18 August the ground echelon debarked at Liverpool, England. A 60-mile train trip brought the ground echelon to an airfield 4 miles outside Shrewsbury in the English midland. In the meantime, the P-38's were ferried to England by way of Greenland and Iceland. By the end of August 1942, all the air echelons and ground echelons of the 14th Group were at Atcham Field, England, where training was resumed. One P-38 had been lost enroute to Greenland. One C-47 crashed into a mountain in northern England with a loss of 10 lives. The air echelon of the 50th Squadron was assigned to duty in Iceland upon arrival which permanently severed



THE REPUBLIC "LANCER" P-43

The Republic "Lancer" P-43, another ship of the 14th Fighter Group's past airfleet, was rated as a member of the 300 m. p. h. class and was designed for efficient operation at altitudes of 20,000 feet and higher. The power unit was a 1,200 h. p. supercharged Pratt & Whitney radial engine. Armament included 30 and 50 calibre machine guns and fragmentation bombs. The P-43 was often referred to as the "Lancer."



their connection with the 14th Fighter Group.

Their sojourn in England was to be a short one. The 14th P-38's (both from the 48th and the 49th Squadrons), detached to West Hampnett and Ford Fields in southern England, engaged in a number of practice sweeps over the Channel in conjunction with British squadrons. Other training consisted of gunnery off the northwest English coast, simulated attacks on bomber formations, high altitude rendezvous, instruction by British operations and intelligence officers and practice with British radio procedure.

In the meantime, preparations for the invasion of North Africa were being made and the 14th Fighter Group was selected to take part. On 8 November 1942, the invasion was launched; and between 15 and 17 November, the air echelon arrived at Tafaraoui, near Oran, Algeria.

The Allied armies had landed successfully at Oran and Algiers along the North African coast line when the 14th Fighter Group arrived in Algeria on 15 November 1942; and preparations were being made to move swiftly into Tunisia in order to prevent Germans and Italians from seizing that strategic area. The rapid formation of Allied air power was an essential integrant in this eastward thrust; and the



THE CURTISS "WARHAWK" P-40

On 17 December 1942, eight of the Group's P-38's with twelve Curtiss "Warhawk" P-40 aircraft flew over Thelepte and then escorted nine Bostons to a railroad target at Sfax.

The P-40 was powered by a 1,050 h. p. Allison liquid-cooled engine and is reported to have been in the 300-mile class.

A limited number of these "birds" were used while the Group was in California during 1941 - 1942.



arrival of the 14th Group at Oran, Algeria, was a part of this plan. The unit remained at Oran three days, and then was sent to Maison Blanche, Algiers, located much closer to the combat area in Tunisia. On the night of their arrival, the German Air Force fighters and bombers attacked, strafing and bombing the field. Hangers were badly damaged and 18 ships were solidly hit, including 7 P-38's of the 43th Squadron. This was the Group's first enemy attack. Several casualties occurred, but were mostly British. But the next day, enough Lightnings of the 14th Group were available to accompany B-17's of the 97th Bombardment Group in a strike against the El Aouina airdrome at Tunis, where eight enemy aircraft were destroyed. No planes of the 14th Fighter Group or the 97th Bombardment Group were lost.

In the meantime, the increasing need for air units still closer to the Tunisian combat area became apparent. The Tebessa-Youks les Bains area, located next to the Tunisian frontier, was selected as the most suitable spot for the concentration of Allied airpower. Immediately upon the capture of Youks by American paratroopers airlift operations were begun to bring the necessary supplies into this area. C-47's were chosen for this mission. On 22 November, the 14th Group advanced to occupy this strategic station in the Tebessa mountains and

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on the same day the Group proceeded to fly 3 strafing missions. Bombing escort and strafing missions were flown on successive days until a 1-day respite was possible on 8 December.

From 14 December 1942 to 9 January 1943, the Group based at Youks les Bains. Missions were flown on all but 8 days when the ships were grounded by weather or muddy fields. As many as 8 missions were flown in a single day for bomber escorts, strafing or reconnaissance. From 29 November to 27 December, the 97th Squadron of the 1st Fighter Group also operated from Youks in conjunction with the 14th Fighter Group. On 14 December, eight P-38's took off at 1000 hours, rendezvoused over Thelepte with twelve P-40's, and then escorted nine Bostons (DB-7's) to Sfax, where the target was a railroad station. Other fighters took off that same day at 1430 hours to provide high cover for nine Bostons in another raid on the railroad station at Sfax. The next day four P-38's escorted three Bostons in a bombing attack on bridges between Gabes and Sfax, and twelve P-38's escorted six Bostons on a mission over Pont du Fans. That same day ten P-38's also flew over Tunis, Gabes and Bizerte on a reconnaissance flight. Close escort for Bostons was given on 16 December, when twelve P-38's were sent to Mateur and twelve to Massicault. The P-38's gave

additional support to the Bostons on 17 December when 12 were dispatched to Gabes and twelve to an airdrome near Tunis. In addition, escort missions were conducted to Gabes on 19 December and to Enfidaville on 26 December and planes were sent to Sbeitia to cover the movement of a train. Two days later, six planes went on a long-range reconnaissance mission into Tripolitania, which was followed by a similar long-range reconnaissance flight over Tripoli. However, in spite of these missions during December, the Allied advance on the ground was held back and the race for Tunis finally resulted in a victory for the enemy.

While the 14th Fighter Group was escorting bombers, flying reconnaissance missions, and making strafing attacks in an area ranging from Tripoli to Bizerte, the personnel of the Group were living under primitive conditions at Youks les Bains. Unfortunately, life at that airstrip was not easy. The severity of conditions was increased by the quality and quantity of food available. A graphic example of this is evidenced in the menu for Thanksgiving Day at Youks les Bains. It ran as follows: Breakfast - two spoons of fried corn beef and two hardtack biscuits; Lunch - canned stew, carrots, hardtack, peanut butter and a half of a pear; Supper - canned beans, hardtack, one slice of Spam, jam and

coffee. In the words of one writer, this food was "damn good food compared to what we have been getting." To increase discomfort was the fact that the vehicles and tents of the Group did not arrive on time at Youks les Bains. It became necessary for the unit to borrow tents for mess halls, hospitals and operational activities. Living quarters were made from fox holes, or "elaborate underground abodes" as they were euphemistically called, which the men dug in the side of a low wind-swept hill. These dugouts provided shelter against the high winds which howled, beat against the tents, and blew fine dust into the mess halls and hospitals.

P-40's of the 33rd Squadron also operated from Youks les Bains for a short period during December. Altogether a total of 184 missions were flown from Youks with an aggregate of 881 sorties. These missions covered an area from Tripoli in the south to Bizerte in the north. These operations were accomplished by the original fifty-four pilots of the 43th and 49th Squadrons to which were added 20 replacements towards the end of the 14th Fighter Group tenure at Youks. The Group worked alternately under British operational control and under XII Fighter Command, the latter having headquarters at Tebessa. Liaison was established with both French and English, from whom much intelligence

was forthcoming. A French liaison officer was attached to Group headquarters who assisted materially as an interpreter and in connection with the French aircraft warning system. Five enemy raids were experienced while at Youks les Bains. The first was a single JU-88 which circled the field in broad daylight, turned in and dropped a string of bombs from 1,000 feet. The intended target was a group of A-20's of the 15th Bomb Squadron which was parked adjacent to the 14th Fighter Group landing strip. No material damage was done, but one enlisted man from the 14th was killed by shrapnel. The heaviest single raid was on the night of 4 January at about 0610 hours. At least 8 JU-88's came over, having waited until the last patrol of the 14th Fighter Group had landed. The first string of bombs scored hits on a silver French monoplane, adjacent to which were a gasoline pump and ammunition boxes. The resulting fire illuminated the entire field and with their target in full view, the JU-88's circled and dropped their loads on various parts of the field as well as in a French ammunition storage depot two miles distant. During the afternoon of 4 January, General Doolittle and his crew flew to the base, the General going on to Tebessa while his co-pilot, and three enlisted men, all members of his Tokyo expedition, remained with the ship. As the

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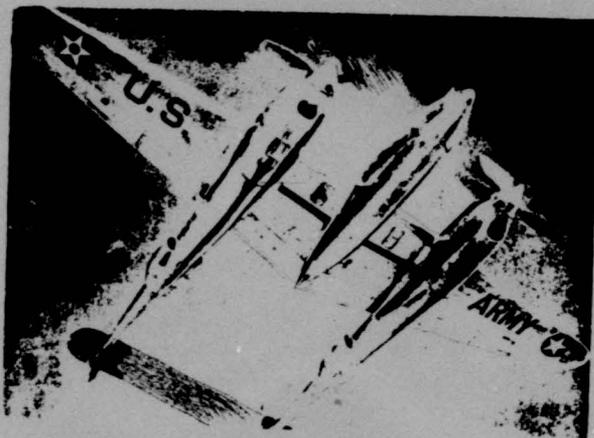
raiders came over, the co-pilot jumped into the bomber to man a machine gun as the three remaining crew members made for the nearest fox hole. A direct hit in the fox hole killed all three of the men but the co-pilot escaped injury. Aside from the three loss by a direct hit, 14 men were treated at the 14th Fighter Group field hospital for minor injury and shock.

By January 1943, the 14th Fighter Group had acquired a considerable degree of experience in fighter and escort tactics and had discovered what could and could not be done under given circumstances. The P-38, under the skilled and efficient control of the airmen of the 14th Group, proved to be an airplane of great capabilities. Compared with the P-39, the only other American fighter used in Africa during the early days of the campaign, the P-38 could dive better, strafe better, and go farther on escort missions. The P-38, compared with the Messerschmitt 109 and the Focke-Wulf 190, was faster at all altitudes and, with the use of combat flaps, out-turned both German types.

On 9 January 1943, the 14th Fighter Group left Youks les Bains for Berteaux, approximately five miles east of Telergma. Despite the two moves, operations continued as usual and missions were flown practically every day. The Group operated from the landing grounds around

Berteaux until operations were terminated on 28 January 1943. During this period 23 missions and 232 sorties were flown. The mission of the Group at Berteaux was similar to the type of activity at Youks les Bains in that the able support of the Lightning air fleet of the 14th Fighter Group was called upon to provide escorts for B-25 and B-26 aircraft and to fly separate fighter sweeps and reconnaissance missions. The recapped record of the Group for the period of 18 November 1942 to 28 January 1943 gives historic testimony to the professional skill and devotion to duty of the men of the 14th Fighter Group. During this period, 207 missions and 1,113 sorties were flown. Twenty-four pilots were declared missing in action. Sixty-two enemy aircraft were destroyed, 7 probably destroyed and 17 damaged. Unnumbered ships were destroyed on various enemy airfields, likewise many tanks, armored cars, trucks and other vehicles were destroyed or put out of commission. Not a single bomber was lost while being escorted by the 14th Fighter Group during this period.

The 28th of January 1943 witnessed the temporary cessation of the combat activities of the Group. The 82d Fighter Group, located at Telergma, received the operational ships, plus several of the pilots who had just been assigned. Simultaneously, the older pilots of the



THE LOCKHEED "LIGHTNING" P-38

The Lockheed "Lightning" P-38 was a rare type of single-place pursuit plane with twin fins and rudders. Its maximum speed of over 400 m. p. h. and its cruising range of more than 1,000 miles at 330 m. p. h. were derived from two 1,050 h. p. Allison in-line engines. The 14th Fighter Group's first combat air fleet was comprised of this aircraft. The P-38 was excellent for ground strafing, fighter sweeps and reconnaissance. For the greater part of the War, this plane was the best long-range escort fighter available.

14th Group who had fought with the unit since its arrival in North Africa were returned to the United States.

A month later, on 28 February 1943, the 14th Group moved out of the combat area and returned to Medjouina airdrome, some 18 miles southeast of Casablanca. There followed a period of rest, recuperation, and training. By 29 March, all ships, pilots, ground personnel and equipment of the 37th Squadron had arrived at Medjouina to become an integral part of the 14th Fighter Group. Pilots were received from the nearby training school at Beerschied and from the 78th Fighter Group in England, and the unit was brought up to full strength. By the end of April 1943, preparations began for movement into the combat area. On 5 May, the air echelon with 90 P-38's, 105 pilots, and other essential personnel aboard 20 transport planes arrived at Telergma, the next base of operations.

When the 14th Fighter Group returned to combat service at Telergma, Algeria, the war in Tunisia was over. On 7 May, the British captured Tunis and the Americans seized Bizerte. The next step was to conquer Italy. To achieve this objective, Pantelleria and Sicily would have to be taken. Airpower was essential in the achievement of these preliminary goals and the 14th airfleet was again called

upon.

Commencing on 6 June, the 14th Fighter Group performed dive-bombing attacks against Pantelleria. These attacks increased in intensity up to 11 June when the Pantelleria garrison surrendered without firing a shot, becoming the first large defended area to be conquered by air power. Thereafter, dive-bombing, strafing, and escort missions were flown to Sicily, Sardinia, and the Tunisian and Italian mainland from Telergma, Algeria.

On 10 July, the Group was placed temporarily under NATAF and set up for coordinated attack with ground forces on Sicily. Many shuttle missions were run each day during the invasion period - dive-bombing and strafing sorties to targets of opportunity, and, upon the landing of the ground forces, participated for a brief period in these same activities in support of the ground forces. By 14 July, the 14th Fighter Group withdrew from these close tactical support operations and returned to service with the Strategic Air Force and continued the escort missions to various strategic targets, principally on the Italian mainland - Vibo Valentia A/D, Naples RR, Ciampino airbase, Salerno Railway Yards, Aquino, etc.

On 25 July 1943, the 14th Fighter Group moved to Ste. Marie du

Zit. At Ste. Marie du Zit the Group occupied a landing strip formerly used by the Germans. After leaving Telergma, the 14th came under the direction of the 2686 (Provisional) Wing, so remaining for a period of approximately four weeks when again they came under the direction of the 5th Wing, meanwhile removed to a headquarters near Diepenne. The field at Ste. Marie was by no means comparable to that which the Group had used while stationed earlier at El Bethan in June of 1943, yet the Germans had done considerable work building revetments and otherwise converting the erstwhile wheat field into one of their strongest and most active airdromes prior to the fall of Tunis.

Two detached service commitments were accomplished from Ste. Marie, one to Gambut in the vicinity of Tobruk and the other to Sicily. While at Gambut an enemy convoy was successfully blasted in the Mediterranean. The Sicilian mission found the Group participating in its second invasion. The air echelon leaving Ste. Marie on 6 September operated with the tactical air force while they were based at Lentini (East) in Sicily.

To summarize the second period of operations at this point, the following statistics are noted: One hundred and fourteen aircraft had been destroyed, twenty-six probably destroyed and fifty-four damaged.

Many direct hits were made on dive-bomb targets, particularly at the Pantelleria and during the invasion of Sicily. Tanks, half-trucks, armored vehicles, trucks and motorcycles are difficult to estimate, though known to be in large figures. A direct hit was scored on a 250 foot merchant vessel off the coast of Sardinia which was later beached. A direct hit was also scored on Tirso dam in Sardinia when a powerhouse on the downstream face was destroyed. Thirty-one additional pilots had been assigned to the 14th Fighter Group making a total of one-hundred and thirty-six which had flown with the various squadrons since 5 May 1943. Of these, forty had been lost in action or were missing in action, three pilots killed in operational training and test flights, one at base during a mission take-off and two in an automobile accident. Thirty-nine pilots had completed their allotted combat time and several additional about to complete their time. During the period from 6 May to 5 September, 138 missions had been flown with a total of 3090 sorties. As many as seventy-two P-38's had participated in a single mission. Eight-hundred and ninety sorties were flown with 6,000 bombs.

Many transitions took place during the months of October, November and December of 1943. During this period of transitions following

the Sicilian campaign and the subsequent invasion of the mainland of southern Italy, the 14th continued to escort the 17's and 24's in their peppering of Italian targets. Cities that were later to become familiar targets for three-day passes - Rome, Foggia, Naples - were now targets for the bombers. The 14th Fighter Group's ships were engaged in patrolling convoys in the vicinity of Rhode Island. B-17's were escorted to Terni, Orvieto, Grosseto, Maribor, Torino, Civitavecchia, Bolzano, Ajaccio, Rimini, Verno, Reggio Emilia. B-24's were escorted to Saion, France; 17's to Toulon and Marseille, France and to Bastia, Corsica.

In December 1943, the Group moved to Italy to Triolo No. 7, one of the air bases of the great Foggia complex, where it was stationed for the remainder of the War.

In the period between December 1943 and the end of the War in May 1945, the 14th devoted its efforts largely to escort missions. As a part of Fifteenth Air Force, its fundamental mission was providing fighter escorts to the heavy aircraft in the strategic bombardment of targets in southern Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Poland. Its secondary mission was to provide fighter support to the Allied Armies in their advance up the Italian

mainland. In addition to this, the 14th Group also supported the invasion of southern France.

Throughout the first half of 1944, the 14th Group, now equipped with the new P-38J's, accompanied the bombers of the Fifteenth Air Force over a wide area. The P-38J's escorted heavy aircraft to distant strategic targets.

During the month of January 1944, 24 missions were flown of which 21 were high escort, mostly targets at Wiener-Neustadt, Klagenfurt (2) Sofia (2), Piraeus, Mostar, Saion airdrome and Istres le Tubes airdrome, these covering a wide range to the west, north and southeast. Po Valley targets, east and west, as well as points south to the bomb line were also hit. During January the Group destroyed 20 enemy aircraft in the air.

February was noteworthy for the 14th since during this period began the mass scale co-ordinate attacks by the 8th AF in Britain and the 15th Air Force in Italy. For the first time in history, the organization's young pilots tangled with a preponderance of twin-engined enemy fighters. Four of the five victories claimed during this 28-day period fell within this category. For the first time, too, the Group escorted great numbers of B-24's rather than B-17's with which they had been

working for well over a year. This was significant of the growth of the Fifteenth Air Force. Escorts were flown to Florence area and the Verona marshalling yard and from Steyr and Regensburg.

February had found the Group somewhat lacking in airplanes and grounded a good deal of the time due to non-flying weather, yet there was tension and a feeling of things-to-come as the Fifteenth Air Force filled the skies with its growing force.

March of 1944 was not an outstanding month for the 14th Fighter Group from the point of view of combat with the enemy, but significant trends were apparent. Most important of all was the arrival of replacement aircraft in substantial numbers. The new P-38J's meant longer range and closer support for the bombers at targets which were previously out of range. The weather started to clear up the latter part of the month, the fighters taking to the air thirteen times in the last seventeen days of the month. The most notable performance by the 14th Fighter Group was the fighter sweep of the Udine area with its concentration of enemy fighters. The final score was five victories and no losses.

The month of April was outstanding from the standpoint of victories over the enemy, a total of 55 fighters having been destroyed in combat

with 12 probably destroyed and 22 damaged.

One of the most outstanding escort missions during 1944 occurred on 2 April. The assignment was to provide escort and close cover for B-24's of the 304th Bombardment Wing in an attack against the ball-bearing plant and aircraft factory at Steyr, Austria. The P-38's took off from Triolo airdrome at 0835 hours. Rendezvous with the bombers was scheduled to be made over the target area, which was 500 miles away from the base. But, the bombers were late, and the P-38's turned south and picked up the bombers 20 miles northeast of Trieste at 1045 hours. When the bombers approached Steyr at 1205 hours, 40 twin-engine enemy fighters headed for the bombers. Flying four in a line abreast, the enemy planes began coming in and prepared to launch their rockets. Instantaneously, the 14th Group intercepted the on-rushing planes, broke up the enemy formations, and forced the planes to fire the rockets at random. Then the 14th Fighter Group engaged the planes in combat, and in a relentless attack cut the enemy flights to pieces, destroying 20, 3 probables, and 4 damaged. As the bombers began to withdraw, the 14th Fighter Group provided cover until the bombers reached a point south of Klagenfurt; then the P-38's returned to home base. No fighter plane of the 14th Fighter Group

was lost, and the bombers suffered only slight losses. The bombing attack on Steyr was successful and the ball-bearing plant was destroyed.

On the 21st of April, 11 enemy planes were destroyed and one damaged. In this battle, the 14th Fighter Group suffered the loss of only one pilot missing. With a full quota of P-38's and vastly improved weather conditions, operations reached their highest peak of activity since September 1943 during the landings at Salerno. However, the type of missions was very different and they were the most difficult ever undertaken by the 14th Group, being of long duration against fierce enemy opposition. The planes of the 14th Fighter Group ranged from Toulon in the west, to Bucharest in the east, and to Vienna in the north, meeting every type of aircraft the enemy could muster - everything from the latest model twin-engine fighters to Fiat G-50's. The intensity of combat is reflected in the final score - 55 fighters destroyed.

During May the Group continued to operate at a very intense pace, exceeding April figures by a considerable margin. Targets were principally of two types. First were the distant strategic targets such as Ploesti, Bucharest, Weiner Neustadt and Lyons. Second were those

communications targets in Northern Italy which were of direct assistance to the offensive launched by the 5th and 8th Armies. Operations differed greatly from the previous month in that the Luftwaffe was scarce and, when present, not aggressive. In spite of this, 61 enemy aircraft were destroyed by the Group with 7 probables and 38 damaged ships. From a historical point of view, May was a month of anxious waiting. The offensive in Italy was begun, finally uniting the main-front with the beach-head, but the fall of Rome was yet to come. Invasions from Britain were still the principal subject of conversation and betting, as was a new offensive on the Russian front. The only mission of unusual interest was the one to Lyons, France, when the Fifteenth Air Force penetrated 190 miles into France without meeting any opposition whatsoever. This fact was of particular significance as it seemed to indicate that at last the Luftwaffe's strength was dwindling so rapidly that it could no longer defend vigorously more than a few targets and then only spasmodically. This was heartening proof of the success of previous months of intense combat and bombing of the aircraft production centers of Germany.

Operations against the enemy were carried out with the same intensity during June as in the two previous months. All missions,

except three (to northern Italy), were to distant strategic targets, with the greatest penetrations to Guirgiu, Roumania on the east, to Sete, France on the west, and Vienna, Austria on the northeast. The longest mission was the one to Sete, France, some 610 miles from base. The three missions to northern Italy, while still of the strategic type, were in direct support of the rapidly advancing 5th and 8th Armies. Again, as in May, the Luftwaffe was conspicuous by its absence. In the entire twenty missions during June, pilots reported that none of the enemy aircraft encountered was particularly aggressive or eager for combat. Twenty-two enemy aircraft were destroyed, five probably destroyed and seventeen damaged. Antiaircraft fire at all the major targets continued to be generally moderate to intense. Nine of the pilots of the 14th Fighter Group failed to return.

The month of June brought two great events which had long been awaited by everyone: the fall of Rome together with the subsequent push north into Italy and the invasion of the Normandy coast of France. Air power contributed conspicuously to the success of the Italian Campaign, the Allies enjoying total air superiority, both strategic and tactical. The almost complete stoppage of rail traffic in Italy finally forced the Germans into full retreat along the entire

front. The failure of the Germans to whole-heartedly defend in the air more than a very few of their important oil, communications and aircraft manufacturing centers gave further proof that the Luftwaffe was unable to replace their dwindling reserves.

July operations were noteworthy from three points of view. In the first place, a record number of missions and sorties were flown, indicating a substantial growth of the Fifteenth Air Force in recent months. The attack had been carried deep into enemy territory with a consistently increasing number of bombers and fighters. The tonnage of bombs likewise reached record proportions. The accuracy of the bombers was noteworthy as were the low number of planes lost to enemy fighters. The latter can be attributed not only to the waning strength of the Luftwaffe, but also to the continued excellent support afforded by the fighters of the 306th Wing. The consistently good weather was also an important factor in the high rate of operations. A new tactic, the dropping of chaff bombs by fighters in front of the leading bomber formation just before reaching the target was inaugurated during July with the 14th Fighter Group chosen to do this most important job. Preliminary reports indicated a successful tactic had been introduced and later results were to prove this. Antiaircraft fire directed at the

lead group was unusually inaccurate and losses were low whereas previously such a formation had the highest losses to such fire while over the target. The third noteworthy operational event for the 14th Fighter Group during July was the shuttle mission to Russia. All three missions were successful.

By July 1944, the Group had rounded out two years of successful and active overseas duty. During those two years of active combat, the 14th Fighter Group had accounted for 384 enemy aircraft destroyed in the air, 91 probably destroyed and 198 damaged. Many hundreds of aircraft, tanks, trucks, locomotives were destroyed on the ground. Six hundred and forty-three missions and 13,013 sorties were flown.

Going into the first month of its third year in active combat, August found the Group participating in its fourth invasion - that of southern France. The 14th Fighter Group left its home base at Triolo, Italy, on 10 August, 1944, for Aghione airdrome, Corsica. It was attached to the 87th Fighter Wing for operations during the period of 13 - 20 August. During these eight days, the 14th Fighter Group's ships flew 63 assorted missions, totaling 460 sorties. The 14th airfleet also gave direct support to the invading 7th Army, dropping more than 92 tons of high explosive and incendiary bombs. Gun positions, bridges,

and communication targets received the brunt of this effort. The 63 missions which comprised the Group's operations consisted of patrol, dive-bombing, dive-bombing and patrol, armed reconnaissance, visual reconnaissance with passenger and strafing. Strafing results were impressive - many locomotives, railroad cars, motor cars, and various other vehicles were destroyed and damaged.

August 17th witnessed the greatest disaster involving enlisted personnel to befall the Group. The 14th's B-17, coming in for a landing from Triolo with men and rations, crashed and burst into flames on the runway at Aghione. Thirteen lives were lost.

Despite hardships, operational conditions at the forward base, take-offs and landing during the early morning darkness and landing in the evening twilight, a minimum number of aircraft were lost. Total operational losses due to all causes were 17. Eleven pilots were lost during these operations - two later returned to base. The three outstanding missions of the month might be identified as the strafing of Vaience - La Tresorerie airdrome on the 13th and the armed reconnaissance missions of the 18th and 19th when extremely valuable information was obtained regarding enemy troop movement and severe damage was inflicted through strafing. Maximum number of missions flown in a day

were 18 - these accomplished on D-Day. Minimum number of missions flown was one in which 40 aircraft were airborne to strafe Valence-La Tressorerie airdrome and Orange/Plan de dieu airdrome in France on the 13th of August. All in all, the two weeks in Corsica were exciting and the hard work produced results which the Group will always remember with great pride.

Maintaining the tempo against the enemy, the Group flew nine escort missions in ten days after returning from Corsica, a record number of missions and sorties for a month was thus established which reflects great credit upon the entire personnel of the 14th Fighter Group for the outstanding job done under severe handicaps and constant pressure.

Operations during the month of September were noteworthy for the fact that not a single enemy aircraft was seen or encountered in the air in the course of the eighteen missions flown during the month over Yugoslavia, Italy, Hungary, Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Greece. This is especially noteworthy in that many missions penetrated not only to the Vienna-Budapest area but considerably deeper into Germany and Czechoslovakia. This was the very area that the enemy had tried to defend with such determination in the past. During the month the intensity of operations was considerable reduced

over past months because of the deterioration in the weather, particularly after the equinox, no mission being flown during the last week in the month.

Assignments for the 2d and the 3d of September proved to be most interesting. On the 2d of the month, twenty-nine P-38's flying through heavy antiaircraft fire strafed the highway and railroad from Bela Palanka to Nis Cuprija, Yugoslavia. Twenty-one locomotives were destroyed and three damaged. Seventy-one motor transports were destroyed plus two damaged. Six gasoline trucks and one trailer was destroyed and two were damaged. Eighty-two freight and passenger cars were left in flames. One ME-210 was destroyed on the ground. On 3 September, 22 Lightnings dive-bombed ferry boats at the north terminus of the ferry at Smederevo, Yugoslavia. Twelve went on to strafe Kovin airdrome. Twenty-nine enemy planes were destroyed on the ground, of these twenty-one were JJ-87's and it was apparent that some of them were "bombed up" for a mission as severe explosions gave evidence. Three P-38's ran across some twenty-six camouflaged and well-dispersed aircraft on an airdrome at Bavaniste. Making four to five passes, they destroyed ten aircraft and registered another probable. These were JJ-52's for the most part. The remaining sixteen

missions were confined to escort work and "window" bombing. Targets attacked by the bombers were almost entirely of two types. First and foremost was the continued pounding of Axis oil production, refineries, and stores. Second were the numerous communications targets of direct support to the Russians advancing from the East and Marshal Tito's forces which steadily increased their pressure on the German troops in the Yugoslavia area. Antiaircraft fire was encountered on all missions. It ranged from scant to intense and accurate in most cases.

The first P-38L aircraft were received during the month. The two major changes - dive flaps and servo boost on the ailerons - were received enthusiastically by the pilots. It was now possible for the pilots of the 14th Fighter Group to stay with the enemy when he attempted to split-S to break off combat.

October afforded the Group little opportunity, the weather went from bad to worse and targets dwindled as the days passed by. Seventeen missions totaling 549 sorties were flown, the greater number to transportation hubs, oil storages, ordnance and tank factories of the large German cities of Munich, Vienna, Blechhammer and Regensburg. Two strafing attacks ripped trains and locomotives in northern Hungary

contributing to the disruption of Axis supplies. A third strafing attack on the Salonika airdrome in Greece resulted in the destruction of many enemy aircraft. For the second month the Group failed to encounter a Flying Dutchman in the air. Instead, the pilots of the 14th Fighter Group turned their efforts to enemy planes on the ground. The score was 31 destroyed, 25 damaged in addition to 8 locomotives destroyed and 10 damaged. The destruction of 7 tank cars was also accounted for including additional damage to 17 freight cars. Target area and weather were two prime factors that had to be faced during the winter. With the liberation of France and the advance of the Russians into the plains of Hungary, only a small arc remained, running from Switzerland to Vienna. Inasmuch as any flight in this section is forced to cross the Alps, it can be appreciated that weather was a very major factor bearing on the frequency of operations during the balance of the winter months ahead.

The single all-out strafing of the month - October 6th - proved quite successful. Thirty-five P-38's strafed the airdrome at Salonika/Sedes and Salonika/Megalo Mikra, Greece. Eighteen assorted enemy aircraft were destroyed on the ground including damage to nine others. One flak boat was also listed as destroyed. The 14th Fighter Group

encountered much antiaircraft and small arms fire at both the airdromes.

Another outstanding mission of October, that of the 13th, witnessed forty-two P-38's escorting bombers to Blechhammer, Germany, where they raided oil refineries. The Lightnings returned via Szombathely airdrome, Hungary, strafing enroute. When the smoke had cleared, the final tally was: five locomotives destroyed, some seven others damaged, twelve assorted aircraft destroyed, thirteen damaged, one hanger set afire, one armored tank destroyed, one oil tank car destroyed, some twenty freight cars destroyed or badly damaged. Five trains and the airdrome provided fine targets for the 14th fighters on their return trip to the base.

Despite a record rainfall in Italy, November provided the Group with approximately half again as many missions as were flown each of the two previous months and further witnessed renewed engagements with the Luftwaffe after more than sixty days had passed without an aerial encounter. Nine enemy aircraft were destroyed in the single "dog fight" of the month. Twenty-nine missions were recorded during the thirty-day period, the majority of these being escorted for the heavies attacking the Munich and Vienna area. Strafing, dive-

bombing and two new types of missions completed the part the Group played in the assault against the enemy this month. One of the new types of missions for the Group was providing escort for several photo reconnaissance missions over targets within the Munich area. The other type of mission for this outfit was high - level bombing in Yugoslavia, led by a "Droop Snoot" (or, guide P-38 bomber) of the 82d Fighter Group. Jet aircraft were encountered for the first time on the 22d of the month while providing chaff cover for the 304th Wing at the East Munich marshalling yard. The jets abandoned the encounter upon the arrival of a number of reinforcement P-38's.

On the 1st of November, thirty-one aircraft provided target cover and chaff for the 5th and 47th Wings, at the South Vienna Goods Siding and the South Vienna Ordnance Depot. Strafing on the return route, results were excellent. Nine locomotives were destroyed and nineteen tank cars including fifteen to twenty tank and passenger cars were damaged. One ship of the 14th Fighter Group failed to return to base.

One of the most lucrative missions of November developed on the 5th when thirty-six P-38's provided the chaff dispensing force for the 5th and 47th Wings at the Florisdorfer Oil Refinery, Vienna, strafing

north of the city on the return route. Four locomotives and some ten to twelve tank cars were destroyed. A number of box cars and passenger cars were also accounted for, others being left damaged. Three motor transports were destroyed and a large camp consisting of four or five storey brick barracks and fifteen large wooden barracks were severely strafed along with a power station. No enemy aircraft was encountered.

Forty P-38's and three "Droop Snoot" of the 82d with their bombardiers and bomb sights successfully conducted a high-level 1,000-pound bombing attack at Podgorica, Yugoslavia on the 7th of the month. Concentrations of hits were observed at a bridge, the railroad and highways, but the bulk of the bombs hit in the south and southeast part of the town. A similar mission of Vizegrad, Yugoslavia on the 16th resulted in no bombing due to the weather.

The only other straight strafing mission - that of the 16th - confined to roads running from Sarajevo to Vizegrad, Prijepelje to Sjenica and Novi Pazar, Yugoslavia, saw twenty-seven P-38's of the Group do an excellent job. Four motor and two ammo trucks were destroyed while several more were damaged and personnel casualties were suffered. For the most part, escort missions during November were to the Munich-

Vienna areas. Others included Dresden Sofia, Augsburg, Brux, Donaworth, Penzing, Blechhammer and the Sarajevo-Novi area.

The assignment for 26 November 1944, produced much activity plus the first re-appearance of the Luftwaife since August. Thirty-nine P-38's set out to strafe parked aircraft at Seregalyes airdrome in Hungary. Strafing at the target was not accomplished. Coming in at tree-top level over the airdrome, ten enemy aircraft were observed in a traffic pattern at 300 to 500 feet. There were six JU-87's three JU-52's, and one ME-109. The lead squadron of thirteen P-38's attacked, destroying the six JU-87's and the single ME-109. A five-passenger cabin-type plane and a FW-190 were also destroyed. Four P-38's failed to return to base, presumably due to ground fire. None were observed shot down during the encounter. Sixty to seventy planes were dispersed at the airdrome. There were three fires on the drome and a large explosion occurred during the general melee. Other strafing results: two locomotives destroyed, one electric locomotive damaged; some fifty freight cars plus six box cars and four flat cars were damaged; one motor transport destroyed and two damaged; one tank car damaged and one horse drawn vehicle damaged. Gun positions three miles east of the airdrome were also strafed. The mission was costly, yet

the results can be considered quite good - destroying the first nine "Jerries" seen in the air in two months.

Operations for the month of December were intensified despite adverse weather conditions. The marked increase in missions flown over a similar period the last year is due entirely to the use of PFF bombing methods which enable the bombardier to hit the target regardless of cloud cover. Fifty-two missions were successfully completed thus making December one of the most active months of the year. The majority of these missions were bomber-escort. Oil targets were again top priority as they had been for the past six months. Damage was again inflicted upon the enemy's entire war machine. Marshalling yards, railroad bridges, and transportation centers such as Bratislava, Hegyes Halom, Linz, Innsbruck and the Brenner Pass were attacked in direct support of the Allied Armies on the Eastern and Southern Fronts.

Possibly the outstanding mission of the month was that of the eleventh when Lieutenant Colonel Thomas B. Whitehouse, then the Deputy Group Commander, led fifty P-38's on an escort and chaff dispersal assignment for the 5th Wing to Moosebierbaum Oil Refinery. Arriving at the initial point on schedule, the fighters made futile

reconnaissance trip attempts to contact the bombers who were nowhere to be seen. Colonel Whitehouse, finding that the target which was visible in the distance had not been bombed, decided it best the Group afford chaff coverage for B-24's of the 47th Wing who were swinging into the initial point at this instant. Upon completion of bailing their "window" bombs, the chaffers broke both to the north and south of the target. Fifty-four chaff bombs had been dropped in four minutes, paving a perfect highway for the Liberators. None were lost due to antiaircraft fire. It was later noted that the 5th Wing formation began bombing thirty-seven minutes late. Enroute to base thirty-seven P-38's strafed the countryside with much fervor and good results. Eleven locomotives were destroyed; a radio station was damaged, three J1-52's were destroyed, another damaged plus four more unidentified aircraft damaged and one glider type; some eighty troop and box cars were riddled. The 14th Fighter Group occasioned no losses.

On the receiving end of the synthetic oil refinery escort assignments were such old acquaintances as Blechhammer, Regensberg, Brux, Linz, Odertal Moosbierbaum and Florisdorf.

Another noteworthy mission of the month was that of the 10th.

The assignment was to provide close escort on penetration for the 49th and 394th Wings at the Brux synthetic oil refineries. The weather was so bad that the Group flight leader was forced to take off on instrument control one half-hour earlier than the others to find a clear area to form the Group. The flight leader successfully formed the Group of thirty-six aircraft below the overcast and climbed through on instruments, breaking out on top at 29,000 feet. In the meantime, the bombers were recalled because of the inclement weather, but the escort failed to receive the message. The flights split into groups and with only three P-38's Captain Harvey Honeycutt of the 37th Fighter Squadron flew directly to the briefed rendezvous point and on towards the target hoping to intercept the heavies. Unable to locate any bombers, the escort turned back, staying at approximately 10,000 feet due to turbo trouble in one of the 38's. Near Chiem Lake, Captain Honeycutt spotted a train with his wingman and destroyed a locomotive and several box cars. Despite the difficult weather conditions which they again encountered south of Ancona and with their fuel supply almost exhausted, he led the formation under the 500 foot ceiling directly back to base. The entire trip was over 1,200

miles and required more than 6 hours.

On the seventeenth of the month, thirty Lightnings covered the 49th Bomber Wing penetration at the Odertal oil refineries. Escorting the bombers to approximately the initial point at 1148 hours some seventy to eighty enemy aircraft, mostly FW-190's, were seen sailing southeast making a 180° turn to bring them to the bombers from a 6 o'clock level. The Lightnings engaged some fifteen or sixteen of the enemy planes in an all-out skirmish, blistering the sky from 29,000 feet down to the ground. When the contrails cleared about a half-hour later, five FW-190's had been knocked for a "fare-thee-well", one probably eclipsed and four royally damaged. Two P-38's failed to return to base.

Besides the 49 escort missions there were two air-sea rescue assignments and the visual reconnaissance ordeal bringing the total up to 52 missions for the month.

Seven locomotives were destroyed on the 26th of December and another eleven on the 28th by the 14th Fighter Group - Lieutenant Colonel Hugh A. Griffith of the 48th Squadron netting six on the latter date. These successful hits occurred while the Group strafed on each occasion in returning from escort duty to Regensburg.

The month of January 1945, was an extremely dull one from an operational standpoint. The weather was unbearable. The constant rain and snow storms falling upon the Group's landing strips not only prevented the aircraft from taking-off but also rendered the field almost unserviceable. Italian Alpine troops assisted the Group's Engineers in a program of better drainage to reduce floods and excessively deep quagmires of mud. The twenty-nine missions flown were, as a whole, very uneventful. Bombing was accomplished by PPI (radar), and, with the absence of enemy opposition, weather was the Group's greatest foe. Only on six missions during the month was a sizeable force of this Group's potential used as escort to B-17's or B-24's. Of the total of 399 sorties, 243 sorties were flown in support of the heavies to six targets at Dojob, Yugoslavia, Linz, Austria, Vienna and at Moosbierbaum. One high-level bombing mission of 55 sorties was flown against the Cison railway bridge, Italy. The remaining sorties on 22 missions were flown as photo reconnaissance or supply dropping escorts. The pilots of the Group were eager to carry the War to the enemy at every possible moment as was evidenced by the destruction of sixteen locomotives and one freight car. Six locomotives and seventy freight cars were claimed as damaged. Despite the failure of the German Air

Force to contest the attacks, antiaircraft fire and training missions took their toll in pilots and aircraft. Five of the Group's pilots were missing in action and seven P-38's were classified as lost in action.

The Russian winter offensive began and shortly robbed the Fifteenth Air Force of several of its primary oil targets in the Blechhammer area. Also during the month, the Royal Air Force made an unusually successful attack against the Brux Oil Refineries. As a consequence, current targets were principally communications centers and, it would seem, attacks in the future would be concentrated on them in direct support of the various Allied fronts in Italy, Yugoslavia, Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Silesia.

In sharp contrast to January's effort against the enemy, the 14th Fighter Group's February operation record was a foreshadow of the eventual disaster that lay in wait for the enemy. In not one instance did the enemy attempt to contest the Group's escort on bomb attacks against oil and communication targets at Regensburg, Munich, Linz, Vienna, Augsburg, and Verona. Though only three regularly scheduled strafing missions were flown during the month, the 14th distinguished itself in this sphere of activity by attacking communications and rail targets generally while enroute to base after the primary mission of

escort and chaffing had been accomplished. In addition to the three regularly scheduled strafing missions on the 16th, 22d and the 28th of February, the Group executed strafing attacks on nine other occasions after their primary function had been fulfilled. Though these attacks by fighters whose principal role is escort protection to bombers may not, in any given attack, represent substantial destruction of enemy communications, their cumulative effect the enemy is unquestionable. In the short month of February, the 14th Fighter Group destroyed more than 100 locomotives, 14 freight cars, 2 passenger cars and 63 oil and gasoline tank cars. In the damaged column are no fewer than 73 locomotives, 399 freight cars, 95 passenger cars and 18 oil and gasoline tank cars.

Perhaps the most successful operations of the month was that flown on the 25th. The field order of that date assigned the Group to dive-bomb the St. Veit marshalling yards and to strafe railroad targets from Ljubljana to Villach. The 37th Squadron achieved the largest total of destruction. Final assessment placed the Group's score for the month at 12 locomotives, 2 trucks, 1 tank car and 3 passenger cars destroyed. Fifteen locomotives, 12 electric locomotives, 6 trucks, 4 tank cars, 128 freight cars and 45 passenger cars were damaged.

Despite the high success achieved by the Group during the month, losses were suffered. During this operational period six pilots were reported as missing in action, two of whom were later returned to duty.

During the month of March 1945, the cumulative effect of Allied operations for the past two years revealed itself increasingly as the enemy military situation became in fact a debacle. Allied aircraft roamed almost at will over the Reich. Heavy bombers striking inexorably at strategic targets while escorting fighters strafed lines of communications, oil storages and ammunition dumps displayed very clearly the enemy's inability to stem or even contest our military efforts. Von Runstedt's December offensive in the West seemed puny when contrasted to the situation that in the month of March made itself evident to the Nazis. A recital of the names of German cities and towns which came under the Allied control during March left little doubt as to the eventual outcome. The Fifteenth Air Force, after destroying German oil targets at Moosbierbaum and Kagran, made its deepest penetrations by striking at Ruhland oil refineries only seventy-five miles from Berlin. Only two efforts were necessary to cancel Ruhland's potential from the German oil larder thus leaving enemy oil refining capacity at a minimum. As if further evidence was necessary, the Fifteenth

Air Force struck at tank manufacturing plants in Berlin itself. From north to south, from west to east, the air investment of the Reich was a painful fact.

During March the 14th Fighter Group flew 1,146 sorties in 26 operational days. The 48 missions which comprised this total were classified as follows: 38 escort, 4 dive-bombing, 4 chaff and escort and 2 sweeps. Insofar as this Group is concerned, in not one instance did the enemy choose to contest its effort in the air. That this was true is borne out by the fact that during the month only 3 enemy aircraft were destroyed in the air.

While the 14th Fighter Group did not draw any straight strafing assignment during the month, it nevertheless did manage to accumulate an enviable record of results in this branch of warfare. Totals for the month and still they do not betray the emulative that this type of attack produces. The enemy's inability to cope with this situation by repairing the damage done to this much harrassed war effort is all too plain. During the month the Group destroyed no fewer than 168 locomotives and damaged 113. In the rolling stock category a telling blow was struck by the destruction of 113 tank cars loaded with gasoline or oil while 105 were placed in the damaged category. Other claims as

the result of strafing attacks are 196 box cars damaged and 18 passenger cars damaged.

Dwindling German opposition during April 1945, in the Mediterranean Theatre made it appear doubtful if the Italian Campaign would last throughout the month. Bombline and location of allied forward elements changed so rapidly that areas for bombing and strafing were established to prevent aerial assault on the Group's own ground units. In the latter days of the month these areas of action had also to be discontinued due to the rapid advance of the ground forces in these only remaining "hunting grounds" in Italy. Tactical instead of the usual strategical operations high-lighted the month's activities. As the Allied Armies successfully hit target after target in their drive through German-held territory, the Group turned its attention from escorting bombers to direct support of the Allied offensive in the Po Valley of northern Italy. There were only 27 operational days in April and during this time the Group flew 1,241 sorties in accomplishing 67 missions. Of these missions, 40 were escort, 15 were dive-bombing, 1 was strafing, 1 fighter sweep, 1 chaff and 9 were armed reconnaissance. The results of these missions showed further destruction to enemy communications and transportation. That only one enemy

aircraft was shot down by the Group indicated the freedom from air opposition that existed on this front. Eleven motor transports were destroyed and 13 damaged. The biggest toll was in enemy rolling stock. One hundred and eleven locomotives were destroyed, 12 damaged; 67 oil cars were destroyed and 24 damaged; 5 freight cars were destroyed and 52 damaged. One passenger car was also damaged. Before the month ended a halt was called in attacks on railroad rolling stock that was not in motion nor preparing to move. This was prompted by the fact that bridges and rail lines were so badly damaged that rolling stock movements were virtually impossible. Furthermore, any unnecessary destruction in these vital areas would be detrimental to future advances of the Allied ground forces.

The price paid for these victories consisted of one pilot killed and nine missing in action. Fifteen P-38's were lost to enemy action and 37 were damaged.

A noteworthy and historical date in the record of the 14th Fighter Group is 11 April 1945. One of the four missions sent out on that date consisted of forty planes on a strafing mission over the southern Reich. The hunt was a fruitful one, netting 84 locomotives destroyed, 4 damaged; 43 oil cars destroyed, 3 damaged; 5 freight cars destroyed,

and 30 damaged. This is probably the greatest day in destruction of locomotives for any one group in any Air Force. The loss of but three pilots missing in action and three P-38's demonstrates the high state of team work that existed in the 14th Fighter Group.

During the month of April, the world heard some very heartening news heralding the nearness of the end of the War in Europe, and received the tragic news of the death of the President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt. The death of our Commander-in-Chief came just as the Allied Forces throughout the Globe were on the verge of victorious drives toward establishing the peace which he so unselfishly labored for, working with such patience and diligence under a terrific strain which undoubtedly contributed to his untimely death. This calamity came as a personal loss to every member of the 14th Fighter Group causing a solemnness which was evident for days after the shocking announcement was received.

On the brighter side of events, the Allies tremendous might drove the cringing foe into what was left of Germany. April brought an announcement from the Commander of the XVth Army Group in Italy, declaring that German Armies in Italy were crushed. Berlin, the Capital of Hitler's would-be New World, was four-fifths occupied

by the Russians; Munich, the shrine of the Nazis, was also captured. And finally, but not least, the welcome news of Mussolini's assassination by the people he had run roughshod over for so many years was indeed happily received.

The month of May 1945 brought the great event towards which everyone in the European Theatre of Operations had been working. This was brought about by the final collapse and complete unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany. From the very beginning of the month German Commanders hastened to capitulate readily to the Allied Armies as they knifed their way through the Fatherland almost at will.

Because of the rapidly diminishing targets and uncertain ground situation which registered great hourly changes, only two missions were run by the Group and only the first of these was an offensive mission. On 1 May, forty-four P-38's provided escort to B-17's bombing Saizburg, Austria, the mission being without event except that anti-aircraft fire was noticeable by its total absence. On 4 May 1945, eight P-38's provided escort for a photo plane to the Klagenfurt-linz area in Austria, the last accredited mission on European soil for the 14th Fighter Group during World War II.

On the 7th of May, previous rumors of the final capitulation were

confirmed by the Germans and Allies together and VE-Day had arrived. The official celebration took place on the 8th of May and the Group participated in a grand air armada over Bari where all units of the Fifteenth Air Force passed in review as a final "Grand Mission." Thus ended a glorious phase in the history of the 14th Fighter Group.

After the end of the war in Europe, the 14th Fighter Group was inactivated at Lesina, Italy, on 9 September 1945. Approximately one year later, on 20 November 1946, the Group was activated at Dow Field, Maine. Subordinate units of the Group were the 37th, the 48th and the 49th Fighter Squadrons. On 2 January 1948, the 14th Fighter Group (Jet Propelled) was transferred to the Department of the Air Force per transfer Order #1, National Military Establishment, dated 26 September 1947. From this time until it was again inactivated on 2 October 1949, the 14th Fighter Group, as a part of the First Air Force, provided fighter protection for the eastern portion of the United States. The dawn of the Jet Age ushered in the acquisition of F-84B aircraft in January 1948 which facilitated the Group's capability to fulfil this mission.

However, on 2 October 1949, the Group was once again inactivated.

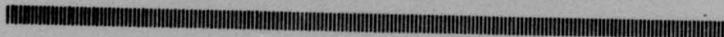
The 49th Fighter Squadron, no longer a part of the 14th Fighter Group, was reactivated again at Dow Air Force Base in November 1952 as a part of the Air Defense Command. The squadron flew the F-80 and the F-86F aircraft until a shipment of F-86D's arrived in January of 1955. In November of the same year the unit was relocated at Laurence G. Hanscom Field, Bedford, Massachusetts. In July of 1956, the squadron's air fleet was strengthened by the acquisition of the new F-86L aircraft. On 1 July 1959, this former squadron of the 14th Fighter Group was relocated, less personnel and equipment, to Griffiss Air Force Base at Rome, New York, where it acquired F-86H aircraft and the personnel of the previously designated 465th Fighter Interceptor Squadron.

Another famous and past squadron of the Group, the 48th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, was reactivated on 1 November 1952 at Grenier Air Force Base, Manchester, New Hampshire, when the former 133d Fighter Interceptor Squadron was redesignated as the 48th Fighter Interceptor Squadron. On 13 January 1953, this historic squadron departed from Grenier Air Force Base and on 14 January 1953 was relocated at Langley Air Force Base, Norfolk, Virginia, to fly the air defense mission. The 48th Fighter Interceptor Squadron is presently



#### THE F-86D NORTH AMERICAN "SABRE"

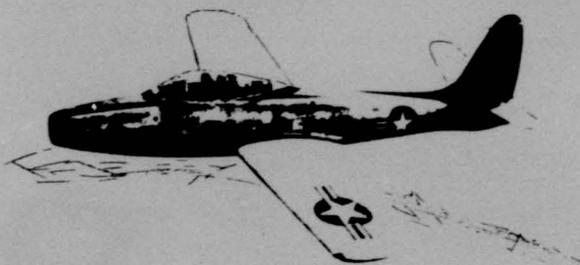
The F-86D North American "Sabre" interceptor aircraft was the first aircraft the 14th Fighter Group used after its reactivation on 18 August 1955 at Ethan Allen Air Force Base near Burlington, Vermont. This aircraft was designed to climb quickly to extreme altitudes for interception on air defense command missions. At one time this aircraft held the world's speed record of 698,505. It later flew at 715.7 m. p. h. It is usually classified within the 650 m. p. h. category. This aircraft is powered by a J47-General Electric-33 jet engine with a ceiling over 45,000 feet and a range of approximately 1,000 miles.



a part of the Washington Air Defense Sector and the Air Defense Command. Prior to August 1953, the Squadron acquired the all weather interceptor F-94C aircraft. In the historic tradition of this unit the 48th set an unprecedented air record in January, February and March of 1954 by flying 1000 hours a month with these aircraft. Today, the 48th Fighter Interceptor Squadron fulfils its defense mission with the F-102 interceptor aircraft which became the air defense weapon of the unit in April of 1957.

Rightfully, the members of the 48th and the 49th Fighter Interceptor Squadrons point with pride to the 14th Fighter Group's long and distinguished history in which their predecessors so valiantly played a vital role.

It was on 18 August 1955 when the 14th Fighter Group, now designated as the 14th Fighter Group (Air Defense), was once again reactivated at Ethan Allen Air Force Base in Vermont as a part of the Air Defense Command and the Eastern Air Defense Force. Subordinate units are the 37th<sup>th</sup> Fighter Interceptor Squadron, the 14th Air Base Squadron, the 14th Materiel Squadron, and the 14th USAF Infirmary. Today the Group stands ready to fulfil its air defense obligation to the Northern New England area. The mission of air defense is best stated



#### THE F-84 REPUBLIC "THUNDERJET"

The F-84 Republic "Thunderjet" was a low-mid-wing monoplane powered by a single turbo-jet engine mounted in a round fuselage with the air intake in the nose. The pilot's cockpit was located ahead of the wing's leading edge. Drop tanks were fitted to the wing tips. A single fin and rudder is rounded at top with a jet outlet in the tail extending slightly beyond the rudder's trailing edge. The original conception for the F-84 was a redesign of the F-47 fitted with a jet. In September 1946, a prototype XF-84 set an American speed record of 611 m. p. h. Retractable rocket mounts and jettisonable pilot's seat were two of the planes new features. The F-84 joined the fighting ranks of the 14th Fighter Group in 1947.

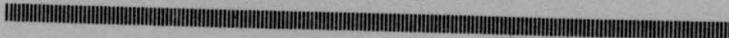


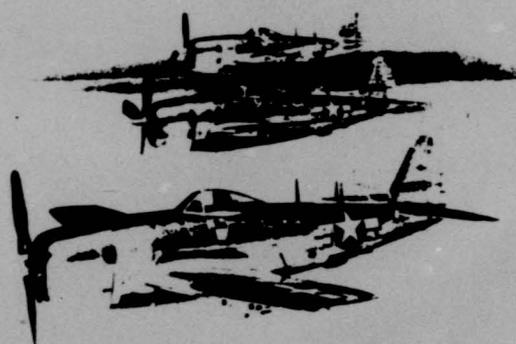
in these words: "To train, constantly, for the moment when, without warning, we will provide air defense for our homes, our families, our countrymen and our nation."

In fulfilling this mission, the men of the 14th Fighter Group (Air Defense) fly the supersonic Convair F-102 Delta Dagger interceptor, armed with Falcon missiles.

The 14th Fighter Group is presently stationed at Ethan Allen Air Force Base in Winooski, Vermont, just 6 miles from Burlington and Lake Champlain. The strategy of its location is emphasized by its proximity to the Strategic Air Command base located at Plattsburgh, New York. The 14th Fighter Group is within 1 hour and 20 minutes commercial flight time distance from the major North Eastern cities of New York, Boston, Albany, and Montreal; and is located along possible air lanes from the Polar ice cap.

Whatever the job may be, the fighting men of the 14th Fighter Group today stand ready once again to defend the great American principles of peace, freedom, and democracy for which their predecessors so valiantly compiled an admirable record of military achievements in the past.





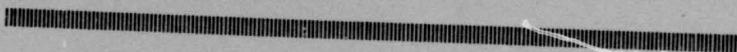
#### THE REPUBLIC "THUNDERBOLT" P-47

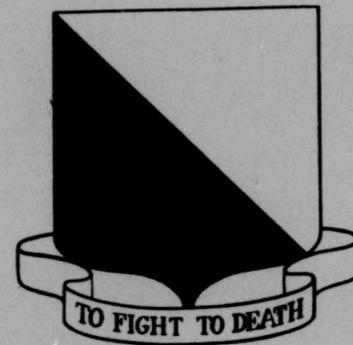
The Republic "Thunderbolt" P-47 was perhaps the fastest and most powerful single-seat fighter used at any time throughout WW II by any country. This "bird" was developed from the Republic P-43 which was, however, considerable smaller. With a loaded weight of 13,500 pounds, the Thunderbolt was one of the largest single-motor fighters ever made. Despite its weight, it was extremely maneuverable. Its maximum speed was in excess of 400 m. p. h. The plane was powered by an 18-cylinder Pratt & Whitney "Double Wasp" two-row radial engine which delivered 2,000 h. p. The high altitudes at which the machine operated made a four-blade propeller necessary. This aircraft was included in the airfleet of the 14th Fighter Group during the period 1946 - 1947.



THE T-33 LOCKHEED "SHOOTING STAR"

The T-33 Lockheed "Shooting Star" was one of the training flight vehicles used by the airmen of the 14th Fighter Group during the transition period from the F-86 aircraft to the new F-102A Delta Dagger all-weather interceptor. This aircraft is in the 600 m. p. h. and 5200 pound thrust class. It has a range of 1,000 miles and a ceiling of over 45,000 feet. In addition to the T-33, the Group also used a TF-102 aircraft to acquaint the pilots with the operating technicalities of the new aircraft.





#### APPENDIX

- Organizational Status
- Composition
- Assignments
- Station List
- Commanding Officers
- Aircraft Used
- Battle Honors
- Distinguished Unit Citation
- Bibliographical Note

## ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS

Constituted

Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, 14th Pursuit Group (Fighter). WD Ltr. AG 320.2 (10-17-40) M (RET) M-C, dated 20 November 1940.

Activated

At Hamilton Field, California, on 15 January 1941, pursuant to above cited WD Ltr., dated 20 November 1940.

Redesignated

Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, 14th Fighter Group (Twin Engine). WD Ltr. AG 320.2 (5-12-42) MR-M-AF, dated 12 May 1942.

Inactivated

At Lesina, Italy, on 9 September 1945. GO 3702, Hq., Fifteenth Air Force, 6 September 1945, pursuant to WD Ltr. AG 322 (22 Aug 45) OB-I-AFRPG-M, dated 4 September 1945.

Activated

At Dow Field, Bangor, Maine, effective 20 November 1946. GO 99, Hq., Air Defense Command, 11 December 1946, pursuant to WD

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Ltr. AG 322 (14 Nov 45) AO-I-AFCOR [366 (e)]-M, dated 20 November 1945.

Inactivated

At Dow Air Force Base, Bangor, Maine, on 2 October 1949. GO 83, Hq., First Air Force, 16 September 1949, pursuant to DAF Ltr. 322 (AFOOR 284f), 2 September 1949.

Redesignated

Headquarters, 14th Fighter Group (Air Defense). DAF Ltr, AFOMO 660j, 20 June 1955.

Activated

At Ethan Allen Air Force Base, Winooski, Vermont, on 18 August 1955. GO 24, Hq., Air Defense Command, 18 July 1955, pursuant to above-cited DAF Ltr., dated 20 June 1955.

## COMPOSITION

Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron	Jan 41 - Jul 42
Headquarters	Jul 42 - Sep 45
48th Pursuit Squadron	Jan 41 - Sep 45
49th Pursuit Squadron	Jan 41 - Sep 45
50th Pursuit Squadron	Jan 41 - Aug 42
37th Fighter Squadron	Mar 43 - Sep 45
*** **	*** **
Headquarters	20 Nov 46 - 2 Oct 49
37th Fighter Squadron	20 Nov 46 - 2 Oct 49
48th Fighter Squadron	20 Nov 46 - 2 Oct 49
49th Fighter Squadron	20 Nov 46 - 2 Oct 49
*** **	*** **
Headquarters	18 Nov 55 - PRESENT
37th Fighter Interceptor Squadron	18 Nov 55 - PRESENT
14th Air Base Squadron	18 Nov 55 - PRESENT
14th Materiel Squadron	18 Nov 55 - PRESENT
14th USAF Infirmary	18 Aug 55 - PRESENT

## ASSIGNMENTS

- Southwest Air District (redesignated Fourth Air Force on 31 March 1941); 10th Pursuit Wing: 15 January 1941
- Fourth Air Force; 9th Pursuit Wing: 1 June 1941
- Fourth Air Force; IV Bomber Command: 5 September 1941

The 14th Pursuit Group was attached to IV Interceptor Command for training and operations from 17 October 1941 to December 1941.

- Fourth Air Force; IV Interceptor Command (redesignated IV Fighter Command in May 1942): 26 January 1942
- Eighth Air Force; 6th Fighter Wing: August 1942
- Twelfth Air Force; XII Fighter Command: 14 September 1942
- Twelfth Air Force; XII Bomber Command: 11 December 1942
- Twelfth Air Force; XII Bomber Command; 7th Fighter Wing: January 1943
- Northwest African Air Forces; Northwest African Training Command: February 1943
- Northwest African Air Forces; Northwest African Strategic Air Force; 5th Bombardment Wing: May 1943
- Northwest African Air Forces; Northwest Tactical Air Force: 10

July 1943.

-Northwest African Air Forces; Northwest African Strategic Air Force; 5th Bombardment Wing: 14 July 1943

-Northwest African Air Forces; Northwest African Strategic Air Force; 2686th Medium Bombardment Wing (Provisional): 24 July 1943

-Twelfth Air Force; XII Bomber Command; 5th Bombardment Wing: September 1943

-Fifteenth Air Force; 5th Bombardment Wing: November 1943

-Fifteenth Air Force; 306th Fighter Wing: 27 March 1944

-Fifteenth Air Force; XV Fighter Command (Provisional); 305th Fighter Wing: 3 September 1944

-Fifteenth Air Force; 305th Bombardment Wing (Hv); 12 June 1945

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-Air Defense Command; First Air Force: 20 November 1946

-Air Defense Command; First Air Force; 14th Fighter Wing: 15 August 1947

-Continental Air Command; First Air Force; 14th Fighter Wing: 1 December 1948 - 2 October 1949

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-Air Defense Command; Eastern Air Defense Force; 32d Air Division;

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4711th Air Defense Wing: 18 August 1955

-Air Defense Command; Eastern Air Defense Force; 32d Air Division  
(Defense): 1 March 1956

-Air Defense Command; Eastern Air Defense Force; 32d Air Division  
(Defense); Bangor Air Defense Sector: 1 August 1958

-Air Defense Command; Eastern Air Defense Force; 26th Air Division  
(SAGE); Bangor Air Defense Sector: 15 August 1958

## STATION LIST

Hamilton Field, California	15 Jan 41 - 10 Jun 41
March Field, California	10 Jun 41 - 7 Feb 42
Hamilton Field, California	7 Feb 42 - 16 Jul 42

## En route overseas:

Air echelon: Left on 1 July 1942 for Bradley Field, Connecticut; went overseas by way of Greenland and Iceland; and arrived at Atcham, England, the latter part of August 1942.

Ground echelon: Left on 16 July 1942 for Fort Dix, New Jersey; went overseas on the USS West Point; arrived at Liverpool, England; entrained for Atcham Field, Shrewsbury, England, and reached that station on 18 August 1942.

Atcham Field, England	Aug 42 - Oct 42
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En route to North Africa

Ground echelon: Left Atcham for Liverpool on 30 October 1942; boarded the USS Brazil and the USS Uruguay; arrived at Oran, Algeria, on 10 November; went to La Senia Airport on the outskirts of Oran until 13 November, and then departed for Tafaraoui, approximately 12 miles south of La Senia.

Air echelon: Flew from England to Oran, Algeria, with the first echelon arriving at Tafaraoui on 15 November 1942 and the second echelon arriving on 16 November 1942.

Tafaraoui, Algeria	15 Nov 42 - 18 Nov 42
Maison Blanche, Algeria	18 Nov 42 - 22 Nov 42
Youks les Bains, Algeria	22 Nov 42 - 9 Jan 43
Berteaux, Algeria	9 Jan 42 - 28 Feb 43
Mediouna, French Morocco	28 Feb 43 - 5 May 43
Telegma, Algeria	5 May 43 - 3 Jun 43
El Bathan, Tunisia	3 Jun 43 - 25 Jul 43
Ste. Marie du Zit, Tunisia	25 Jul 43 - Dec 43
Triolo Landing Ground, Foggia Satellite	
No. 7, Italy	Dec 43 - Sep 45

Lesina, Italy

Sep 45 - 9 Sep 45

\*\*\* \*\*

Dow Field (redesignated Dow Air Force

Base), Maine

20 Nov 46 - 2 Oct 49

\*\*\* \*\*

Ethan Allen Air Force Base, Winooski,

Vermont

18 Aug 55 - PRESENT

## COMMANDING OFFICERS

First Lieutenant Troy Keith (Later Col)	14 Jan 41 - 18 Apr 41
Major Thayer S. Olds (Brig Gen Reg AF Ret)	18 Apr 41 - 28 Jan 43
Lieutenant Colonel Troy Keith	28 Jan 43 - 26 Sep 43
Lieutenant Colonel Oliver B. Taylor	26 Sep 43 - 18 Jul 44
(Col USAF Ret)	
Colonel Daniel S. Campbell (Maj Gen)	18 Jul 44 - 7 Mar 45
Lieutenant Colonel Thomas B. Whitehouse	7 Mar 45 - 9 Sep 45
(Col)	
*** **	
Lieutenant Colonel Clure E. Smith, Jr (Col)	21 Dec 46 - 24 Dec 46
Lieutenant Colonel Lewis W. Chick, Jr	24 Dec 46 - 7 Jan 48
(Reg AF Ret)	
Colonel Loring F. Stetson, Jr	7 Jan 48 - 2 Oct 49
*** **	
Colonel Harry L. Downing	18 Aug 55 - 19 May 56
Colonel William J. Hovde	20 May 55 - 14 Jul 58
Colonel John R. Kullman	14 Jul 53 - PRESENT

## AIRCRAFT USED

P-40; P-66; P-43; P-38,	(1941 - 1942)
P-38	(1943 - 1945)
P-47; P-84	(1946 - 1947)
P-84B	(1948 - 1949)
F-86D	(1955 - 1956)
F-102A	(1957 - PRESENT)

## BATTLE HONORS

Naples - Foggia	Ltr Hq MTO, 1944
Algeria - French Morocco	WD GO 59, 1945
Tunisia	WD GO 59, 1945
Air Offensive, Europe	WD GO 85, 1945
Southern France	WD GO 87, 1945
Sicily	WD GO 91, 1945
Po Valley	WD GO 93, 1945
North Appennines	WD GO 94, 1945
Rome - Arno	WD GO 99, 1945
Northern France	WD GO 103, 1945
Central Europe	WD GO 116, 1945
Air Combat, European - African - Middle Eastern Theatre	DA GO 29, 1948

See Bibliographical Note.

## DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION

For Action Against The Enemy In Austria, On 2 April 1944  
WD GO 65, 1944

## C I T A T I O N

The 14th Fighter Group (TE) is cited for outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy. On 2 April 1944 this group provided fighter support for a record number of 450 heavy bombers of the Fifteenth Air Force whose target was the important enemy ball bearing works at \* \* \* Austria. To defend this vital installation the enemy sent up approximately 270 fighter aircraft, realizing that the destruction of this target would greatly reduce their aircraft production as well retard their armament program. The 14th Fighter Group, while en route to the target to rendezvous with the bombers at 25,000 feet, sighted the bombers flying behind schedule and being aggressively attacked by 70 enemy fighters. Beating off this attack and continuing on through the target area this group broke up several more desperate attacks by enemy fighters, drove them off, and destroyed 20, probably destroyed 4, and damaged 4 others without loss to themselves. The protection thus afforded by the bombers was so highly effected that

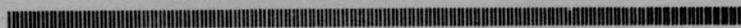
the losses of the latter were materially less than was to be expected, a loss of only 2 percent of the bombing force being attributed to the action of enemy fighters. Despite the fact that the intense action was performed at the limit of their operational range and that they engaged the enemy in combat for more than 20 minutes, the 14th Fighter Group continued to provide effective protection for the bombers during the entire withdrawal until the fuel supply of the fighters was practically exhausted. It is unquestionable that the success of this mission, including the excellent protection and cover afforded our bombers and the large number of enemy aircraft destroyed, was due to the superior combat efficiency of the pilots, together with the professional skill and devotion to duty of the ground personnel of the 14th Fighter Group.

See Bibliographical Note.

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The histories of the 14th Fighter Group constitute the principal source of the material presented in this book. Other sources include the histories of the Twelfth Air Force, Fifteenth Air Force, XV Fighter Command, Eastern Air Defense Force, 48th and 49th Fighter Interceptor Squadrons, and Air Defense Command. Documents from the offices of the Adjutant General and Air Adjutant General, together with the Unit Record card, maintained by Statistical Services, Headquarters United States Air Force, and information compiled by USAF Historical Division, Research Studies Institute, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, were also consulted.

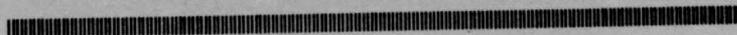
The battle honors and citations were provided by the director of Military Personnel, Headquarters, USAF, the authoritative source for this information.



T H E E N D

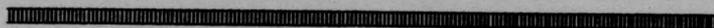
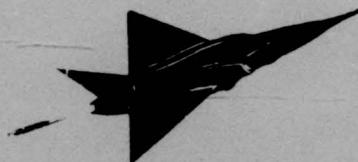
O F T H E

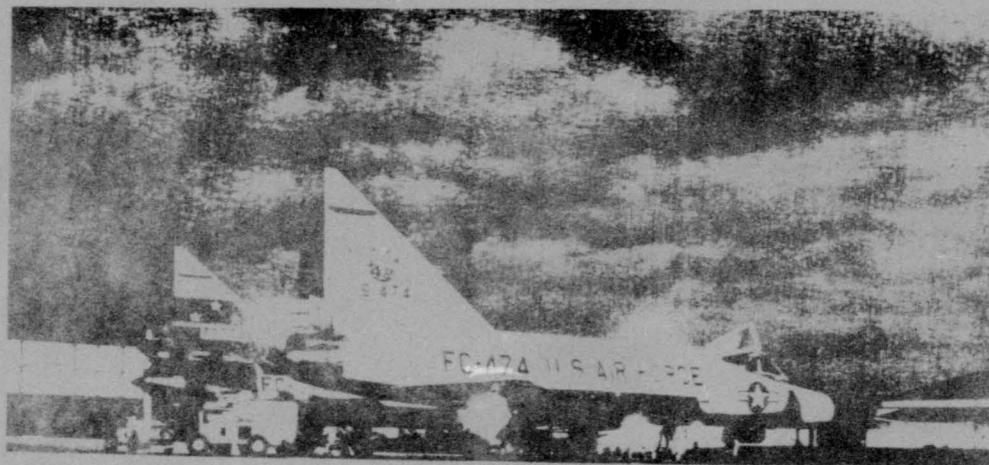
B E G I N N I N G



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Headquarters Air Defense Command  
General Order number 3,  
dated 3 January 1960,  
announced  
the inactivation of  
Headquarters 14th Fighter Group (Air Defense),  
14th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron,  
14th Materiel Squadron,  
14th United States Air Force Dispensary,  
14th Air Base Squadron,  
and the  
37th Fighter Interceptor Squadron  
effective  
1 May 1960





*... that government of the people, by the  
people, for the people shall not perish from  
the earth.*

*Abraham Lincoln*