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Dec-49

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY
19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON
316TH FIGHTER GROUP
VII FIGHTER COMMAND
SEVENTH AIR FORCE
ARMY AIR FORCES PACIFIC OCEAN AREA
A.P.O.#244

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DOD Dir. 5200.30

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APR 20 1951

Historical Division AAFPOA

6389-2-20

5-26-51

Note: [unclear] re. disp

19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
318TH FIGHTER GROUP
VII FIGHTER COMMAND
SEVENTH AIR FORCE
ARMY AIR FORCES, PACIFIC OCEAN AREAS
A.P.O. #244

P.R.C.

~~SECRET~~

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY, 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, 318TH FIGHTER GROUP, VII FIGHTER COMMAND, SEVENTH AIR FORCE.

DECEMBER 1, 1944 - DECEMBER 31, 1944

1. DATE OF ARRIVAL AT AND DEPARTURE FROM EACH STATION OCCUPIED IN THIS THEATRE - NEGATIVE.
2. LOSSES IN ACTION - NEGATIVE.
3. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS - NEGATIVE.
4. 7 ENLISTED MEN RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES ON ROTATION PLAN. 1 ENLISTED MAN RETURNED TO OAHU FOR MEDICAL REASONS. 3 OFFICERS ASSIGNED AND 1 FLIGHT OFFICER PROMOTED TO 2ND. LIEUT. AND 2 ENLISTED MEN ASSIGNED DURING THE MONTH TO THE SQUADRON.
5. STRENGTH: (PERSONNEL)

<u>1 DECEMBER</u> OFFICERS - 63 - FLT. E/M - 230	<u>31 DECEMBER</u> OFFICERS - 67 - 1 FLT. E/M - 224
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6. STRENGTH: (AIRPLANES)

<u>1 DECEMBER</u> 25 P-47D'S 11 P-38L-1-LO'S	<u>31 DECEMBER</u> 24 P-47D'S 10 P-38L-1-LO'S
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7. LOSSES: (AIRPLANES)
 - 1 P-47D LOST BY MID-AIR COLLISION.
 - 1 P-38L-1-LO TRANSFERRED TO STORAGE POOL.

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ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY, 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, IAF. (CONT'D)S E C R E T

COMBAT OPERATIONS:

DURING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER THE 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON PARTICIPATED IN FIVE ARMED RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS OVER PAGAN ISLAND, FOUR FIGHTER SWEEPS TO IWO JIMA, AND TWO ESCORT MISSIONS ALSO TO IWO JIMA, WITHOUT A LOSS OF A SINGLE AIRCRAFT.

THE PAGAN MISSIONS ARE PRIMARILY CONDUCTED TO PREVENT THE ENEMY FROM REPAIRING THE RUNWAY. IN THE PAST IT HAS BEEN FOUND THAT PRECEDING ENEMY RAIDS ON SAIPAN, THE RUNWAY OR TAXI STRIPS AT PAGAN WERE MADE OPERATIONAL. IT IS BELIEVED THAT ALTHOUGH ENEMY AIRCRAFT COULD NOT BE SUCCESSFULLY STAGED THRU PAGAN DUE TO THE LACK OF SERVICE FACILITIES THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO LAND THERE AFTER A SAIPAN RAID IF THEY WERE SHORT OF GAS OR CRIPPLED THUS SAVING PILOT AND AIRCREW PERSONNEL. THUS FAR THE RUNWAY AND TAXI STRIPS ARE STILL NON OPERATIONAL AND NO REPAIR WORK IS EVIDENT.

OF THE SIX MISSIONS TO IWO JIMA PARTICIPATED IN BY THE 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, TWO WERE IN ESCORT OF F-5 OF THE 28TH PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON, AND FOUR WERE FIGHTER SWEEPS.

ON DECEMBER 3 1944, FOUR P-38'S OF THE 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON AND TWO P-38'S OF THE 73RD SQUADRON ESCORTED TWO F-5'S ON A PHOTO RECONN. MISSION TO IWO JIMA. THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY APPROACHING THE ISLAND ON THE DECK AT 300 MPH. NO ENEMY AIRCRAFT OR ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE WAS ENCOUNTERED AND THE MISSION WAS HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL.

THE NEXT MISSION TO IWO JIMA WAS A FIGHTER SWEEP CONDUCTED ON DECEMBER 8 1944. THE PURPOSE OF THIS MISSION WAS TO CLEAR THE SKIES OF ENEMY FIGHTERS PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL OF A LARGE FORCE OF B-29'S AND B-24'S WHO WERE TO BOMB THE AIRFIELDS AND OTHER TARGETS. EIGHT P-38'S OF THE 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON AND TWENTY P-38'S OF THE 73RD AND 333RD FIGHTER SQUADRONS PARTICIPATED IN THIS RAID. THE PLAN WAS TO ALERT THE ISLAND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THAT THE ENEMY WOULD PUT THEIR FIGHTERS IN THE AIR. UPON ARRIVAL AT THE TARGET A TOTAL OF FIVE ZEKES WERE OBSERVED AIRBORNE, ONE OF WHICH WAS DESTROYED BY MAJOR ROESER, 318TH FIGHTER GROUP OPERATIONS OFFICER, AND ONE DAMAGED BY CAPTAIN TENNANT OF THE 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON. DUE TO THE FACT THAT THE TARGET WAS COMPLETELY OVERCAST IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY FIGHTERS WHO EFFECTIVELY USED THE CLOUDS TO ELUDE OUR FIGHTERS. HOWEVER THE MISSION WAS SUCCESSFUL AS THE B-29'S AND B-24'S WERE NOT SUBJECTED TO ENEMY FIGHTER ATTACKS DURING THEIR BOMBING RUNS.

THE NEXT ESCORT MISSION OF F-5'S WAS MADE ON DECEMBER 13 WITH FOUR P-38'S OF THE 19TH SQUADRON AND FOUR FROM THE 73RD SQUADRON. AGAIN THE ENEMY WAS COMPLETELY SURPRISED AND GOOD PHOTOGRAPHIC RESULTS WERE OBTAINED. APPROACH TO THE ISLAND WAS MADE ON THE DECK FROM THE EAST.

DURING THE LATTER PART OF THE MONTH THE FIRST LOW LEVEL FIGHTER SWEEPS AGAINST IWO JIMA WERE ACCOMPLISHED. THE FIRST OF THESE TOOK PLACE ON DECEMBER 19. OF THE EIGHTEEN P-38'S PARTICIPATING THE 19TH SQUADRON HAD FOUR. TWO OF OUR PLANES HAD TO RETURN TO BASE WHEN 400 MILES OUT DUE TO MECHANICAL TROUBLE.

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY, 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, -FAF. (CONT'D)S E C R E T

COMBAT OPERATIONS (CONT'D)

P-38'S APPROACHED THE TARGET IN LINE ABREAST ON THE DECK. CAPTAIN TENNANT AND LT. STAMPE (19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON) SHOT DOWN ONE ZEKE AIRBORNE OVER THE FIELD. ONE ZEKE AND ONE BETTY WERE DAMAGED ON THE GROUND. IN ADDITION TO GROUNDED AIRCRAFT FLIGHTS STRAFED GUN EMPLACEMENTS AND BUILDINGS. ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE FROM AUTOMATIC WEAPONS WAS MEAGRE AND INACCURATE.

THE NEXT FIGHTER SWEEP ON IWO JIMA CAME ON DECEMBER 24 WITH EIGHT-EEN P-38'S OF THE 318TH GROUP PARTICIPATING, SIX OF WHICH WERE FROM THE 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON. ON THIS MISSION ONE ZEKE WAS DESTROYED ON THE GROUND, TWO TWIN ENGINE AIRCRAFT DAMAGED ON THE GROUND AND FOUR SINGLE ENGINE AIRCRAFT DAMAGED ON THE GROUND. ENEMY TROOP CONCENTRATIONS AND GUN EMPLACEMENTS WERE STRAFED WITH GOOD RESULTS. MEAGRE TO MODERATE A/A FROM MACHINE GUNS AND AUTOMATIC WEAPONS WAS RECEIVED FROM ENEMY EMPLACEMENTS. ALL PLANES RETURNED SAFELY TO BASE.

THE LAST FIGHTER SWEEP DURING THE MONTH WAS RUN ON DECEMBER 27. A TOTAL OF EIGHTEEN P-38'S PARTICIPATED IN THIS MISSION OF WHICH SIX WERE FROM THE 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON. ONE NICK WAS DESTROYED IN THE AIR (CREDIT 333RD SQUADRON), ONE ZEKE DESTROYED ON THE GROUND. ONE ENEMY NAVAL TRANSPORT, APD WAS BEACHED AND DAMAGED. ENEMY PERSONNEL AND GUN EMPLACEMENTS ALSO STRAFED. THIS MISSION WAS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL MISSION ACCOMPLISHED BY THE GROUP DURING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER.

AS A RESULT OF INCREASED ENEMY AIR ACTIVITY OVER SAIPAN COMBAT AIR PATROL HAS BEEN STRENGTHENED. EAST FIELD WAS ATTACKED BY ONE ENEMY AIRCRAFT ON DECEMBER 7. A STRAFING RUN WAS MADE BY THIS PLANE RESULTING IN SLIGHT DAMAGE TO A P-38 OF ANOTHER SQUADRON. ALL OTHER ENEMY ATTACKS WERE DIRECTED AGAINST THE B-29 BASE ON THE ISLAND. A TOTAL OF 2,068 HOURS WERE FLOWN BY OUR PLANES DURING THE MONTH, 1,514 HOURS OF WHICH WERE C.A.P., 244 HOURS SORTIE TIME AND 310 HOURS TRAINING.

ON DECEMBER 5 TWO P-47D'S OF THIS SQUADRON COLLIDED IN MID-AIR AS A RESULT OF AEROBATICS. ONE PLANE CRASHED AT SEA AND THE OTHER PLANE WAS RETURNED TO BASE SUFFERING MINOR DAMAGE. THE PILOT OF THE PLANE THAT WAS LOST SUCCESSFULLY BAILED OUT AND WAS PICKED UP BY A DESTROYER A FEW MINUTES LATER.

TRAINING.

TRAINING CONTINUED THRU THE MONTH OF DECEMBER. P-47 PILOTS CONTINUED TO CHECK OUT IN P-38'S AND FLEW TRAINING MISSIONS CONSISTING OF GUNNERY AND AEROBATICS.

INTELLIGENCE TRAINING CONTINUED WITH EMPHISIS BEING PLACED ON AIRCRAFT RECOGNITION AND ENEMY TACTICS.

ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY, 19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF: (CONT'D)S E C R E T

STATION LIFE.

BASEBALL IS STILL THE MAJOR SPORT HERE AT OUR BASE WITH NUMEROUS GAMES BETWEEN SQUADRONS ON THE FIELD. EACH SQUADRON ON THE FIELD HAS AN OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MENS TEAM AND SEVERAL GAMES A WEEK ARE PLAYED. THIS SQUADRON HAS CONSTRUCTED A BALL DIAMOND AND NAMED IT 'HORNET FIELD'. THE FIELD IS USED BY ALL UNITS ON THE FIELD AND HAS PROVEN TO BE ONE OF OUR GREATEST ASSETS IN FILLING IN OUR SPARE TIME.

CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY WERE CELEBRATED BY THE SQUADRON IN TYPICAL 'NINETEENTH' FASHION. A CHRISTMAS PARTY WAS GIVEN FOR BOTH THE ENLISTED MEN AND OFFICERS WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE QUITE A GALA AFFAIR, ON A PAR WITH PREVIOUS PARTIES GIVEN BACK IN THE REAR AREAS.

MORALE.

THE MORALE OF THE UNIT IS EXCELLENT. ONE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TOWARD GOOD MORALE HAS BEEN THE P-38'S. WITH P-38'S LONGER RANGE THE SQUADRON IS AGAIN ABLE TO STRIKE AT ACTIVE ENEMY BASES. THIS IN ITSELF IS A BREAK IN THE MONOTONY OF COMBAT AIR PATROL AND THE DULL PAGAN MISSIONS. THE PILOTS AND GROUND CREWS ARE PLEASED WITH THE TWIN ENGINE AIRCRAFT, AND THE OUTFIT AGAIN FEELS THAT IT IS ACCOMPLISHING SOMETHING HERE IN THE PACIFIC.

PROMOTIONS STILL REMAIN ONE OF THE SQUADRONS BIGGEST PROBLEMS. AT THE PRESENT TIME THERE ARE NUMEROUS OFFICERS IN THE ORGANIZATION WHO HAVE NOT BEEN PROMOTED IN OVER A YEAR. MANY OF THESE MEN ARE SECOND LIEUTENANTS AND ARE LEADING FLIGHTS IN COMBAT. IT IS DIFFICULT FOR THOSE OF US IN A SQUADRON, ESPECIALLY ONE IN COMBAT, TO UNDERSTAND WHY THIS CONDITION NEED EXIST AT ALL. IT IS FELT THAT A FEW WELL PLACED PROMOTIONS WILL NOT ONLY BOOST ANY ALREADY GOOD MORALE BUT WILL BETTER COMBAT EFFICIENCY.


 JOSEPH G. TOWNSEND
 1ST. LIEUT. A.C.
 INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
A.P.O. # 244

31 DECEMBER 1944

19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION #12-5
318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION #12-

1. A. FOUR (4) P-47B'S
B. NONE
2. A. NONE
B. NONE
3. ARMED RECONNAISSANCE OF PAGAN ISLAND.
4. LT. GRAY, CAPT. LEFFORGE, LTS. BARNETT, BOHERTY (VIOLET 2)
VIOLET 2-3 WAS EQUIPPED WITH 2 LIFE RAFTS

TAKEOFF: 1607 LANDING: 1820

FLIGHT APPROACHED ISLAND ON THE WATER FROM 20 MILES OUT.
TWO RUNS WERE MADE OVER THE AIRFIELD FROM OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS.
A CIRCLE WAS THEN MADE AROUND AND OVER THE ISLAND AT MIN-
IMUM ALTITUDE. TWO PLANES STRAFED INTO A GROVE OF TREES.

THE RUNWAY IS INOPERATIONAL AND NO ATTEMPTS HAVE BEEN MADE
TO REPAIR IT. THERE IS NO SIGN OF LIFE ON THE ISLAND.

5. A. GOOD 2/10 CUMULUS FROM 3500 TO 4000 FT.
B. LOUS AND CLEAR
6. UNKNOWN
7. 650 RES. .50 GAL. - 1025 GALS. GAS
8. NONE

TENNANT

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

19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
A.P.O. #244

29 DECEMBER 1944

19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION #12-4
318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION #12-71

1. A. FOUR (4) P-47'S
B. NONE
2. A. NONE
B. NONE
3. RECONNAISSANCE OF PAGAN ISLAND.
4. LTS. ANDERSON, WEIR, MATHIS, CROCKER (VIOLET 8)

TAKEOFF: 1525 ON TARGET: 1635 LAND: 1723

WENT UP AT 8,000 FEET 30 MILES WEST OF MARIANAS CHAIN TO POINT 20 MILES DUE WEST OF PAGAN. CAME IN ON HEADING 90 DEGREES TO PAGAN.

EACH PILOT MADE FOUR RUNS OVER RUNWAY IN BOTH DIRECTIONS. RUNWAY IS INOPERATIONAL AND NO ATTEMPTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO REPAIR IT SINCE LAST RECONNAISSANCE BY THIS SQUADRON.

VIOLET 8-3 AND 8-4 WENT AROUND ISLAND TO NORTH, NO SIGN OF LIFE.

VIOLET 8-2 FIRED 800 ROUNDS INTO A GRASS HUT ON THE NORTHWEST SIDE OF THE ISLAND. AN AIR RAID SHELTER ON WEST SIDE OF RUNWAY AND INTO A STONE BUILDING ON SOUTH SIDE OF RUNWAY CLOSE TO HILL.

VIOLET 8-3 AND 8-4 FIRED 120 ROUNDS INTO AN AIR RAID SHELTER ON NORTH SIDE OF RUNWAY. THE DOORWAY SEEMED TO BE OPEN.

5.A. .9 CUMULUS OVER TARGET, BASE 1,800 FEET TOP 3,000 TO 5,000 FEET, CUMULUS CLOUDS 2,000 AT BASE TO 5,000 TO 9,000 FEET. VISIBILITY LESS THAN TEN MILES.

B. VIOLET 8-1 BAD RECEPTION AT BEGINNING WHICH CLEARED UP.

6. UNKNOWN

7. 920 ROUNDS OF .50 CAL. 945 GALLONS GASOLINE.

8. NONE.

TENNANT

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318TH FIGHTER GROUP, AAF
A.P.O. # 244

27 December 1944

318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION REPORT # 12-66 (Consolidated)
P-38 PROVISIONAL SQUADRON MISSION REPORT # 12-5

1. A. Eighteen (18) P-38L's. (Three (3) failed to reach target)
B. One (1) NICK
2. A. None
B. One (1) NICK destroyed in the air (confirmed); one (1) ZEKE destroyed on the ground; two (2) ZEKES damaged on the ground.
3. Fighter sweep on Iwo Jima.
4. Major ROESER, Lts. RESER, KENDLE, STOLZ (Violet 33)
Capt. McCOWN, Lts. SHENEMAN, SPENCER, BABCOCK (Violet 34)
Lts. RUFF, SPAULDING, PETTY, MORRIS (Violet 35)
Capt. MULLIGAN, Lts. DEYONKER, FOSTER, SULLIVAN (Violet 36)
Lt. FANCHER, F/O JAMES (Violet 37)

Takeoff: 0621 - Over Target: 1015 - Land: 1345

The five flights rendezvoused with the three navigating B-29's over East Field and proceeded to Iwo Jima at 10,000 feet.

Lt. KENDLE's (Violet 33-3) landing gear doors would not close. He pancaked at West Field, Tinian, at 0815.

Lt. SPENCER (Violet 34-3) returned from 200 miles out due to faulty generator and oscillating R.P.M. He pancaked at West Field, Tinian, at 0810.

Lt. BABCOCK (Violet 34-4) returned from 300 miles out due to right collant flaps being inoperative. He pancaked at East Field at 0945.

The remaining 15 planes continued to Iwo Jima, dropping to the deck 100 miles from the target. As they reached the target area, the following action took place:

Violet 33-1 made his run across the north end of Airfield No. 1. The first target he saw appeared to be a building or large van between the two turnarounds. A four to five second burst was fired, scoring hits on personnel and starting fires. As he pulled out of his strafing dive he saw a ship (tentatively identified as a naval transport, A P D) about one mile off the east coast, south of the boat landing. He and the remainder of his flight made three strafing runs on the vessel, hitting the bridge, superstructure and along the waterline. Violet 33-1 then circled the north part of the island and heard a bogie called in by Violet 33-4, low at 3 o'clock. Violet 33-4 made the first attack on the enemy plane which was now identified as a NICK. After Violet 33-4 broke off, Violet 33-1 got on the NICK's tail, opened fire at medium range and observed hits on the right engine and wing root. Further firing resulted in an explosion of the NICK's right auxiliary external tank. Flames from this explosion charred the left wing of Violet 33-1's plane. The NICK took violent evasive action. Violet 33-1 broke off the attack due to being out of ammunition.

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318th Fighter Group Mission Report # 12-66 (Consolidated) -- CONTINUED

4. CONT'D

Violet 33-2 picked up his first target which was a truck on the turnaround on the north end of Airfield No. 1. He strafed it, observing hits. He then strafed a gun position just off the next turnaround to the east. No fire or explosions were observed. He then joined the rest of his flight for the attack on the freighter. After this, he joined in the attack on the NICK, firing a deflection shot at the same time that Violet 33-1 made his first pass. After Violet 33-1 broke off his attack, Violet 33-2 got on the NICK's tail and opened fire from medium range. He observed hits on the left engine, which burst into flame, and also hits in the cockpit. He broke off temporarily but again got on the NICK's tail as the NICK pulled up to the left. Opening fire at close range, he observed hits on the tail and left wing. He saw a strip which was possibly an aileron, or wheel, dangling from the left wing. The NICK began a diving turn to the right as Violet 33-2 fired a final burst, which resulted in an explosion in the left wing root. The NICK flipped over, his left wing tip struck the water, and he crashed in a large explosion. The position of the crash was approximately 25 miles northwest of Iwo Jima.

Violet 33-4 made a strafing run from the west. He observed flashes coming from a gun position on the east coast just below the boat landing. He fired into this position, observing hits. He joined the balance of his flight in the attack on the ship, the bow of which was pointed approximately 45 degrees true. Violet 33-4's first pass was made 45 degrees to the bow. The second pass was made 90 degrees to the bow. He observed hits going into the side and superstructure and saw a small explosion on the superstructure. Falling off this target, he joined his flight as they proceeded to climb and head for the north part of Iwo Jima. When the flight reached 2,000 feet on a course of 270 degrees, Violet 33-4 saw a NICK 500 feet below at 3 o'clock, approximately one mile away, heading on a course of 45 degrees. He called the bogie in and started after him. He fired three long bursts but observed no hits. He then made three more passes and observed his tracers going into the fuselage, wing roots and canopy. Then, being out of ammunition, he broke off his attack and joined Violet 33-1.

Violet 34-1 strafed a truck, buildings and enemy personnel on the service apron at the southern end of Airfield No. 1. A large fire was started as a result of this attack. As he came off the island, he made three strafing runs on the ship, observing hits on the bridge and at the waterline.

Violet 34-2 strafed two trucks south of the northernmost turnaround on Airfield No. 1. He then strafed six trucks and enemy personnel on the beach just south of the boat landing on the east coast. He then joined his flight leader in attacking the ship.

Violet 35 flight had been assigned the oil drums imbedded along the beach on the west coast. The flight proceeded north of Iwo Jima, passing over Kangoku Iwa and pulling up to 2,000 feet over Hiraiwa Saki. Violet 35-1 observed a lot of small piles of sand and rocks on the beach. He fired into what appeared to be oil drums set into the sand for rifle pits. He observed direct hits at harmonized range by both 20mm and tracers, but the drums did not explode or catch fire. Heads of drums appeared to have been cut off. He swept his fire along the beach, turning off the

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318th Fighter Group Mission Report # 12-66 (Consolidated) -- CONTINUED

4. CONT'D

target over the west boat landing. Retiring out to sea and climbing, he saw a small boat the size of a seagoing tug approximately 1,000 yards off Tobiishi Bana, headed approximately 10 degrees toward shore. Violet 35 flight made seven strafing attacks from 45 degrees to dead astern of the boat, getting many hits at the waterline and on the superstructure. When the flight left his target, the boat was drifting and settling in the white foam water and among the rocks directly off the south tip of the island. They observed two men or bodies in the water.

Violet 35-2 saw the oil drums assigned as a target but was not in a position to fire on them. He observed six to eight landing type craft in the west boat landing. He observed three 40mm tracers coming from this position and therefore fired into the ships while turning off the target. Damage as a result of this strafing was unobserved.

Violet 35-3 was also out of position to hit the oil drums but observed the fire from Violet 35-1 go directly into them. Violet 35-3 fired into a wooden building north of the intersection of the roads on the west beach. He saw hits on the building. Automatic weapons fire prevented him continuing his pass south along the beach. He pulled off the target 2,000 feet south of the boat landing.

Violet 35-4 fired down a whole row of drums but saw no results from his fire. He observed tracer fire coming from a revetment and building in the vicinity of the west boat landing. He attacked this position and the firing ceased. Automatic weapons fire from north of the volcano forced him to retire out to sea 2,500 feet south of the boat landing.

Violet 36-1 thoroughly strafed an automatic weapons position that was firing at him from the beach approximately due west from the turnaround on Airfield No. 2. He then strafed 2 or 3 single-engine aircraft, which may or may not have been operational, just west of the turnaround. Continuing his pass east of the turnaround, he started a fire midway between the turnaround and the east coast. As he pulled off the island, the burning area exploded and dark smoke rose to 2,000 feet. He next observed the ship off the east coast and strafed it from stern to bow, observing hits all along the deck and bridge. When he left, the freighter was smoking from 2 or 3 different places.

Violet 36-2 saw 3 clipped-wing ZEKES parked wing tip to wing tip at the west edge of the No. 2 Airfield runway intersection. He fired into the ZEKES and the center one immediately exploded and burst into flame. Inasmuch as the 3 ZEKES were parked so close together, Violet 36-2 believes the two outside ones must have been severely damaged when the middle one exploded. Coming off the island, he observed a ship and joined three other P-38's who were strafing the ship in string formation. He observed hits along the side and bridge.

Violet 36-3 made his pass on the deck across Airfield No. 2. He saw the three ZEKES (the middle one was burning) and just as he started to strafe the other two, he received hits from automatic weapons fire which tore off a large section of his left outboard horizontal stabilizer and damaged his left vertical stabilizer and rudder. He immediately headed for Minami Rock and orbited there until joined by the B-29's.

Violet 36-4 strafed two of the landing craft near the west boat landing, observing hits on one of them. He continued across the island without picking up a specific target and was just about to join in the attack

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318TH Fighter Group Mission Report # 12-66 (Consolidated) -- CONTINUED

4. CONT'D

on the ship when he heard Violet 36-3 call in and say that he had been hit. He therefore joined Violet 36-3 and accompanied him to Minami Rock.

Violet 37-1 remained with the bombers until they came within one mile of Iwo Jima. He then saw the seagoing tug off the south tip of the island and proceeded to attack it. He made a total of seven strafing passes on the boat, observing tracers pour into it on each pass. After his last pass, he saw the boat crash into the rocks on the southeast tip of the island. The boat was smoking when he left the area.

Violet 37-2 remained with the bombers and did not attack any target.

A/A varied. Fire from the west shore was meager and inaccurate except for the automatic weapons positions just north of the south volcano, which was intense and inaccurate. Fire from the positions in the vicinity of Airfield No. 2 was moderate and accurate. Violet 36-3 was hit from these positions. Intense barrage type fire was observed coming from positions south of the east boat landing. Fire from these positions (40mm or larger) put up an intense barrage over the ship just after the pilots completed their strafing attacks.

At 1030 all planes had completed their attacks and rendezvoused with the B-29's at Minami Rock. They headed for base at 1040.

5. A. Good enroute and return with the exception of a few small fronts.
Good over target; clouds, .3 cumulus, 4000 to 5000 feet.
B. Loud and clear.

6. See Narrative.

7. 10,841 rounds .50 cal. 1,428 rounds 20mm. 10,577 gallons gas.

8. Other observations:

Violet 35-1 observed white phosphorous exploding in the air directly over the fire started by Violet 34-1 at the southern end of Airfield No. 1. Smoke from this fire and from the burning ZEKE was visible from Minami Rock.

No operational planes other than those mentioned in this report were seen, either on the runways or in the wooded dispersal area.

When planes finished strafing the naval transport A P D smoke was seen rising from three places along the deck. The B-29 navigational escort planes observed intense A/A fire emitting from this ship when it was under strafing attack by the P-38's.

A thorough reconnaissance of Minami Rock by Violet 34-1 did not disclose the presence of a radar installation.

SANDERS

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19 TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
A.F.S. # 214

25 DECEMBER 1944

19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION REPORT #12-3
318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION REPORT #12-54

1. A. 4 P-47BIS
B. NONE
2. A. NONE
B. NONE
3. RECONNAISSANCE OF RUNDAY, PAGAN ISLAND.
4. LTS. ANDERSON, RHOBY, MATHIS, LEHR (VIOLET 5)

TAKEOFF: 1424 - LANDING: 1835

VIOLET 5-1 AND 5-2, APPROACHED THE TARGET ON COURSE 260 DEGREES, FLYING OVER THE EAST SIDE OF THE VOLCANO AND POPPED DOWN ON THE RUNWAY. VIOLET 5-3 AND 5-4 WENT AROUND THE NORTH END OF THE ISLAND. THE FLIGHT SWEEP AROUND AND CAME OVER THE RUNWAY FROM THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION, THEN TURNING NORTH WENT AROUND THE ISLAND AS FAR AS THE SOUTH TIP. VIOLET 5-1 SAW ONE JAP SQUATTING ON THE ROAD WHERE IT CURVES OUT ON THE POINT OF LAND SOUTHWEST OF THE WEST END OF THE RUNWAY. HE COULD NOT GET A SHOT AT HIM. THE JAP WAS GONE WHEN HE MADE HIS NEXT RUN OVER THE AIRFIELD.

VIOLET 5-3 AND 5-4 FIRED INTO SOME TREES ON THE SOUTHWEST END OF THE ISLAND. GREY SMOKE WAS SEEN ISSUING FROM THIS POINT. STEAM WAS SEEN ISSUING FROM THE VOLCANO ON THE SOUTH END OF THE ISLAND.

PILOTS REPORT RUNWAY NON-OPERATIONAL. NO ATTEMPT MADE TO FILL IN CRATERS.

5. A. .8 CUMULUS OVER TARGET. BASE 1500 FT., TOPS 2500 FT.
B. 0000
6. UNKNOWN
7. 150 RDS. .50 CAL. M.G. - 1050 GALS. GAS
8. NONE

TERMINATE

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318TH FIGHTER GROUP, AAF
A.P.O. # 244

24 December 1944

318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION REPORT # 12-46 (Consolidated)
P-38 PROVISIONAL SQUADRON MISSION REPORT # 12-4

1. A. Eighteen (18) P-38L's. (One did not reach the target)
B. None
2. A. None
B. One (1) ZEKE destroyed on the ground; Two (2) twin-engine aircraft damaged on the ground; Four (4) single-engine aircraft damaged on the ground.
3. Fighter sweep on Iwo Jima.
4. Capt. PARK, Lts. RIVAS, ERBELE, DUPUY. (Violet 34)
Capt. McCOWN, Lts. BYERS, SNYDER, RESER. (Violet 35)
Capt. OTTENSTEIN, Lts. DUKET, KENDLE, DONAHUE. (Violet 36)
Lts. JACOBSON, DUNN, LIEBGOTT, CARDEN. (Violet 37)
Lts. WILSON, BESCHE. (Violet 38)

Takeoff: 0615 - Over Target: 1015 - Land: 1332

The five flights rendezvoused with three B-29's (navigating escort) over East Field and headed for Iwo Jima. Approximately 15 minutes after takeoff, Violet 35-4 lost coolant out of his right engine and the left turbo started to smoke. He returned to Saipan, landing at Isely Field at 0650. The remaining 17 P-38's were escorted to within 30 miles of Iwo Jima. Violet 38 remained with the B-29's and Violets 34, 35, 36, & 37 were set on course for the target area. They formed line abreast and made one strafing run across the island from northwest to southeast.

Violet 34-1 observed three aircraft near the junction of the runways on Airfield #2. One was a silver single-engine fighter (probably a TOJO) and the other two were dark, camouflaged ZEKES. Violet 34-1 hit the silver plane with a long burst, but it did not explode or catch fire. He then strafed the ZEKES, setting one of them on fire. This ZEKE was definitely destroyed. Violet 34-1 then strafed three beached ships on the east shore of the island, near the boat landing, with unobserved results.

Violet 34-2 did not pick up a target until he was almost across the island. He then observed and strafed a gun position located near the beached ships on the east shore. The results of the strafing were not observed.

Violet 34-3 strafed a ZEKE in a revetment just southeast of the #2 Airfield runway intersection. Hits were observed but no specific damage noted. Violet 34-3 then observed 3 other operational aircraft parked just south of the ZEKE's revetment. He was unable to get his nose down in time to strafe these three aircraft.

Violet 34-4 observed 5 aircraft in bunkers south of Airfield #2. He fired a long burst at the aircraft and observed hits on two of them, but they did not burn. He then observed a truck full of Japs on the

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318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION REPORT # 12-46 (Consolidated)

4. Cont'd

road just east of the runways. The Japs dismounted and scattered for cover but Violet 34-4 was pulling up at the time and could not strafe the troops. While passing over the east shore of the island, he observed and strafed a possible gun position on the beach east of the runways. He observed hits in the revetment.

Violet 35-1 found no targets other than a truck and steam roller on the south tip of Airfield #2, which he strafed. He observed one single engine aircraft in a revetment on the northeast corner of Airfield #1.

Violet 35-2 strafed a VAL in a revetment between Airfield #1 and Airfield #2, south of the intersection of No. 2 runways. No hits were observed.

Violet 35-3 strafed a silver single-engine aircraft in one of a line of revetments connecting the two airfields. 20mm hits were observed and the enemy plane was left smoking. He then strafed a truck and enemy personnel on the north tip of Airfield #1.

Violet 36-1 observed a gun position near the beach west of Airfield #2. He strafed it with unobserved results. He next observed a large, screen-type radar just southwest of the turnaround on Airfield #2. He strafed this installation without being able to determine specific damage. A gun position just to the left of the radar was firing as Violet 36-1 passed this area.

Violet 36-2 saw two twin-engine aircraft parked 100 feet apart between the ridge and the west taxiway of #2 Airfield. He strafed both planes, observing many hits on each. He also hit a Jap who was running from one plane to the other.

Violet 36-3 found himself on the deck at the west beach. He fired into unidentified beach positions. As he pulled up, he noticed a large white puff of smoke similar to drifting steam on his left. He turned and fired into the smoke. Continuing his pass, he strafed grass huts south and west of Airfield #3. Nosing over, he then strafed a concentration of running Japs (approximately 50 or 60) midway between the western end of Airfield #3 and the north turnaround of Airfield #2. Retiring southeastward, he continued to strafe across the island.

Violet 36-4 was approximately 150 feet to the left of Violet 36-3 and made an almost identical strafing run. He observed an additional concentration of troops north of those attacked by Violet 36-3. He strafed these troops and observed his fire hitting among them. Retiring southeastward, he fired at some buildings (probably concrete) 3,000 feet northeast of the East-West runway of #2 Airfield.

Violet 37-1 approached the island pulling up to 1,000 feet. He nosed over at the beach and observed numerous wrecked aircraft on and about Airfield #3. His course during the run was approximately 3209 and took him over the area formerly occupied by the industrial plant. This entire area appeared levelled. The P-38's on his right forced him to strafe north of his assigned target area. Numerous grass shacks were seen and strafed north of the turnaround. He continued his strafing run north and northeast of Airfield #2, hitting what appeared to be cement structures approximately 5,000 feet northeast of the turnaround.

Violet 37-2 fired into a large house 7,000 feet northwest of the turnaround and into the gun position south of #3 airfield. He then

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318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION REPORT # 12-46 (Consolidated)

4. Cont'd

strafed the gun position east of the radar station near #2 Airfield.

Violet 373- strafed houses southeast of #3 Airfield. He observed two fires, one approximately 2,000 feet east of #3 Airfield and the other 2,000 feet west of #3 Airfield. He retired northeast, strafing the gun position directly east of the east end of #3 Airfield.

Violet 37-4 strafed across the center of Airfield #3 and, turning left, strafed the radar station 2,500 feet north-northeast of the east end of Airfield #3. He observed his 20mm shells entering the building. Violet 37-4 retired north off the island.

Meager to moderate A/A from machine guns and automatic weapons was received from the following points:

Automatic weapons positions east of Airfield #2.

M/G position next to radar southeast of the turnaround on Airfield #2.

M/G's near three beached ships on east coast.

M/G 100 yards east of the west shore, due west of Airfield #2.

The A/A fire seemed to be accurate as to direction but inaccurate as to altitude. Violet 36-1 received a jagged tear on the right outer collant jacket cowling from a probable automatic weapon. Violet 36-2 received a small hole in the nose of his plane from a probable machine gun.

After the P-38's completed their strafing runs, they rendezvoused with the B-29's between Iwo Jima and Minami Rock and headed for base.

5. A. Good enroute and return; clouds .4 to .6. Over target, poor -- solid overcast at 700 feet and raining.
B. Loud and clear.
6. See narrative.
7. 7,140 rounds .50 cal. 976 rounds 20mm. 12,495 gallons gas.
8. The radar station just southwest of the turnaround on Airfield #2 was definitely identified. This installation does not appear on current maps or photographic interpretations.

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2,
HEADQUARTERS
318TH FIGHTER GROUP, AAF
A.F.O. # 244

19 December 1944.

CONSOLIDATED MISSION REPORT

P-38 Provisional Squadron Mission # 12-3
318th Fighter Group Mission # 12-32

1. A. Eighteen P-38L's. (Two did not reach the target).
B. One ZEKE.
2. A. None.
B. One ZEKE shot down (Confirmed); one ZEKE damaged; one BETTY damaged.
3. Low level fighter sweep on Iwo Jima.
4. Major ROESER, Lts. J.P. MORRIS, EUSTIS, F/O JAMES. (Violet 33) - (333d Sq)
Captain TENNANT, Lts. STAMPE, KENDLE, DUNN. (Violet 34) - (19th Sq)
Captain MULLIGAN, Lts DE YONKER, FANCHER, MONYELLE. (Violet 35) - (333d Sq)
Captain MC COWN, Lts. HEAGNEY, KANE, REDFIELD (Violet 36) - (73rd Sq)
Lts SMITH, M. BENNETT. (Violet 37) - (73rd Sq)

Takeoff: 0715

Over Target: 1110

Land: 1430

All five flights rendezvoused with the three B-29's (navigating escort) over East Field and proceeded to Iwo Jima at 10,000 feet. Lt Dunn (Violet 34-4) developed an air lock which prevented gas from the external and wing tip tanks from flowing properly. He was 400 miles from base at the time and was ordered to return, accompanied by Lt. Kendle (Violet 34-3).

The flights let down when 60 miles from the target in order to approach Iwo Jima on the deck. The B-29's put them on course for Iwo, but the heading brought the flights to Minami Rock instead. As soon as Minami Rock was sighted, the flights changed course and approached Iwo Jima from the west. Violet 37 remained with the B-29's as fighter escort.

The other 14 planes approached the target line abreast, on the deck. Captain Tennant (Violet 34-1) and his wing man, Lt Stampe (Violet 34-2), spotted a ZEKE flying patrol at 1,500 feet directly over the island. Both pilots pulled up as the ZEKE turned to the left. The ZEKE apparently did not observe our attack because he took no evasive action until bullets from Violet 34-1 and 34-2 started to hit his plane. Captain Tennant observed 3 20MM shells hit the ZEKE directly behind the pilot, in the vicinity of the oxygen tank. Lt Stampe observed two of his bursts hit the ZEKE. One on the engine below the cowling and one on the wing root. As Captain Tennant broke away, the ZEKE was smoking. Lt. Stampe observed the ZEKE crash northwest of Airfield # 1.

Major Roeser observed two silver ZEKES taxiing and a BETTY with its engines running on the NE-SW runway of Airfield # 2. He turned into the three aircraft and opened fire. His wing man was concentrating on strafing gun positions and did not see him turn off. He scored hits on the BETTY and on one ZEKE. The latter spun around suddenly as if in a ground loop. Neither plane was observed to explode or burn, nor was it possible to determine whether the planes stopped afterwards.

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19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, RAF
A.P.O. #244

16 DECEMBER 1944

19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION #12-2
318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION #12-23

1. A. SIX (6) P-47'S
B. NONE
2. A. NONE
B. NONE
3. ARMED RECONNAISSANCE OF THE RUNWAY AT PAGAN ISLAND.
4. LTS. LIESCOTT, BOHERTY, BUNN, ANDERSON (VIOLET 9)
LTS. BYRAM AND RUST, 'JOSEPHINE' AND ESCORT.

TAKEOFF: 1359 - LAND: 1611

THE FLIGHT APPROACHED THE ISLAND FROM THE EAST AND ON THE DECK. WHEN IN CLOSE TO THE ISLAND THEY SPLIT INTO ELEMENTS VIOLET 9 TAKING THE NORTH SIDE OF THE RUNWAY AND VIOLET 9-3 TAKING THE SOUTH SIDE. THE ELEMENTS RETIRED TO THE WEST THEN CIRCLED AND MADE A SECOND PASS FROM WEST TO EAST, ON THIS SECOND PASS THEY OBSERVED ABOUT SEVEN JAPS NEAR THE WATERS EDGE WHO SCRAMBLED INTO A NEARBY CAVE. ONE PASS BY ALL PLANES WAS MADE ON THE CAVE WITH UNDETERMINED RESULTS. THE LAST PASS WAS MADE ON THE RUNWAY FROM EAST TO WEST, THE FLIGHT REFORMED AT SEA AND CONTINUED ON THE BASE.

5. A. 6 CUMULUS AT 6,000 FEET
B. LOUD AND CLEAR
6. NONE
7. 1200 ROUNDS .50 CAL. 1475 GALLONS GASOLINE.
8. RUNWAY APPEARS INOPERATIONAL, OBSERVED WHAT APPEARED TO BE A NEW AIR-RAID SHELTER BEING CONSTRUCTED NEAR THE SERVICE APRON ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE RUNWAY. SAW A FRIENDLY DD 40 MILES SOUTH OF ALAMEGAN.

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318TH FIGHTER GROUP, AA F
A.P.O. # 244

13 December 1944

P-38 PROVISIONAL SQUADRON MISSION REPORT # 12-2
318TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION REPORT # 12-15

1. A. Eight (8) P-38L's.
B. None
2. A. None
B. None
3. Escort of One (1) F-5 on photographic mission to Iwo Jima.
4. Lts. LOFLIN, DONOHUE, SITTON, MORRIS (JP). (Violet 5) - (19th Ftr.)
Lts. WILSON, SHEPARD, AMON, STEVENS. (Violet 14) - (73rd Ftr.)

Takeoff: 0745 - Over Target: 1135 - Land: 1510

Lt. MORRIS, Violet 5-4, returned to base due to generator and hydraulic system out, pancaking at 0910. Lt. WILSON, Violet 14-1, failed to takeoff on account of right engine cutting out. (Airlock in gasline).

Flights rendezvoused at Marpi Point with 3 B-24 navigation planes and proceeded to 10,000 feet to a point 100 miles out from the target where they started letdown to the deck. Approach was made to the target from the east and approximately 15 miles out. The B-24's with one flight as escort proceeded to Minami Rock.

Violet 5-1 and 5-3 escorted photo ship over target. Run was made from SE to NW and turned south. Violet 5-2 accompanied planes in escort of B-24's. From the west beach dust observed indicating activity on the beach 4000 feet north of the volcanic cone. After planes reached south tip of the island, Airfield #1 appeared dusty. Strafing was not feasible because only two planes escorted photo ship over target. Other planes remained with B-24's at Minami Rock. One probable 40mm burst seen at north end of the island. Observed DD 350 miles south of Iwo Jima on return trip. No airborne planes at Iwo Jima.

Violet 14, plus Violet 5-2, escorted navigation planes to the rendezvous point, Minami Rock. On reaching the rendezvous they climbed to 3000 feet, and had completed only one large circle before being joined by the F-5 and its escort.

5. A. Weather very good enroute (.2-.3 cumulus). Over target, .3 cumulus from 1500 to 3000 feet.
B. Loud and clear.
6. None
7. 80 rounds .50 cal. 5 rounds 20mm. 3975 gallons gas.
8. Observed B-24 strike headed north on return trip. Volcano on Farallon de Pajaros erupting.

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

HEADQUARTERS
318TH FIGHTER GROUP, AAF
A.P.O. # 244

CONSOLIDATED MISSION REPORT

P-38 Provisional Squadron Mission # 12-1
318th Group Mission # 12-10

8 December 1944.

1. A. Twenty-eight P-38L's.
B. Five ZEKES.
2. A. None.
B. One ZEKE destroyed (confirmed) and one ZEKE damaged.
3. Fighter Sweep on Iwo Jima, prior to strike by B-29's and B-24's.
4. Capt. PARK; Lts. SULLIVAN, EUSTIS, DUKET. (Violet 1)
Capt. OTTENSTEIN; Lts. MONYELLE, ERBELE, FOSTER. (Violet 2)
Capt. TENNANT; Lts. SPAULDING, PETTY, GIBSON. (Violet 3)
Maj. ROESER; Lts. HEAGNEY, BALKUM, DUBERSCHMIDT. (Violet 4)
Lts. RUFF, GARDEN, COX, RICKARD. (Violet 5)
Lts. KANE, WALKER, HARBOUR, REDFIELD. (Violet 6)
Capt. MC COWN, BENNETT (M), SPENCER, BESCHE. (Violet 7)

Takeoff: 0628. Time Over Target: 0945. Land: 1401.

The three escorting B-29's led all seven flights to within five miles of Iwo Jima. The original plan was for Violets 1,2 and 3 to make a sweep around the west side of the island, and Violets 4,5 and 6 to make a sweep around the east side of the island. These six flights were to clear the skies of enemy fighters before the arrival of the B-29's and B-24's. Violet 7 was to remain with the three escorting B-29's, five miles south of Iwo Jima. However, a solid overcast existed over the target and the pilots could not see any part of the island.

Violet 1 saw one ZEKE break through the overcast at 7,000 feet. As soon as the ZEKE spotted the P-38's, he immediately dived through the overcast.

Violet 2 saw three ZEKES at 20,000 feet at 9 o'clock, with four P-38's chasing them from out of range.

Violet 3 called in the above three ZEKES at 10 o'clock, high. The first ZEKE dived straight down and disappeared in the clouds. Violet 3-1 peeled off and attacked the second ZEKE, who headed for the overcast in a more gentle dive. Violet 3-1 made two passes at this ZEKE from maximum range and observed hits in the back of the cockpit. These hits were also observed by Violet 3-2. This ZEKE disappeared in the clouds, trailing smoke. Violet 3-1 and 3-2 then climbed back to 16,000 feet and saw Violet 3-3 and 3-4 attacking the third ZEKE. Violet 3-1 opened fire at maximum range. Neither Violet 3-1, 3-3 or 3-4 observed any hits on this ZEKE, who also disappeared in the overcast.

Soon after leaving the escort bombers, Violet 4-2 developed engine trouble. The entire flight returned to the three escorting B-29's where they left Violet 4-2. Shortly after this, Violet 4-1 observed a ZEKE break through the overcast in a climbing turn. Violet 4-1 immediately attacked, firing a short burst from

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(Group Mission # 12-10, 8 December 1944) Continued.

from dead astern. The ZEKE exploded and burned. This action was confirmed by Violets 4-3 and 4-4. The ZEKE was OD in color with the usual roundels on wings and fuselage. The ZEKE did not have any opportunity to take any evasive action.

Violet 5 stayed at 18,000 feet and after a complete search of the area let down to 12,000 feet. Only enemy aircraft observed was the one shot down by Major Roeser (Violet 4-1).

Violet 6 and Violet 7 remained with the escorting B-29's at 18,000 feet.

All flights made a thorough search for enemy fighters other than those reported above. They remained in the target area for approximately 20 minutes. Inasmuch as Minami Rock (the rendezvous point) was completely closed in by weather, they had great difficulty in reforming. Violet 5 went down through the overcast in an attempt to locate Minami Rock, and found themselves over the east coast of Iwo Jima, near the volcanic cone. They observed bombs bursting on the island and immediately withdrew.

The flights rejoined as best they could under the circumstances, with some of them catching the formation on the course home. They pancaked at 1401K, after being airborne for 7 hours and 33 minutes.

5. A. Excellent enroute and return; scattered clouds. Bad over target; solid overcast at 7,000 feet.
B. Loud and clear.
6. None.
7. 1,540 rounds .50 caliber. 385 rounds 20 MM. 20,860 gallons gas.
8. No A/A, shipping or other observations. The B-29 escort was highly satisfactory.

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HEADQUARTERS
318TH FIGHTER GROUP, AAF
A.P.O. # 244

8 December 1944.

INDIVIDUAL PILOT NARRATIVE REPORTS
(Group Mission # 12-10, 8 Dec. 1944)

MAJOR WARREN K. ROESER (Violet 4-1)

At approximately 0945K, 8 December 1944, I arrived at IP with my flight, and prepared to start a sweep around the east side of Iwo Jima at 16,000 feet. There was a solid overcast above the entire target area, with base at 1,000 feet and top at 7-8,000 feet. Neither Iwo Jima nor Minami Rock were visible to me at any time from the above overcast.

At approximately 0950K I heard three bogies called in at nine o'clock to the B-29 escort. Turning slightly to port, I saw two flights of P-38's chasing two Zekes into the overcast. I did not see the other two reappear after diving into the cloud layer.

At 1000K my wing man, Violet 4-2, called me and said he was having trouble with his port engine, so I turned to take him back to the escort B-29's, where he was to wait for me. Just as I turned, I saw a Zeke climbing rapidly just above the overcast at nine o'clock to me about one-half mile off. I immediately turned toward him, and he evidently did not have time to take any evasive action, for I was able to get dead astern of him and fire a two-second burst from a range of not more than 200 feet. Large pieces flew from his tail section and canopy, then he exploded and spun down to the top of the overcast, trailing flames and completely disintegrated.

No more enemy aircraft were seen by my flight, and at 1140K we rejoined the B-29 escort and headed for Saipan, where we landed at 1355K.

/s/ Warren K. Roeser
/t/ WARREN K. ROESER
Major, Air Corps

1LT. EVERETT L. BALKUM (Violet 4-3)

I was flying Major Roeser's element. I observed a Zeke break through the overcast in a climbing turn to the left. Major Roeser immediately got on the Zeke's tail and closed to about 50 yards. Major Roeser opened fire and I saw the Zeke explode and burn. The Zeke was dark OD in color and had red roundels on the wings and fuselage. The Zeke took no evasive action.

/s/ Everett L. Balkum
/t/ EVERETT L. BALKUM
1st Lt., Air Corps.

A TRUE COPY:

C. L. Hoover
C. L. HOOVER,
Captain, Air Corps

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19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, AAF
A.F.O. 9244

7 DECEMBER 1944

19TH FIGHTER SQUADRON MISSION REPORT #12-11
316TH FIGHTER GROUP MISSION REPORT #12-

1. A. 6 P-47D'S
B. NONE
2. A. NONE
B. NONE
3. INTRUDER MISSION TO PAGAN ISLAND.
4. LTS. JACOBSON, ELMER, DECHARY, MARCINKO (VIOLET 3)
LTS. ANDERSON, THOMAS (GREYHOUND "JOSEPHINE")

TAKEOFF: 0630 - LAND: 0738

GREYHOUND "JOSEPHINE" LEADER DEVELOPED SERIOUS OIL LEAK AT ALMAGAN ISLAND AND WAS FORCED TO JETTISON LIFE RAFTS AND RETURN TO BASE, PARACHUTING AT 0705.

VIOLET 3 FLIGHT REACHED PAGAN ISLAND AT 0620, AND ORBITED THE TARGET FOR TWENTY MINUTES SEARCHING FOR ENEMY AIRCRAFT RETURNING FROM RAID AT SAIPAN. SEARCH NEGATIVE.

FLIGHT MADE ONE STRAFING PASS ON RUNWAY TO OBSERVE THE CONDITION OF THE RUNWAY FROM LOW ALTITUDE. RUNWAY WAS NON-OPERATIONAL.

NO A/A OR OTHER ENEMY ACTIVITY OBSERVED.

5. A. .6 TOWERING CUMULUS WITH BASE AT 1500 FT., TOPS 7000 FT.
B. LOW AND CLEAR.
6. UNDETERMINED
7. 1850 RDS. .50 GAL. M.G. - 1650 GALS. GAS.
8. NONE

WILLIAMS

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