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Dec 44  
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P.R.C.

# HISTORY

458<sup>TH</sup> FIGHTER SQDN. (SE)

506<sup>TH</sup> FIGHTER GROUP (SE)

1 DECEMBER 1944 --- 31 DECEMBER

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DOD, Div. 5200.30

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H I S T O R Y

458TH FIGHTER SQUADRON (SE)

506TH FIGHTER GROUP (SE)

1 DECEMBER 1944 - 31 DECEMBER 1944

*George J. Wilson, Jr.*  
GEORGE J. WILSON, JR.  
2nd Lt. Air Corps  
Asst Historical O.

HENRY G. KISSEL, S/Sgt  
Historical Clerk

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## H I S T O R Y

The 458th Fighter Squadron continued the program of training for combat duty during the month of December. With the receipt of III Fighter Command Regulation Number 50-100, which covers the entire program of training for all personnel in Very Long Range Fighter Groups, /1, the really intensive effort to complete the requirements began. This phase of training was the most important item to be accomplished during December.

For the month a total of 2433 hours was flown in fighter type aircraft with the average of 24 planes available, all in the P-51 type assigned to the Group for training. During the last week of the month interception and bomber escort missions were flown and for the first time pilots went on rocket firing missions. This was on the 26th of December, and in the balance of the period 358 rockets were fired. A great many of the missions during the time covered were aerial gunnery, with 65,698 rounds of caliber .50 ammunition expended and 243 practice bombs dropped.

As for ground training of Rated Personnel, so much of a start had been gained during November that the entire program was virtually completed by the 25th of this month.

With the receipt of the training directive for Enlisted Men, this form of training started and here the /1. III Ftr Command Reg #50-100, dtd 2 Dec 44.

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major difficulties were encountered in the program. In the first place, the number of men involved, over 250, greatly taxed available space and the only solution to the problem seemed to be the division of the men into two echelons and alternate classes held for each of the groups. That is exactly the way the situation was finally handled. On-the-job training and servicing and maintenance of aircraft prohibited these sessions being held during flying hours to a great extent, so night sessions had to be resorted to. Arranging for capable instructors, training films to supplement the lectures and the use of projectors was not the least of the problems encountered and solved. Of course, for maintenance reasons or due to furloughs, hospitalization, etc., 100% attendance could not be counted on and therefore it is contemplated that classes would have to be repeated during the month of January, but by the last day of December more than 90% of the training had been accomplished.

The problem of adequate supplies was the second of the major difficulties encountered. All the Sections had this problem although the major difficulty naturally was encountered in the Supply Section itself. During the month there was little or no replacement of worn clothing and shoes, and the lack of expendible material for the everyday routine of duty might have caused inadequacy of records among other things, if a

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few of the men had not foreseen such a lack and brought some material with them from their previous organizations. Small amounts of organizational equipment for overseas use was issued to the Squadron, but much of this equipment was either unsuitable for use or even unusable and had to be exchanged. Storage was another problem in this instance for even the present quarters are inadequate for efficient work. About the 19th of the month Supply began to issue each man his individual weapon so that he might get used to carrying it around with him at all times and learn to take care of it so that it was always in the best possible condition. Ordnance personnel devoted themselves for several days to aiding and assisting everyone in the initial cleaning and instruction as to just what was necessary to keep the weapon in tiptop shape. The ingenuity of the men in preparing a means of obtaining hot water proved to be a great help, /2.

With the major portion of the training program completed, there remains only the further preparation of the Squadron for overseas assignment and duty. Great strides towards that goal were made in December and the final steps should be taken during January so that when the final movement orders are issued the 458th will be ready for the quick accomplishment of their mission.

/2. Photograph by 4501st BU, #883, dtd 9 Dec 44.

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As of the last day of December the personnel of the Squadron numbered 341, of which 69 were Officers and 272 Enlisted Men. The key personnel of the 458th was as follows:

Major Harrison E. Shipman.....	Commanding
Capt Peter Nowick.....	Operations
Capt Earle F. Gray, Jr.....	Executive Officer
Capt Gordon C. Roesch.....	Intelligence
Capt Kenneth J. Wheeling.....	Flight Surgeon
Capt J. B. Baker.....	"A" Flight
Capt Francis C. Carmody.....	"B" Flight
1st Lt Goldie Marcott.....	"C" Flight
1st Lt Nolen C. Johnson.....	"D" Flight
1st Lt Frank H. Mekus.....	Asst Operations
1st Lt Edward H. Connor.....	Gunnery
1st Lt Irving Brein.....	Adjutant
1st Lt Robert K. Price.....	Ordnance
2nd Lt Clifford C. Blue.....	Squadron Supply
2nd Lt Francis N. Hines.....	Engineering
2nd Lt Miles J. Jorgensen.....	Armament
2nd Lt James H. Roman.....	Technical Supply
2nd Lt William B. Shortley.....	Personal Equipment
2nd Lt George J. Wilson, Jr.....	Asst Intelligence

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ET:l:acIII FTR COMD REGULATION)  
NUMBER 50-100 )HEADQUARTERS III FIGHTER COMMAND  
DREW FIELD, FLA, 2 DECEMBER 1944TRAINING

## VLR Fighter Group Training Guide

INDEX

- I GENERAL
- II TRAINING OF RATED OFFICERS
- III TRAINING OF NON-RATED OFFICERS
- IV TRAINING OF ENLISTED PERSONNEL

SECTION IGENERAL

1. Purpose. The purpose of this directive is to provide a general memorandum for the training of VLR fighter squadrons which are designated for service in active combat theaters.

2. Scope. This directive provides for:

- a. Individual ground and air training of all personnel.
- b. Unit ground and air training of the squadrons and group.

3. Objective. The objective of all training is the attainment of a high degree of combat efficiency under adverse conditions. The combat missions which normally will be performed by VLR fighters are listed below. All training will be directed toward the attainment of a high degree of proficiency in the timely accomplishment of these missions.

- a. Destruction of assigned ground or surface objectives with bombs, machine guns and rocket fire.
- b. Escort of friendly bombardment aircraft and their protection from hostile intercepting enemy aircraft.
- c. Interception and destruction of all hostile aircraft.

4. Indoctrination. The offensive combatant spirit of the individuals and the units must be developed to the very highest degree. This can only be accomplished with emphasis on air and ground discipline -- thus insuring prompt compliance with orders and confidence in the ability and dependability of all personnel, commissioned and enlisted. The successful operation of fighter units

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in particular depends upon mutual confidence and cooperation between all personnel, both flying and non-flying. These qualifications plus an aggressive combatant spirit will result in pushing the attack to a successful termination when hesitancy, indecision and lack of mutual confidence would prove fatal. Essentially, a belligerent spirit and a desire to kill the enemy must be imbued in all pilots and commanders.

5. General Plan of Training. This directive is predicated on the basis that the units have completed Phase I and Phase II training and are lacking only in Phases III and IV. All records will be closely scrutinized and any deficiencies uncovered in regard to basic training will be completed during Phase III. Training will progress according to the following general plan:

a. The group and squadrons will issue a complete training schedule every week so designed as to provide a definite procedure that will be strictly adhered to. This schedule will show the air and ground training for rated officers, non-rated officers and enlisted personnel. The ground training schedule will show courses scheduled, the time and place. All ground training will fall under the following categories. Training in both the categories listed will be included in the ground training schedule:

- (1) On-the-job Training. The importance of on-the-job training during which the individual actually learns his particular specialty by accomplishing the task, cannot be over-emphasized. However, this training must be carefully supervised and more thoroughly checked than formal classroom training in order that the manner of performance may be determined and in order that the individual's proficiency and knowledge of his task is continually increased.
- (2) Formal Training. Formal ground training will be conducted by classroom work, by field demonstration and by supervised practical work in the field or on the line.

6. Standards. WAF Training Standard No. 10-1, dated 16 October 1944, prescribes standards of individual proficiency and unit combat efficiency which must be attained by all personnel.

SECTION IITRAINING OF RATED OFFICERS

7. Phase III Training. a. During this period the squadrons begin to function as tactical units whose entire endeavor will be coordinated to effect timely, disciplined and effective use of a fighter aircraft in squadron tactical operations. Upon the completion of Phase III training, the organization will be capable of moving into a maneuver area and functioning tactically with other squadrons in the group. The organization will be capable of administering itself and continuing its unit training program with a minimum of supervision

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and outside assistance. While undergoing this period of training, field conditions of the theater to which the organization will ultimately be assigned will be simulated to the fullest possible extent. Theater operating conditions and combat tactics will be duplicated in every phase of operation.

b. A period of four to five weeks will normally be allocated to Phase III training.

c. Flying Training. All pilots will have completed the requirements for a 120-hour pilot (3FC Reg No. 50-50), and credit will be given for previous flying training in a CCTS or equivalent training obtained elsewhere in other organizations.

d. Ground Training. Key flying officer personnel will be thoroughly qualified in the ground aspects of their assigned duties. Their training will be closely supervised "on-the-job" training for the duty for which they have been assigned.

8. Flying Training. a. Ninety-three (93) hours of flying training will be given during Phase III in accordance with the following breakdown:

<u>Mission</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
<u>Engineering Missions</u>	5	Thorough familiarity with the location and function of all controls, instruments and operational accessories, together with the operating instructions, flying characteristics and performance of the P-51 fighter aircraft.
<u>Formation and Combat Exercises, 1500 to 25,000 Feet</u>	5	
<u>Acrobatics and Combat, Above 15,000 Feet</u>	2	To include attacks and the resulting evasive action taken by individual fighters, elements, flights, squadrons and groups.
<u>Acrobatics and Combat, 25,000 to 34,000 Feet</u>	4	Emphasis to be placed on the tactics which are likely to be employed by enemy fighters attacking VHB.
<u>Instrument Fighter</u>	10	To be accomplished either under the hood or in an overcast when the base of subject overcast is 2,000 feet or higher and visibility a minimum of three miles. Each pilot will receive an instrument check in suitable aircraft in accordance with AAF Regulation No. 50-3.

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<u>Mission</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
<u>Instrument Bi-place</u>	10	
<u>Navigation, Low Altitude - 200 to 500 Feet</u>	4	All navigation missions will be conducted with a minimum of four (4) aircraft participating and each member of the formation leading the flight at different intervals throughout the mission. Four hours total navigation time will be conducted using long range cruise control.
<u>Navigation, Medium Altitude - 1,500 to 25,000 Feet</u>	4	
<u>Navigation, High Altitude - 30,000 to 34,000 Feet</u>	4	
<u>Camera Gunnery</u>	4	
<u>Aerial Gunnery 5,000 to 15,000 Feet</u>	5	Two thousand (2000) rounds per pilot is the minimum for all aerial gunnery. The G.S.A.P. camera will be utilized on all missions involving aerial gunnery.
<u>Aerial Gunnery, 15,000 to 25,000 Feet</u>	5	
<u>Aerial Gunnery, 25,000 to 34,000 Feet</u>	5	
<u>Ground Gunnery</u>		To include strafing. Minimum one thousand (1000) rounds per pilot.
<u>Rocket</u>		Minimum twenty-four (24) rockets per pilot.
<u>Chemical Spray</u>		Minimum two (2) missions per pilot.
<u>Night Fighter (Transition)</u>	1	
<u>Night Fighter</u>	4	To be devoted to squadron and group assemblies and navigation.
<u>Night Fighter</u>	3	To be devoted to high altitude navigation. High altitude is construed to mean altitudes above 20,000 feet.
<u>Interception and Escort</u>	8	To include rapid take-offs from dispersed locations, assembly of squadrons and the group, and subsequent interception of bombardment aircraft. One flight is to be a 2,000 mile closed course non-stop flight

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<u>Mission</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
<u>Interception and Escort, cont'd.</u>		with all fighter aircraft fully combat loaded. Subject course to include:  a. Rendezvous with and escort of friendly bombardment aviation.  b. Interception by enemy fighter aircraft (simulated).  c. A minimum of four (4) intercept missions will be performed using full military power. To be used for five minutes and no longer.
Non-Directive Flying	0 - 10	
TOTAL	93 Hours	
Bombing concurrently conducted with other missions:		
<u>Dive</u>		Minimum 25 bombs per pilot.
<u>Skip and Low Level</u>		Minimum 25 bombs per pilot.
<u>Link Trainer</u>	12	All pilots will complete the basic and advanced link trainer course.

b. Ground Training.

- (1) At the completion of Phase III training all rated personnel will have satisfactorily completed the following listed subjects:

<u>Mission</u>	<u>Hours</u>
✓ Fighter Tactics and Technique (Par 3 b (2), AAF Tng Standard 10-1)	10
✓ Airdrome Defense, to include camouflage (Par 3 b (12), AAF Tng Standard 10-1)	5
✓ Use of Weapons, to include qualification with 45 caliber automatic pistol (Par 5 b, Third Air Force Reg 50-36)	10
✓ Navigation (Par 3 a (13) (a) (b) (c), AAF Tng Standard 10-1)	10

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<u>Mission</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Medical, to include Malaria Control and Review of First Aid (WD Cir. 48, dated 3 February 1944)	6
Long Range Cruise Control, to be given by graduates of ATC Cruise Control School	5
Signal Communications, to include four (4) hours instruction on IFF. Each pilot will be capable of transmitting and receiving five words per minute by blinker and six words per minute by CW.	8
Recognition	2
Practical Maintenance. All pilots will be capable of performing minor maintenance to include attaching and dropping external fuel cells, changing spark plugs and wheels, in addition to performing normal first echelon maintenance. (Par 3 b (3) (4) (5), AAF Tng Standard 10-1)	Continuous
Command and Employment of Air Power (FM 100-20)	4
Duties of Squadron Officers, Administration (FM 100-10)	6
Combat Orders (FM 101-5)	2
Cryptographic Security and Intelligence; to include escape, evasion, and behavior in event of capture. (AR 380-5)	6
Military Discipline and Functions of Command (TR 100-5)	2
Weather, to be continuous in all phases of training.	5
High Altitude Indoctrination. (Par 3 b (17), AAF Tng Standard 10-1)	6
TOTAL	89

(2) On-the-job training will continue for all rated officer personnel assigned administrative or ground duties. Close supervision by unit commanders will insure constantly increasing proficiency and knowledge with respect to the assigned duties.

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Page 79. Phase IV Training.a. Flying Training.

- (1) A minimum of twenty (20) hours squadron operation and ten (10) hours group operation will be accomplished during the maneuver phase of training. This thirty (30) hours of flying will include:
  - (a) A minimum of eight (8) escort missions.
  - (b) A minimum of five (5) scramble and intercept missions.
  - (c) A minimum of one (1) chemical spray mission.
  - (d) A minimum of six (6) high altitude missions.
  - (e) A minimum of three (3) night missions.
- (2) Combined missions will be accomplished wherever possible to prevent a realistic tactical problem. For example: A high altitude escort mission meets the requirements of one (1) mission under both paragraph 9 a (1) (a) and paragraph 9 a (1) (d) above.
- (3) The exigencies of training may require or permit accomplishment of certain training missions listed under one phase of training during a different phase. This latitude in scheduling training is authorized the Group Commander. Example: If the opportunity presents itself for combined escort missions during Phase III training, and the unit's operating schedule can accommodate such training, the Group Commander is authorized to conduct such training during Phase III and due credit will be taken for accomplishing the mission.

b. Ground Training. During this phase of training the organization will be operating under simulated combat theater conditions, maneuvering with other Air Force organizations or with Ground Force organizations. Ground training will include:

- (1) Briefing, critique, and interrogation for every mission.
- (2) Constant supervision by unit commanders of the manner of performance of assigned administrative and ground duties.
- (3) Airdrome and cantonment operation, sanitation, concealment and defense; to include a thirty-six (36) hour bivouac for all squadrons.
- (4) Continuation of military training, with emphasis on ground and air discipline.

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- (5) Continuation of the study of fighter tactics and technique as employed in the theater to which the organization will eventually be committed.
- (6) Completion of all ground training previously prescribed and not yet satisfactorily completed.

## 10. Air Training Summary, Minimum Requirements.

Mission	PHASES I & II (3FC Reg 50-50)	PHASE III	PHASE IV (Maneuvers)	TOTAL
<u>BIFLACE</u>				
1. Check	1	0	0	1
2. Instrument	3	0	0	3
<u>FIGHTER</u>				
1. <u>Engineering Missions</u>	6	5	0	11
2. <u>Formation and Combat Exercises:</u>				
a. Formation and Combat Exer., 1500' - 25,000'	3	5	0	8
b. Formation, High Altitude	6	0	0	6
c. Formation, Low Altitude	6	0	0	6
3. <u>Acrobatics and Combat</u>				
a. Acrobatics and Combat, above 15,000'	2	3	0	5
b. Acrobatics and Combat, 25,000' - 34,000'	0	5	0	5
4. <u>Instrument</u>				
a. Fighter	4	10	0	14
b. Bi-place	0	10	0	10

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<u>- Mission -</u>	PHASES I & II (3FC Reg 50-50)	PHASES III	PHASE IV (Maneuvers)	<u>- TOTAL</u>
5. <u>Navigation</u>				
a. Navigation, Low Altitude (500')	2	4	0	6
b. Navigation, 1500' - 25,000'	4	4	0	8
c. Navigation, 30,000' - 34,000'	0	5	Min 6 Missions	5
6. <u>Camera Gunnery</u>	16	5	0	21
7. <u>Aerial Gunnery</u>				
a. Aerial Gunnery, 5000' - 15,000'	13	5	0	18
b. Aerial Gunnery, 15,000' - 25,000'	4	5	0	9
c. Aerial Gunnery, 25,000' - 34,000'	0	5	0	5
8. a. Ground Gunnery and Strafing	6	Min. 1000 rounds		6
b. Rockets	0	24 rockets per pilot		0
9. <u>Chemical Spray</u>	2 Missions	2 Missions	Min 1 Mission	
10. <u>Night Fighter</u>	4	8	Min 3 Missions	12
11. <u>Interception and Escort</u>	3	9	Min 8 Missions	12
12. <u>Scramble and Intercept</u>	0	0	Min 3 Missions	
13. <u>Bombing</u>				
a. Dive	14 Bombs	25 Bombs	0	39 Bombs
b. Low level	10 Bombs	25 Bombs	0	35 Bombs
14. <u>Squadron Operation</u>	0	0	20	20
15. <u>Group Operation</u>	0	0	10	10
TOTAL	83	87	30	200

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11. Physical Training. All rated officer personnel will participate in a minimum of six (6) hours per week vigorous physical exercise.

SECTION IIITRAINING OF NON-RATED OFFICERS

12. Phase III Training. Formal ground school training in classroom or in the field will be conducted twelve (12) hours per week until all courses are completed. The following topics will be covered:

<u>Mission</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Duties of Squadron Officers, Administration	6
Military Discipline and Functions of Command	2
Medical Training, to include Malaria Control and First Aid	12
Chemical Warfare Training	15
Use of Weapons (Time Estimated) 50 percent of all personnel will be qualified with the weapon with which armed, all personnel must have fired a familiarization course. (Par 5 b, Third Air Force Reg 50-36)	20
Combat Intelligence	7
Signal Communications	8
Cryptographic Security	1
Command and Employment of Air Power	4
Infantry Drill	4
Woodsmanship	2
Seamanship	1
Camouflage	4
Recognition	2

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<u>Mission</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Destruction of Supplies and Equipment	2
Tent Pitching, Slit Trenching, Camp Construction	7
	<hr/>
TOTAL	97 Hours

13. Phase IV Training. During this phase of training, the organization will be operating under field conditions. Ground training will include:

- a. Constant supervision by unit commanders on the manner of performance of assigned administrative, technical and other ground duties.
- b. Airdrome and cantonment operation, sanitation, concealment and defense.
- c. Continuation of military training with emphasis on ground discipline.
- d. Completion of all ground work previously prescribed and not yet satisfactorily completed.

14. Physical Training. Non-rated officers will participate in a minimum of six (6) hours vigorous physical exercise per week.

SECTION IV-TRAINING OF ENLISTED PERSONNEL

15. Phase III Training.

- a. On-the-job training will be stressed with particular attention being paid to the elimination of all deficiencies and weaknesses.
- b. Scheduled training in squadron sections on specialized work will be a minimum of two (2) hours per day six (6) days per week until all personnel are fully qualified.
- c. Formal ground training for all enlisted personnel will include the following courses:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Chemical Warfare	15
Combat Intelligence	3

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<u>Subject</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Recognition	3
Destruction of Supplies and Equipment	2
Map and Aerial Photograph Reading (Motor Vehicle)	2
Woodsmanship and Seamanship	2
Use of Weapons (Time Estimated) 50 percent of all personnel will be qualified with the weapon with which armed, all personnel must have fired a familiarization course. (Par 5 b, Third Air Force Reg 50-36)	10
Camouflage	4
Tent Pitching, Slit Trenching and Camp Construction	5
Signal Communications	2
Medical Training, to include Malaria Control and First Aid	12
Safeguarding Military Information	2
Interior Guard Duty	3
TOTAL	65 Hours

16. Phase IV Training. With the organization operating under field conditions ground training will include:

- a. Continuous supervision by unit commanders to insure that the highest degree of proficiency is attained in the performance of assigned administrative, technical and other ground duties.
- b. Airdrome and cantonment operation, sanitation, concealment and defense.
- c. Continuation of military training with emphasis on ground discipline.
- d. Completion of all ground work previously prescribed and not yet satisfactorily completed.

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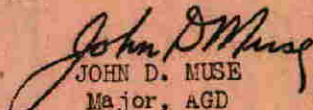
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17. Physical Training. All enlisted personnel will participate in a minimum of three (3) hours vigorous physical exercise per week. Clerical and non-manual workers will participate in a minimum of six (6) hours per week physical exercise.

By command of Brigadier General BLACKBURN:

E. P. GAINES  
Colonel, G. S. C.  
Chief of Staff

OFFICIAL:

  
JOHN D. MUSE  
Major, AGD  
Adj Gen

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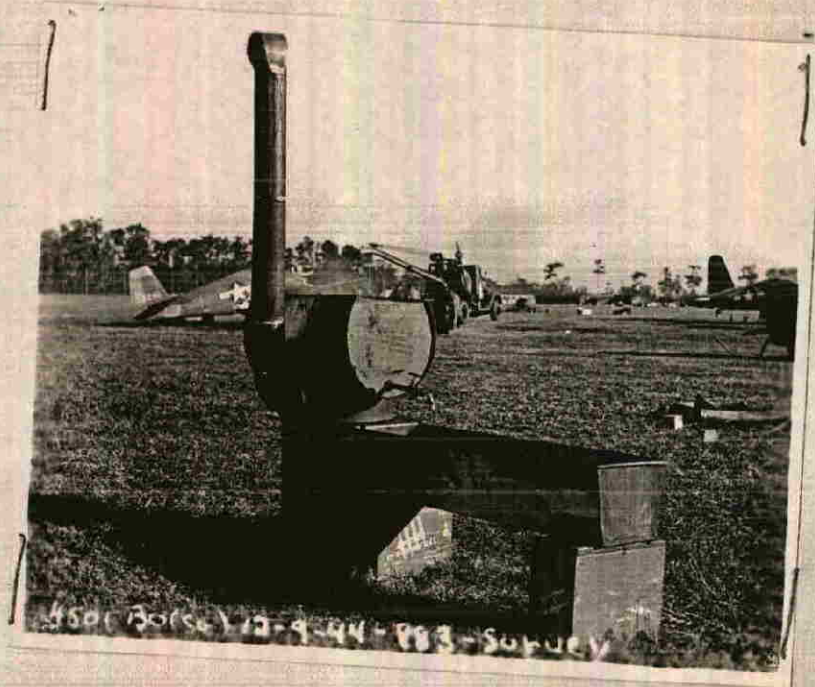


EXHIBIT No. 2

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