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Apr-45 X

P.R.C.

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MICROFILMED

6564-110

5G-FI-531-09  
APRIL 1945

Organizational History, 531st Fighter Squadron AAF, 21st Fighter Group AAF, APO #36, VII Fighter Command

April 1, 1945 - April 30, 1945

**RESTRICTED**A. Date of-arrival and departure from each station occupied in this theater:

Negative

## B. Losses in action (Personnel)

1st Lt. Robert G. Anderson  
2nd Lt. Arthur R. Beckington**P.R.C.**

## C. Awards to and decorations of members:

Per General Order #14, VII Fighter Command dated April 11, 1945 the following men were awarded the Purple Heart.

Major John S. Hudson, Jr.  
Capt. Frank R. Koplín  
Capt. Thomas W. Lewis  
Capt. Herbert C. Swigert  
1st Lt. Richard S. Davis  
1st Lt. Cecil C. Drinnen  
1st Lt. John F. Galbraith  
1st Lt. Thomas P. Riddle  
2nd Lt. Henry J. Koke  
2nd Lt. Walter L. Miller  
2nd Lt. Paul E. Schurr  
2nd Lt. Millard J. Smith  
2nd Lt. John M. Tomlinson  
T/Sgt. George E. Kovac  
Sgt. Howard L. Morrison  
Cpl. Henry H. Puu

08419000

## D. Organization

Negative

## E. Strength (Personnel)

1 April 1945: 65 Officers, 234 EM assigned, 26 attached.  
31 April 1945: 72 Officers, 247 EM assigned, 8 attached.

## F. Strength (Airplanes)

1 April 1945: 36 P-51D20s  
30 April 1945: 30 P-51D20s

6564-40

Historical Division AAFPQA  
JUN 16 1945**RESTRICTED**

G. Losses: (Airplanes)

- 1 P51D20, Serial No. 44-63952.
- 1 P51D20, Serial No. 44-63741.



General History of the Organization  
April 1, 1945 - April 30, 1945

The month of April began with the entire squadron still living in foxholes, and operations at a standstill for lack of squadron equipment which was still aboard the S.S. Christopher Gale lying offshore.

Our permanent area, which adjoined the foxhole area, was being leveled by the Sea-bees with their bulldozers, and on the 3rd the area was pronounced ready for occupancy. Tents were set up, and the squadron moved into them with a will, sandbagging them against stray bullets and making things in general much more comfortable than they had been during the foxhole stage.

On the 7th of April, which was the 6th and hence Army Day back in the States, the squadron participated in the first very long range escort mission over Tokyo. This was the first time our land-based fighters had invaded the skies over the Japanese homeland, and the sky was theirs. The mission was a huge success, and in addition to effectively protecting the B-29's from enemy air attack, Major Crim shot down two enemy planes and Lt. Boseley got another.

The successful completion of the first mission of this type, about the feasibility of which there had been considerable doubt, gave everyone a much - needed lift, and during the balance of the month several more of the same type were successfully carried out. Complete details will be found in the Intelligence Section History.



Page two of General History of Organization - April.

Two pilots were lost on these missions, 1st Lt. Robert G. Anderson on the first mission, and 2nd Lt. Arthur R. Beckington on the second. Details of the loss of the two men were meager, but it is definitely determined that both went down over Japanese home territory.

During a movie being shown in the squadron area on the night of the 5th, Cpl. Henry Pua was struck in the back by a stray bullet. He was removed to a hospital, and subsequently evacuated to the Hawaiian Islands.

Two airplanes were damaged during the month when the pilots were obliged to pull up their wheels in order to stop. Both their engines cut out when they were attempting to take off, Lt. Meyer's on the 16th, and Lt. Steele's on the 21st. Neither pilot was injured.

SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS HISTORY FOR MONTH OF APRIL

Organization personnel have been set up in our tent area and living conditions are much better. The quality of the food is better and morale is excellent. A shower room has been installed in the squadron area, built by the squadron detail men. A day room for the enlisted men has also been built. It has a cement floor, ping-pong table, couch and chair and a radio. Corporal Henry H. Puu was wounded in the left shoulder by the discharge of a firearm from an unknown source while watching a movie in the squadron area, and has been evacuated. Corporal Robert E. Gray was wounded by an enemy anti-personnel mine and has also been evacuated. Captain Harry C. Crim, Jr. our CO was promoted to Major. 1st Lt. Howard J. Kendall and 2d Lts Bernard W. Lawrence, Thomas P. Riddle and Frank L. Seymour were also promoted. Captain William X. Gebele, Jr. was detailed Squadron Flight Surgeon and 1st Lt. Robert H. Moody was detailed Flight Commander. 1st Lt Robert G. Anderson and 2d Lt Arthur E. Beckington two of our pilots were lost on combat missions over the Tokyo area, Japan. S Sgt Robert Richman and Sgt George J. Stulac rejoined the squadron from a 30 day furlough to the mainland. Four officers left for rest leave to the Hawaiian Islands. Nine (9) officers were assigned and two transferred. Fourteen (14) MM were assigned, one (1) attached and twenty (20) relieved from attached. The organization has performed normal squadron duties in combat area. Our pilots have continued to participate in the combat missions.

## History of the Armament Section

1 April 1945 - - 30 April 1945

Our first raid on Tokio started April with some excitement. Our men were happy with the victories of our pilots, and of special interest was the strafing attack on Yokahama. The gunnery equipment has been working good, our stoppages per rounds fired is .0003 for this month. Strength of the section is forty one men, fifteen of whom are now eligible for rotation.

Both the Fifteenth and Twenty First Groups have been having trouble with empty fuel tanks failing to drop. The bomb racks do not seem to be at fault, the difficulty seems to be that the airstream prevents the tanks from dropping after the rack has been released. This has happened in only a few instances, but Lt. Whitney and M/Sgt. Wertman have been experimenting with devises to correct the condition.

Cpl. Callen was rather severely burned by a gasoline fire early this month and is still in the hospital. Pvt. Francis, Pvt. Spanton, and S/Sgt. Laminsky are no longer attached to our squadron, having been returned to their own organization.



HISTORY OF THE ORDNANCE SECTION  
1 APRIL 1945 — 30 APRIL 1945

1. During the month (7) missions were accomplished with a total expenditure of (51,821) rounds of cal..50 AC, ammunition, plus (32), (500) pound compound B demmolition bombs. Regular (50) and (100) hour inspections were conducted on all guns. Four (4) chrome plated barrels were installed in cal..50 machine guns to ascertain their full worth. As of this date, guns so equipped, have not been fired.
2. On 7 April 1945 our P-51's were over Tokio on a mission, being the first land based fighters to hit Japan. This is a (1,500) mile flight as long, if not longer, then any fighter sweep made up to this time. The stoppage record of rounds fired has been below (1) per cent of total rounds. No bombs have failed to release or explode.
3. This month saw the Section completely set up, with the arrival of our boxes. Two (2) were lost in transit, this loss did not hamper us to any great extent. Operations have been difficult, due to the excessive amount of rain and winds. Tents have been blown over and over (6) missions cancelled during this month alone. Each cancellation means loading and unloading, fuzing and unfuzing of bombs.

HISTORY OF THE COMMUNICATIONS SECTION  
1 APRIL 1945 TO 30 APRIL 1945

OUR BOXES BEGAN TO COME ASHORE FROM THE SHIP IN THE HARBOR. IT WASN'T VERY LONG UNTIL WE SET UP OUR MAINTENANCE SHACK, WHICH WAS MADE FROM SCRAP IRON POSTS. AFTER GETTING SCRAP WOOD FOR THE FLOOR, PUTTING OLD PIECES OF CANVAS AROUND THE FRAME WORK, WE HAD A RATHER GOOD PLACE IN WHICH TO WORK. OUR BIGGEST TROUBLE WAS THE RAIN COMING THROUGH THE CANVAS. THE SHACK WAS SPLENDID PROTECTION AGAINST THE DUST BUT NOT THE RAIN. AFTER A TIME WE RECEIVED ALL OUR BOXES EXCEPT TWO, WHICH WERE LOST IN TRANSIT. IT WAS EQUIPMENT THAT WE COULD VERY WELL DO WITHOUT.

IN OUR LIVING AREA, PYRAMIDAL TENTS WERE SET UP FOR OUR QUARTERS. OUR TWO ELECTRICIANS SOON HAD POWER FOR EACH TENT. WE WERE RUNNING OUR PE-95, PART OF THE RADIO GROUND SET, SCR-399 AS OUR LARGE GENERATOR WAS BROKEN DOWN. THE 15KVA IS NOW IN OPERATION.

AFTER GETTING SET UP IN OUR MAINTENANCE AREA, WE WERE TOLD TO MOVE TO A NEW ONE. THE NEW AREA IS LARGE AND VERY NICE. WE OBTAINED A 16-MAN SQUAD TENT FOR THE MAINTENANCE SHOP AND A 6-MAN TENT FOR STORAGE. IT TOOK US ONE AND A HALF DAYS TO MOVE. OPERATING FROM THIS AREA HAS MANY ADVANTAGES OVER THE OTHER. WE ARE NEARER TO THE PLANES AND FARTHER AWAY FROM THE RUNWAY. THERE IS VERY LITTLE DUST HERE. THE SHOP IS COMPLETELY SET UP AND IN GOOD WORKING ORDER. AN INVENTORY WAS MADE OF ALL EQUIPMENT.



(HISTORY OF THE COMMUNICATIONS SECTION CONTINUED)

ALL PLANES HAVE D.U. INSTALLED NOW. SO FAR WE HAVE HAD VERY LITTLE TROUBLE WITH IT. OUR SCR-522 SETS ARE WORKING FAIRLY GOOD EXCEPT WHEN THE WEATHER IS EXTREMELY DAMP. WE HAVE HAD GOOD LUCK WITH OUR CRYSTALS AS WELL.

THERE SEEMS TO BE A LOT OF TROUBLE WITH THE RADIOS, R-100/UR, WHICH HAVE BEEN ISSUED AS SPECIAL SERVICE EQUIPMENT. THE MAIN SOURCE OF THE DIFFICULTIES SEEMS TO BE IN THE TUBES.

IT HAS BEEN QUITE A WHILE SINCE THE PILOT'S, HEADSETS AND MIKES HAVE BEEN CHECKED BUT THAT IS BEING DONE AT PRESENT. THROUGH THIS CHECKING WE HAVE ELIMINATED A LOT OF SO-CALLED RADIO TROUBLE IN THE PLANES. ALL PLUGS ARE THOROUGHLY CLEANED WITH STEEL WOOL AND ALL WIRING CHECKED.

WE HAVE INSTALLED ALL THE TELEPHONES IN THE MAINTENANCE AREA. IT IS QUITE DIFFICULT KEEPING THE LINES IN OPERATION AS THE BULL-DOZERS AND OTHER HEAVY EQUIPMENT CUT THE LINES ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS. AT PRESENT WE ARE TRYING TO GET PERMISSION TO PUT A DIRECT LINE FROM SQUADRON OPERATIONS TO THE CONTROL TOWER WHICH WILL SPEED INFORMATION ABOUT OUR AIRCRAFT.



## HISTORICAL REPORT OF THE ENGINEERING SECTION

April 1, 1945 - April 30, 1945

1. The squadron engineering section maintained thirty P-51D-20 aircraft during this month. Two aircraft were lost over the target area due to enemy fire. The average number of planes in commission were twenty five. This percentage is somewhat lower than usual because of the additional difficulties encountered in this theatre.

The total number of personnel in the section at the end of the month was ninety. This number includes men from all units of the section. The average aviation mechanic experience of present personnel is about three years. About eighty percent of the crew chief's of this squadron have up till now maintained six different types of fighter planes.

2. Two instances of engines cutting on take off were encountered. The reasons for the cut-outs were varied. One was attributed to the carburetor, which, after a flow test was found to be set lean. On the other, no apparent reason was found. The aircraft was run up immediately after, and did not falter even with the application of full power. It was therefore concluded that the exceptionally wet weather on the previous days, had caused water to enter the ignition system. No damage was sustained to the aircraft in the latter case.

Several propellers were changed because of damage caused by shell fragments picked up on the runway. This condition is being corrected by the use of a magnetic trailer that is now in operation on the airbase.

3. Several experimental flights were made with the "Josephine" life saving equipment. This gear consists of a 110 gallon auxilliary fuel tank which houses a five man life raft. Some difficulty was encountered in the installation and adjustment of this equipment. However, the best installation was found to be one, whereby the raft was released from the tank by means of arming wires.

## Historical Report-Cont'd.

4. A coolant door trip device was installed on all aircraft. The purpose of this modification is to trip the coolant doors open in case the electrical system became inoperative. The device consists of a small cable connecting cockpit and coolant door actuating rod. The pilot in pulling the cockpit handle pulls a pin in the actuating rod, which releases a spring held under tension. This action holds the coolant door in the open position.

All ammunition doors on the P-51D were reinforced during this month. The modification consists of adding several bolts to the ammunition doors. This is intended to eliminate the possibility of skin wrinkling at that wing section.

9. The weather conditions on the island of Iwo Jima were dusty and damp. Dusty to such an extent, as to require constant vigilance. Maintenance was complicated by the additional inspections required by these conditions. The ignition wiring was affected by the rains that persisted several days at a time. The part of the aircraft most effected by the corrosion was the landing gear and flap selector peppet valves. These valves are exposed to the atmosphere and corrode to such an extent that they wedge upon being depressed, thereby rendering the landing gear of flpa systems inoperative. This condition was counteracted by more frequent inspections and an application of non corrosive lubricants not required by ordinary circumstances.

The sulphur steam that seeps through the ground on all parts of the island has no visible effect upon the aircraft but undoubtedly adds to the corrosive conditions of this area. A close check of operating units is being kept to discover the first signs of such corrosion.



HISTORY OF THE OPERATION SECTION  
1 April 1945 - 30 April 1945

APRIL, and the month all were awaiting was here, Surely this was the month we were to send our aircraft against the Island Fortress of Japan.

Then, on the 7th of April news came that we were to escort a group of B-29's over Tokyo. Heavy and accurate AA and some fighter opposition was encountered. Of the few aircraft thrown against us three were destroyed in the air. One of our own was missing at the completion of the mission.

A mission to Chichi Jima was scheduled. Slight AA was encountered, but this proved to be inaccurate.

On the 12th once more an escort mission was attempted, but bad weather prevented contact and the mission was declared abortive. Later during the day eight planes were scrambled for an alert. No enemy aircraft was sighted, however.

Once more , on the 16th, the Squadron was doomed to disappointment. Flying high cover for the Fifteenth Fighter Group our mission was to strafe Kyushu Airfield. No enemy aircraft was observed either on the ground or in the air. AA was moderate and accurate, and one of our aircraft failed to return.

The most successful mission of the month was conducted on the 19th when we were assigned to Strafe Atsugi Airfield, 25 miles south of Tokyo. Sweeping in at roof-top level the P-51's caught the enemy completely by surprise. Pilots reported that nine planes were seen to burst in flame on the ground and one seriously destroyed as their 50 calibre guns ripped through the line of planes sitting like clay ducks on the airfield. Troops standing review on the field were mowed down, so complete was the surprise. Of the few aircraft that managed to become airborne six were



destroyed, including two troop transports. Sweeping out toward sea the pilots swept down upon craft lying idly in the harbor, sinking two supply ships and damaging two freighters.

As the 22nd came around we were once more assigned to fly top cover for the 15th group on a mission to strafe Suzuka Airfield near Nagoya, and a factory adjoining the airfield. Despite the extremely hazy weather which obscured the target one enemy aircraft was destroyed in the air, and four destroyed or damaged on the ground. Winging their way toward nearby Ise Bay the Mustangs sunk one tanker and damaged or destroyed three freighters and two cargo vessels. AA was moderate and accurate.

On the 26th a fighter sweep was scheduled to secure a zone of security for the B-29's in the Kanoya Area. A complete undercast obscured the target. No enemy aircraft were sighted and no AA encountered.

The 30th came and we were to escort B-29's once more to Tokyo. A heavy cloud formation blanketed the entire area so that all that was visible was the peak of Fujiyama. However, that which usually proved to be the dull routine part of the mission, the sub cover, turned out to be the most successful. Three Picket boats were seen churning through the waters toward our rescue submarines. Lt. Galbraith set his three ships upon the enemy and after six passes left them afire and in a sinking condition.

Total Cap time for the month was 124 Hours: Scramble time 15 Hours.

A Comparative Summary of losses follows:

OUR LOSSES	ENEMY AIRCRAFT LOSSES					ENEMY SURFACE VESSEL LOSSES	
	DESTROYED			DAMAGED		PROBABLY SUNK	DAMAGED
P-51D	Ftrs	Trans	Train	Ftrs.	T/E	Tons	Tons
2	11	3	7	9	1	820	2860
TOTALS	21			10		3680 Tons	

History of the Medical Section  
April 1, 1945---April 30, 1945

1. Medical Activities.

a. During the month of April, the Medical Section personnel, this squadron, cooperated with the Medical Department personnel, 21st Fighter Group, in setting up semi-permanent installations which constitute the 21st Fighter Group Consolidated dispensary and hospital area.

b. The Consolidated dispensary was provided in accordance with VII Fighter Command Memorandum 25-4, so that personnel of the 21st Fighter Group would obtain a maximum of professional service, and was activated during the month of April.

c. A mobile dispensary unit was installed in the ambulance, property of this squadron. This mobile dispensary unit is used on the flight line for any emergency which might occur.

d. A torpedo hut was erected and is used as a physio-therapy room for pilots on their return from long missions. Rub-down tables, and bath tubs with an adequate drainage system were installed.

e. The Medical Section personnel, this squadron, participated in the building, operation, and maintenance of the Consolidated dispensary, the hospital section, the mobile dispensary unit, the line ambulance, and the physio-therapy hut.



History of the Intelligence Section  
April 1, 1945 - April 30, 1945

The first mission for the month of April was on th 7th. The Very Long Range Mission had started. The full story of these raids is best told by the missions reports. These give a brief but accurate account of the raids. They are enclosed as supplements to this month's history. Mission report numbers are 4-1 through 4-8.

A combat report for the month of April is enclosed as a supplement to this month's history. It gives a complete and accurate record of A/C and shipping destroyed or damaged.

A Memorandum was sent out by the XXI Bomber Command on the escort mission of the 7 April 1945. This was the first time B-29s had escort over the Japanese homeland and it was also the first time for the army Fighters to be over the Japanese homeland. It is and "Extract from Air Intelligence Report XXI Bomber Command." We are enclosing this report as a supplement to this month's history.

During the month two pilots were lost on the Very Long Range Mission. 1st Lt. Robert G. Anderson, on the 7th and 2nd Lt. Arthur R. Beckington on the 19th. They are carried as missing in action. On the 22nd April 2nd Lt. Lloyd L. Boseley was transfered to the 46th Fighter Squadron, 21st Fighter Group, APO #86. All there Combat Mission Records are enclosed as supplement to this month's history.

Boxes arrived very slow and it took some time to completely set up the section. We were in about three areas before we finally received a pernanent one. We have two tents on the line, one for the



## History Of the Intelligence Section Continued

section office and the other for a pilots room. In the area a temporary tent was set up for I&E and so the section would be able to work on strip maps and mission reports at night in the tent.

The section was handicaped by injuries during the month, Pvt McKaig our draftman was out about 10 days. Pvt Karamian was releived from attachment and sent to VII Fighter Command. Duties were left up to the balance of the section. On the 30 April 1945, the section received its 3rd man PFC Harold L. Ward. Things were carried on in a normal manner for the month.

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

7 April 1945

FROM: Commanding Officer, 531st Fighter Squadron, AAF, APO #86.

TO : Commanding General VII Fighter Command, AAF, APO #86.

THRU: Commanding Officer, 21st Fighter Group, AAF, APO #86.

531st Squadron Mission No. 4-1.  
 21st Fighter Group Mission 4-1.  
 VII Fighter Command Mission No.

MISSION REPORT

1. A. 20 P-51Ds  
 B. 50 Zekes, Tonys, Nicks.

2. A. 1 P-51D  
 B. 2 Tonys, 1 Nick.

3. Escort - Fighters will provide fighter protection for bombers of XXI Bomber Command attacking Tokyo Area. Per VII Fighter Command F.O. #31.

4. Red Flight  
 Capt. Harry C. Crim, Jr.  
 2nd Lt. Henry J. Koke  
 1st Lt. Robert G. Anderson  
 2nd Lt. Lloyd L. Bosley

Blue Flight  
 Capt. Thomas W. Lewis (Abortive)  
 2nd Lt. Earl D. Crutchfield "  
 1st Lt. Louis C. Spillman  
 2nd Lt. John D. Wilson

Green Flight  
 Capt. Fredrick J. Gibson  
 2nd Lt. Conrad E. Matson  
 1st Lt. John F. Galbraith (abortive)  
 2nd Lt. Richard B. Woolley

Yellow Flight  
 Capt. William B. Smith (Abortive)  
 2nd Lt. Irvin P. Skansen "  
 1st Lt. Richard S. Davis "  
 2nd Lt. Theodore H. Fox "

Spare Flight  
 Capt. William H. Benton, Jr.  
 1st Lt. Albert B. Davis  
 2nd Lt. Frank L. Seymour  
 2nd Lt. John M. Wyles (Abortive)

Take Off : 0655 - 0720  
 Over Target: 1040 - 1120

Time of Landing: 1430

531st Fighter Squadron P-51Ds rendezvoused with navigator B-29s over Kita and proceeded to Kozu at 1030 where they rendezvoused with the main attacking force of B-29s attacking the Tokyo Area. Of 20 P-51Ds, nine were abortive, and the remaining Red, Blue and Green flights formed on the right flank of the bomber formations and flew a course roughly parallel and slightly higher than that of the bombers through the target area.

Red Flight led by Capt. Crim was the first of the Fighter flights into the target area. Thirty or more enemy fighter planes were observed by this flight some low and others at bomber level attacking bombers. The enemy fighters consisting of Zekes, Tonys and Nicks appeared to be operating individually - no coordinated attacks were observed. Red flight members became separated and in ensuing action Capt. Crim shot down a Tony and a Nick. The Tony was hit twice. On the first pass the engine was set on fire and on the second the right wing fell off. The Nick was hit in the left engine, from which fire spread completely along the left wing and the plane was seen to crash. The Nick had no tail gunner but had a piece of tan canvas tied over the position. Lt. Koke of Red Flight became separated and was some 30 minutes behind Capt. Crim on his return to base and received

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



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

Page Two of 531st Fighter Squadron Mission No. 4-1.

navigational aid from a B-29. Lt. Anderson, element leader of Red Flight, was seen to explode by his wingman, Lt. Bosley, who had followed him west to east across the bay below Tokyo, Lt. Anderson had dropped his wing tanks and climbed across the bay from 12 to 23,00 feet when he did a roll and a half and was split S'ing down when his plane exploded. No flames was observed, just a little puff of smoke and the wings came off, then the plane seemed to blow up. Lt. Bosley shot down one Tony at 12,00 feet. He observed his burst to hit in the right wing roots and pieces flying off when the plane went into a spin and was last seen going down at about 5000 feet. Other than Lt. Anderson, members of Red Flight reached the rally point at different times and returned from there to base.

Blue flight rendezvoused with the bomber force at Kozu, and took their position on the right flank of the bombers as they made a wide circle about Kozu and headed North for the coast of Japan. One small freighter observed heading for Japan. Another, a large transport, was seen leaving the coastline off Shimoda. They crossed the coastline near Hiratsuka at which point they saw two very large, intensely white puffs of smoke appear about 2000 feet above the bomber force.

Vapor trails, from possibly 10 planes, very wide, were seen east of O Shima at about 25 - 30,000 feet.

Intense, heavy flak was observed to burst above the bombers as the formations traversed the coastline from Yougawara to Yokohama. This flak was of the barrage type, high but accurate. On this leg of the flight, an airplane, presumed to be Japanese, was seen to go down in flames over land on the left flank of the bomber formation.

Over Yokohama, Lt. Spillman's plane developed engine trouble. The bombers turned north, and Blue flight turned southeast to take Lt. Spillman to the rally point. They took cover under a layer of alto-stratus clouds at 10,000 feet about 30 or 40 miles off the coast at 120° from Tokyo while searching for the submarine and Cyclones. On the way to the rally point, one Nick was observed at about 17,000 feet, North of Tateyama, but made no attempt to attack.

Blue Flight tried to make radio contact with the submarine, but were unable to. After circling 20 to 30 minutes, visual contact was made with a B-29 navigator. They joined with the B-29 navigator and about 35 other fighters, and came back to base.

Haze was encountered in layers at various altitudes, and moderate N. to N.W. winds were noted. Weather over Japan was CAVU.

Blue Flights communications were very poor. They received no OU signals, and their radios cut out occasionally.

Green flight was over Target area at 18,000 to 20,000 feet. No enemy aircraft were observed. AA was all directed at bombers and appeared heavy and accurate. Fighters kept 3000 to 4000 feet above the bombers and about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile to the right of them. Green Flight flew over Yokohama to a point 10 miles West of Tokyo then east across the bay to the rally point. Coast area just south of Yokohama was heavily covered by AA. Two phosphorous shells, white puffs ("looked like cumulus clouds about 50 feet high") with streamers going up were observed to burst.

5. A. CAVU over Tokyo, moderate winds.  
B. Poor

6. None

7. 1890 rounds of 50 caliber  
6199 gallons of gasoline

8. None

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Statements

DESTRUCTION OF AIRPLANE "TONY" AND "NICK" IN AIR.

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



C O N F I D E N T I A LStatement of Capt. Harry C. Crim, Jr., O-659669.

My flight was over a bomber box just south of Tokyo when a Zeke was reported at six o'clock high. My flight turned 180° and the Zeke passed over head. At this time I saw a Tony going in the opposite direction about 1000 feet lower, I made an overhead attack on him but couldn't get the right amount of lead so on the recovery from 500 feet below him I gave him a short burst from close range. Over shooting I pulled up over him and rolled on my back. From this position I could see the left side of his engine burning. He then started about a one needle-width turn to the left and I dropped back on his tail. From this position I fired a three or four second burst from about 300 feet. His right wing came off at the middle panel. I broke off to the right and saw a Nick at about two miles at three o'clock to me, same level, making a large circle to the left. I cut his circle and started firing at about 700 feet at 30° and fired till I over shot. I pulled up on the outside of his turn and then dropped back on his tail. His left engine nacelle and left wing was burning as I closed in on the second attack. I fired again until I over ran at which time his fuselage was starting to burn. I pulled up and circled once and headed for Rally Point. I was looking back constantly and saw him crash into the southeastern suburbs of Tokyo.

*Harry C. Crim, Jr.*  
 Harry C. Crim, Jr., O-659669,  
 Captain, Air Corps.

DESCRIPTION OF "TONY" IN AIR.Statement of 2nd Lt. Lloyd L. Bosley, O-694041.

At or about 1050 S.W. of Tokyo, I was flying with my element leader at 12,000 feet when slightly to the right and below about 500 Feet I saw a silver airplane. The plane crossed under us to the left and I recognized it as a Tony. My element leader dived on him and he made a sharp turn to the right my element leader gave a short burst with no effects. I turned with the Tony and started firing with a 2 radii lead. Not seeing any hits I began increasing my lead. With about 2½ to 2¾ radii lead I observed incendiarys bursting at and around the wing roots, pieces of the plane began pulling off. I kept firing for about 120° turn, then the plane turned over on its back and started spinning. I broke off and watched the plane spin down to about 5000 feet. Then I pulled up and rejoined my element leader.

*Lloyd L. Bosley*  
 Lloyd L. Bosley, O-694041  
 2nd Lt., Air Corps.

A TRUE COPY OF MISSION REPORT

*Leon F. Weit*  
 LEON F. WEIT,  
 1st Lt., Air Corps,  
 Adjutant.

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



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

10 April 1945.

FROM: Commanding Officer, 531st Fighter Squadron AAF, APO #86.

TO : Commanding General, VII Fighter Command AAF, APO #86.

THRU: Commanding Officer, 21st Fighter Group AAF, APO #86.

531st Squadron Mission No. 4-2.  
 21st Fighter Group Mission No. 4-4  
 VII Fighter Command Mission No.

MISSION REPORT

1. A. 16 P-51D20's (1 Abortive)  
 B. None

2. A. None  
 B. None

3. Dive bomb and strafe Chichi Jima Per F.O. 38, VII Fighter Command.

4. Red Flight  
 Capt. Harry C. Crim Jr.  
 2nd Lt. Henry J. Koke  
 1st Lt. Cecil C. Drinnen  
 2nd Lt. Arthur R. Beckington

Yellow Flight  
 Capt. William B. Smith  
 2nd Lt. Theodore H. Fox  
 1st Lt. Richard S. Davis  
 2nd Lt. Millard J. Smith

Blue Flight  
 Capt. Thomas W. Lewis  
 2nd Lt. Billy Griffin  
 1st Lt. John F. Galbraith  
 2nd Lt. Paul E. Schurr

Green Flight  
 Capt. Charles G. Betz  
 2nd Lt. Wade W. Fehr  
 1st Lt. Joseph M. Lindsay  
 2nd Lt. Jack Counts

1 Abortive - 2nd Lt. Jack Counts, O-714886, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63426 returned at 1450. His airplane developed a rough engine north of Kita Rock as he was climbing at 7000 feet.

Time of takeoff - 1405  
 Time over target - 1505  
 Time of pancake - 1620

## Narrative:

Course flown: Out 20° M. Return 200° with DU.

Enemy shipping in Futani Ko - (7) seven ships were observed anchored in 246A. (7) seven ships in 245N. (3) three ships observed in 213T. (2) two of ships in 246A appeared to be longer than others, possibly 250 feet. Others were 150 to 200 feet long.

Enemy aircraft on Susaki airfield. One Nell and two Zekes observed in 198C. In 212 R and W appeared to be 2 or 3 more Zekes. In 198H, one airplane, possibly a Judy observed. All appeared inoperational.

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Page two of 531st Fighter Squadron Mission No. 4-2.

Susaki Airfield - The field itself is reported by Capt. Crim to be cratered, although recent rains have made it appear in good condition from a height of 3000 feet. Capt. Crim observed this condition after a low sweep over field.

Enemy AA encountered - A short burst by AA reported from 262 X by Capt. Betz when he led his flight on a strafing pass across shipping in 246A at 4000 feet. None other encountered.

Flights flew a reconnaissance over target for some thirty minutes before making their attack.

Red Flight made their dive bombing run from 9000 feet on a heading of 20° on shipping in 246A, releasing bombs at 3500 feet. Capt. Crim then left his flight to make a strafing run on 3 ships in 213T, and another on ships in 246A. These strafing runs were made from 5000 feet down to 2000 feet. Results of bombing and strafing incomplete, one bomb hit by a Red Flight plane reported in 245E by Capt. Smith, Yellow Flight.

Yellow Flight made 2 passes on (7) seven ships in 245N. The first pass, the dive bombing run, was made from 9000 to 3500 feet on a heading of 40°. Only 3 planes released their bombs on the first pass, but all strafed. On the second pass at 350° heading, the remaining airplane released its bomb while the other three strafed. Two of Yellow flights bombs were observed to score near misses on ships at 245N.

Green Flight dive bombed on a heading of 40° from 11,000 feet on shipping at 246A. One hit and two near misses were observed. From the hit there was lots of smoke, dirt and splinters, but no flame. The fourth bomb hit the jetty in grid 246F. Green Flight then made a south to north strafing run 7000 down to 2500 feet on shipping and observed one burst of AA fire from 262X. Susaki Airfield was orbited at 4000 feet without drawing AA fire.

Blue Flight, the last to dive bomb the target, the ships in 246A, made a 360° dive bombing run, releasing at 3000 feet. Bomb hits uncertain, but believe there was at least one hit, or one bomb dropped in between two ships.

All planes returned to base without mishap.

5. A. Weather - CAVU except over Chichi where 9/10s cover was encountered, 2800 to 4500 feet.
- B. Communications - Good.
6. Undetermined.
7. Ammunition expended - 3256 rds .50 cal.; 32 X 500 lb. GP bombs, AN-M-64, Nose fuse AN-M103, .10 sec delay; Tail fuse AN-M101A2, .025 sec delay.  
Gasoline consumption - 2295 gallons.
8. Remarks - A large cave was observed in the rocks near the waterline in grids 184G or L which in the pilots opinion could be a haven for undersea craft.

Capt. Smith suggests that an extra plane should accompany these missions to observe results as it is impractical for the bombing and strafing pilots to make accurate observations.

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



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

12 April 1945.

From: Commanding Officer, 531st Fighter Squadron AAF, APO #86.

To : Commanding General, VII Fighter Command AAF, APO #86.

Thru: Commanding Officer, 21st Fighter Group AAF, APO #86.

531st Squadron Mission No. 4-3  
 21st Fighter Group Mission No. 4-5  
 VII Fighter Command Mission No.

MISSION REPORT

1. A. 20 P-51Ds  
 B. None
2. A. None  
 B. None
3. Escort - Fighters will provide fighter protection for bombers of XXI Bomber Command attacking Tokyo Area. Per VII Fighter Command F.O. #
4. Red Flight Time of landing

Capt. Robert I Mallin (Abortive)	0922
2nd Lt. Paul E. Schurr	1031
1st Lt. Charles Provost, Jr.	1030
2nd Lt. Herbert C. Straughn	1031
Yellow Flight	
Capt. Charles G. Betz	1008
1st Lt. Albert B. Davis	1032
1st Lt. Howard J. Kendall	1009
1st Lt. Joseph M. Lindsay	1032
Blue Flight	
Capt. Thomas W. Lewis	1038
2nd Lt. Earl D. Crutchfield	1007
1st Lt. John F. Galbraith (Abortive)	0852
2nd Lt. John M. Wyles	1006
Green Flight	
Capt. William B. Smith	1024
2nd Lt. Irvin P. Skansen	1025
1st Lt. Richard S. Davis	1026
2nd Lt. Theodore H. Fox	1023
Saltwater Spare	
Capt. Floyd L. Manning	1118
2nd Lt. Floyd E. Rice	1120
1st Lt. William J. Fenker	1119
2nd Lt. Milliard J. Smith	1117

## Abortives:

Blue three (3), 1st Lt. John F. Galbraith, O-40852, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63934, landed at 0847. Wheels failed to retract because of malfunction of poppet valve in hydraulic line.

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

Page two of 531st Fighter Squadron Mission No. 4-3.

Red one (1), Capt. Robert I. Mallin, O-727496, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63910, landed at 0930. Returned after accidentally dropping left wing tank.

Time of Take Off: 0830 to 0837.

**Narrative:**

531st Fighter Squadron planes, took off last following the 72nd and 46th Fighter Squadrons. Major Booth, the mission leader, took off at 0755. The last plane of the 46th Squadron took off at 0824. 531st Fighter planes then taxied length of runway and took off 0830 to 0837. The flights were scheduled to rendezvous with B-29 navigators at Kita. By the time they reached Kita, the B-29s had left. The fighters were unable to make visual contact with B-29s and radio Communications were confused, several DU's being received at same time from different sectors. Communications was established with Popeye Red Leader who reported he was 60 miles N of Kita Rock. This meant that the 531st Flights were approximately 55 miles behind the main body. Capt. Lewis decided to fly on a vector of 340° for 20 to 30 minutes and if no visible gain was made to turn back. They flew for about 30 minutes and seeing no improvement in their position, Capt. Lewis made the decision to return his squadron to base.

A narrative account by flights follows:

**Red Flight: Airborne 0832**

Squadron formed on way to Kita and headed out on 345° without contact with rest of group or B-29 navigators. 15 minutes out from base, Capt. Mallin, squadron leader, got a DU on A band from Popeye leader and found that the squadron was on course. Then Capt. Mallin accidentally dropped a wing tank and had to turn back, telling Capt. Lewis, Blue flight leader, to take over the squadron half-way to Kita Rock. Capt. Lewis failed to hear him, as he was on DU at the time, so Capt. Betz led the squadron until they reached a point about 75 miles N of Kita. He then turned the squadron over to Capt. Lewis.

Capt. Mallin landed at 0922. Remainder of flight, including Lt. Lindsay of fellow flight who had tacked onto the Red after having been lost from his own, landed at 1030.

**Blue Flight: Airborne 0834.**

Capt. Lewis, flight leader, took command of the squadron from Capt. Betz when the squadron had been on course for about 35 minutes. The squadron had had no visual contact with remainder of group or B-29 navigators since leaving base. Capt. Lewis decided to fly for another 15 or 30 minutes and if no contact was made to return to base. They climbed to 11,500 feet, leveled off, and flew for 30 minutes on a heading of 340°, indicating 250 MPH. Capt. Lewis was trying to get DU's from Popeye leader, but received 3 at a time and could not follow any of them. Then the decision to return was made; the flight let down to 200 feet to get through the overcast, and returned to base at 290 MPH I.A.S. Capt. Lewis circled while the other planes of the squadron landed, and came down at 1038. The remainder of his flight landed at 1006.

**Yellow Flight: Airborne 0835**

Formed with rest of squadron on way to Kita. Half-way to Kita, Capt. Mallin, leading the squadron, told Capt. Lewis to take command as he had to turn back. Capt. Lewis did not hear him, so Capt. Betz, Yellow Flight leader, took over. Capt. Betz called Popeye leader for position; Popeye answered that he was 60 miles N. of Kita Rock. A DU was also coming through from the Navigator. Capt. Betz on A band, so the flight increased speed and, receiving on-course signal, proceeded until they were approximately 75 miles N. of Kita. Capt. Betz then called Popeye Red Leader and requested DU on Item channel and approximate vector of Popeye Red leader. Popeye

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Red leader gave a vector of 340°, and transmitted a homing on Item channel. Capt. Betz then turned squadron over to Capt. Lewis. At this time several DU's were very noticeable on both Love and Item channels. Decision to return was made, and flight landed at 1020.

Green Flight: Airborne 0836

Pancaked at 1024. No incident. Followed squadron as tail end Charlie flight.

Spare Flight: Airborne:0837

This flight returned with rest of squadron, orbiting in clear spots off base waiting for other planes to land. Pancaked 1120.

All pilots and planes returned to base without injury or damage.

5. A. Weather - Over Iwo Airfield No. 2 - ceiling 200 feet, solid at 0830K and 1000K. Enroute Iwo to Kita and North - overcast and 200 foot ceiling, 11,500 foot tops.
- B. Communications - Poor in that several DU's were received on same channel at same time, and flights were unable to follow any one of them for any length of time.
6. None
7. Ammunition expended - None  
Gasoline Consumption - Unknown
8. Remarks - All planes of the Group were parked at Southwest end of runway by squadrons in anticipation of a N.E. wind. As the wind was from the southwest the planes were forced to taxi the length of the runway, one squadron at a time, and take off toward the southwest. The 46th Squadron, the second one to take off, attempted a down-wind take off, but after three planes, abandoned the idea and taxied the rest of their's to the northeast end of the runway.

A TRUE COPY OF MISSION REPORT

*Herbert C. Swigert*  
HERBERT C. SWIGERT  
CAPT., AIR CORPS,  
S-2 OFFICER.

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



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

16 April 1945

FROM: Commanding Officer, 531st Fighter Squadron, AAF, APO #86.

TO : Commanding General VII Fighter Command, AAF, APO #86.

THRU: Commanding Officer, 21st Fighter Group, AAF, APO #86.

531st Squadron Mission No. 4-4.  
 21st Fighter Group Mission 4-6.  
 VII Fighter Command Mission No. 114.

MISSION REPORT

1. A. 16 P-51s  
 B. None
2. A. None  
 B. None
3. Top cover while aircraft of 15th Fighter Group attack targets in southern Kyushu per VII Fighter Command F.G. #49.

4. Red Flight  
 Lt. Col. Elmer S. Booth (Abortive)  
 1st Lt. Richard S. Davis  
 Capt. William B. Smith  
 2nd Lt. Irvin P. Skansen

Blue Flight  
 Capt. Robert I. Mallin (Abortive)  
 2nd Lt. Paul E. Schurr  
 1st Lt. Charles Provest, Jr.  
 2nd Lt. Herbert G. Straughn (Abortive)

Yellow Flight  
 Capt. Thomas W. Lewis  
 2nd Lt. Earl D. Crutchfield, Jr.  
 1st Lt. John F. Galbraith  
 2nd Lt. John M. Wyles

Green Flight  
 Capt. Charles G. Betz (Abortive)  
 1st Lt. Albert W. Davis (Abortive)  
 1st Lt. Howard J. Kendall  
 1st Lt. Joseph M. Lindsay

Spare Flight  
 Capt. Floyd L. Manning  
 2nd Lt. Theodore H. Fox (Returned as spare)  
 1st Lt. William J. Fenker (Abortive)  
 2nd Lt. Floyd B. Rice

Time of Take Off - 0927 to 0935

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Page Two of 531st Fighter Squadron Mission No. 4-4

Time over Target: 1330 to 1400

Time of landing : 1702 to 1735

Abortives and spare returning:

Yellow (1) one, Capt. Robert I. Wallin, O-727496, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63910, abortive on take off. Engine cut out.

Yellow (4) four, 2nd Lt. Herbert S. Straughn, O-763397, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63937 abortive before take off. Engine cut out.

Spare (2) two, 2nd Lt. Theodore H. Fox, O-2057598, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63784, returned as spare landing at 1058.

Spare (3) three, 1st Lt. William W. Fenker, O-692898, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63953 abortive before take off. Hydraulic system would not function.

Red (1) one, Lt. Col. Elmer E. Booth, O-396363, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63461 abortive, magneto trouble. Pancaked 1110.

Green (1) one, Capt. Charles G. Betz, O-724460, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63770 abortive prop trouble, loss of power. Pancaked 1202.

Green (2) two, 1st Lt. Albert B. Davis, O-692138, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63933 abortive returned with Capt. Betz. Pancaked 1202.

Narrative:

Per VII Fighter Command F.O. #49 (16) sixteen airplanes (and 4 spares) of 531st Fighter Squadron joining with the 72nd and 46th Fighter Squadrons to compose the 21st Fighter Group unit of 52 aircraft were to provide top cover for fighter aircraft of the 15th Fighter Group and a medium bomber unit attacking targets in southern Kyushu.

531st Squadron planes were the first planes to take off in the 21st Group at 0927 - 0935, and rendezvoused with B-29 navigators over surface vessel approximately 100 miles N - NW of Iwo at approximately 9000 feet. Reaching the IP at 1340 about 20 miles east of Tori-misaki, Kyushu, they observed 15th Fighter Group planes sweep in for their attack. The 531st Flights, now consisting of 13 airplanes. Yellow and Spare with (4) four each. Red with (3) three and Green element with (2) followed the (5) five B-25s giving top cover, in across Kanoya Airfield Area receiving moderate AA fire. The flights left

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the area flying east out across Ariake Bay to Rally Pt., leaving Rally Pt., for base at 1410.

Red Flight \* At Rendezvous Point Major Booth's Airplane developed magneto trouble and he turned back. Capt. Smith took over Red Flight and dropped it back to No. 2 position. Meeting the 15th Group about 20 miles east of Tori-misaki, Kyushu they entered the target area flying west across Ariake Bay in a box formation, flying mutual support with Green Element, and following Yellow and Spare flights in to target area. Red Flight flew a circular course around outside perimeter of three airfields (Kanoya, East and Kushira) and returning out across Ariake Bay. Red Flight fired one short burst, strafing, at 4000 feet as they crossed over North end of Kushira airfield- results unobserved. They received meager to moderate accurate AA fire at 5000 feet from north end of Kanoya East airfield, believed to be 40 MM and smaller. A large fire was observed in SW corner of Kanoya Field. Several enemy aircraft, type unknown observed over water heading north 10 miles north of Tori-misaki. (1) one small ship (75 feet) observed in Ariake Bay. No enemy aircraft or other shipping observed.

Blue Flight - Only two planes of Blue flight reached rendezvous point, and they were taken over by Capt. Manning as an element of Spare Flight.

Yellow Flight - At Rendezvous point Lt. Col. Booth developed magneto trouble and was forced to return, giving control of the group to Capt. Kessler of the 46th and the Squadron to Capt. Lewis of Yellow Flight. 20 miles from land fall, Capt. Kessler developed engine trouble and had to bail out, giving command of the group to Capt. Lewis. Yellow flight took the cover position for the 5 B-25s on their bomb run, which took them from 10,000 feet down to 4000 feet over target area. After leaving the B-25s, the flight dropped to 1000 feet and left target area behind the B-25s. During the bombing run, explosion were observed on the ground. AA fire was moderate to intense, with heavy small arms fire from vicinity of airstrip. Moderate AA fire followed the flight to the coast, where AA fire was intense and accurate. Much AA of small caliber was seen to burst without impact at altitudes ranging from 3000 to 15,000 feet. P-51Ds of the 15th Group made their strafing run at the same time this flight was escorting B-25s over the target, but no results were observed. One surface vessel was seen off point directly east of Kanoya field. No details. Flight reached rally point at 1405, left at 1410 in company with 1 B-29 and 9 planes of the 46th Fighter Squadron. Capt. Lewis landed at 1735, the rest of his flight having come down at about 1715.

Green Flight - An hour past the rendezvous point, Capt. Betz reported a surging prop. 15 minutes later he turned back, escorted by Lt. A.B. Davis. This flight then took position to fly mutual support with Capt. Smith's 3 - plane flight, and kept this position for the remainder of the mission. Over target at 1350, and 6000 feet waited till 15th Group planes finished their strafing run, then headed for rally point. Moderate, accurate AA fire was encountered over target, including 40 MM and smaller, as well

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as small arms fire. On surface vessel, brown in color, with heavy super-structure amidships, was observed off point east of Kanoya airfield, 2 P-51s were flying over it at 3000 feet but it was not putting up any AA fire against them. Flight continued to rally point and returned with a B-29 and several other P-51s.

Spare Flight - Spare flight flew throughout the mission keeping the designation spare flight. They entered target area across Ariake Bay then turning in a northerly direction between Kanoya and Kanoya East and then circling just south of Kushira airfield to west of Kanoya airfield and then east across Kanoya airfield and out across Ariake Bay to Rally Point. Spare flight followed the B-25 bombers on their run, flying mutual support with yellow flight, and giving the bombers top cover. Flying at 6000 feet the planes of Spare flight flew through considerable AA fire, although most of it appeared to be directed at B-25s. No enemy aircraft were observed either in air or on airfields. Spare flight reached rally point and proceeded to base without incident pencaking at 1710.

5. A. Weather - Over target 3/10 coverage, very hazy, visibility about 5 miles.

B. Communications - Satisfactory.

6. Undetermined

7. 3395 rounds 50 caliber ammunition expended.

8. Remarks - Capt. Kessler was observed to bail out at 1355 and to be picked up at 1359 by a submarine.

One (1) P-51 was observed attacking a 100 foot ship in Ariake Bay.

One enemy airplane was observed by yellow flight members to be in flames on Kanoya East airfield in northwest corner.

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

19 April 1945

FROM: Commanding Officer, 531st Fighter Squadron, AAF APO #86.  
 TO : Commanding General VII Fighter Command, AAF, APO #86.  
 THRU: Commanding Officer, 21st Fighter Group, AAF, APO #86.

531st Squadron Mission No. 4-5.  
 21st Fighter Group Mission No. 4-7.  
 VII Fighter Command Mission No. 126.

MISSION REPORT

1. A. 20 P-51D20s  
 B. In Air - 1 Myrt, 2 Topsys, 1 Tabby, 1 High wing monoplane, 1 Trainer  
 On Ground - 35 unidentified planes, 20 Trainers, 1 Nate, 10 Tonys.
2. A. 1 P-51D20  
 B. In Air - 2 Topsys, 1 Myrt, 1 Tabby, 1 Trainer, 1 Highwing monoplane,  
 Destroyed.  
 On Ground - 5 Trainers, 4 Tonys, Destroyed.  
 1 Nate probably destroyed.
3. Fighter Aircraft of 21st Fighter Group will attack targets on or about  
 Atsugi Airfield, Japan while 15th Fighter Group provides top cover Per  
 VII Fighter Command F.O: #55.
4. Red Flight  
 Major Harry C. Crim, Jr!  
 2nd Lt. Henry J. Koke  
 1st Lt. Cecil C. Drinnen  
 2nd Lt. Arthur R. Beckington  
  
 Blue Flight  
 Capt. Charles G. Betz  
 2nd Lt. Wado W. Fehr  
 1st Lt. Howard J. Lindsay (Abortive)  
 2nd Lt. Theodore H. Fox  
  
 Yellow Flight  
 Capt. Fredrick J. Gibson  
 2nd Lt. Dale F. Meyer  
 1st Lt. John F. Galbraith  
 2nd Lt. John C. Wilson  
  
 Green Flight  
 Capt. Floyd L. Manning  
 2nd Lt. Harry B. DeRieux  
 1st Lt. William J. Fenker (Abortive)  
 2nd Lt. Floyd E. Rice (Abortive)  
  
 Spare Flight  
 Capt. Howard J. Kendall  
 2nd Lt. Richard B. Woolley  
 1st Lt. Louis C. Spillman, Jr. (Abortive)  
 2nd Lt. Jack Counts (Abortive)  
  
 Sub Cover  
 Capt. Robert I. Mallin  
 Capt. Grover C. Sayer  
 2nd Lt. Herbert S. Straughn  
 2nd Lt. Roxford W. Parfitt

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Time of Take Off: 0719 to 0725  
Sub Cover Flight: 0741 to 0743

Over Target: 1130 to 1155

Time of Landing: 1445

Abortives:

Green (3) Three, 1st Lt. William J. Fenker, O-692898, Flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63953, abortive on take off. Engine cut out.

Green (4) four, 2nd Lt. Floyd E. Rice, O-524621, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63384, abortive engine was cutting out just as he was leaving ground, continued to cut out in traffic pattern as he circled for landing. Pancaked 0726.

Spare (3) Three, 1st Lt. Louis C. Spillman, Jr., O-807636, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63781, abortive left belly tank would not draw gas. Pancaked 0800.

Spare (4) four, 2nd Lt. Jack Counts, O-714886, Flying P-51D Serial No. 44-63426, abortive returned with 1st Lt. Louis C. Spillman, Jr., Pancaked 0800.

Blue (3) three, 1st Lt. Joseph M. Lindsay, O-692170, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63787, abortive engine rough and on return cutting out. Pancaked 0812.

Narrative:

Per VII Fighter Command F.O. #55, 16 P-51Ds and 4 spares plus 4 P-51Ds to act as cover for air sea rescue submarine of the 531st Fighter Squadron joined with the 72nd and 46th Fighter Squadrons airplanes to compose the 21st Fighter Group unit of 52 aircraft to attack aircraft in the air and on the ground at Atsugi, Airfield, Japan while 15th Fighter Group aircraft supplied top cover.

531st Fighter Squadron airplanes were airborne 0719 to 0725 from Central Airfield Iwo Jima. They rendezvoused with B-29s navigators over Kita Rock at 0800. The four flights (15 Airplanes) proceeded at altitude of 10,00 feet to Fuji San. Leaving Fuji San on a vector, estimated at 50° the four flights apparently were on a course north of where they intended to be and in looking for their reference point the Sagami River, mistook the Tama River for the Sagami, and flew down the Tama River from a point somewhere in the vicinity of Hachioki on the deck attacking aircraft, airfields and other targets and breaking out into Tokyo Bay South of Tama River mouth. Yokohama was strafed from north end to south end from on the deck altitude. Shipping in Tokyo Bay was also attacked. Six airplanes are claimed destroyed in air and seven claimed destroyed on ground and 1 probably destroyed on ground.

All but (1) one of our planes reached the Rally point and returned to base safely. Lt. Beckington did not return. His plane was seen pouring smoke from the left exhaust stacks by Lt. Fox in Tama River Area. Capt. Betz reports seeing the plane at 100 feet altitude in a chandele to the right, climbing at a high rate of speed. It is believed his plane had been hit by AA fire. No further information has been obtained on him.

Individual Flight Narratives follow:

Red Flight - Leaving Fuji San, on a course estimated 50°, Red Flight crossed a lake then picked out a river that they thought was Sagami River, but is believed to have been the Tama River. They dropped down to the deck across an airfield, rectangular in shape, with at least 35 aircraft, various types single and twin engine, but were too late observing it to strafe it. Heading down river, on the deck, strafing two town areas very close together, they observed there fire to hit what looked to be transformers on electric light poles and power lines causing them to burst into flames, electric trains, barracks buildings, and trucks on streets. Two

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pilots report they flew under electric power lines. Two very devastated areas were crossed apparently the results of B-29 bombing. Coming out across Tokyo Bay at 100 feet a Myrt was observed heading north across Red Flights course. Major Crim, Lt. Drinnen and Lt. Fox in that order put bursts into the Myrt after which it was seen to crash. Red Flight then flew across the peninsula southeast of Tokyo Bay and turned south to rally point.

Blue Flight - Flight missed Atsugi Airfield and flew on deck down Tama River valley, strafing a barracks building, 2 factories, power house, electric train, a troop concentration, 4 power lines, 1 plane on the ground and 1 administration building with 6 soldiers in the doorway. At mouth of Tama River, they turned south and strafed Yokohama from North end to south end from very low level, one pilot reporting having flown under a power line. Good results were reported from this strafing, the power lines having emitted showers of blue sparks. At south end of Yokohama, they turned east out over the bay, where, Capt. Kendall shot down a Topsy off Futtsu Saki. This kill was seen by his wingman, Lt. Fox, Capt. Betz and Lt. Fehr also saw another plane of the same type go down in the same vicinity, believed to be the one claimed by Capt. Manning of Green Flight. Then they turned south out mouth of Tokyo Bay past Kisarazu airfield to the rally point.

Blue Flight Reports on AA fire as follows near Chofu airfield they encountered 25 and 40 MM. AA fire, low and intense. As the flight ahead went over, 3 land mines were set off but failed to do any damage to our aircraft. Between Tokyo and Yokohama, black AA puffs appeared at 100 ft. altitude. Over Tokyo bay, machine gun tracers were directed at the flight. Capt. Betz returned with a hole 4" across in his right aileron, and the leading edge of his left horizontal stabilizer was damaged as a result of a collision with some object on the ground.

Yellow Flight - Leaving Fuji San on an estimated vector 50° Flight headed across a lake, believed to be Yamanaka Ko, and down a Valley between two ridges of mountains, over a bend in the Sagami River, at 4000 feet, an enemy aircraft, small twin engine, possible transport type Tabby, was observed to crash. Climbing up to 5000 feet a highwing monoplane, possibly an observation type was sighted. All four members of the flight fired at it, Lts. Galbraith and Wilsons fire being the effective fire. The plane exploded and was seen to crash. A biplane, appeared to be a trainer, was observed and fired at. The biplane crashed to the ground, not it is believed from being hit but from being scared or ran into the ground. Continuing on down river at minimum altitude, Yellow flight fired into power lines, a factory, trucks and came over an airfield believed to be Chofu Airfield. It was a rectangular grass strip with at least 20 airplanes, Tonys, trainers and one 4 engine plane. Capt. Gibson hit three trainers observing them to burst into flames. Lt. Galbraith from 50 feet saw pieces flying from two Tonys his fire hit and destroyed. Lt. Wilson observed his fire to hit two Tonys around engines, wings and landing gear. Planes did not burn but were chewed up by fire. Lt. Meyer, got his fire on a Nate and observed one wing to drop to ground. No AA fire was received.

From Chofu Airfield on down Tama River another field was crossed. The field was on the south side of the river. A Tower markedly stood out. To the north of the tower 15 trainers were observed on ground while to the south lay the main airfield. Two of the trainers were set on fire and destroyed by Capt. Gibsons fire. The coast was crossed into Tokyo Bay between Tokyo and Yokohama. Capt Gibson reports that he observed an island just off of Futtsu Saki. Island appeared to be 50 feet high and 200 feet long and appeared to be built up with fresh earth into shape of a truncated pyramid. At least 100 landing craft were observed seemingly practicing landing operations. Craft were amphibious, tracked and carried estimated 20 men per craft.

At the mouth of Tokyo Bay, a 30 or 40 foot barbe type ship with sail and carrying metal tanks in rear was strafed by Lt. Meyer. Bursts hit tanks and ship blew up.

A ship about 100 feet long believed Baker Tare Type was strafed.

A DD was sighted at 34°55' N. Lat. and 137°47' E. Long. at tip of peninsula. It fired 10 or 12 rounds at long range as airplanes passed.

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



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Green Flight + Green Flight in target area now consisting of Capt. Manning Lt. De Rieux, Capt. Kendall, Lt. Woolley. Passed Atsugi Airfield before it was sighted, so the flight continued on and strafed a barracks area east of the airfield. Then they dropped to minimum altitude and flew down the Tama River valley, strafing all the way. They hit several factories and electric railway engines in the valley, then flew out over Tokyo bay where they attacked a 100 foot flat bottom boat in the bay. Several aircraft were seen burning on Haneda airfield at the mouth of the river. Lt. Woolley and Capt. Manning saw two Topsy's over the bay. Capt. Manning made a pass at one and started an engine smoking. On a second pass, it started to fall apart and go down. Lt. Woolley saw the plane lose altitude, smoking, and heading for the water. Capt. Manning saw the other Topsy going down, smoking, also. This other evidently was the one claimed by Capt. Kendall. Then the flight headed for the rally point, crossing the peninsula southeast of Tokyo Bay. This flight reports moderate AA opposition, consisting of black bursts at 100 to 200 feet and 25 MM tracers. Many flashes were seen on the ground presumably small arms fire. On the return trip, at 1235, a large, fire with much white smoke was seen about 175 miles South of Nojima Saki as the flight passed at 10,000 feet.

Cover Flight - This flight rendezvoused with B-29 navigators over Kita Rock, and flew to the rally point at 10,000 feet. At the rally point they covered the submarine at 5000 feet, and left with the last B-29 with 5 other P-51s. Visibility in the vicinity of the rally point was about 6 miles.

5. A. Weather - Over target 6/10 coverage, bases 5000 feet, visibility 6 miles. Enroute - High scattered clouds.
- B. Communications - Good from plane to plane - Bad over Iwo, poor readability.
6. Undetermined.
7. 25,500 rounds of 50 caliber expended.  
Gas Consumption
8. None

StatementsDESTRUCTION OF AIRPLANE "MYRT" IN THE AIR.Statement of Major Harry C. Crim, Jr. O-659669.

While crossing Tokyo Bay from Yokohama South Eastward we (4 plane flight) sighted a Myrt headed North across our course. I pulled in stern and fired three bursts with only two (2) guns working getting hits at right wing root. The Myrt pushed over so I pulled up to right no seeing it again.

*Harry C. Crim, Jr.*  
Harry C. Crim, Jr.  
Major, Air Corps O-659669.

Statement of Capt. Charles G. Betz, O-794460.

After hearing Capt. Crim calling in a bandit at 2 o'clock high I turned to the right and started to make a head on pass at the Myrt. I observed Lt. Drinnen just pulling off from the Myrt and Lt. Fox just closing in. Lt. Fox's fire came close to my left wing so I turned to the left and down and last saw the Myrt in a steep spiral about 50 feet above the water. Lt. Fox's fire definitely caused severe damage to the Myrt and in my estimation was impossible for him to level off so close to the water in his diving altitude.

*Charles G. Betz*  
Charles G. Betz, O-794460  
Captain, Air Corps.

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Statement of 1st Lt. Cecil C. Drinnen, O-806636.

As we came off the target area we spotted an aircraft on the east side of the bay and Major Crim made a short pass firing a short burst. I observed hits on the right wing root and right side of cowling the aircraft did a violent pushover and Major Crim broke away and his wing man Lt. Koke broke with him without firing then I fired the remainder of my ammunition at him observing a few hits in tail section. Lt. Fox then followed him down firing at him.

*Cecil C. Drinnen*  
Cecil C. Drinnen, O-806636,  
1st Lt., Air Corps.

Statement of 2nd Lt. Theodore H. Fox, O-2057598.

Upon leaving the target area I became separated from Saltwater Blue Flight and took number four (4) position in Saltwater Red Flight. A bogey was sighted at 12 o'clock on a Northeastern heading 200 feet over Tokyo Bay. Major Crim fired a burst at which time the Myrt pushed over and leveled off at 20 feet. I fired two (2) long bursts and observed hits on the cockpit and right engine cowling at which time the plane started to smoke and nosed over into the Bay.

*Theodore H. Fox*  
Theodore H. Fox, O-2057598,  
2nd Lt., Air Corps.

DESTRUCTION OF AIRPLANE "TOPSY" IN THE AIR.Statement of Capt. Howard J. Kendall, O-677051.

Upon leaving the Yokohama district I headed across Tokyo Bay. On the same course about four miles ahead Major Crim with four P-51's made passes on one enemy aircraft. Results unobserved.

Looking away to the west I saw, at about 1000 feet, a Topsy flying straight and level on a course of approximately 90 degrees.

By this time I had acquired a wingman, Lt. DeRieux. We turned into the Topsy head on. He observed us and made a diving turn to the right. At about an 80 degree deflection I was in range and fired closing in to about 50 yards breaking away below and heading back on course of 180 degrees.

I fired about 50 to 100 rounds from one gun in my right wing.

Lt. DeRieux claims that as he passed by behind me the left engine of the Topsy was on fire, the cockpit (cabin) windows were shattered and the fuselage riddled. He watched the plane turn over on its back and spiral down to the water. Capt. Betz also in the vicinity saw the Topsy turn over and go down.

*Howard J. Kendall*  
Howard J. Kendall, O-677051,  
Captain, Air Corps.

Statement of 2nd Lt. Harry B. DeRieux, O-830424.

Leaving the Tokyo - Yokohama district I observed three P-51's ahead of me. I was in the process of joining on one of these (which I later discovered was Capt. Kendall) when I saw a Topsy 1000 feet above us and to the right. Capt. Kendall turned into the Topsy which also turned into him. I noticed strikes about the pilots compartment and in the left wing root of the Topsy from Capt. Kendall's fire. I also turned into the Topsy that was by now, coming down at about a 45 degree angle. I came head on and fired, but I did not have but two or three rounds of fire from but one gun. I observed no results of this action. My plane came close enough to the Topsy to observe the windshield shattered, holes in the fuselage and tail surfaces, and the left engine smoking. I watched the Topsy spiral down to the water of Tokyo Bay roll on its back and continue its dive into the water.

*Harry B. DeRieux*  
Harry B. DeRieux, O-830424,  
2nd Lt., Air Corps.

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DESTRUCTION OF ONE (1) TABBY, ONE (1) HIGHWING MONOPLANE, ONE (1) TRAINER.Statement of Capt. Fredrick J. Gibson, O-730450.

At about 1100, we had left Fuji San and vectored 050 until we came out over the plains west of Tokyo. As our time on vector ran out, I noticed a twin engine plane at about 4000 feet, 5 miles to the right at one o'clock. The Squadron Commander, dispatched Blue Flight to attack this bogie, but, Blue Flight failed to hear transmission. Consequent my flight being the nearest, we gave pursuit. A quick climbing turn to the right brought us out upon the bogie tail, dead astern. Firing a trial burst, I saw the range was correct. I let go a three second burst, and pieces of the plane came off. As I passed his left side, I saw fire start in the left engine and I noticed many holes in his fuselage. I couldn't see in the window along the side of the plane. I made a climbing turn to the right and watched him burn and crash into the ground. Reversing the right turn, I signaled for a rejoin and I noticed a monoplane low investigating the fire of the Tabby. I made a high, overhead, up sun pass but my speed was too great for a pursuit curve, consequently he received only insignificant hits from me. Climbing to the right, I observed his plane to crash and burn, which, I think, was due to Lt. Galbraith's fire. Looking up I noticed a biplane investigating these two fires while in a gentle turn to the left. Sucking in behind him, again my speed was too great and my hits were meager and in the tail surfaces. Pulling up to the left, I noticed Lt. Meyers and Lt. Wilson firing on his plane which crashed and burned not far from the other two crashes.

*Fredrick J. Gibson*  
 Fredrick J. Gibson, O-730450,  
 Captain, Air Corps.

Statement of 2nd Lt. Dale F. Meyer, O-2059335.

I was flying No. 2 in yellow flight and when Capt. Gibson (my flight leader) made a climbing turn to the right, I followed in close trail. Instantly upon becoming straight and level, I saw Capt. Gibson's guns fire a short trial burst, then immediately a longer burst (approximately 3 to 4 seconds). Directly in front of us and at approximately 1000 feet was this twin engine bogie, we were dead astern. After Capt. Gibson's burst and his quick pull up I saw his hits in the left engine and a fire start immediately. Also there were parts flying off and many bullet holes in wing roots and fuselage. I shot a one to two second burst, but did not observe hits from my guns. When range became too short I pushed over and immediately joined Capt. Gibson and looking back saw the enemy plane burn and crash to the ground. Again we started down and this time after a monoplane, believed to be an observation plane. This plane was very low, both Capt. Gibson and myself were closing in very fast on a right hand curve of pursuit. After Capt. Gibson's short burst I fired a short burst observed small inconsequential hits. Then again joining Capt. Gibson I saw plane crash into the ground and burn. Apparently being hit by other two men in our flight. Immediately we again started after a biplane, being on the inside of Capt. Gibson and curve of pursuit I fired approximately same time as flight leader only much longer burst saw tracers hit plane from my guns then a burst from another plane below me, believed to be Lt. Wilson. Never saw plane again until it had crashed and was burning.

*Dale F. Meyer*  
 Dale F. Meyer, O-2059335,  
 2nd Lt., Air Corps.

Statement of 1st Lt. John F. Galbraith, O-638814.

The Squadron left Mt. Fuji on vector of approximately 55° due to cloud cover and dense haze. Atsugi was not seen and we continued on until the Squadron Commander saw an airfield at 3 o'clock low. He called for a turn

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towards the field, (the squadron was to execute a line abreast formation at his time) and as we dove towards the field the Squadron Commander told one flight to take the bogie which was high about 2 O'clock from our flight which consisted of Capt. Gibson, wing man Lt. Meyer, Lt. Galbraith, wing man Lt. Wilson. We immediately pulled up in a climbing turn to the right after him. As we were indicating 350-375 at time of pull up we rapidly closed on him in a four plane string formation. I observed Capt. Gibson's fire strike the enemy A/C about the wing root and over the fuselage, the enemy A/C was starting to burn and as he turned to the right out of control I blew off the tail assembly with a long burst. I claim this A/C as destroyed by Capt. Gibson alone. As I pulled away from this A/C he was burning fiercely an enormous flame as long as the fuselage trailed behind it. Capt. Gibson and Lt. Meyer pulled up immediately and started in a steep dive towards a brightly painted (orange) high wing monoplane, they both fired at 90° deflection getting possibly a few hits. I followed on it from a lesser altitude, the enemy A/C was approximately 1500 feet high, at a range of not more than 200 yards I opened fire, leading him three quarters of one radii I held my fire on until he flew into it, the fire disintegrated him and I pulled up. I claim this A/C as destroyed. As I pulled up I observed a small biplane trainer at 5 o'clock, Capt. Gibson fired at it a second or so later. I did not observe hits on this A/C but did see it hit a hedgerow and burn.

*John F. Galbraith*  
 John F. Galbraith, O-688814,  
 1st Lt., Air Corps,

Statement of 2nd Lt. John D. Wilson, O-770503.

A few seconds after turning off our Dogleg from Fuji, our Squadron began its power letdown prior to the strafing run over the target. At that time a bogie was called out, and the squadron commander asked for a flight to go off to the right and take care of it. We had high speed and so closed upon the plane rapidly from its right. It was climbing and speed was probably little over 100 MPH. Falling into a string, our flight made its pass on it. No. 1 man appeared to fire about a 1½ second burst and the plane started a climbing turn to the right, into us. I saw no bullet strikes. No. 2 man fired a shorter burst and pushed over, and again I saw no strike. My element leader, No. 3 man fired a long burst and I could see strike on the rear portion of the fuselage and the tail with pieces flying off. Flashes of light could be clearly seen where the bullets hit, but no flame was visible to me. Its left engine and wing were observed to me. I started firing a little before No. 3 man stopped and fired about 3½ seconds, closing to within 75 yards. I could observe strike around the forward portion of the fuselage, right wing root and engine. I stopped firing when the plane blew up, as should be shown in GSAP films. The plane appeared to be an Old DC-2, painted olive with large red roundels on wing and fuselage.

Continuing in a climbing turn to the left, in string, our flight made a pass on another plane, flying north. No. 1 and No. 2 men made very short 90° deflection passes, firing short burst. I saw no strike and the plane started a lazy turn into us, to its right. No. 3 man fired a burst and I could see the flash of strike on its fuselage. I fired about a 3 second burst at 45° deflection, closing to about 80 yards firing. I could observe strike along the center of its high single wing and upon the top of the fuselage and engine cowling, or the portion directly behind the engine. I ceased firing when it exploded and passed about fifty feet behind the cloud of burning material. The plane was a high wing monoplane resembling our old O-38. It was painted bright yellow or orange with red roundels.

The third plane was a biplane which we fired upon from a considerable distance while it was close to the ground. I observed no hits from anyone's fire, but the plane crashed straight into the ground and burned.

I observed all three of these planes to hit the ground, two in flames, one burning immediately afterward.

*John D. Wilson*  
 John D. Wilson, O-770503,  
 2nd Lt., Air Corps.

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PROBABLE DESTRUCTION OF AIRPLANE "NATE" ON GROUND.Statement of 2nd Lt. Dale F. Meyer, O-2059335.

Flying line abreast (spread out) with Capt. Gibson we came across air field. I picked out, directly in front of me, a plane on the ground. From head on appeared to be a "Nate". My first burst was short, then hugging the ground made a 2 to 3 second burst good, observing strikes on landing struts and engine. Failing to see if plane burned, as was very necessary to pull up. Definitely damaged plane.

*Dale F. Meyer*Dale F. Meyer, O-2059335,  
2nd Lt., Air Corps.DESTRUCTION OF "BARGE" IN TOKYO BAY.Statement of 2nd Lt. Dale F. Meyer, O-2059335.

After flying for about 2 to 3 minutes over Tokyo Bay I sighted a barge with sail on, but had large metal tanks on stern. I fired a short burst and craft exploded and burned. Burst were into stern of barge, where the explosion and fire immediately started.

*Dale F. Meyer*Dale F. Meyer, O-2059335,  
2nd Lt., Air Corps.DESTRUCTION OF AIRPLANE "TOPSY" IN AIR.Statement of Capt. Floyd L. Manning, O-799604.

Coming across a Topsy in Tokyo Bay I made a front quartering attack and observed smoke coming from his right engine. On the second pass I looked back and saw the plane coming apart and going down.

I was alone in attacking the plane but was covered by three other friends. I did not see the plane I shot crash but on climbing to join the shadows I looked back and saw an object in the water which I assumed was it.

*Floyd L. Manning*Floyd L. Manning, O-799604,  
Captain, Air Corps.Statement of Capt. Charles G. Betz, O-794460.

Saw one Topsy type plane and started after him. I then noticed some of our planes making a pass from above him. Being below, I turned away. Looking back I saw a splash in the water near where the Topsy had been flying. The lead plane in the formation, believed to be Capt Manning was closing in firing when I last saw the Topsy.

*Charles G. Betz*Charles G. Betz, O-794460,  
Captain, Air Corps.Statement of 2nd Lt. Wade W. Fehr, O-2059261.

Capt. Betz and I were on a course of 90° from Yokohama over Tokyo Bay. We were at 100 feet when we saw one (1) Topsy at approximately 300 feet. We turned into it when we saw one (1) P-51 making a pass on it and another P-51 some distance behind. I saw the left engine smoke as we returned to our original course.

*Wade W. Fehr*Wade W. Fehr, O-2059261,  
2nd Lt., Air Corps.C O N F I D E N T I A L



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DESTRUCTION OF FIVE (5) TRAINER AIRPLANES ON THE GROUND.Statement of Capt. Fredrick J. Gibson, O-730450.

Diving down to tree top level after leaving previously described plane crashes. I fired on power lines, two factory buildings and several trucks. This brought me between the two factory buildings. Ahead I could see an airfield on which were parked many airplanes. I chose one for a target, fired, but the burst was short. Raising my sights, the next burst caught the plane squarely, he burst into flames and exploded. The explosion carried burning fuel onto two adjacent planes which also burned and exploded. After leaving this airfield, we shortly came upon another one. There was a row of trainer type planes parked nose-to-tail. Pushing over and firing my burst caught the far end two and they both exploded and burned.

*Fredrick J. Gibson*  
Fredrick J. Gibson, O-730450,  
Captain, Air Corps.

DESTRUCTION OF TWO (2) AIRPLANES "TONYS" ON GROUND.Statement of 1st Lt. John F. Galbraith, O-688814.

While flying along the river between where we had the engagement and the harbor area of Yokohama I observed a large airfield on the left side of the river (going downstream). This airfield had a distinctive shape which I later identified as Chofu Airfield. At the extreme SW corner I saw 8 to 10 single engine fighters parked wing to wing, they appeared to be Tonys. I immediately pushed over and strafed from 800 feet down to approximately 75 feet concentrating my fire on the two end planes, I observed hits all over the fuselage and wings. Pieces flew off but no explosion occurred, though possibly they burned after I pulled away. I claim these planes as definitely nonoperational and irreparable.

*John F. Galbraith*  
John F. Galbraith, O-688814,  
1st Lt., Air Corps.

DESTRUCTION OF TWO (2) AIRPLANES "TONY" AND "NICK OR IRVING".Statement of 2nd Lt. John D. Wilson, O-770503.

During our strafing run we passed over a square dirt and grass airfield with about a dozen or more Tony type fighters on it. I saw my element leader destroy two, without their bursting into flames, and I shot on Tony, observing hits on the engine, wing and landing gear, which crumpled on my side. It did not burn. A few seconds later, I shot up an Irving or Nick which was parked off the field. I saw hits around its cockpit and right engine but was unable to observe entire of damage or if it burst.

*John D. Wilson*  
John D. Wilson, O-770503,  
2nd Lt., Air Corps,

A TRUE COPY OF MISSION REPORT:

*Leon F. Weit*  
LEON F. WEIT,  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
Adjutant.

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FROM: CO Fiteron Five Three One

TO : CO Fitergr 21st Fighter Group

22 April 1945.

531st Fighter Squadron Mission No. 4-6  
21st Fighter Group Mission No. 4-MISSION REPORT

1. A. 20 P-51D20s  
B. In Air - 1 Oscar, 1 Oscar or Zeke, 1 Mavis.  
On Akenogahara Airfield - 50 A/C estimated - Zekes, Tonys, Irvings, and other single and twin engine types.
2. A. None  
B. In Air - 1 Oscar Destroyed.  
On Ground - 1 Tony, 1 Irving, 1 unidentified destroyed.  
9 Tonys, 2 T/E damaged.
3. Fighter Aircraft of 21st Fighter Group will provide top cover while aircraft of the 15th Fighter Group attack Suzuka Airfield, Nagoya Area, Japan per VII Fighter Command F.O. #62.
4. Red Flight  
Capt. Robert I. Mallin  
2nd Lt. Paul E. Schurr  
1st Lt. Charles Provost, Jr.  
2nd Lt. Herbert S. Straughn  
  
Blue Flight  
Capt. William H. Benton, Jr.  
2nd Lt. Bennet J. Erickson  
1st Lt. Frank L. Seymour  
2nd Lt. John M. Wyles (abortive)  
  
Yellow Flight  
Capt. Thomas W. Lewis  
2nd Lt. Roy K. Shoemaker  
2nd Lt. Conrad E. Mattson  
2nd Lt. Earl D. Crutchfield, Jr.  
  
Green Flight  
Capt. William B. Smith  
2nd Lt. William N. Steel  
1st Lt. Richard S. Davis  
2nd Lt. Irvin P. Skansen

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## Sub Cover Flight

Major Robert L. McDonald (abortive)  
2nd Lt. Billy Griffin  
1st Lt. Albert B. Davis  
2nd Lt. Floyd E. Rice (abortive)

## Spare Flight

Major Harry C. Crim, Jr.  
F/O Armand G. Rowley (abortive)  
1st Lt. Robert H. Moody (abortive)  
2nd Lt. Jack Counts

Time of Take Off: 0850 to 0859  
Over Target : 1220 to 1235  
Time of Landing : 1502

## Abortives:

Blue four (4), 2nd Lt. John M. Wyles, O-770510, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-64000, abortive on take off. Engine cut out.

Sub Cover one (1), Major Robert L. McDonald, O-429832, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63787, abortive engine cutting out, pancaked 1002.

Spare two (2), F/O Armand G. Rowley, T-63035, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63781, ordered to return as spare. Pancaked 1005.

Spare three (3), 1st Lt. Robert E. Moody, O-806722, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63987, ordered to return as spare. Pancaked 1005.

Sub Cover four (4), 2nd Lt. Floyd E. Rice, O-824821, flying P-51D, Serial No. 44-63413, abortive, couldn't keep up with less than 2200 RPMs. Engine rought between 2200 and 2400 RPMs. Pancaked 1045.

## NARRATIVE:

Per VII Fighter Command F.O. #62, P-51s and 4 spares plus 4 P51Ds to act as cover for air-sea rescue submarine of the 531st Fighter Squadron joined with the 72nd and 46th Fighter Squadrons Airplanes to compose the 21st Fighter Group unit of 52 aircraft to provide top cover for aircraft of the 15th Fighter Group attacking Susuka Airfield Nagoya Area, Japan.

531st Fighter Squadron Airplanes were airborne 0850 to 0859 from Central Airfield, Iwo Jima. They rendezvoused with B-29 navigators

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at 0935, 110 miles N of Iwo Jima and proceeded to target at 10,000 feet altitude. The navigators and submarine cover flight left fighters 30 miles off the South coast of Honshu, the fighters proceeding to the Empire. Four (4) flights (16) sixteen planes went into target area, approaching over the entrance into Ise Bay, and turning 270° along the south coast of Honshu, searching for a landmark. Seeing they were missing the target area they reversed course and then swept north along the west coast of Ise Bay passing over Akenogahara Airfield, where they observed the 15th Fighter Group strafing the airfield, and went on up the coast about 10 miles. Then turning back, they made a strafing run across Akenogahara Airfield and continued on south crossing the coast in the vicinity of the town of Hamajima, arriving at the rally point at 1245. All planes returned to Iwo.

Approaching Akenogahara Airfield from the NW, Capt. Mallin, Blue Flight leader, closed on an Oscar and got hits behind the cockpit and into the engine. The Oscar was observed to crash by several flight members. This action occurring almost over the field left Capt. Mallin in such a position he was unable to accompany his flight down on a strafing run. The rest of Blue flight strafed across the field. On the strafing run Lt. Straughn's fire damaged a Silver Tony, Lt. Provost's fire damaged two (2) T/E aircraft on the southwest corner of the field.

Yellow flight, leader reports seeing an estimated 50 single and twin engine planes on the field. On the strafing run Capt. Lewis destroyed one Irving, one Tony, and damaged eight more Tonys. Lts. Mattson and Crutchfield observing this action. Lt. Mattson set fire to a small - tailed unidentified aircraft in a hangar. A barracks and a power line around the field also were strafed.

Capt. Benton observed 10 planes burning on the field, apparently the results of strafing by the 15th Group, and also a large fire in hangar and shop area. A plane being chased by a flight of the 15th Group was observed to crash just southwest of the field.

On south from the field, a factory and truck on a bridge were strafed, also a town was given a burst when small arms fire was seen coming from it.

Reaching the coast in the vicinity of Hamajima, Red and Blue flights strafed a small harbor area. There were many small fishing craft and one barge. Also Red flight reports strafing two large cargo vessels, wooden and about 200 foot long, doing them some damage. Blue flight reports strafing 2 ships and 5 miles off coast Hamajima. Both appeared to be about 200 feet long. One a tanker was seen to explode and was left in a sinking condition. The other a wooden freighter was left burning furiously.

Green and Yellow Flights had turned East and left the coast at Nakiri. Yellow Flight strafed a barge and several sampans. Green Flight strafed a 150 foot cargo ship which was already burning and

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heading toward Nakiri. A burning dredge was also seen about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile off shore. Another 75 foot ship was strafed and damaged.

Lt. Schurr of Red Flight observed a Mavis as they left coast on their way to Rally Point.

AA fire over the land was meager, inaccurate, machine gun and small arms fire.

Sub cover flight arrived at Rally Point at 1205. The superdumbo was already there above the surfaced submarine. One pilot of the 15th Group sub cover flight was observed to bail out at 1230. The submarine reached him in from 5 to 7 minutes, but Lt. Griffin reports overhearing a conversation between the superdumbo and the submarine to the effect that they had arrived about a minute too late. Sub cover flight returned with navigators.

5. A. Weather - Over Target - Few Clouds, high and hazy, 4 to 6 mile visibility.  
B. Communications - Good.
6. Undetermined.
7. Ammunition Expended - 13,600 rounds of 50 caliber.  
Gasoline Consumption.
8. Remarks. Sub cover leader reports that he heard a call from one Cloudhopper to another Cloudhopper for him to turn on DU and that the reply was no, that it would bring the Jap Air Force down on them. After some argument DU was turned on.

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Statements of 531st Fighter Squadron Mission No. 4-6.

DESTRUCTION OF AIRPLANE "OSCAR" IN THE AIR.

Statement of Capt. Robert I. Mallin, O-727496.

As we approached Akenogahara Airfield from the north (April 22, 1945) sighted an Oscar several miles ahead traveling in same direction. Closed on him and fired several bursts. Pieces were seen to fall off right wing and bullett seen to go into cockpit. I broke off and couldn't see whether he crashed or not. All Flights following saw him crash into ground.

Statement of Major Harry U. Crim, Jr., O-659669.

Just north of the airfield, I saw Capt. Mallin shooting at an Oscar. It dived into the ground, and a big cloud of black smoke rose from the spot.

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Statement of Capt. William H. Benton, Jr., O-886221.

Two or three miles north of airfield, I saw bogey and turned, putting Capt. Mallin on the bogey's tail. I saw him start shooting, and saw the Oscar go into a slight spiral dive, and watched it until it hit the ground, where it blew up.

DESTRUCTION OF I TONY AND I IRVING ON GROUND AND DAMAGING 8 OTHERS.

Statement of Capt. Thomas W. Lewis, O-730543.

On a strafing run on Akenogahara Airfield I strafed 3 groups of airplanes, 2 twin engined aircraft in the first group, about 4 silver Tonys in the 2nd group, and 5 silver Tonys in the 3rd group. I observed tracers going into at least 8 aircraft although I only saw 1 Tony and 1 twin engine plane to start smoking and burning.

Statement of 2nd Lt. Conrad E. Mattson, O-758830.

I was flying number three position in Yellow Flight. We started our strafing run on Akenogahara Airfield from the northwest which brought us in approximately 90° to the runway.

Capt. Lewis, the flight leader, was shortly in front and to the left of me. He started firing and immediately I noticed a twin engined plane burst into flames which I identified to be a Irving. Meanwhile, Capt. Lewis had swung to the left down the runway firing at a group of about eight Tonys, leaving one of them burning. I observed this while turning fairly sharp to the left after pulling up over the hangar.

The Flight then turned North, we stayed on the "deck" and after reaching the ocean we climbed to the rally point.

Statement of 2nd Lt. Earl D. Crutchfield, Jr. O-2054131.

While my flight was making a strafing run on Akenogahara Airfield, April 22, 1945 I saw my flight leader, Capt. Lewis, strafe 1 Tony on the ground and saw the Tony burst into flame. Capt. Lewis also made passes at several other Tonys, but results were not observed.

DESTRUCTION OF AIRPLANE "TONY" ON THE GROUND.

Statement of 2nd Lt. Conrad E. Mattson, O-758830.

While strafing Akenogahara Airfield I started to fire at a Tony which looked to be sitting just inside of a hangar. Just before pulling up over the hangar I saw the Tony burst into flame.

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



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

Page six of 531st Fighter Squadron Mission No. 4-6.

Statement of 2nd Lt. Earl D. Crutchfield, Jr., O-2054131.

While my flight was making a strafing run on Akenogahara Airfield, April 22nd, I saw Lt. Mattson score hits into a hangar and observed smoke and flame issuing from hangar door.

DAMAGE TO TWO TWIN-ENGINE AIRPLANES ON GROUND.

Statement of 1st Lt. Charles Provost, Jr., O-740914.

I was number 3 man in Capt. Mallin's Flight. We peeled off at 2500 feet making a strafing run on the Airfield from North to South. My first burst fell short of the SW corner of the field where I observed some SE and TE planes. I pulled my fire up into what I think were two Twin Engine planes and held it there for 2 or 3 seconds. Did not observe damage as I immediately went into evasive tactics.

DAMAGE TO AIRPLANE "TONY" ON GROUND.

Statement of 2nd Lt. Herbert S. Straughn, O-763397.

On 22 April 1945, while strafing targets on Akenogahara Airfield, I observed my tracers striking in the right wing root and cockpit section of a Tony. The plane did not catch fire or explode although I could see it wasn't going to burn I concentrated on the engine with my tracers.

ATTACK ON 2 SHIPS 5 MILES SOUTH OF HAMAJIMA.

Statement of 1st Lt. Frank L. Seymour, Jr., O-767053.

At 1230 I called out to our 3 plane flight the two vessels at 10:00 o'clock to our course. I made a strafing run on the 200 foot ship on the right and observed hits amidship. While taking evasive action leaving the target I looked back and observed white steam or smoke shooting high above the ship I had strafed and heavy black smoke enveloping the other ship. Major Crim and Capt. Benton had also made strafing attacks on the vessels a few seconds after my pass and I rejoined them soon after they came off the target.

Statement of Capt. William H. Benton, Jr., O-886221.

As we approached the 2 boats moving in opposite directions, Major Crim fired at the one on the left, and I fired on the one on the right. It was burning about the bridge from Lt. Seymour's fire, and after my pass it was burning from fore to aft, apparently an oil or gasoline fire. I then strafed the other, which had a large column of black and white smoke rising from it. As I passed over it, it blew up. As I looked back, it was definitely in a sinking condition, and the other was burning furiously.

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



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

Page seven of 531st Fighter Squadron Mission No. 4-6.

Statement of Major Harry C. Crim, Jr., O-659669.

On way to rally point, sighted 2 ships about 200 feet long, saw Lt. Seymour's fire explode the boiler of one of them. Then I made a strafing run on the other, with the same results. As I looked back, a column of black smoke rose from the one I shot at.

ATTACK ON 2 SHIPS IN HAMAJIMA HARBOR.

Statement of Capt. Robert I. Mallin, O-727496.

After leaving Akenogahara Airfield, sighted a 200 foot wooden ship in a small harbor believed to be Hamajima. I led Red Flight on a strafing run across it but did not observe damage.

Statement of 2nd Lt. Herbert S. Straughn, O-763397.

On reaching the harbor area near Hamajima Red Flight strafed two large cargo vessels of at least 200 feet and numerous smaller craft. I observed smoke coming from both of the large ships as we passed them. One of the large ships was anchored and one was under way headed out towards sea.

ATTACK ON A FREIGHTER IN A SMALL BAY ON WEST COAST OF ISE WAN ABOVE NAKIRI.

Statement of Capt. William B. Smith, O-797984.

About five minutes after leaving target (secondary) my flight was heading South over Ise Wan close to the west shore and I observed a freighter about 200 foot in length anchored in a small cove I guessed to be about 10 miles above Nakiri point, and made one pass with my wingman from 3500 feet breaking off about 1000 feet and observed good hits but did not see any fire on my pass. My element leader followed in the same type pass about 30 seconds later. They claimed good hits and smoke coming from the superstructure.

Statement of 2nd Lt. Irvin P. Skansen, O-770451.

Flying number four in Green Flight we came upon a freighter in a small bay, location unknown, but believed to be on west coast of Ise Wan slightly north of Nakiri. We all made passes and observed very good hits. Upon making my pass I observed smoke coming from the central portion of the ship and got in a good shot and left the ship smoking.

Statement of 2nd Lt. William N. Steele, O-2059858.

On mission to Honshu 22 April 1945. Our flight sighted a ship approximately 200 feet, and made strafing pass on same. I observed hits from both the Flight Leader and myself. Shortly before breaking away I observed fires towards aft end of ship.

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



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

26 April 1945.

FROM: Commanding Officer, 531st Fighter Squadron AAF APO #86.

TO : Commanding General VII Fighter Command AAF, APO #86.

THRU: Commanding Officer, 21st Fighter Group AAF, APO #86.

531st Squadron Mission No. 4-7  
 21st Fighter Group Mission No. 4-10  
 VII Fighter Command Mission No. 132

MISSION REPORT.

1. A. 16 P-51D20s  
 B. None

2.

2. A. None  
 B. None

3. Fighter Aircraft of 21st Fighter Group will establish a zone of security in Kanoya Area, Kyushu to protect a bomber force approaching from the south.

4. Red Flight  
 Lt. Col. Elmer Booth  
 2nd Lt. Wade W. Fehr  
 Major Robert L. McDonald  
 2nd Lt. John W. Cox (Abortive)

- Blue Flight  
 Capt. Floyd L. Manning  
 2nd Lt. James F. Wright  
 1st Lt. William J. Fenker (Abortive)  
 2nd Lt. Harry B. DeRieux

- Yellow Flight  
 Major Harry C. Crim, Jr.  
 2nd Lt. David M. Scotford  
 1st Lt. Joseph M. Lindsay  
 2nd Lt. Theodore H. Fox

- Green Flight  
 1st Lt. Robert H. Moody  
 F/O Armand G. Rowley  
 1st Lt. Louis C. Spillman, Jr. (Abortive)  
 2nd Lt. John M. Wyles (Abortive)

- Spare Flight  
 1st Lt. John F. Galbraith (Abortive)  
 2nd Lt. David C. Fuller  
 2nd Lt. Richard B. Wooley (Abortive)  
 2nd Lt. Dale F. Meyer (Abortive)

## ABORTIVES:

Red four (4), 2nd Lt. John W. Cox, O-829941, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63311, abortive. Belly tanks fell off as he was about to taxi to take off position.

Green four (4), 2nd Lt. John M. Wyles, O-770510, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-64000, abortive, wheels would not retract.

Spare one (1), 1st Lt. John F. Galbraith, O-688814, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63937, abortive, returned as spare. Pancaked 0715.

Spare three (3), 2nd Lt. Richard B. Wooley, O-770508, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63426, abortive, returned as spare. Pancaked 0800.

Blue four (4), 2nd Lt. Harry B. DeRieux, O-830424, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63674, abortive engine would not take low RPMs, surge and vibration, loss of power on way back and cutting out. Pancaked 0835.

Blue three (3), 1st Lt. William J. Fenker, O-692898, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63953, abortive, returned with Lt. DeRieux. Pancaked 0835.

Green three (3), 1st Lt. Louis C. Spillman, Jr., O-807636, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63781, abortive rough engine. Pancaked 0850.

Spare four (4), 2nd Lt. Dale F. Meyer, O-2059335, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63933, abortive, returned with Lt. Spillman, pancaked 0850.

Time of Take off - 0641 to 0646  
 Over Target - 1055 to 1120  
 Time of landing - 1414

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



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

Page two of 531st Fighter Squadron Mission No. 4-7

## NARRATIVE --

Per VII Fighter Command F.O. #68, 16 P-51Ds and 4 spares of 531st Fighter Squadron joined with 72nd and 46th Fighter Squadrons airplanes to compose the 21st Fighter Group with a total of 52 aircraft to provide a zone of security in Kanoya Airfield, Kyushu area to protect bombers approaching from the south.

531st Fighter Squadron airplanes were airborne 0641-0646 from Central Airfield, Iwo Jima. They rendezvoused with B-29 navigators 105 miles course 305° T at 0743 and proceeded on course 10-11,000 feet to departure point arriving their at 1050. Three flights, Red, Blue, and Yellow, total of twelve (12) planes reached the target area. In target area 1055 to 1120 at 14,000 to 17,000 feet the three flights patrolled the area. The weather in target area was two layers of solid overcast with 8000 to 20,000 feet clear. B-29s were observed evidently leaving target area at 16,000 feet. Also 15th Fighter Group planes were seen in the same area. Land was only observed once through a hole in the overcast and flights were uncertain at all times of their exact position. No AA fire was observed. No enemy A/C sighted. Leaving target area at 1120, the three flights were at Rally Point 1130 to 1145 and returned to base without incident. No. A/C losses or damage were sustained by either us or the enemy.

5. A. Communications - Good
- B. Weather - Enroute 200 miles from Iwo, solid overcast, top 10,000 feet. Another overcast with base at 20,000 feet. Over Target - Two layers of overcast. Top of lower 8000 feet base of higher 20,000 feet. Visibility 6 miles.
6. None
7. Ammunition Expended - 570 rounds of 50 caliber  
Gasoline Consumption 5004 Gallons
8. None



30 April 1945

FROM: Commanding Officer, 531st Fighter Squadron AAF, #86.  
 TO: Commanding General, VII Fighter Command AAF, APO #86.  
 THRU: Commanding Officer, 21st Fighter Group AAF, APO #86.

531st Squadron Mission No. 4-8  
 21st Fighter Group Mission No. 4-11  
 VII Fighter Command Mission No. 134

MISSION REPORT

1. A. 20 P-51D20s  
 B. Airplanes - 4 Tonys, 1 S/E.  
 Shipping - 1 DD, 3 Picket Boats.
2. A. None  
 B. Airplanes - None  
 Shipping - 3 Picket Boats left in sinking condition.
3. Fighter aircraft of 21st Fighter Group will provide fighter escort at the target, Tachikawa Air Arsenal, Tokyo Area, Japan for attacking B-29s.

4. Red Flight	Blue Flight
Capt. Robert I. Mallin	Capt. William H. Benton Jr.
Capt. Grover C. Sayer	2nd Lt. Bonnet J. Erickson
2nd Lt. Paul E. Schurr	1st Lt. Frank L. Seymour
2nd Lt. Rexford W. Farfitt	2nd Lt. John M. Wyles

Yellow Flight	Green Flight
Capt. William B. Smith	1st Lt. Robert H. Moody
2nd Lt. William N. Steele	2nd Lt. Irvin P. Skansen
2nd Lt. Conrad E. Mattson	1st Lt. Albert B. Davis
2nd Lt. Billy Griffin	2nd Lt. John W. Cox

Spare Flight	Sub Cover Flight
1st Lt. Charles Provost Jr.	1st Lt. John F. Galbraith
2nd Lt. Herbert S. Straughn	2nd Lt. Dale F. Moyer
1st Lt. William J. Fenker	2nd Lt. John D. Wilson
2nd Lt. Roy K. Shoemaker	2nd Lt. Harry B. Deltieux

Time of take off - 0745 to 0752  
 Sub Cover Flight - 0830  
 Time over target - 1135 to 1155  
 Time of landing - 1415 to 1445  
 Sub Cover Flight Landed - 1530.

Spare one (1), 1st Lt. Charles Provost, Jr., O-740914, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63918, abortive, rough engine and losing power on take off.

Spare two (2) 2nd Lt. Herbert S. Straughn, O-763397, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63937, ordered to return as spare by Flight Leader Capt. Mallin. Pancaked 0930.

Spare three (3) 1st Lt. William J. Fenker, O-692897, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63953, ordered to return as spare by Flight Leader Capt. Mallin. Pancaked 0930.

Spare four (4) 2nd Lt. Roy K. Shoemaker, O-2057036, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63944, ordered to return as spare by Flight Leader Capt. Mallin. Pancaked 0930.

Sub Cover three (3) 2nd Lt. John D. Wilson, O-770507, flying P-51D20, Serial No. 44-63770, abortive, prop was throwing oil on windshield. Pancaked 0935.

## NARRATIVE:

Per VII Fighter Command F.O. #74, 16 P-51Ds and 4 spares plus 4 P-51Ds to act as sub cover for air sea rescue submarine of the 531st Fighter Squadron joined with the 72nd and 46th Fighter Squadrons airplanes to compose the 21st Fighter Group unit of 56 aircraft to provide escort for B-29 bombers attacking Tachikawa Air Arsenal in the Tokyo Area, Japan.



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

Page two of 531st Fighter Squadron Mission No. 4-5.

531st Fighter Squadron airplanes were airborne 0745 to 0752 from Central Airfield, Iwo Jima. They rendezvoused with B-29 navigators at 0815 at 9000 feet and proceeded on course 347 degrees True to departure point about 5 miles south of coast of Honshu. 15th Fighter Group and 21st Fighter Group planes circled waiting to pick up bombers. A few B-29 bombers were seen to proceed toward the target area. 15th Fighter Group planes went in first with the 21st Fighter Group following immediately.

Yellow three and four fell out at departure point and stayed with navigators when smoke was seen coming from yellow three's cockpit. The rest of Yellow and all of Green Flights then fell into a box formation with 8 planes of the 15th Group and went in to target area with them. While at 17,000 feet, Yellow and Green Flights observed four unidentified planes at 12,000 feet, at 1130, approximately over town of Hatano, believed to be Tonys. 8 P-51s of 15th Group went down too them and 12 planes were observed milling around in the area. One was observed to fall out of the group and appeared to be out of control. No gun fire was observed so it was not known for sure whether 4 planes were Tonys or other P-51s. Yellow and Green flights after penetrating to a distance of what must have been north of the Tama River changed course to 200 degrees and came out to sea over coast at Iro Saki at 6000 feet.

Red and Blue flights went in with the 21st Fighter Group. They were over land 1115 to 1200 and over target area 1135 to 1155. Blue 2 reports sighting one S/E enemy aircraft at too great a distance to identify.

All four flights rejoined at Rally Point at 1205. Only enemy aircraft sighted were four Tonys and one unidentified S/E. No AA fire was received.

Weather over Japan - Coast line was visible at landfall. Inland solid overcast tops at 5000 feet. All Tokyo Bay was overcast. Above overcast visibility unlimited.

Green Flight reports sighting one vessel, probably an enemy destroyer headed west about 150 miles south of Tokyo Bay, at 1230K.

Sub Cover Flight members were airborne at 0830. Three of them reached the rally point at 1150, number three having returned because of mechanical trouble. They replaced a flight of 72nd Squadron as Air Sea Rescue submarine cover. At 1200 they received a call from the submarine saying that three enemy picket boats were heading toward him to attack him. The flight of three airplanes attacked the picket boats about 2 miles from the submarine. The first passes were made in line abreast on a strafing run from 2000 feet to the deck, each pilot attacking a separate boat. On the initial pass all decks of the ships were cleared of personnel and the three pilots then executed a series of "lazy 8's" to put themselves in position for further passes. An average of 6 passes per pilot was made. The picket boats appeared to be 60 to 70 feet long, wooden, and armed with 20MM AA cannon in the bow. The flight then returned to cover the submarine, leaving two of the picket boats, burning and dead in the water, and the third, heading slowly for land in a crippled condition. The submarine then dispatched them to finish the third boat and they left him burning. All three were left in a sinking condition.

Sub cover flight left the submarine at 1240 and while returning observed one Oscar on Nishino, Bonin Islands, about 1/3 of way from the north end on the beach. It appeared inoperational, and also there was insufficient area for it to take off.

5. Weather - Enroute scattered clouds, clear. Over Target - coastline and Fuji San visible, other land covered with solid overcast with tops at 5000 feet. Visibility above overcast unlimited.

B. Communications - "A" band on two airplanes went out halfway to target and came in again halfway back. A DU was being transmitted on Able channel all the way to target, in target area and part of way back. One DU failed completely and smoke issued from the radio.

6. None

7. Ammunition expended 3620 rounds of 50 caliber  
Gasoline consumption 7497 gallons

8. Remarks - After the subcover flight returned from their attack on three picket boats, the submarine showed their appreciation by radiocing "Boys, we love you. Good Werk and Good Luck."

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



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

Statement of 531st Fighter Squadron Mission No. 4-8

ATTACK ON \* PICKET BOATS, LEAVING ALL OF THEM IN SINKING CONDITION.Statement of 1st Lt. John F. Galbraith, O-538814

At 1200, 30 April, while on station above life-guard submarine which was orbiting off Iro-Saki and due west of Nii-Shima, I observed a dark cylindrical object two or three miles to the east I turned toward it thinking it to be an airborne bogie. In less than a half minute the submarine called our escort Superdumbo and said, "Send your chickens after three picket boats ahead of me." I acknowledge his call and started a climb to the cloud base which was at 2300 feet, about 4000 feet thick. A haze hung below the clouds and offered concealment. The three boats were in line abreast, approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a mile apart, heading for the submarine at maximum speed judging from their wakes. I told my element leader, Lt. DeRieux, to take the boat on the left, my wingman Lt. Meyer took the middle one, leaving me the one on the extreme right. We all made a simultaneous attack from bow to stern, clearing the decks of all personnel. We immediately climbed up to 2000 feet and set up another pass. On the second pass I noticed a long barreled gun of probably 20 MM on the boat I strafed. It was revolving freely on its mount. After observing this gun I changed all my passes to rear quarter attacks from 4 and 5 o'clock. The stack and pilot house blanked out the possible fire from the gun at this angle, and I observed no return fire. We made from 6 to 7 passes, each man alternating on every boat, leaving two boats dead in the water and burning fiercely—one boat was smoking a little but still moving aimlessly. We returned to the submarine and orbited, from where two large columns of white smoke could be seen rising from the burning ships. Within a few minutes the sub told us to hit the third boat again as he thought it was still coming. We went back and I looked it over — no signs of life were evident, then black smoke was rising but the prop was still churning so we made 2 passes apiece on it. After this attack it stopped and began burning about the pilot house. I observed the other two at this time; ammunition was exploding on one, and was observed by the sub which asked if a gun were firing. Both the other boats were burning from bow to stern and settling in the water. We returned to the sub, which submerged at 12:38.

1st Lt. John F. Galbraith

Statement of 2nd Lt. Dale F. Meyer, O-2059335

After arriving at our designated spot, and having circled for 15 minutes, we were called by "Darkeyes 31" and told to investigate 3 picket boats heading west towards sub (Darkeyes 31). Climbing from approximately 200 feet to 2300 feet we reached the picket boats. Flight leader Lt. Galbraith, sent element leader Lt. DeRieux after boat on right. We then made simultaneous strafing attacks on individual boats from bow to stern. I made 6 passes and observed fire burst out followed by immense black smoke. When we left, I could see the boat listing and smoking. It had completely stopped any navigation. We returned to cover sub, but were sent back out to completely halt one boat that was apparently moving very slowly. After making 2 more passes, and halting the craft, we returned to Darkeyes 31. We remained for 5 minutes while sub submerged, then left spot at 12:38 for base.

2nd Lt. Dale F. Meyer

Statement of 2nd Lt. Harry B. DeRieux, O-830424

While on sub cover patrol off Iro-Saki on Honshu Island, the sub asked us to investigate three picket boats heading out toward the sub. The boats, about 75 feet long were coming in a string and in perfect line. I made a pass on the lead boat along with Lt. Galbraith and Lt. Meyer who made initial passes on the other two. We made 6 or 7 passes apiece on the three boats. The results were: One boat burning fiercely and stopped in the water. Another boat burning and stopped in the water, and the third boat was smoking badly. The sub asked us to finish him off, and he was left burning. These boats seemed to be very fast and the lead boat had a small cannon mounted on the bow, which they were never able to bring into action. I would judge this cannon to be in the 20MM or 37MM class mounted on a swivel, without a shield. All boats in my opinion were definitely destroyed.

  
 2nd Lt. Harry B. DeRieux

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



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

Statements of 531st Fighter Squadron Mission No. 4-8.

Statement of Lt. John L. Gisson, 1st Lt., Signal Corps, Radio Officer, VII Fighter Command. Extract from "Log of Communications and Events Occuring During VLR Escort Mission 30 Apr 1945," kept by him while aboard Boxkite 31, the Super Dumbo covering Submarine at coast of Japan.

- 1210 We sight two picket boats about 60 or 70 feet long heading out from shore toward the submarine. We call Darkeyes 31 and tell him we are sending chickens to investigate.
- 1212 Hear Saltwater cover flight tell his wingman "I've got the one on the right - you take the one on the left - Go get him boy!" Fighters are observed to make about six passes across each boat strafing at very low level. Large fires break out on both boats - no AA fire is observed from boats. Do not believe boat crews ever saw P-51s until they were being strafed.
- 1220 Called Darkeyes 31 to tell him both boats were on fire heading toward shore. He asked if there wasn't a third boat which was not yet burning. We then sight third boat through light mist which has swung around the two burning and is heading toward sub. Our cover flight has already sighted the third boat and is working him over.
- 1232 We inform Darkeyes that all three are now burning and dead in the water.
- 1234 Darkeyes to All Chickens - We love you, we love you, you did a swell job."
- 1240 Darkeyes 31 has submerged completely - large columns of smoke are still visible from the three boats which were strafed.

End of EXTRACT



THIS PAGE DECLASSIFIED IAW EO12958

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

531st Fighter Squadron  
Intelligence Office

10 May 1945

Summary of enemy A/C and surface vessels destroyed, probably and damaged for the month of April 1945 by pilots of the 531st Fighter Squadron. This report covers missions with Squadron Mission Nos. 4-1 through 4-8. \*Credits by claimed board are incomplete as they have not yet passed on all claims.

ENEMY AIRCRAFT AIR

<u>Type</u>	<u>Pilot claiming</u>	<u>Squadron Mission No.</u>	<u>*Credited by Claims Board</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Probably Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
1 Tony	XMajor Harry C. Crim, Jr.	4-1		X		
1 Nick	XMajor Harry C. Crim, Jr.	4-1		X		
1 Tony	2nd Lt. Lloyd L. Boseley	4-1		X		
1 Topsy	Capt. Floyd L. Manning	4-5	X	X		
1 Myrt	2nd Lt. Theodore H. Fox	4-5		X		
1 Tabby	Capt. Fredrick J. Gibson	4-5	X	X		
1 Topsy	Capt. Howard J. Kendall	4-5	X	X		
1 Biplane Trainer	X2nd Lt. John C. Wilson	4-5		X		
1 Highwing Monoplane	X2nd Lt. John C. Wilson	4-5		X		
1 Oscar	Capt. Robert I. Mallin	4-6		X		
TOTALS				10		

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

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

Page two of Summary for month of April.

ENEMY AIRCRAFT GROUND

<u>Type</u>	<u>Pilot claiming</u>	<u>Squadron Mission No.</u>	<u>*Credited by Claims Board</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Probably destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
2 T/E	1st Lt. Charles Provost, Jr.	4-6				X
● Tony	1st Lt. John F. Galbrith	4-5		X		
1 Tony	2nd Lt. Conrad E. Mattson	4-6		X		
1 Tony	2nd Lt. Herbert S. Straughn	4-6				X
1 Tony	2nd Lt. John C. Wilson	4-5		X		
1 Nick or Irving	2nd Lt. John C. Wilson	4-5		X		
1 Nate	2nd Lt. Dale F. Meyer	4-5			X	
5 Trainers	Capt. Fredrick J. Gibson			X		
1 Tony	Capt. Thomas W. Lewis	4-6		X		
● Irving	Capt. Thomas W. Lewis	4-6		X		
8 Tonys	Capt. Thomas W. Lewis	4-6				X
TOTALS				<u>12</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>11</u>

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



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Page three of Summary for month of April.

ENEMY SURFACE VESSELS

<u>Squadron</u> <u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Pilot(s) claiming</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Estimated</u> <u>Gross Tons</u>	<u>Sunk</u>	<u>Probably Sunk</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
4-5	2nd Lt. Dale F. Meyer	Lugger or supply craft	40		X	
4-5	Capt. Fredrick J. Gibson 2nd Lt. Dale F. Meyer 1st Lt. John F. Galbraith 2nd Lt. John C. Wilson	Tare Baker 100 foot.	200			X
4-5	Capt. Floyd L. Manning 2nd Lt. Harry B. DeLieux Capt. Howard J. Kendall 2nd Lt. Richard B. Wooley	Flat Bottom Boat 100 feet	200			X
4-6	Capt. William H. Benton, Jr. 1st Lt. Frank L. Seymour Major Harry C. Crim, Jr.	One Tanker 200 feet. One wooden Freighter 200 feet.	600		X	
4-6	Capt. William B. Smith 2nd Lt. William N. Steele 1st Lt. Richard S. Davis 2nd Lt. Irvin P. Skansen	One Freighter 200 feet. One Feighter 75 feet.	600			X
4-6	Capt. Robert I. Mallh 2nd Lt. Paul E. Schurr 1st Lt. Charles Provost, Jr. 2nd Lt. Herbert S. Straughn	One Cargo 200 feet One Cargo 200 feet	600			X

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



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

Page four of Summary for month of April.

ENEMY SURFACE VESSELS

<u>Squadron</u> <u>Mission No.</u>	<u>Pilot(s) claiming</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Estimated</u> <u>Gross Tons Sunk</u>	<u>Probably Sunk</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
48	1st Lt. John F. Galbraith	One Picket Boat			
	2nd Lt. Harry B. DeRieux	60 to 70 feet.	80	X	X
	2nd Lt. Dale F. Meyer	One Picket Boat			
		60 to 70 feet.	80	X	X
		One Picket Boat			
		60 to 70 feet.	80	X	X

TOTALS - 320 Gross Tons Probably Sunk.  
2860 Gross Tons Damaged.

HERBERT C. SWIGERT  
Capt., A.C.  
Intelligence Officer.



S E C R E T

3. There were indications that the presence of an escort surprised the enemy. Two Jap snoopers, often encountered near landfall on the way in, were there as expected. But they were engaged by the escort and didn't get home with their news.

4. The Japs went all out to protect the target. In addition to the usual Nicks, Tojos, Irvings and Zekes, a Mary, Dinah, Hamp and two Myrts were sighted.

5. The escort aspects of the mission ran as smoothly as if it had been old stuff.

Extracted from Air Intelligence Report XXI Bomber Command  
Vol. 1 No. 7, 19 April 1945

Hq VII Fighter Command, 28 April 1945

**DISTRIBUTION:**

15th Ftr Gp	(20)
21st Ftr Gp	(20)
A-3	(20)

- 2 -

S E C R E T







51st Fighter Squadron, AAF 51st Fighter Group, AAF 51st Fighter Command AAF

CONFIDENTIAL

REMARKS

Joined 15 November 1943.  
Listed as missing in action 7 April 1945

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the entries on this form are a true and correct record of the combat missions of Robert C. Anderson for the dates shown. (Name, rank Serial No)  
for the dates shown. C-303361

ROBERT C. ANDERSON  
(Name, rank)

30 April 1945  
(Date)

51st Fighter Squadron AAF  
(Organization)

Commanding

FOOTNOTES

- (1) Missions followed by "X" have been used as basis for awards
- (2) Time to be obtained from Pilot's Form 1
- (3) Last entry represents credit sorties to date
- (4) All combat interceptions, including those turned friendly, where no contact with enemy has been made.
- (5) Does not include sortie time

CONFIDENTIAL





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

REMARKS

Joined 24 January 1945  
Listed as missing in action 19 April 1945

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the entries on this form are a true and correct record of the combat missions of Arthur J. Suddleston for the dates shown (Name, rank Serial No) 1st Lt. G-326605

1st Lt. G. Suddleston

(Name, rank)

20 April 1945

(Date)

1st Fighter Squadron 47

(Organization)

Commanding

FOOTNOTES

- (1) Missions followed by "X" have been used as basis for awards
- (2) Time to be obtained from Pilot's Form 1
- (3) Last entry represents credit sorties to date
- (4) All combat interceptions, including those turned friendly, where no contact with enemy has been made.
- (5) Does not include sortie time

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





551st Fighter Squadron A-1, 1st Fighter Group A-1, 7th Fighter Command A-1, 49 AF

CONFIDENTIAL

REMARKS

Joined Squadron 28 March 1943,  
left Squadron 22 April 1943

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the entries on this form are a true and correct record of the combat missions of 1st Lt. Stanley Ed. H. (Name, rank Serial No.)  
for the dates shown. 0-49491  
for the dates shown.

HARRY C. SMITH, JR., MAJOR

(Name, rank)

551st Fighter Squadron A-1,

(Organization)

20 April 1943

(Date)

Commanding

FOOTNOTES

- (1) Missions followed by "X" have been used as basis for awards
- (2) Time to be obtained from Pilot's Form 1
- (3) Last entry represents credit sorties to date
- (4) All combat interceptions, including those turned friendly, where no contact with enemy has been made.
- (5) Does not include sortie time

CONFIDENTIAL



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

COMBAT MISSION RECORD

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

(Name)

(Rank)

(Serial Number)

Date	Mission No		Type Mission (1)	Target	Sortie Time (2)	Total Sorties to Date (3)	Abort Time (2)	Cap Time (2)	Inter- cept Time (2 & 4)	Total Combat Time (5)
	Sq	Gp								
1945										
1-10			Search / Patrol	Choshi Jima - Kama Jima		1				
1-19			Patrol	Tokyo - Tokushima Area						
<p>1. Beakings was last seen by Lt. Richard Lee, 2-28-45, in the River Area, between Hachioji and Tokyo Yokohama, when his plane was seen putting smoke from the left exhaust stacks. The plane, when 1st seen was at about 100 feet altitude in a climb to the right following at a high rate of speed. It Beakings is carried as missing in action.</p>										

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

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

REMARKS

Joined 24 January 1945  
Listed as missing in action 19 April 1945

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the entries on this form are a true and correct record of the combat missions of Arthur R. Beckington for the dates shown. (Name, rank Serial No)  
2nd Lt. O-326605

HARRY C. GRIM, JR., MAJOR  
(Name, rank)

30 April 1945  
(Date)

531st Fighter Squadron AAF  
(Organization)

Commanding

FOOTNOTES

- (1) Missions followed by "X" have been used as basis for awards
- (2) Time to be obtained from Pilot's Form 1
- (3) Last entry represents credit sorties to date
- (4) All combat interceptions, including those turned friendly, where no contact with enemy has been made.
- (5) Does not include sortie time

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