

e. CAMPAIGNS: Operations continued over Italy, otherwise no additions.

f. COMMANDING OFFICERS IN IMPORTANT ENGAGEMENTS: No additions.

g. LOSSES IN ACTION:

1. 1st. Lt. Robert D. Lundberg, bailed out East of Rome, Italy, 11 November 1943, seen to land safely and run from plane.

h. MEMBERS WHO HAVE DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES IN ACTION.

1. Capt. Michael R. Yannell, who completed his tour of duty consisting of 80 combat missions, on 8 December 1943, the first A-36A pilot to complete his tour of duty, was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross personally by General Henry Arnold, at Romigliano Airfield, Italy, in the presence of Group and Squadron officers, and Generals Spaatz, Cannon and House, after a brilliant flying career, with two enemy aircraft victories to his credit.

2. 1st. Lt. Robert J. Frisbey, who was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for bravery and achievement in aerial flight.

3. 1st. Lt. Alfred R. Bolch, awarded the Purple Heart for injuries suffered while on combat mission.

4. 1st. Lt. Robert R. Hood, awarded a cluster to the Purple Heart, for additional injury while in line of duty.

5. 1st. Lt. Maurice W. Griffin, completed 80 missions and his tour of duty.

6. 1st. Lt. Walter L. Gibson, completed 80 missions and his tour of duty.

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Sheet No. 34 War Diary. 526 F-B Sq., 86 F-B Gp., APO 520, N.Y., N.Y.

Month of November, 1943. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Capt.

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tion fuses on the north end of our airfield. Our ordnance officer removed them, and there were no casualties. The concussion from the falling bombs in Naples could easily be felt here, six or seven miles away. The big guns near our apartment shot at the German raiders numerous times, and made considerable noise. These air raids seem to be terrifically frightening to the natives who get in air raid shelters promptly. About half of our own men take shelter and the other half stand outside and watch the fireworks. Many don't even bother to put on their helmets. Occasionally one can hear the stray shrapnel whiz close by during these raids, but thus far we have had no injuries.

- 6 Two missions, both of which were very successful, were run today. The weather is continuously threatening. The activities up on the front seem to have bogged down and our forces are not moving ahead as rapidly as they were. Many reports indicate that the Germans are moving a lot more personnel into Northern and Central Italy for a determined stand, including a lot of Goering's crack Panzer troops.
- 7 One mission flown today, bombing movements along the Gagliano River. Our enlisted men have an Italian photographer in the basement of our apartment, whom they keep busy developing their films. This activity is more or less sub rosa and probably violative of the censorship regulations, but most of the pictures the fellows take are of a personal and non-military nature. The photographer takes fairly good portraits and the boys are busy getting "shot" for pictures to send home for Christmas. A few Christmas packages have already started to arrive, and a lot of the men have packed trinkets and presents for which they were generally overcharged by the natives here, for mailing back home.
- 8 The colors on the slopes of Mt. Vesuvius are changing and starting at the top it has taken on a dark brown hue, which is slowly moving down the crater into the valley below. Occasional dead leaves are falling from the trees, but there is no real sign of winter here as yet, except the chilly mornings and some ground fog. The natives still walk around barefoot. The road to and from Naples is crowded with military vehicles, native trucks and hundreds of native carts. The native trucks are loaded with human cargo to the point where one wonders how the axles and springs hold up.
- 9 Two missions flown today. Due to the comparative inactivity of the squadron on account of inclement weather, the enlisted men and officers are taking advantage of the lull to go to Naples. The officers may stay at the 86th Group hotel, which is the Albergo Lago Maggiore. There is no restriction on the place, and the officers who care to, take Italian girls into the hotel and stay all night with them. There is a shower in the hotel, and the rooms and linen are fairly clean and acceptable. There has been some trouble in the cases where some of the officers have left their bed partners in the morn-

Sheet No. 35 War Diary. 526 F-B Sq., 86 F-B Gp., APC 520, H.Y., N.Y.
Month of November, 1943. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Captain.

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ings and gone to the fields. These girls who are left in the rooms insist on stealing the linen and other articles in the rooms.

- 10 One rhubarb mission South of Rome into the center of Italy was flown today, with good results. The natives are beginning to knock holes in the wire fence around the field. There are colored troops stationed at all the gates, but this does not seem to do any good in keeping the natives out. They insist on getting into the field where they either beg or steal tin cans, bomb covers, gasoline and oil.
- 11 Lt. Lundberg, on a mission South of Rome, had his plane hit by small arms fire, and he bailed out in enemy territory. He was seen to land safely and run with his parachute for cover. However, the spot where he bailed out was infested with German anti-aircraft units, and he was probably taken prisoner immediately. Today was Armistice Day, but with the majority of the personnel it passed unnoticed. Large convoys of men and materiel are still passing northward through Fomigliano and Acerra. Early this morning a huge naval convoy of 50 or 60 ships steamed into Naples Harbor, which seems to be already crowded with boats.
- 12 In the only mission flown today, Lt. Hansen bagged a German JU-88, and Lts. Koeltz, Fox and McClean, between them, bagged another, which raises our squadron score to 14 planes destroyed in flight, without loss to our own squadron. Twelve of more FW-190s raided our airdrome today, dropping numerous anti-personnel bombs which injured a few personnel, damaged a F-38 and a transport, and riddled a few tents. There was one of the raiders shot down by anti-aircraft fire. The raid came at British tea time, and a lot of the British who man the ack-ack on our field, failed to get the covers off the guns before the raiders were gone. Some of the bombs dropped are still lying on the field unexploded. There was an air alert tonight, but nothing happened. The 525th squadron lost another pilot today.
- 13 One mission only today. Lts. Griffin and Gibson, who had previously gone to Tunis to appear before the Medical Board preparatory to going home, returned today, stating that the Board was of the opinion they could fly another 10 or 15 missions before completing their tour of duty.
- 14 It rained most of the day, and consequently no missions flown.
- 15 Rain again today and no missions. Lt. Chandler got back from Capri where he has visited a few days.
- 16 Lts. (now Capt.) Dorris and Orr arrived back from Cairo. Capt. Dorris had a lot of strange tales to tell about Kenya Colony, Khartoum, lion hunts, and eager and promiscuous women. He stated

Sheet No. 36 War Diary. 526 F-B S., 86 F-B Gp., APO 520, N.Y., N.Y.
Month of November, 1943. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Captain.

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that the people there were enthusiastic about the few Americans who get down there; that there is a United States training command flight into this country which he believes to be useful only to protect Pan American post-war air routes; that the U. S. sells gas to the British in this area for 10¢ a gallon, and buys it back for \$1.70; that there are huge numbers of military vehicles and wag troops in the vicinity, and that the whites who are called into service may satisfy the English requirements by sending a wag who may be his personal servant, consequently there being large numbers of young civilians out of uniform.

- 20 No activity from our field on the 17, 18 and 19, on account of rain. None again today for the same reason. There is a sea of mud all around us. The 525th Squadron and Group Headquarters moved here from Serretelle.
- 21 Stand down again today on account of rain. Our enlisted men have a fine club in one of the basement rooms of our apartment, flush with fine furniture that they brought with them from Barcellona, Sicily, and complete with up to date bar. Pop Grice is in charge of the club, which is exclusively for enlisted men. We had a turkey dinner today, with all the trimmings, including dressing and giblet gravy, together with pumpkin pie.
- 22 One mission of twelve ships flown today, bombing the docks at Civitavecchia. Lt. Willard left today to assume new responsibilities as Engineering Officer of the 33rd Group near Capua.
- 23 No missions flown today on account of rain.
- 24 One mission flown today in bad weather with an overcast. At the target at S. Pietro the formation found a hole in the clouds and in the process of going down were jumped by Spitfires, resulting in complete failure and part of the ships bringing their bombs back.
- 25 Thanksgiving Day today, and the Squadron had turkey for dinner, complete with dressing. In the afternoon, Air Marshall Cunningham visited the Group and talked to the pilots. He stated that the 27th & 80th Groups had done a grand job, and that they were to be commended. Also, that the ground troops were stalemated and had to now look to the Air Corps to loosen up the enemy, and that our groups were the most valuable asset the forces had for this work. He stated that the Spitfires, who had up to now been the "prima donnas" of the air would have to come down and do some bombing and strafing, and that they were being processed for this work in missions over Jugoslavia. He further commented that there were to be 1000 four engine bombers in Italy by March 1st, and that Germany was going to get 12,000 tons of bombs daily, and that the bombing of Germany was not only to assist in destroying from the present 7% up to 20% of their war industry, but to discourage any attempt at warfare 25 years from now.

Sheet No. 37 War Diary. 526 F-B Sq, 36 F-B Gr, APO 520, N.Y., N.Y.

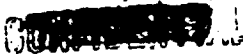
Month of November, 1943. Prepared by Frederic M. Henriod, Captain.

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- 26 There was a heavy air raid in Naples this evening. A number of the fellows were in town when it started around six o'clock. The tracers made a red curtain in the sky, and the shrapnel falling on the stone streets looked like fireflies. A Colonel who flew from Foggia to Caserta told them that a large plane filled with high ranking German officers had landed there for re-fueling, on their way to a conference, presumably with Allied leaders. Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin are reported to be in Cairo for a conference. The Squadron flew one mission today.
- 28 Pilots from the 525th Squadron, who were down at Montecorvino, told us that an ME-210 landed there, and that the two German pilots stepped out and told the personnel at the field that they could have the plane - that they were through with the war. The sun shone all day today for the first time in many days. Two outstanding missions were flown today, doing terrific damage to the enemy. Lt. Yannell came home with flak holes in his wing, and Lt. McClintock flew through a high tension telephone line, damaging the spinner and wings of his plane, requiring it to be taken to the service squadron for repairs.
- 29 On the only mission flown, Lt. Wright got lost in bad weather and finally landed his plane at a small grassy field near Benevento. He landed safely. The plane will probably be grounded there for some time. We just got word that Lt. Hill, who went home a few weeks ago, is to be married on December 4th.
- 30 Another highly successful mission was flown today in support of the ground troops that have been stalemated not far from Venafro, opening what appears to be a determined drive on Rome. Many of the men in the squadron have spent a good deal of time in Naples the past month, and tell strange tales about the place. The most common complaint is that the Italians persist in upping prices, knowing the willingness of the American soldier to spend. Naples appears to be an unique city in many respects. The women seem to be unconscious of any sex morality, and hundreds of moppets and old and middle aged men constantly approach the soldiers soliciting business for a "signorinna". Small brothels are to be found all over town. Singularly enough, our squadron has had but one case of venereal disease since we have been in Italy, which speaks highly of our men. One can see anything on the Neapolitan balconies from crawling bambinos to chickens and the people have a novel delivery system, lowering baskets on ropes to the streets below, where they make small purchases from street vendors. Cameos, fountain pens, highly colored bedspreads and dictionaries have taken the place of leather wallets which we found in Africa. Many fatalities take place on the streets of Naples due to the heavy traffic. The people still seem to be underfed, and still walk around with practically nothing on in the coldest of weather. The airrome is a sea of mud.

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Sheet No. 38. War Diary. 526 F-5 Sq., 86 F-5 Gr., APO 520, N.Y.

Month of December, 1943. Prepared by Frederic M. Henriod, Capt.

DAY

EVENTS

- 1 One mission was flown after several days of inactivity. 16 planes took part in aid of ground troops, bombing and strafing enemy troop concentrations and gun emplacements near Rocca, Italy. There have been rumors of changes in the group and the various squadrons.
- 2 Two missions were flown in aid of ground troops who are making a determined push in the Verniro area, where there has been a stalemate for some time due to mud and bad weather and perhaps the appearance of larger concentrations of enemy materiel and personnel on this so-called "winter front". Col. Yancey Tarrant, popular Group Executive Officer, was transferred to the 64th Fighter Wing today, while on leave in Cairo, raising considerable speculation as to future policy and personnel of the group and the squadrons.
- 3 Col. Robert C. Paul, group commanding officer, was transferred to the XII Air Support Command, being succeeded by Lt. Col. Harold E. Kofahl. One two plane mission was flown by Lt. Yannell and Capt. Dorris on an armed reconnaissance mission near Cassino. Lt. Yannell came back with flak in his plane. The weather continues to be poor and the field continues to be muddy.
- 4 No missions flown today on account of bad weather. There are the usual first of the month poker and black jack games going on in the area with a lot of money changing hands. After about a week, most of the players are eliminated and the money is concentrated down into a few hands. Roosevelt and Churchill are said to be in Cairo for a conference. It is also reported that Von Ribbentrop has flown there. Col. Kofahl took over command of the Group. Our own commanding officer, Maj. Glenn A. Stell, who has commanded since we were at Korba, Tunisia, Africa, after the death of Capt. Reginald D. Winter on July 10th, 1943, has been transferred to the Group and will act as Operations Officer. Maj. Marsh, formerly a pilot of the 527th Squadron, and possessor of the Distinguished Flying Cross, has been named Maj. Stell's successor. Most of the pilots already know him and he seems to be well respected in the Squadron.
- 5 The group officers had a party at the hotel in Naples, in honor of Col. Paul and Col. Kofahl. Lts. Fite, Forster and Beebe were assigned to the Squadron. Two missions were flown today, one of which was dropping food to stranded troops on a hill near the front line.
- 6 Three missions dropping food to front line troops were flown today. The Group held its first Special Courts Martial since it was organized, today, in the Officer's Mess Hall of our Squadron. Lt. Col. Kofahl, who was President of the Court Martial, was disqualified since he had become commanding officer of the Group, and therefore, the reviewing authority, and he was substituted by Maj. Charles Cassidy.

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Sheet No. 39. War Diary. 526 F-3 Sq., 86 F-B. Gr., APO 520, N. Y.
Month of December, 1943. Prepared by Frederic M. Henriod, Captain.

DAY EVENTS

- 7 Two food missions flown today, dropping food to stranded troops 2 miles west of Mignano, on which missions the writer went as observer in the radio compartment. A third mission bombed Civitavecchia.
- 8 Lt. Suhn transferred from the Squadron. Major Marsh, at the meeting of the Squadron, formally introduced himself as the new commander. Lt. Yannell flew his 30th mission today, being the first pilot of an A-30A type aircraft to have completed his tour of duty in any theatre. There was an air alert in Naples and Romigliano.
- 9 Two missions flown today, one being exceptionally effective, in which railroad cars, trucks, gun emplacements, supply dump, high tension line, radio stations and considerable personnel destroyed.
- 10 Generals Arnold, Spaatz, Hoose, Cannon and others made a special trip to Romigliano today for the purpose of decorating Lt. Michael S. Yannell with the Distinguished Flying Cross. The writer was arrested in Naples for having his hand in his pocket, the case section tightening up on military discipline in that city.
- 11 Two missions flown today, one bringing its entire bombload back on account of bad weather. The weather has become increasingly cold and has made it difficult for our ground personnel working on the planes. Each morning when the men go to work, fires can be seen all over the airdrome where the men have built gasoline fires to provide some degree of warmth. Some of the fellows manage to brew a little coffee in the mornings on the line. It is difficult to get coal in this vicinity, with the result that each morning sees some of the ground officers or men or the pilots wielding an ax on tree stumps or boards to provide fuel for the G.I. stoves we have in the tents on the line.
- 12 A mission designed for Civitavecchia had to return early on account of bad weather. The V and VII Armies have moved but little the past two months and continue to hold their present positions against increasing German resistance.
- 13 One successful mission flown to Civitavecchia today. The sun has finally started to shine today and the weather is good.
- 14 To give bombing missions today, on one of which the writer went in the ~~the~~ radio compartment as observer. Three of the twelve planes were hit by flak. The mission was reported by the ground troops as having been highly successful.
- 15 One bombing mission at Soru, Italy, today. In the evening the enlisted men had a party in the S.L. bar, and had several young women in to entertain, including strip tease, bathing under the showers and some degree of public intimacy.

Continued on next page

Sheet No. 40. War Diary. 520 F-B Sq., 80 F-B. Gr., A.F.C. 520, N.Y.
 Month of December, 1943. Prepared by Frederic ... Harriod, Captain.

DAY

EVENTS

- 16 Lt. Carrels left for North Africa today, from whence he will continue to the United States. The writer, while at Bari, saw the sunken boats in Bari harbor - 18 in all, sunk by German planes on Dec. 2nd, which loss has not as yet been reported in the press or radio. Civitavecchia was again bombed today by our Squadron. This has been a target so frequently, that our pilots no longer require any briefing on these missions. A three ship convoy was attacked and two probably destroyed, when our pilots observed them to list badly, personnel jumping overboard.
- 17 The officers and men have been getting large numbers of Christmas packages from home. Some turn out to be very humorous, containing life savers, gum, tooth brushes and razor blades, things we have had in abundance. Some have even received cans of Spam, which is, of course, the last straw. It is reminiscent of the time in Barcellona, or Cella, Sicily, when our Mail Orderly, who slept under an almond tree, where he could reach up from his bed and pick ripened almond nuts, received a large package of almonds from his wife in the United States.
- 18 We received word today of the discovery of the last remains and the plane of our former commanding officer, Capt. Reginald J. Winter, near Carratrance, Sicily. It was further reported that he had been properly buried and a suitable marker placed on his grave. The mission was flown to the forward slope of Mt. Trocchio, where an effective pattern bombing was the result.
- 19 Lt. Griffin flew his 30th mission today, thus completing his tour of duty. He is the second in the Squadron to complete the tour.
- 20 A talk was given to the pilots on capture and escape. Two missions were flown. The men in the outfit are still receiving Christmas packages.
- 21 The officers were called into a meeting in the evening to vote on the question whether they were in favor of the Group continuing the hotel in Naples, with a monthly fee of \$1.00 per officer, under the condition that there would be women periodically examined by the Group physician, available for any of the officers who cared to patronize them. The vote was in favor of continuing the hotel under these circumstances.
- 23 Our Squadron Bar opened today, in the basement of our apartment building with a good stock of liquor, the room being gaily decorated for Christmas under the able supervision of Lt. Beebe. Sgt. Hushney is the bartender. In the evening most of the Squadron went to Marigliano and saw an excellent stage show featuring Humphrey Bogart and his wife, Mayo Methot. No missions account of rain.

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Sheet No. 41. War Diary. 526 F-B Sq., 86 F-B. Gr., APO 520, I.Y.
Month of December, 1943. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Captain.

DAY

EVENTS

- 24 No missions today on account of rain. A lot of the boys in the Squadron did some heavy drinking this Christmas Eve, and there was considerable noise in and around the buildings, and considerable shooting of Tommy guns and other guns to celebrate.
- 25 Christmas day found the Squadron celebrating with a turkey dinner with all the trimmings. The mess hall and officer's mess were decorated for the occasion. One mission was flown but the flight was unable to reach the target on account of the bad weather.
- 26 Troops have been prohibited from going to Naples on account of a typhus epidemic. Lt. Griffin left for home today after having completed his 80th mission on December 19th, 1943. No missions flown on account of bad weather.
- 27 There was a freezing wind today. The mountains to the North are covered with snow. A lot of the personnel went to the movies at the Church in Pomigliano to see "Crazy House" featuring Johnson & Olson. Before the show many of the boys inflated condoms and sailed them through the air, to the embarrassment of one girl brought to the show by one of the G.I.s. One mission was flown to Atina, Italy.
- 28 Lt. Gibson completed his 80th mission and his tour of duty today. One mission today. Lt. Beebe's ship hit by a cable, damaging his left wing and scoop.
- 29 Two missions flown today.
- 30 One mission flown today.
- 31 New Years Eve proved to be a noisy one for the Squadron, and there was considerable criticism due to the fact that there was a lot of fraternizing between enlisted men and officers who were under the influence. The big guns around here and in Naples opened up to celebrate New Years Eve and it appeared like an air raid. No one seemed to be able to cope with the situation or prevent the indiscriminate shooting. One mission was flown but the flight was unable to reach the target on account of bad weather. Many of the boys in the squadron had to be carried to bed, and many of them missed the passing of the Old Year and the entry of 1944. Everybody hoped that the new year would bring an end to the conflict and offer the long awaited opportunity to return to the States and Coca Colas.

SP-F-504-41
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526th Fighter-Bomber Squadron.

Outline History Jan 44

S E C R E T

By Auth CC

526th FB Sq

31 Jan 44

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HEADQUARTERS 526TH FIGHTER-BOMBER SQUADRON,
86TH FIGHTER-BOMBER GROUP, A.F.C. 650.

31 January 1944

AG 314.7

SUBJECT: Historical Records.

TO: Commanding General, XII Air Support Command, APO 374.

1. Outline History of the 526th Fighter-Bomber Squadron for the period 1 January 1944 to 1 February 1944.

a. Present Designation: 526th Fighter Bomber Squadron, 86th Fighter-Bomber Group, XII Air Support Command.

b. Changes in Organization: No changes.

c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted.

(1) Month of January 1944.

(a) At beginning: 46 officers, 220 E.M. assigned.

(b) Net increase: None

(c) Net decrease: 6 officers, 2 E.M.

(d) At end: 40 officers, 218 E.M. assigned.

d. Stations: No changes.

e. Movements: No changes.

f. Campaigns: Continued Italian Campaign.

g. Operations.

(1) Campaign: Continuing campaign in Italy, consisting of combat missions by flights of A-36A type aircraft, on dive-bombing, strafing, rhubarb and patrol, particularly in close support of ground troops, and principally of dive-bombing type.

(2) Nature of operations: See Par. (1)

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S E C R E T

(3) Number of missions and sorties for period: 399.

(4) Results of the most important missions:

(a) Mission: 2 Jan 44 - 12 aircraft A-36A type, responding to an urgent request from ground command, to bomb gun emplacements on reverse slope of Mt. Chiaia, Italy, which was 1) a hazardous enemy strong defensive point, 2) penetrable by bombing since artillery had been unable to dislodge the guns, 3) requiring close air support to ground troops, 4) interrogation indicating that practically all bombs struck the pinpoint target, creating huge clouds of smoke and silencing the guns.

(b) Mission: 5 Jan 44 - 12 A-36A aircraft, responding to request from ground command, bombed and strafed gun emplacements on Mt. Forchia, Italy, which were 1) deadly impediments to our ground troops' advance, 2) impenetrable by artillery, 3) requiring close air support, 4) the mission being highly successful, effective and destructive, as evidenced by official commendation and congratulations from ground forces headquarters received before the flight returned to base.

(c) Mission: 6 Jan 44 - 8 A-36A aircraft, responding to request from ground command, bombed and strafed enemy personnel and gun positions at the base of Mt. Trocchio, Italy, which for weeks 1) had been a deadly hazard to ground forces which the latter had been unable to dislodge with artillery or ground troops, 3) requiring close air support of ground personnel, 4) this mission being outstandingly successful, causing great damage and destruction to the enemy, evoking 5) high praise officially communicated by ground headquarters stating that this mission was "very effective".

(d) Mission: 7 Jan 44. 20 sorties of A-36A aircraft flown on three missions during the day, in close support of and at urgent request of ground troops in the Mt. Trocchio and Aquino, Italy, region, where 1) advances of our troops had been slow for several months, the Germans having dug in in such 2) fashion that they could not be dislodged by ground troops or artillery, 3) requiring assistance from the air corps in close support, 4) in which three missions tremendous damage was done and inestimable assistance given to ground troops, evoking official commendation from ground headquarters in the following language: "Close support bombing today highly successful. Army delighted. Enemy casualties two days 150. Counter attacks today all successfully beaten off."

(e) Mission: 12 Jan 44. 12 A-36A aircraft, in response to advice that German headquarters existed in town of Villa Latina, Italy, and requesting close air support to destroy these headquarters and the town, 1) this target being of extreme importance due to its command post nature, 2) the town being small and near several excellent checkpoints, insuring accuracy in bombing, 3) ground forces desiring a knock-out in this area, 4) the whole town being obscured by smoke and dust from 19 direct hits.

(f) Mission: 14 Jan 44. 8 A-36A aircraft, responding to a request for close air support by ground headquarters, bombed a pinpoint target being the town of Picinisco, Italy, which 1) had for a long time been a dangerous enemy strong point extremely harrasing to our ground troops, 2) the mission having a high probability of success because of terrain and check point advantages,

S E C R E T

4) the bombing and strafing being highly effective as evidenced by an official statement forwarded by ground headquarters stating that there was "notable slackening of enemy pressure following attack", 5) indicating great destruction of enemy installations and personnel, both of which had been extremely active immediately prior to the bombing and strafing.

(g) Mission: 19 Jan 44. 12 A-36A aircraft, in response to ground headquarters request to attack important town of Velletri, Italy, 1) a highly strategic town in which many roads merge, near the Anzio beachhead which was to be occupied two days later, 2) the town being easily seen and easy to find from the air, 3) the mission being in aid of the beachhead invasion, 4) the whole town being covered with smoke and dust after the bombing and strafing, 5) causing considerable damage to enemy communications and probably effecting a road block, assisting in preventing enemy movement to the beachhead, and 5) delaying activity of the enemy in his resistance to our invasion forces.

(h) Mission: 25 Jan 44. 8 A-36A aircraft, in response to request from ground forces, to bomb intersection at Velletri, Italy, 1) highly strategic enemy point due to its communication center, near the Anzio invasion beachhead which had been occupied by our forces three days prior, the 2) town being easily seen and easy to find from the air, 3) this mission being in close support of the above mentioned invasion, 4) 16 bombs scoring direct hits on or near the intersection in the middle of town, 4) causing huge clouds of black smoke to arise from the center of town, 5) crippling enemy transportation for an undetermined length of time, preventing the arrival of reinforcements to the enemy defensive stations in the beachhead area.

h. Commanding officers in important missions.

(1) Major John W. Marsh, C.O. led squadron flight on mission (b) above, mission (c) above, mission (f) above, and (g) above.

i. Losses in action: officers and men.

(1) Mission: 22 Jan 44, 1st Lt. Herbert W. Street, did not return from a bombing and road reconnaissance mission at Palestrina, and from Valmontone to Ceprano, he having last been seen at approximately G-3456, cause for failure to return unknown - carried as missing in action.

(2) Mission: 22 Jan 44, 2nd Lt. Gerald E. Walsh, did not return from a bombing and road reconnaissance mission at Palestrina, and from Valmontone to Ceprano, he having been seen to bail out safely near Ferentino, Italy, his plane crashing at G-3843, presumably after being hit by enemy flak, Lt. Walsh being carried as missing in action.

(3) Mission: 28 Jan 44, 2nd Lt. William J. Leep, did not return from a bombing mission South of Lago Di Nemi and road junction at Falcognana, Italy, cause for failure to return unknown, - carried as missing in action.

j. Former and present members who have distinguished themselves in action.

(1) Nothing additional to report.

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SECRET

2. Inclosed are War Diary, 526th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, for the period 1 Jan 44 to 1 Feb 44.

For the Commanding Officer:

Frederic H. Henriod
Frederic H. Henriod, Capt.,
Intelligence Officer,
526 FB Sq., 86 FB Gp., APO 650.

Incl: War Liary orig & cv

Sheet No. 42. War Diary. 526 F-B Sq., 86 F-B Gp., APO 650, N.Y.
Month of January, 1944. Prepared by Frederic M. Herliod, Captain.

DAY

EVENTS

- 1 A lot of the boys in the Squadron spent most of the day nursing headaches after their celebration last night. The headaches are not as violent here in Italy as they were in Africa, however, since what liquor there is - mostly cognac, vermouth, etc. is generally better than that obtainable in Africa. The native Italians are celebrating today as the big day. There was a stand-down today and no missions were flown. Most of the officers, both pilots and ground officers, have had a week at the Capri rest camp, in connection with a policy adopted some time ago. The Morgano-Riberio Hotel was requisitioned for the AII ASC, and is one of the nicest hotels on the island. The policy adopted has proven a good one, since most of the officers returning from rest camp look much better than when they left.
- 2 Two 12-plane missions were flown today in close support of ground troops, in an effort to destroy an enemy strong point at Mt. Chiaia. Both missions were highly successful. The weather is fairly good but quite cold, particularly in the mornings. Lt. Gibson, after having completed his tour of duty - 80 missions - left for home today.
- 3 One mission flown today to bomb the railroad yards at Colliferro. The poker sessions are beginning to appear on the scene again, a sure sign that the boys have got a little extra money. Some of them circulate among the natives and buy eggs, potatoes and an occasional chicken. Most of the apartments where we live are equipped with a G.I. stove, over which there is considerable cooking done in between meals. The food at the regular mess has been consistently good, but some of the officers patronize the Officers Mess of the 41st Service Group, which is just around the corner.
- 4 There are either picture shows or stage shows put on by the Special Services branch, at the church in Romigliano, or at the theatre in Marigliano, two or three times a week, so that the fellows are not lacking in entertainment. The enlisted men's bar has shown a consistent profit, and generally speaking, it is run in an orderly dignified manner. Card games of various kinds go on in the Officer's bar each night, but there has been little or no drinking since New Year's Eve. One mission was flown today, which was unsuccessful on account of inclement weather.
- 5 One very important mission was flown today, being a 12 plane bombing and straring mission to Mt. Porchia, which has been a stumbling block for Allied advance in the Cassino region for many weeks. Before the boys landed their planes, the ground forces command had called in with a highly congratulatory message. A number of our pilots have been hospitalized with venereal disease. There is

Sheet No. 44. War Diary. 526 F-B Sq., 86 F-B Gp., APO 650, N.Y.

Month of January, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Captain.

DAY

EVENTS

infection does not seem to be eliminated by periodic weekly examinations. There is some talk of dispensing with this institution, especially in view of the fact that a typhus epidemic has broken out among the native population of Naples. The inoculations of the men in the forces seem to have proved 100% effective with respect to this disease, and there are no reported cases in the army here.

- 11 There was a stand-down again today on account of the inclement weather. There has been considerable traffic on the road past Romigliano, going both ways. It appears that there is something in the air with respect to increased activity. Some of the units in the Naples area have been quietly packing up and moving out. There are many boats of all kinds in Naples harbor, but strangely enough the Germans have either overlooked this target or don't wish to risk their airforce on it, since Naples has experienced an air raid for quite some time. Life in Naples itself, and the surrounding towns is getting more and more back to normal and larger crowds of natives can be seen on all the streets. The native carts on the road are somewhat of a problem, and present not only a traffic hazard, but a delaying element with respect to the transportation of our men and material up and down the roads. Nevertheless, the authorities give the natives complete freedom of use of the highway. Orange peddlers are all over, as are peanut vendors. Prices are terrifically high, and inflation has taken place in this country. There is an uncontrollable black market situation in this country, and with respect to this phase, Allied Military Government authorities have been unable to cope with the situation.
- 12 One B-26 plane mission flown today, to bomb a small town, Villa Latina, in which German headquarters are reported. Pilots reported back that most of the bombs scored direct hits and that the whole town was mantled with a thick cloud of black smoke and dust. Strict censorship regulations have been in effect in this area for a period dating almost from the time we arrived at Romigliano. The men can't say very much of anything, which creates considerable comment, gives rise to many questions - but cuts down on the amount of writing necessary to censor.
- 13 Two missions flown today, one an armed reconnaissance from Cassino to Valmontone, the other a bombing mission to the railroad yards southwest of Frosinone. Lt. Williamson's plane's engine cut out on the takeoff and landed up in a ditch at the north end of the runway - almost a total wreck. Fortunately, Lt. Williamson had no greater injuries than some frayed nerves.
- 14 A B-26 plane mission, bombing the town of Picinisco, was so effective today, as to draw another official congratulatory response from the ground forces.

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Month of January, 1944. Prepared by Frederic A. Henriod, captain.

noon we received the full plan of the invasion to take place at Anzio and Nettuno, south of Rome. This plan was called "Shingle" and was explained to the pilots in the afternoon. In the evening, the plan was likewise explained to the enlisted men of the Squadron, in compliance with the adopted theory that the men should be allowed to know the strategy of the war they are fighting and should be made to feel that they are a part of it. Singularly enough, the writer believes that the natives around here knew of the plan before we did, since some of them were jabbering about Nettuno a week ago. It is reminiscent of the time in Barcellona, Sicily, when a Sicilian woman living on the beach, told one of our pilots ten days before the event took place, exactly where the invasion of Italy was to take place and the exact date upon which it would transpire. Invariably, however, when such people are questioned about their source of information, they state that they merely heard it on the street, or that their uncle told them about it. Upon being pressed about their informant's name, they either forget it or change their story. There have been many instances where events have transpired beyond the front line, where the natives had the information concerning them hours and even days before even secret messages came through the intelligence department confirming the events. One wonders how it gets across the lines, especially in view of the fact that there is supposed to be no telephonic or other kind of communication. The grapevine system among the native population is one of the most amazing facts of the war.

22 Today was "D" Day for the "Shingle" invasion. It proved to be a day of disaster for our Squadron. Lt. Walsh was seen to bail out near Ferentino, and Lt. Street was last seen near a small town (G-3456) further north and west. Of the remaining ten which did return from the first mission, three of them were damaged by flak holes. Out of 32 planes which took off today in the Group, 14 were either lost or made temporarily inoperational. A flyer of the 525th was also lost during the day. On the second mission of the day, two more of our planes were hit by enemy flak. The landings of our naval and ground units at Nettuno have been reported as being extremely successful with very little opposition.

23 Because of the heavy inroads the enemy cut in our planes yesterday there was no activity today in the Squadron. A British operated A-20 airplane crashed in the residential section of Poggioreale early this morning killing all four of its crew and scattering wreckage for hundreds of feet around. The LPs in Naples arrested several hundred officers and men for presence in town without passes or without sufficient reason for being there. One or two of our boys were detained until someone from the outfit went to Naples to get them. The invasion is still reported as being highly successful.

24 Two English Beaufighters were damaged by our own flak last night and are lying on the field wrecked. No missions flown today.

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Month of January, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Captain.

DAY

EVENTS

- 25 Sgt. Goldman died of spinal meningitis today, after a 3 or 4 day illness. Two missions flown today in close support of ground troops. A lot of the fellows who attended the movies at Marigliano tonight were treated to a display of anti-aircraft fire while they were riding back to Romigliano in the trucks, with coused lights. The air raid appeared to be on Naples. The natives are having a tough time with inflation. Potatoes that cost 5 lire a kilo when we first came here, now cost 36 lire a kilo. Coffee costs them 20.00 a pound if they can get it. It is obtainable only through the black markets. Everything else is comparable. Many soldiers, particularly the negroes, in this area, have been selling various items to native black market merchants who resell the articles at fabulous prices.
- 26 Major Marsh and Lt. Williams both finished their tour of duty today. Speculation as to who will be our new commanding officer is of course running high. Two missions were flown in support of ground troops.
- 27 Most of the fellows went to a stage show featuring Dick Nash, at Marigliano tonight. Two missions were flown.
- 28 Two more missions were flown today, in one of which Lt. Leep was apparently killed, his plane having been seen to hit the ground, bounce and explode. There was no visible reason for the accident. This happened on a mission which the AII ASC gave to the Squadron, allowing the latter to choose the type and target of the mission. Another plane in the flight struck a telegraph wire and slightly damaged the plane.
- 29 One mission flown today, bombing railroad station and troop concentrations near Albano. The ground forces have widened their beachhead in the Anzio-Nettuno area, and there have been minor gains on the V Army front. Allied troops have by-passed Cassino. Many of the boys are getting short on cigarettes again. Some of them have been trading them for eggs and other commodities.
- 30 A road block was effected in the only mission flown today, in the area near the bomblines in the invasion area. The weather has continued to be mild for the past week.
- 31 Two missions flown today, one which combed Atri and the other being an armed reconnaissance north of Fondi. The officers and men got paid today. Naples is still off limits. The rest camp at Capri has been closed since about the 10th of the month on account of lack of water and the typhus threat. Many French troops are seen around the Naples area, and they have done a good job in the S. Elia area north of Cassino. Many of the troops stationed in Naples were moved to smaller towns like Acerra during the month on account of the epidemic and crowded conditions.

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(1 Feb 44)
JR

526th Fighter-Bomber Squadron.
Outline History February 44.

[REDACTED]

526th Fighter-Bomber Squadron
650, 1st

29 February 1944

314.7

Historical records.

Commanding General, III Air Support Command, 374.

1. Outline History of the 526th Fighter-Bomber Squadron for the period 1 February to 1 March 1944.

a. Present assignments: 526th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 86th Fighter-Bomber Group, III Air Support Command.

b. Changes in organization.

- (1) Changes in designations: none.
- (2) Disposition of echelons or subordinate units: none.
- (3) Change of commanding officers: Capt. Harry W. Morris replaced Major John W. Marsh as commanding officer of the Squadron on February 4th, 1944, pursuant to order dated 1 February 1944.
- (4) Change of staff officers: Capt. Robert P. Hood replaced Capt. Harry W. Morris as S-3, Operations Officer, 4 February 1944.

c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted men.

(1) Month of February 1944.

- (a) At beginning: 40 officers, 218 E.M. assigned.
- (b) Net increase: 2 officers, nil
- (c) Net decrease: None
- (d) At end: 42 officers, 218 E.M. assigned.

d. Stations: No change.

e. Movements: No change.

f. Campaigns: Continued Italian Campaign.

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G. Operations.

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- (1) Campaign: Italian.
- (2) Nature of operations: combat missions by flights of A-36 type aircraft, on dive-bombing, strafing, harassment and patrol, particularly in close support of ground troops, and principally of dive-bombing type.
- (3) Number of missions and sorties for periods:
- (4) Results of the most important missions:

(a) Missions: 5 Feb 44. Two 2 plane missions were flown in 1st solid overcast, covering roads between the two frontlines, in which many enemy motor vehicles were destroyed and damaged. 1) the enemy was moving troops and equipment under cover of the overcast, 2) the probability of successfully carrying out these missions was small due to the bad weather, but 3) ground forces were greatly assisted by destroying transportation of the enemy, 4) several of the vehicles burst into flame, 5) causing great loss to the enemy. The Chief of Staff of the 11th Air Support Command, the operations section, 11th Air Support Command and the Air Support Control all offered highly congratulatory statements for the accomplishments.

(b) Missions: 9 Feb 44. 3 A-36 aircraft flew in close support of ground forces in response to request from the latter, to the monastery at Montecassino, near Cassino, Italy, 1) the Germans having dug in at this monastery hill in such fashion that our ground forces had been unable to dislodge them for many weeks, 2) the target being easily visible and distinguishable, 3) ground forces headquarters requiring the destruction of the enemy in this area before the town of Cassino could be taken, 4) the target being covered with fanlike pattern of bombs causing great clouds of smoke to arise all around the monastery, 5) causing great loss to the enemy in personnel and equipment, for which achievement high official praise was received from the commanding officer of ground troops of the 1st Division of the Fifth Army.

(c) Missions: 13 Feb 44. 12 A-36 aircraft of the Squadron, in response to an urgent request from ground forces headquarters, flew on a bombing and strafing mission to the famous "factory" area, near Carroceto, Italy, where the Germans had successfully thrown out our own troops that had taken the area, 2) this target being an isolated group of important buildings in a wide open area, 3) it being highly important to take this area as it was a key transportation, supply and communication junction of the enemy, 4) the whole area being covered by highly accurate pattern bombing which observation indicated caused immense destruction to the enemy and eased the tension on our hard pressed ground troops. As a result of this mission the Fifth Army, in congratulating our fliers on the success of this mission, wired in observers report attack by two waves Invader dive-bombers at 1530 hours on Carroceto very successful. All bombs except two in village."

(d) Missions: 15 Feb 44. 12 A-36 aircraft were called upon to bomb the marshalling yards in the South part of Rome, Italy, 1) where the enemy had been and was making up trains for transportation of men and materiel south to the battle lines, 2) the probabilities of a successful mission being good due to the good weather and visibility, 3) the ground forces being hard pressed by the continual flow of troops and supplies from these yards, 4) observation indicating that many of the cars in the yards, as well as the tracks, were blown up, crippling 5) a good portion of the enemy's transportation facilities and shipments initiating from this point.

(e) Missions: 19 Feb 44. Two 8-plane missions were called upon to bomb and strafe enemy concentrations of men and materiel and guns at pinpoint targets adjacent to the Anzio beach head, in response to requests made by ground forces command, 1) at two points where the enemy was amassing troops and equipments for a

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determined assault on our already hard pressed ground forces in this area, 2) the probabilities of success being highly doubtful due to the pinpoint nature of the targets and the highly camouflaged positions of the enemy, 3) it being necessary to knock out these concentrations to prevent high and unusual casualties to our own troops, 4) the bombs and bullets of our pilots finding their marks with unerring accuracy as evidenced by a message from the Army Air Support Control headquarters saying: "Air contributing magnificently towards smashing enemy's savage thrust" and one from the same source after the second mission stating: "Everybody here and at Corps are delighted with your work today. Great help to ground troops."

h. Commanding officers in important missions: None to report.

i. Losses in action: officers and men.

(1) Mission: 5 Feb 1944, 2nd Lt. William H. Fox, did not return from mission to Cisterna di Pansa, having last been seen somewhere between this city and the Tyrrhenian Sea, cause for failure to return unknown, reported and carried as missing in action. He was seen to bail out at about F-7736.

(2) Mission: 6 Feb 1944, 1st Lt. Alfred P. Poloh, did not return from bombing mission to Cisterna di Pansa, having last been seen somewhere near F-8839, between Cisterna and the sea, cause for failure to return unknown, reported and carried as missing in action.

(3) Mission: 6 Feb 1944, 1st Lt. Sibley (MI) did, did not return from bombing mission to Cisterna di Pansa, having bailed out into the sea off the Anzio beach head, where it was reported an Allied cruiser, in attempting to rescue him, ran into him, possibly being the cause of his death which occurred on this date. He is reported as being killed in action.

(4) Mission: 8 Feb 1944, 1st Lt. Wilfred B. Nelson, did not return from a patrol mission near Fabrica, Italy (A-6015), he having been seen to be attacked by an enemy fighter plane, it being undetermined whether he successfully bailed out near coast of Lake Bracciano, or not, he being carried as missing in action.

(5) Mission: 8 Feb 1944, 2nd Lt. Allen W. Hansen, did not return from a patrol mission near Fabrica, Italy (A-6015), he having been seen to bail out successfully near the West coast of Lake Bracciano, Italy, and land safely, he being reported as being missing in action.

j. Former and present members who have distinguished themselves in action.

(1) Nothing additional to report.

2. Inclosed are War Diary, 526th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, for the period 1 February 1944 to March 1944.

For the Commanding Officer:

Frederic H. Henriod

Frederic H. Henriod, Capt.,
Intelligence Officer,
526 F.B. Sq., 86 F.B. Gp., APO 650.

Incls: War Diary orig & copy

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Sheet No. 49. War Diary. 526th F-3. Sq., 86th F-3. Gr., 120 CGO, A.I. N. I.

Month of February, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Captain.

DAY

WAR DIARY

- 1 No missions were flown today. Lts. Barber, Williams and Hood were promoted to Captain and are supporting bright new bars today. Major Hersh wrote a letter to the Commanding Officer of the Group complaining about the dental work. Our forces at the Anzio beach head have been holding their own, but it is a tough battle.
- 2 Two missions, one recon and one designed to blow up an ammunition dump, were flown today. Captain Williams went to Naples to arrange for transportation for himself and Major Hersh to go back to the States. Lt. Blackwell of the 527th Sqdn. was killed today, or lost over enemy territory. We all heard that the American forces made their first landing on territory originally held by the Japs in the Marshall Islands, which is apparently the beginning of the long trek over Japanese territory to Tokyo.
- 3 There were 7 two-plane rhubarb missions flown today. One of our men came home with his plane shot up. The 525th and the 527th each lost a man in today's activities. The weather was cloudy, and a poor day for flying. We have had reports of the Russians trapping ten German divisions in the Ukraine today. Our Group received official congratulations from the Chief of Staff of the XII Air Support Command and the Air Support Control for the fine work done today.
- 4 A stand-down was declared today on account of inclement weather. The Russians have entered Estonia. There is bitter street fighting in Cassino, which is a tough nut to crack. Two enlisted men, Herman and Jones, were reduced to the rank of private for having taken an ambulance yesterday to Avellino and staying all night without permission. Major Hersh and Captain Williams left for the States today. Capt. Dorris took over as Commanding Officer of the Squadron, Capt. Hood as Operations Officer, and Lt. Lucas as Asst. Operations Officer.
- 5 Every day DO-3s land at our field and load wounded soldiers from the front and take them from the field hospital which is located across the road from our field to the South, to Africa for further treatment. Two of our enlisted men, Lassiter and Guise, were cut up in a knifing affair on the electric train running from here to Naples, involving some natives. Neither was seriously injured. Most of the Squadron went to Marigliano to see Oagney in "Johnny Come Lately" in the evening. One 8 man mission was flown today.
- 6 Today spelled disaster for our Squadron. On a single mission to Cisterna di Roma, Lts. Fox, Reid and Bolch failed to return from the mission. Lt. Reid was later picked up in the Mediterranean sea by a cruiser, which is reported to have run into him while he was floating in the water. There are only 16 planes left in the Squadron. A P-51 of the 111th Obsn. Sq. which is stationed on our field, crashed near the field, and the pilot was killed. Another was killed in the 111th today, and we understand that they lost two more yesterday. The 27th Group also lost a man today. Lt. Trice, our former mess officer, who is Adjutant at Capri, was here to visit with us, and some of us accompanied him to Major Vessell's Apt. in Naples, where Ernie Pyle is staying.

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Sheet No. 50. War Diary. 526th F.B. Sq., 86th F.B. Gp., APO 650, N.Y., N.Y.

Month of February, 1944.

Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Captain.

DAY

WAR DIARY

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- 7 The 525th Sqdn. is transferring their A-36s to our Sqdn and the 527th, and are getting P-40s. It is thought that this will tend to make the flying more uniform and regular, since there aren't enough Invaders to go round. We are suffering from an acute shortage of both planes and pilots. A group of some 30 or 40 French anti-aircraft personnel came to our field today to examine and acquaint themselves with our planes. One French captain displayed unusual ability at aircraft identification. One very successful mission flown today.
- 8 This was another bad day for our Squadron. From all the information we can get, Lt. McLean was shot down by a German plane, and Lt. Hansen bailed out successfully after his plane had been hit by enemy anti-aircraft fire - both near Lake Bracciano. "Roxie Hart" showed at the theatre at Marigliano today. There was a fairly thick coating of ice on the ground this morning and the weather has remained quite cold. The boys on the Anzio beach head have suffered some rather discouraging reverses. This bad news is offset by that from Russia, where it is reported that Nikopol was captured.
- 9 Today was a heavy day, five missions having been flown. 8 of our planes bombed the slope of Montecassino, the hill on which the Benedictine monastery is located. The boys had to fly low over the monastery and drop their bombs in a glide bomb fashion. Several of them bounced ten or fifteen feet off the ground after landing and burst in midair, a new type of bombing never seen or heard of before. "Two Faced Woman" with Greta Garbo, was enjoyed by most of the Squadron at the theatre at Marigliano. The Group received an official communication from the commanding officer of the First Division, commending the excellent flying the boys did today. A flight of 19 B-26s landed on our field late in the afternoon, after apparently being sent here for an emergency landing.
- 10 Two missions flown today. The weather is still cold, and one wonders how it is possible for the natives to cling like flies to the electric train that runs between here and Naples, on these cold mornings. Naples is still off limits to troops outside the Naples area, presumably on account of the continuing typhus epidemic. Our Squadron and Group, however, have been issued permanent passes and are allowed to go to Naples. The rest camp at Capri is still closed on account of lack of water. Many of the fellows in the Squadron have taken advantage of the opportunity to visit Mt. Vesuvius, and have come home with lava souvenirs - mostly ash trays with a coin imbedded in the bottom. The Officer's Bar and the Enlisted Men's Bar are still functioning and being liberally patronized. The health and morale of the officers and men in the Group are not nearly as good as they were four or five months ago, when we were all more or less roughing it. Since we hit Pomigliano, many have started drinking quite heavily, and have been consorting with the native women, and many cases of venereal disease have cropped up. Eggs are 20¢ apiece but a lot of people still buy them. There is still a lively trading in cigarettes, and considerable government property has changed hands in trading with the natives.
- 11 No missions today. A Colonel, A-5, came to the field today and asked some questions, sat in on one of our interrogations, and complimented us. Each night, which of late has been unusually foggy, a blue-white searchlight across the road from our field, sends a shaft of light straight up as a beacon to Beaufighters and other planes operating at night. It presents a beautiful sight. Mae West entertained the boys with "The Heat's On" at Marigliano.

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Sheet No. 51. War Diary. 526th F.B. Sq., 86th F.B. Gp., APO 650, N.Y., N.Y.

Month of February, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henrked, Captain.

DAY

WAR DIARY

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- 12 Last night it snowed a very little, the first time since we have been here, although there has been snow on the mountains for a month or two. Mt. Vesuvius is especially attractive belching smoke out of what appears to be a mound of snow. Down in the valleys things are actually growing - cabbages and grain in the field are green and seem to be thriving. We celebrated Lincoln's birthday with four missions. Somebody in the Squadron celebrated it in another way, by breaking into the pantry, creating some doubt as to the disposition of some pork chops, and considerable complaining on the part of the enlisted men. The B-26s that flew in here have been operating from this base the past few days, being bombed up by our ordnance company.
- 13 More reverberations about the pork chops of last night. An inventory indicated that none were taken, but there are a couple of nasty poems posted on the bulletin board written by an anonymous writer in the Squadron. Incidentally, the poetry is as bad as the writer's anonymity. One mission was flown today to the famous "Factory" area, near Carroceto, where the buildings have changed hands several times, and where the Americans have stood in one part of a building heaving hand grenades at Germans in another part of the building, and vice versa. There were two air raids during the night and a lot of flak was thrown up around Naples. A P-40 nosed over and a B-26 crashed on the field today. There is a lot of movement on the roads pointing to Cassino, and the Naples area is almost a traffic jam of military vehicles. The taxicabs of Naples are small Fiats, all of which look dilapidated and worn out. We have heard that Major Stell and the others who left some time ago are still stranded at Casablanca, and haven't set sail for the states yet. On the "Factory" mission, the following message was received: "Observers report attack by two waves Invader dive-bombers at 1530 hours on Carroceto very successful. All bombs except two in village." This is a testimonial to the accuracy of our pilots and planes, and a somewhat definite contradiction to the English theory that dive-bombing is obsolete and worthless.
- 14 Two highly successful missions flown today. The pilots were given a lecture on escape procedure. There is a huge C-54 on the field that is reported to be lately from America. It dwarfs a B-17. A stove blew up in the A-Flight tent and burned the tent down.
- 15 Two missions were flown today, one a bombing of Rome, which received considerable publicity in the press and over the radio. The 527th Squadron lost three pilots today in three 2 plane rhubarb missions. The evacuation hospital across the road from our field has moved out, lock, stock and barrel, and is reported to have moved into Naples. The case of the "Purloined Porkloin" still gets considerable attention, and after four enlisted men had been reduced to privates over the affair, on reconsideration, Capt. Dorris gave them four days extra guard duty.
- 16 Our boys bombed Rome again today. On a second mission flown by our Squadron, the target was completely missed, and we are sweating out some kind of message, fearing that the boys may have dropped their bombs on our own troops. It was a close support target a few yards from our own troops, in the Carroceto area. Chandler left for Capri today.

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Sheet No. 52. War Diary. 526th F.B. Sq., 86th F.B. Gp., APO 650, N.Y., N.Y.

Month of February, 1944.

Prepared by Frederic H. Henrrod, Captain.

WAR DIARY

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DAY

- 17 One mission was flown today, after which a standdown was declared. Major Barrett and Sgt. Elliston went to Constantine, Africa, today, to attend the aircraft identification school. The rest camp has opened at Capri.
- 18 Standdown today on account of inclement weather. Major Home killed today (see *Outline Unit, 86th F.B. Gp., Feb 44, par 1c*)
- 19 Had one mission today to the important Carroceto area, where our ground troops have been taken a beating. The boys did a good job, and the following messages were received in congratulation from the Air Liaison Officer: "Air contributing magnificently towards smashing enemy's savage thrust." ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ From the Army Air Support Command: "Everybody here and at Corps are delighted with your work today. Great help to ground troops." We were supposed to have had a standdown today on account of Major Home's death and the decision to inspect all the planes. This standdown was to continue till the 27th, but due to the gravity of the situation on the Anzio beachhead, we were called back into service immediately.
- 20 Two important missions flown today in aid of the Anzio beachhead crisis. Evidence of the assistance rendered by air power began to show when the bomblines, which had moved perilously close to the sea, began to move back. Doctors Murphy and Anderson (formerly of 525th), and Capt. Dorris, went to Phillipeville, Africa, to take Dr. Anderson, who was transferred. They later had to take him to Corsica, where his group is stationed.
- 21 The heaviest artillery of the entire war has been poured into our boys at Anzio, but an American counter-attack pushed the Germans back. Lt. Chandler arrived back from Capri today. Our squadron flew two missions, one having to turn back on account of inclement weather. The other mission was only one of two out of 7 or 8 during the day which were able to get into the Carroceto area.
- 22 Washington's birthday, celebrated with one mission. No one even mentioned Washington today, and probably 99% of the men forgot it was a holiday. From the appearances on the highway, the activity at the airports, etc. there was no appearance of a holiday.
- 23 No missions during these two days on account of inclement weather. Some of the boys took advantage of the situation to go to Naples and other nearby towns and get into some kind of trouble. Many caught up on their mail, and there were many poker games going on. Others felt that the best way to spend two days of inactivity was to be inactivity, and as a result there was considerable frequenting of bunks, which most of the enlisted men affectionately call "fart sacks". With the passing of these two days, no one doubts but that there will be several cases of V.D., and a short-arm inspection will no doubt result. The writer went A.W.O.L. in a polite way, to Capri, on a civilian boat. The boys at Capri, who are presumably "resting" will undoubtedly have to take a vacation flying their planes in order to rest up. Life on Capri is a joyful mixture, apparently, of good and bad liquor, with adultery for a chaser. At least one Count has no objection to farming his countless wife out to the highest bidder. Surprisingly enough, however, with the apparently strenuous life that is led on this famed isle, the boys all look better when ready to go home. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Life is as good as a rest.

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Sheet No. 53. War Diary. 526th P.B. Sq., 86th P.B. Gp., APO 650, N.Y., N.Y.

Month of February, 1944.

Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Captain.

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25 Since the writer is at Capri today, and since practically everyone in the Squadron has been or is going to be at Capri, it might be well to describe something of the island and something of the life of the average "restee". The boat generally arrives at about 4:30 P.M., just in time, to take your luggage on a jeep and arrive at the Morgano-Tiberius or the Quisisana Hotel by 5. After discovering that this is not one of the days when you can get hot water, a wash and a shave in cold water refreshes one for the evening meal which comes at 6:30. The average person visiting Capri is hardly in condition to eat the meal the first night, since drinking starts a few minutes after arriving at the Hotel. However, should one stay sober until after dinner, he would find that the meals are wonderful, quite in contrast to those he has been accustomed to. This starts him off feeling better immediately. After wandering around a little after dinner, he discovers that the girls that were eating dinner in the dining room are actually hired to keep the boys amused and entertained. The presumption is that their morals do not include intimacy, but merely lend local color to what would be an otherwise all-male dilemma. Rumors have it, however, that these skirted hirelings have been known to indulge in more profound amorous amiabilities than passing the time of day or playing bridge. Elsewhere on the island, after a day or two of inquiry, one can find equally as good-looking young women whose scruples are not even pretentious. All in all, however, the people and girls who are natives of the island, have a high degree of morality. It is the immigrant who lends a touch of immorality to the fabled isle. The first night generally winds up with a headache and several broken glasses. Next morning, in sober reflection, the average "restee" takes oath that he and liquor have parted definitely and permanently. It takes the sinking of the sun into the western sea to bring on the inevitable amnesia that afflicts these habitual oath-breakers, and the average is off in a cloud of dust as the shadows deepen. Some noble souls write a few letters home, which no doubt paralyze the home folks with the thought that their loving son has been the victim of shell-shock or some other ailment conducive to an unsteady hand. Hardier souls pick up a book now and then and perform the almost impossible feat of reading half a page. Each hotel has a pool table, with cues that have no buffer ends. Cue chalk has never been heard of in the island. Everywhere are small shops, selling anything from buckskin shoelaces to contraband Leica lenses. Prices have risen 500% - but so have the spirits of the "restees" so that the inflation problem has little to do with life on the island except with respect to craniums the morning after. Long strolls can be taken down narrow, cobble-stone lanes, with high stone fences or buildings on either side. Most everyone sees the ruins of Tiberius, where the famed old Emperor must have lost many a mason to the rock sea below, his villa reaching out on the crags as closely as possible to Vesuvius which smokes ten or fifteen miles to the North. Count Ciano's villa dominates another hill overlooking Piccola Marina, and the boarded windows are symbolic of the end that befell it's owner. Anacapri is on the western part of the island, where the Hotel Paradiso sells weak drinks for strong prices. One - or maybe two - days out of the week, one can enjoy the luxury of a hot bath. Seven days float by quickly, and the boys leave their feminine acquaintances and their doubtful liquor, and spend a sickening small boat trip back to Naples and captivity.

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29 Leap Year ended with little or no proposing in the Squadron, except perhaps the proposal that we go home as quickly as possible. The weather continues to be bad. Few missions have been flown the past few days. The boys at Anzio are still getting roughed up. Rumors about another invasion fly around. Many boats have landed in Naples, and polished men and equipment have disembarked, scattering in all directions up the roads toward the front. Our squadron still leads in missions & hours.

AG-FI-526-PI
1 MAR 44

RESTRICTED

526th Fighter Bomber Squadron
Outline History, March 44.

HEADQUARTERS 526TH FIGHTER-BOMBER SQUADRON
86TH FIGHTER-BOMBER GROUP, A.P.O. 650, N.Y.

31 March 1944

AG 314.7

SUBJECT: Historical Records.

TO : Commanding General, XII Air Support Command, A.P.O. 374.

1. Outline History of the 526th Fighter-Bomber Squadron for the period 1 March to 1 April 1944.

a. Present Designation: 526th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 86th Fighter-Bomber Group, XII Air Support Command.

b. Changes in organization.

- (1) Changes in designation: None.
- (2) Disposition of echelons or subordinate units: Same.
- (3) Change of commanding officers: None.
- (4) Changes of staff officers: None.

c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted men.

(1) Month of March 1944.

- (a) At beginning: 40 officers; 218 E.M. assigned.
- (b) Net increase: 2 officers; nil " "
- (c) Net decrease: None.
- (d) At end: 42 officers; 218 E.M. assigned.

d. Stations: No change.

e. Movements: No change.

f. Campaigns: Continued Italian Campaign.

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c. Operations.

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(1) Campaign: Italian.

(2) Nature of operations: combat missions by flights of A-36A type aircraft, on dive-bombing, strafing, rhuherb and patrol, particularly in close support of ground troops, and principally of dive-bombing type.

(3) Number of missions and sorties for period: 263.

(4) Results of the most important missions:

(a) Mission, 7 March 44: Twelve A-36A aircraft called upon to bomb RR cars on sidine NW of Monterotondo, Italy (F-745), 1) enemy using marshalling yards here to route supplies and men to the two Italian fronts. 2) We had good chances of successfully completing this mission, 3) enormously aiding our ground troops strategically though not immediately. 4) Mission was successful. A 20-car train moving out just N of station was destroyed and direct hits were scored on RR tracks and buildings in and around the station, 5) causing great loss to the enemy inasmuch as it cost him material as well as interrupted his supply lines.

(b) Mission, 9 March 44: Twelve A-36A aircraft called upon to bomb RR station and siding at Monterotondo (F-8425). 1) Enemy believed to be storing supplies in warehouses here as well as using marshalling yards. 2) There was a good probability of success since our pilots were familiar with the target and the weather was good. If successful the mission would relieve our front line troops by denying the same supplies, communications and replacements to the enemy on the front lines. 3) Direct hits were scored on two large warehouses, causing large explosions and much heavy black smoke. Direct hits were also scored on RR tracks and box cars. One box car exploded, probably causing heavy losses of ammunition and fuel to the enemy.

(c) Mission, 15 March 44: Eight A-36A aircraft called upon by ground forces to bomb "Boston" area at Cassino 1) where our forces were deadlocked with the enemy, 2) this target being easily defined from other possible targets in the area. 3) It was essential to shake the enemy from this position in order for our ground forces to advance into Cassino. 4) Thirteen direct bomb hits were scored in the concentrated target area, 5) completely demolishing it.

(d) Mission, 23 March 44: Twelve A-36A aircraft called upon to drop emergency rations and supplies to some of our troops near Cassino (G-847205). 1) It was difficult or impossible for ground forces to supply these troops but they were unwilling to withdraw the troops. 2) There was a good probability of success as the pilots had done this type of work before and were proficient at it. 3) Accuracy was essential in order for troops to get supplies 4) and 22 of the tanks were seen to land in the area and men were observed running to get them. 5) Germans sent up green flares NW of target in effort to deceive our pilots but this proved unsuccessful.

(e) Mission, 30 March 44: Twelve A-36A aircraft called upon to bomb RR bridge at A-744137 which was 1) on main line by which materiel and men were brought to the enemy. 2) Probability of success was lessened by bad weather, there being an .8 cloud cover almost to target and severely limited visibility. 3) Ground forces would be greatly aided by this continuous interruption of enemy supply and communications lines which would force the enemy to use a dwindling number of MT and wear out irreplaceable tires. 4) Direct hits knocked out N end of bridge and many

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valuable observations of enemy activity (especially between F-651 and F-1370) were made. 5) Front line troops felt effect of this and similar missions within a few days.

h. Commanding officers in important missions: None to report.

i. Losses in action: officers and men.

(1) Mission, 13 March 44: First Lt. DeForest L. Buchman did not return from mission to RR embankment three miles N of Attigliano, Italy, having been last seen engaging E/A over this area. It was undetermined whether he bailed out or landed in enemy territory and he is carried as missing in action.

(2) Mission, 13 March 44. Second Lt. James H. Warren did not return from mission to RR embankment three miles N of Attigliano, Italy, having been last seen engaging E/A over this area. It was undetermined whether he bailed out or landed in enemy territory and he is carried as missing in action.

(3) Mission, 13 March 44: Second Lt. George A. Madrich did not return from mission to RR embankment three miles N of Attigliano, Italy, having been last seen engaging E/A over this area. It was undetermined whether he bailed out or landed in enemy territory and he is carried as missing in action.

(4) Mission, 13 March 44: Second Lt. Thomas E. Forster, having returned to base after participating in mission against RR embankment three miles N of Attigliano, Italy, called the radio tower for an emergency landing. The runway was cleared for him but he called back saying that he was going to bail out, which he did over the water between Naples and the island of Ischia. His parachute was observed open and floating on the water but he has not been seen since and he is carried as missing in action.

j. Former and present members who have distinguished themselves in action:

- (1) Maj. Glenn A. Stell Awarded D.F.C.
- (2) Capt. Robert F. Hood Awarded D.F.C.
- (3) Capt. John G. Claus Awarded D.F.C.

2. Inclosed is War Diary, 526th Fighter Bomber Squadron, for the period 1 March 1944 to 1 April 1944.

For the Commanding Officer:

Frederic H. Henriod

FREDERIC H. HENRIOD
Capt., A.C., S-2 O.
526 F.B. Sq., 86 F.B. Gd., APO 650.

Incl: War Diary orig. & 2.

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Sheet No. 55. War Diary. 526th F-B Sq., 86th F-B Gp., APO 650, New York, N.Y.

Month of March, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Captain, above Squadron.

DAY

WAR DIARY

- 1 According to American standards, March came in more or less like the proverbial Lamb. However, though the weather appeared good here, there were no missions flown, presumably because of bad weather to the North. The day was more noteworthy because of the fact that each man in the Squadron received three Coca-Colas, the first we have been issued since leaving the States. The event called for considerable mixing of drinks, with the result that not a few officers and men in the evening drank unwisely and too well. During the afternoon, two Liney enlisted men had to be thrown out bodily from our Orderly Room because of a drunken and unrequested intrusion.
- 2 One mission was flown today in an attempt to knock out three heavy guns near Littoria which have been harrasing the beach head landings for several days. The mission was apparently highly successful since the guns were reported as heving been silenced. After the third German attempt to drive our troops into the sea at Anzio, our boys have driven them back.
- 3 No missions were flown today on account of rain. Many of the boys in the Squadron went to Marigliano in the evening to see "Keeper of the Flame" with Spencer Tracy and Kathryn Hepburn, after which a Lieutenant from the "A" Force gave a lecture on escape to the pilots. The thing was so secret that the lecture was stopped while an officer ejected a three-year old moppet who had wandered into the place. Humor was added to the movie when the G.I.s boisterously applauded the title of the picture and each succeeding flash which showed the producer, the cost and who designed the gowns. Sgt. Milston returned from Constantine, Africa, where he has been attending an aircraft identification school with Major Barrett.
- 4 The weather continues to be inclement, hence no missions today. Another movie featuring Diana Durbin in the "Butler's Sister" was enjoyed by most of the Squadron at the Marigliano theatre in the evening. On rainy days, besides the usual poker sessions, one has time to notice the commonplace, among which are four dogs of questionable caste, which daily roam around the airfield. One belongs to the Red Cross girl who serves donuts. His name is Groundfog. Another belonging to Major Cassity is called Rhuarb, one belonging to Capt. McGoldrick has been christened Jinks and the fourth, the cutest of all, whose ownership is undetermined, named Stand Down. A fifth, longtime adjunct of the Squadron, whose history dates back to the days at La Senia, Africa, called Dusty, is a resident of the Motor Pool and frequently adds to the Squadron's numbers.
- 5 Bad weather again today kept the planes grounded. Lt. Calamai returned from his rest at Capri, looking not much worse for the experience. In view of the inactivity due to the Stand down, most of the officers took advantage of the situation by going to Naples and obtaining their PX rations. Lt. Kelly left on a DC-3 for the United States, having completed his tour. There is a minor epidemic of the "itch" in the Squadron, which as yet has baffled the most expert diagnostician in the Squadron, Capt. Murphy. Everyone having it takes a quick second look at the V.D. posters which are posted all over the place. One in particular is appealing, showing a picture of an innocent looking young girl who is obviously somebody's sister, pleadingly saying "Come Back - Clean."

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