

# **WW II HISTORY**

**527th Fighter-Bomber Squadron  
86th Fighter-Bomber Group  
February, 1942 - October, 1945**

5667-116  
10 Feb 42 -  
30 Sep 43

OUTLINE HISTORY

527 FIGHTER BOMBER SQUADRON, 86 FIGHTER BOMBER GROUP AAF

PERIOD - 10 FEBRUARY 1942 - 30 ~~SEPTEMBER 1943~~

NOVEMBER, 1945

5667-116

SHEET NO. 1. OUTLINE HISTORY 527TH FTR. BOMBER SQ., 86TH FTR. BOMBER GP.

DATE FEB. 10, 1942 - SEPT. 30, 1943. PREPARED BY: DONALD L. WHITNEY,  
1ST LT., AIR CORPS,  
527 FTR. BOMBER SQ.

A. ORIGINAL UNIT:

- (1) DESIGNATION - 311TH BOMB. SQ. (L), 86TH BOMB. GP. (L).
- (2) DATE OF ORGANIZATION - 10 FEBRUARY 1942.
- (3) PLACE OF ORGANIZATION - ACTIVATED AT WILL ROGERS FIELD, OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA.
- (4) AUTHORITY - GENERAL ORDER NO. 5, HQ. THIRD AIR FORCE, TAMPA FLA.
- (5) PERSONNEL - ORIGINAL PERSONNEL OBTAINED FROM 57TH BOMB. SQ. (L), 48TH BOMB. GP. (L), AFCC.

B. CHANGES IN ORGANIZATION:

- (1) 19 JUNE 1942, PERSONNEL OF ORGANIZATION WERE TRANSFERRED FROM THE 311TH BOMB. SQ. (L), 86TH BOMB. GP. (L) AFCC TO THE 388TH BOMB. SQ. (L), 312TH BOMB. GP. (L) AFCC PER PAR. 16, SPECIAL ORDER 149, DATED 19 JUNE 1942, HQ. ARMY AIR BASE, WILL ROGERS FIELD, OKLA.
- (2) 4 AUGUST 1942, 126 MEN (ENTIRE STRENGTH) TRANSFERRED FROM 388TH BOMB. SQ. (L), 312TH BOMB. GP. (L) AFCC. TO A/C UNASSIGNED AND DEPARTED FROM WILL ROGERS FIELD, OKLA. FOR KEY FIELD AIR BASE, MISS. ARRIVED AT KEY FIELD AIR BASE, MISS. ON 7 AUGUST 1942.
- (3) 7 AUGUST 1942, 126 E.M. ASSIGNED AND JOINED ORGANIZATION FROM A/C UNASSIGNED. 29 E.M. FROM HUNTER FIELD, SAVANNAH, GA. ASSIGNED AND JOINED ORGANIZATION. 14 E.M. (ORDNANCE DEPT.) ATTACHED AND JOINED ORGANIZATION FROM TSS ABERDEEN, MD.
- (4) 11 AUGUST 1942, ALL PERSONNEL OF ORGANIZATION TRANSFERRED FROM 388TH BOMB. SQ. (L), 312TH BOMB. GP. (L) AFCC TO 312TH BOMB. SQ. (L), 86TH BOMB. GP. (L) AAF, PER PAR. 6 SPECIAL ORDER 188, HQ. WILL ROGERS FIELD, OKLA.
- (5) 1 SEPTEMBER 1942, NEW TABLE OF ORGANIZATION ASSIGNED SQUADRON. ORGANIZATION CHANGED FROM LIGHT BOMB. SQ. TO DIVE BOMB. SQ. AND AUTHORIZED A-31'S AND A-24'S.
- (6) 1 JUNE 1943, FIGHTER TABLE OF ORGANIZATION ASSIGNED SQUADRON, SUPERCEDING DIVE BOMB. TABLE OF ORGANIZATION.
- (7) 11 SEPTEMBER 1943, DESIGNATION OF ORGANIZATION CHANGED FROM 312TH BOMB. SQ. (L), 86TH BOMB. GP. (L) TO 527TH FIGHTER BOMB. SQ., 86TH FIGHTER BOMB. GP. PER PAR. 2, GENERAL ORDER 49, HQ. 12TH AIR FORCE, DATED 5 SEPTEMBER 1943.

C. STRENGTH OF ORGANIZATION.

- (1) AT BEGINNING OF PERIOD - STRENGTH ON 10 FEBRUARY 1942 - 1 OFFICER ASSIGNED, 32 E.M. ASSIGNED. (SEE PAR. 1 & 2, SPECIAL ORDER 16, HQ. SECOND AIR SUPPORT COMMAND, OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA DATED 3 FEBRUARY 1942 - ATTACHED)
- (2) MONTHLY STRENGTH:
  - 29 FEBRUARY 1942 - 1 OFFICER ATTACHED, 32 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 31 MARCH 1942 - 1 OFFICER ATTACHED, 33 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 30 APRIL 1942 - 1 OFFICER ATTACHED, 32 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 31 MAY 1942 - 1 OFFICER ATTACHED, 39 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 30 JUNE 1942 - 1 OFFICER ATTACHED, 93 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 31 JULY 1942 - 2 OFFICERS ATTACHED, 96 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 31 AUGUST 1942 - 11 OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 190 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 30 SEPTEMBER 1942 - 20 OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 258 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 31 OCTOBER 1942 - 28 OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 277 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 30 NOVEMBER 1942 - 25 OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 273 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 31 DECEMBER 1942 - 33 OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 268 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 31 JANUARY 1943 - 32 OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 253 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 28 FEBRUARY 1943 - 33 OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 256 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 31 MARCH 1943 - 32 OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 256 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 30 APRIL 1943 - 32 OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 254 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 31 MAY 1943 - 31 OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 254 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 30 JUNE 1943 - 49 OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 253 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 31 JULY 1943 - 49 OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 247 E.M. ASSIGNED.
  - 31 AUGUST 1943 - 49 OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 241 E.M. ASSIGNED.
- (3) AT END OF PERIOD - STRENGTH ON 30 SEPTEMBER 1943 - 45 OFFICERS ASSIGNED, 241 E.M. ASSIGNED.

D. STATIONS (PERMANENT OR TEMPORARY) OF UNIT OR PARTS THEREOF.

- (1) WILL ROGERS FIELD, OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA. - 10 FEBRUARY 1942 TO 4 AUGUST 1942.
- (2) ENROUTE TO KEY FIELD, MERIDIAN, MISS. FROM WILL ROGERS FIELD, OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA. VIA TRAIN - 4 AUGUST 1942 TO 7 AUGUST 1942.
- (3) KEY FIELD, MERIDIAN, MISS. - 7 AUGUST 1942 TO 19 MARCH 1943.
  - (A) DS TALLAHASSEE, FLA. (ATTACHED 309TH BOMB SQ. (L) ) FLIGHT ECHELON, 10 OFFICERS, 9 ENLISTED MEN - 14 DECEMBER TO 21 DECEMBER 1942.
  - (B) DS HATTIESBURG, MISS. FLIGHT ECHELON, 25 OFFICERS, 57 E.M. - 26 DECEMBER 1942 TO 10 JANUARY 1943.
  - (C) DS SAVANNAH, GA. FLIGHT ECHELON, 8 OFFICERS, 1 E.M. 30 JANUARY 1943 TO 3 FEBRUARY 1943.
  - (D) DS EGLIN FIELD, FLA. FLIGHT ECHELON, 8 OFFICERS, 1 E.M. 3 FEBRUARY 1943 TO 6 FEBRUARY 1943.

SHEET NO. 3 . OUTLINE HISTORY 527TH FTR. BOMBER SQ., 86TH FTR. BOMBER GP.

DATE FEB. 10, 1942 - SEPT. 30, 1943. PREPARED BY: DONALD L. WHITNEY,  
1ST LT., AIR CORPS,  
527 FTR. BOMBER SQ.

- (4) ENROUTE TO CAMP KILMER, N.J. FROM KEY FIELD, MERIDIAN, MISS. VIA RAIL - 19 MARCH 1943 TO 21 MARCH 1943.
- (5) CAMP KILMER, N.J. - 21 MARCH 1943 TO 27 APRIL 1943.
- (6) ENROUTE TO NEW YORK CITY P. OF E. FROM CAMP KILMER, N.J. VIA RAIL - 27 APRIL 1943.
- (7) ENROUTE TO MERS-EL-KABIR, ALGERIA, NORTH AFRICA FROM NEW YORK CITY P. OF E. VIA ARMY TRANSPORT, "JOHN ERICSSON" 27 APRIL 1943 TO 11 MAY 1943.
- (8) ENROUTE TO LA SENIA AIR BASE, ALGERIA, NORTH AFRICA FROM MERS-EL-KABIR, ALGERIA, NORTH AFRICA. VIA MOTOR TRANSPORT 11 MAY 1943.
- (9) LA SENIA AIR BASE, ALGERIA, NORTH AFRICA - 11 MAY 1943 TO 11 JUNE 1943.
  - (A) DS MADIOUNA, MORROCC, NORTH AFRICA FLIGHT ECHELON, 14 OFFICERS, 15 E.M. - 15 MAY 1943 TO 11 JUNE 1943.
- (10) TAFARAQUI AIR BASE, ALGERIA, NORTH AFRICA - 11 JUNE 1943 TO 7 JULY 1943.
  - (A) DS N. KORBA L.G., TUNISIA, NORTH AFRICA FLIGHT ECHELON, 33 OFFICERS, 180 E.M. 1 JULY 1943 TO 12 JULY 1943.
- (11) ENROUTE TO N. KORBA L.G., TUNISIA, NORTH AFRICA FROM TAFARAQUI AIR BASE, ALGERIA, NORTH AFRICA VIA RAIL & MOTOR TRANSPORT - 7 JULY 1943 TO 12 JULY 1943.
- (12) N. KORBA L.G., TUNISIA, NORTH AFRICA - 12 JULY 1943 TO 21 JULY 1943.
  - (A) DS W. GELA L.G., SICILY FLIGHT ECHELON, 40 OFFICERS, 80 E.M. 20 JULY 1943 TO 31 JULY 1943.
- (13) STAGING AREA BIZERTE, TUNISIA, 21 JULY, 1943 TO 27 JULY 1943.
- (14) ENROUTE TO W. GELA L.G., SICILY FROM STAGING AREA BIZERTE, TUNISIA, VIA LST #317 - 27 JULY 1943 TO 31 JULY 1943.
- (15) W. GELA L.G., SICILY - 31 JULY 1943 TO 1 SEPTEMBER 1943.
  - (A) DS BARCELLONA L.G., SICILY, FLIGHT ECHELON, 41 OFFICERS, 92 E.M. - 28 AUGUST 1943 TO 1 SEPTEMBER 1943.
- (16) BARCELLONA L.G., SICILY - 1 SEPTEMBER 1943 TO 9 SEPTEMBER 1943.
- (17) STAGING AREA MILAZZO, SICILY - 9 SEPTEMBER 1943 TO 12 SEPTEMBER 1943.

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SHEET NO. 4. OUTLINE HISTORY 527TH FTR. BOMBER SQ., 86TH FTR. BOMBER GP.

DATE FEB. 10, 1942 - SEPT. 30, 1943. PREPARED BY: DONALD L. WHITNEY,  
1ST LT., AIR CORPS,  
527 FTR. BOMBER SQ.

(18) ENROUTE TO SELE RIVER AIR FIELD (SALERNO AREA) ITALY FROM STAGING AREA MILAZZO, SICILY VIA LST - 12 SEPTEMBER 1943 TO 13 SEPTEMBER 1943.

(19) SELE RIVER AIR FIELD, ITALY - 13 SEPTEMBER 1943 - TO DATE OF REPORT.

E. CAMPAIGNS.

(1) SICILIAN CAMPAIGN

- (A) FIRST SQUADRON SORTIE IN SICILIAN CAMPAIGN: 3 JULY 1943, 1ST LT. ROBERT J. KIRSCH ACCOMPANIED 27TH BOMB. GP. ON AN 1:50 HOUR MISSION - TARGET PANZER DIVISION, SW SICILY.
- (B) FIRST SQUADRON MISSION: 6 JULY 1943, CAPTS. CASSIDY, HARSH, AND 1ST LT. DUNGAN PARTICIPATED IN JOINT MISSION WITH GROUP - TARGET ARMED RECONNAISSANCE OVER LICATA, SICILY.
- (C) SQUADRON CONTINUED TO FLY MISSIONS OVER ITALY, ASSISTING GROUND TROOPS IN THE INVASION ON 10 JULY 1943, AND GIVING AIR SUPPORT UNTIL THE CAPITULATION OF SICILY ON 17 AUGUST 1943.

(2) ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

- (A) FIRST MISSION TO ITALY: 3 AUGUST 1943, SQUADRON SENT A 12 PLANE MISSION ON A ROAD SWEEP OVER S. ITALY.
- (B) SQUADRON CONTINUED TO FLY MISSIONS OVER ITALY; FURNISHING BLANKET FIGHTER COVER DURING INVASION OF ITALY ON 9 SEPTEMBER 1943 (AMERICAN TROOPS AT SALERNO).
- (C) SQUADRON MOVED TO ITALY ON 13 SEPTEMBER 1943 AND CONTINUED MISSIONS IN SUPPORT OF GROUND TROOPS TO DATE OF REPORT.

F. COMMANDING OFFICERS IN IMPORTANT ENGAGEMENTS.

- (1) CHARLES F. CASSIDY, JR., MAJOR, A.C. COMMANDED SQUADRON FROM DATE OF ENTRY INTO COMBAT ON 3 JULY 1943 TO DATE OF REPORT (30 SEPTEMBER 1943).

G. LOSSES IN ACTION.

(1) SICILIAN CAMPAIGN:

- (A) WOUNDED - WILLIAM L. DOTSON, 1ST LT., A.C. 16 JULY 1943 - WOUNDED AS HE BALED OUT OF PLANE NEAR PANTELLERIA ISLAND.
- (B) MISSING IN ACTION - ALBERT R. FLEISCHMANN, 1ST LT., A.C. 10 JULY 1943 - FAILED TO RETURN FROM MISSION OVER SICILY.

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SHEET NO. 5. OUTLINE HISTORY 527TH FTR. BOMBER SQ., 86TH FTR. BOMBER GP.

DATE FEB. 10, 1942 - SEPT. 30, 1943. PREPARED BY: DONALD L. WHITNEY,  
1ST LT., AIR CORPS,  
527 FTR. BOMBER SQ.

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(2) ITALIAN CAMPAIGN:

- (A) MISSING IN ACTION - JOHN D. HUNTER, 2ND LT., A.C.  
10 AUGUST 1942 - FAILED TO RETURN FROM MISSION OVER  
SOUTHERN ITALY, LAST SEEN OVER NORTHERN SICILY.  
MISSING IN ACTION - DEWEY L. GOSSETT, FLIGHT OFFICER,  
A.C. 27 SEPTEMBER 1943 - FAILED TO RETURN FROM PATROL  
MISSION OVER SOUTHERN ITALY.

H. MEMBERS WHO HAVE DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES IN ACTION.

(1) SICILIAN CAMPAIGN:

- (A) WILLIAM L. DOTSON, 1ST LT., A.C. WOUNDED IN ACTION  
16 JULY 1943. AWARDED PURPLE HEART 23 JULY 1943  
BY COMMANDING GENERAL, PANTELLERIA ISLAND.

HEADQUARTERS 2d AIR SUPPORT COMMAND  
 ARMY AIR BASE, WILL ROGERS FIELD  
 OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

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SPECIAL ORDERS )

February 3, 1942.

No. . . . . 18)

1. Pursuant to authority contained in letter Hq. AFCC, Bolling Field, D.C., file : ACC 370.5 dated January 27, 1942, and 1st Ind. thereto, Hq. 2d Air Force dated January 30, 1942, the following-named enlisted men are transferred in grade with rating from the 48th Bomb. Group (L), Will Rogers Field, Okla. to Air Corps unassigned, Will Rogers Field, Okla, are designated cadres as shown below. Attached for administration to the hq & Hq Squadron, 2d Air Support Command, Will Rogers Field, and with the approval of the Commanding Officer of the Air Base, Will Rogers Field, are attached for rations to the 38th Air Base Squadron, Will Rogers Field, Okla.

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57th Bomb. Squadron (L), 48th Bomb. Group (L) Cadre		57th Bomb. Squadron (L), 48th Bomb. Group (L) Cadre		57th Bomb. Squadron (L), 48th Bomb. Group (L) Cadre		57th Bomb. Squadron (L), 48th Bomb. Group (L) Cadre		57th Bomb. Squadron (L), 48th Bomb. Group (L) Cadre	
RANK	NAME	ASN		DUTY					
M/Sgt.	Fosco, Knute	6526702		Airplane Mechanic					
S/Sgt.	Downs, Gus E., Jr.,	6971032		First Sergeant					
S/Sgt.	Poulan, Rush	6383902	✓	Aircraft Inspector					
S/Sgt.	Bankston, Nelson M.	6364279		Aircraft Mechanic					
Sgt.	Hord, John P.	18009868	✓	Clerk, Administrative					
Corp.	Blacketer, Edward M.	17017052		Clerk, Technical					
Sgt.	AM1cl Mitchell, Vann B.,	18014831	✓	Aircraft Armorer					
Sgt.	Barentine, William F.	17013484		Aircraft Mechanic					
SGt.	Bonenberger, Charles A.	18024164		Clerk, Administrative					
Corp.	Karrant, Jimmie	17018559		Duty Sergeant					
S/Sgt.	Reagan, Otis D.	7002664	✓	Radio Mechanic					
Corp.	Hood, Coleman	6327062		Mess Sergeant					
Sgt.	AM1cl Snodgrass, Jesse E.,	17013710		Acft Instrument Mechanic					
Corp.	AM1cl Spessard, George K.,	17018325		Aircraft Mechanic					
Corp.	Stepanich, Henry M.	17012382		Aircraft Mechanic					
Pvt.	Hopwood, William A.	35024521	✓	Acft Metal Worker					
Cpl.	Yoke, Willard E.,	15019579		Clerk, Administrative					
Pvt.	AM2cl Stiles, Phillip E.	7010205	✓	Aircraft Armorer					
Pvt.	AM2cl Ledford, Daw	14030557	✓	Aircraft Armorer					
Pvt.	1cl. AM2cl Schultz, Albert F.	17010909		Aircraft Mechanic					
Pvt.	1cl. AM2cl Shaughnessy, Wm P.	17017964		Aircraft Mechanic					
Pvt.	1cl. AM2cl Hall, John B.	15066904		Aircraft Mechanic					
Pvt.	AM2cl. Hobough, Billie J.	18004137		Aircraft Mechanic					
Corp.	Straney, Charles W.	15066954		Cook					
Corp.	Moore, Edward	34095578		Cook					
Pvt.	Hall, J.D. (i.o)	18053746		Cook					
Pvt.	Lamb, Luther G.	34055559		Cook					
Pvt.	Henry, Allen B.	18056029		Lineman, Telephone					
Corp.	AM2cl Henderson, Clarence V.	18019763		Radio Operator					
Pvt.	Somers, Ira W.	34117536	✓	Radio Operator					
Corp.	Hipsak, John M. Jr.	6664970		Telephone Operator					
Sgt.	AM1cl Hallenbeck, Gordon L.	17011971	✓	Teletype Operator					

2. Pursuant to authority contained in letter Hq. AFCC, Bolling Field, D.C. file: ACC 370.5 dated January 27, 1942, and 1st Ind. thereto Hq, 2d Air Force, dated January 30, 1942, the following named officers of the 48th Bombardment Group (L) are attached to Hq & Hq Squadron, 2d Air Support Command, and will report to the Commanding Officer, Headquarters, 2d Air Support Command, for assignment and duty.



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Par. 1, SO #18, Hq, 2d ASG, 2-3-42, Continued)

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1st Lieut. RICHARD D. CALLAWAY, 022371, Air Corps.

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By order of Colonel FRIERSON:

F.T. DCDD,  
Lieut. Colonel, F.A.,  
Adjutant.

OFFICIAL:

/s/F. T. Dodd

F.T. DCDD,  
Lieut. Colonel, F.A.,  
Adjutant.

DISTRIBUTION: "D" & "C".

A TRUE COPY:

*Donald L. Whitney*  
DONALD L. WHITNEY,  
1st Lieut., A.C.

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The 527th Fighter Squadron was activated Feb. 10, 1943 at Hill Roberts field, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Then it was known as the 312th Bomb. Squadron (L) and was assigned B-24's. Soon the personnel of the 312th were transferred to the 388th Bomb. Squadron and were shipped to Key Field, Georgia, Miss.

On arriving at Key Field the personnel were transferred to the 312th Bomb. Squadron, 6th Air Group and later the 312th Bomb. Squadron was redesignated the 12th Dive Bomb. Squadron, flying B-24's. With training in these new type aircraft the Group moved to port of embarkation and sailed from New York on April 27, 1943.

On May 11, 1943 the 6th Div. Bomber Group landed in North Africa and were immediately sent to various locations, Morocco and Tunisia for tactical training, acquisition of supplies, and outfitting equipment. The next base was North Africa Landing Ground where the Squadron flew its first mission on July 9, 1943. That same day the pilot was briefed by Capt. Cassidy, the squadron commander, for the covering of the Sicily invasion. By July 19 they had completed 251 sorties, dropping 70 tons of bombs on Sicilian targets.

The ground echelon had begun to move and once again the Squadron resumed operations at Arcadiane Landing Ground in Sicily. There they covered the Salerno Beachhead and gave close support to the 5th Army in Italy. On Sept. 11, 1943 the 312th Dive Bomb. Squadron was redesignated the 527th Fighter Bomber Squadron and were moved on to the mainland at the Pisa Airfield. The dive bombs and strafing continued and by the end of Sept. the 527th had completed 1363 sorties in helping the 5th Army continue its drive in Italy.

In October another move was necessary to keep in range of the retreating Germans and the Squadron found itself operating out of the base at Poggio, Italy. There the unit concentrated on enemy communications, transportation, and operated with the ground troops giving them close support when necessary. When January, 1944 was over the 527th had piled up 2784 sorties and 4038 hours of combat time.

The unit was moving again in April and operations were carried on from Grosseto Airfield. In May they had their best month thus far, going on 68 missions and 491 sorties even though the pilot strength was at an all time low. The fighter bombers strafed and dive bombed sometimes getting as many as 200 B/T's in one day.

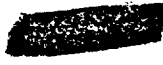
In June the 527th Fighter Bomber Squadron was redesignated the 527th Fighter Squadron and again changing bases. Orbetello Airfield was the next station and later the Squadron moved to Poretta Airfield in Corsica. The operations there consisted of bombing shipping, radar installations, communications and transportation in preparation for the coming invasion of Southern France. On Aug. 15 the Squadron took off at 0455 hours and flew 9 missions for the cover of the invasion. A new record was made when 70 missions and 494 sorties were flown in the month of August.

When the Allies had begun to advance in Southern France the 86th Group having been assigned P-47's in Corsica, moved back to the mainland at Grosseto Airfield, Italy. Then the front had become more or less stationary and the unit concentrated on bridges, railroad cuts, enemy transportation. Here also the fire bombs were used to smother out enemy installations that the Allied ground troops could not get. Later, the Squadron operated from Pisa Airfield and continued the same type missions.

In Feb., 1945 the unit moved up into Tattenville, France. Operations began before the men could find a good place to sleep and for the month of March the 527th flew 761 sorties and 154 combat hours, but lost 12 men and 7 pilots.

Just as the unit had followed the Germans into Italy, so they did in Germany and it was necessary to move to Brunshausen, Germany to keep in range of the targets. For the month of April the unit flew 752 sorties, only 2 short of the previous month. The last mission the 527th flew was on May 4, 1945 and since that first mission in July 1944, the unit had seen action in three invasions and had won 15 battle stars.

Soon after the war was over the unit was put to work in training of new pilots, but re-employment was constantly cutting one strength until it was necessary to consolidate the 527th with other squadrons into Group 10 and move them to Schweinfurt in Germany.



WAR DIARY

527th FIGHTER-BOMBER SQUADRON, 86th FIGHTER-BOMBER GROUP AAF

PERIOD - 1 JULY 1943 - 30 SEPTEMBER 1943

(PERTINENT ARTICLES & CLIPPINGS ATTACHED AT END OF EACH MONTHS NARRATIVE)

MONTH OF JULY 1943. PREPARED BY: DONALD L. WHITEY,  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
527th Ftr-Bomber Sq.JOHN W. HARSH  
620 Parter Drive  
Magnolia, Arkansas

Entering the North African Theater of Operations on 11 May 1943, the squadron flying personnel took tactical training at Medlouna, Morocco, North Africa and at Tafaraoui, Algeria, North Africa. Training, the assignment of new pilots, the addition of equipment and supplies continued until 1 July 1943, when the Flight Echelon proceeded to North Korba Landing Ground, Tunisia, North Africa.

- | DAY | EVENTS  |
|-----|---|
| 1   | The Engineering Section - Lt. Rice and 24 E.M. arrived at North Korba Landing Ground tonight via DC 3's and bivouaced in an olive grove. Natives set signal fires around the field and area, and guards were particularly on the alert. Preparations for moving continued at Tafaraoui.   |
| 2   | Three more DC 3's loaded with equipment and men arrived safely at North Korba. Temporary mess facilities set up, and men warned to dig in, as air raids are imminent. Airfield in fair condition, once a goat pasture, its barren surface took little clearing. Cleared cactus hedges into bivouac area. Pilots start hop to Korba today. Two motor convoys set out from Tafaraoui on the 5 day trek to Korba.                      |
| 3   | 1st Lt. [redacted] accompanied the 27th Bomb Group on an 1:50 hour bombing mission - target Penzer Division - SW Sicily and thereby became first pilot in squadron to enter combat. Airplane guards doubled as report of sabotage circulates. Air Raid alarm 3 shots established.   |
| 4   | The Squadron celebrated the 4th variously - 2 convoys on the rocky rough, freshly cleared road to Korba; a handful of men and equipment at Korba attempting to prepare field and planes for operation; the balance of the Squadron at Tafaraoui preparing to move and sweating out the trip, as reports have sifted back of unfriendly natives and signal fires at Korba. The Tafaraoui contingent had some native beer for supper. |
| 5   | Most of the planes arrived today, and Ordnance and Armament busy checking and adjusting guns, and planes are all bombed up tonight in preparation for tomorrow's mission. The flies, native dogs, dust from the field make things pretty disagreeable. Tafaraoui unit to pack for troop train.  |
| 6   | Capt. [redacted] and Capt. [redacted] and 1st Lt. [redacted] participated in a joint mission with Group, target being Licata, Sicily. Everyone on the ball.   |
| 7   | Tafaraoui unit boarded troop train today for Korba. Korba squadron continues to operate with Group. Motor convoy arrived today with more supplies and personnel, until today, Sergeants were pulling guard and KP, in addition to working all day on the Line.  |
| 8   | One 12 ship mission today. Flak guns lobbed shells over sea, trying to get hits with water spouts and ricochets on our deck flying planes. At Lt. [redacted] suggestion, Group adopted name "Invader" for the A-36-A to avoid confusion with P-51 "Mustang" (See Clipping).   |

MONTH OF JULY 1943. PREPARED BY: DONALD L. WHITNEY,  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
527th Ftr-Bomber Sq.

- | DAY | EVENTS  |
|-----|---|
| 9   | 312th flew first mission as a squadron today, target - Railroad yards, Canicatti, Sicily, 22 bombs (500 lb. demd. inst. fuse) were dropped in target area causing great damage, one plane damaged by flak. Pilots: Capt. Marsh, 1st Lts. <del>Kasner, Reale, Walsh, Geo. Dunham</del> and 2nd Lts. <del>Lynne, Pfeifferman, Brown, and Brewer</del> . Capt. Cassidy held a meeting tonight and with the aid of a map of Sicily illustrated how the invasion of Sicily would take place at 2:30 tomorrow morning. The 312th will help furnish fighter cover for the invasion.  |
| 10  | "D Day". "Invasion proceeds according to plan" - BBC. Our 2nd mission had difficulty getting off due to cloud of dust hovering field. Lt. <del>Kirsch's</del> aircraft crashed into another A/C on takeoff killing 2 enlisted men of 310th Bomb Sq - Cpl. Stachovic and Sgt. Kosobusky, and injuring Cpl. Saturday, perhaps fatally. Lt. Kirsch got out of plane before bombs exploded and escaped with minor injuries though badly shaken. Three medics of our squadron, Cpl. <del>Witt</del> , Pfc. <del>Nowak</del> and Pvt. <del>Kosobusky</del> did heroic work in removing the dead and wounded despite danger of explosion from bombs and wild bullets from burning planes. 1st Lt. Albert <del>Fleischmann</del> failed to return from this mission, though he wasn't seen to have crashed. Everyone tense. |
| 11  | A bang up mission today. 12 planes 2 hour mission, strafed and destroyed about half of a 75 truck convoy, about 3/4's of a 100 truck convoy, and strafed a railroad station at Lecara, Sicily. Capt. <del>Cassidy</del> led mission. Officers and men relaxed tonight a bit and went to Mediterranean for a swim - fine sandy beach. Nearby melon patches and Italian wine shop have lots of business.  |
| 12  | Two successful missions - Lt. <del>Fleischmann</del> reported rescued by U. S. Navy. The balance of squadron arrived from Tafaraoui today, relieving the overworked crews. Enough transportation now. Plane guards are patrolling field in a jeep.  |
| 13  | Bright spot of day. Red Cross Mobile Unit brings donuts and coffee to pilots and men on the line. Lt. <del>Witt</del> gets new mess set up, supplementing C rations with fresh vegetables - a welcome change.   |
| 14  | Two successful missions. Dr. <del>Rider</del> acquiring quite a number of native patients who come to the dispensary more regularly than our own boys. Set a broken leg for a little native boy tonight with the aid of first aid boys and officers using homemade splints and by the light of flashlights.   |
| 15  | Movie tonight at Group. "George Washington Slept Here". Held outside on a little knoll with bomb fuse cases for seats with jeeps suppling first balcony. Everyone attended.   |
| 16  | On the first mission today, Lt. <del>Witt</del> bailed out near Pantelleria. Lt. <del>Witt</del> circled him, until Navy launch came out from Pantelleria and picked him up. Bad news - on checking hospital and Navy reports, no sign of 1st Lt. <del>Albert F. Fleischmann</del> missing since July 10. (See Clipping) Had first transport escort mission today.  |

MONTH OF JULY 1943

PREPARED BY: DONALD L. WHITNEY  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
527th Ftr-Bomber Sq.

- | DAY        | EVENTS  |
|------------|---|
| 17         | Order issued on motorcycles requiring them to stay on roads, they have been wrecking camouflage discipline. Boys have acquired 8 or 10 Italian and German motorcycles, riding them, and a dip in the Mediterranean after hours supplies recreation  |
| 18         | Four missions today. Sicilian Campaign moving "According to Plan." AP Representatives and Stars and Stripes representative here for news stories today. (See news clippings attached.)  |
| 19         | Two short missions, operations ceased today. Completed 253 sorties at night, dropping 70 tons of bombs on Sicilian targets.   |
| 20         | Air Echelon left today via DC 3's and our own planes for W. Gela Landing Ground, Sicily. The Ground Echelon packed and prepared to move to Staging area at Bizerte.   |
| 21         | Air Echelon dug in today after air raid alarm last night. Field was once a cotton field, and dispersal area still is. Engineers still clearing mines from dispersal area. Can hear artillery all the time. The barrages seem particularly loud at night. Beach mined, wreckage, barbed wire and several dead Italians give mute evidence of the battle that raged here but a few days ago. Ground Echelon arrived at Bizerte and bivouaced on hillside. |
| 22         | Air Echelon resumed operations, flying four missions today. Consuming U rations, pretty good, everyone cooks for himself. Ground Echelon witnessed searchlight display, men attended movie at nearby Service Group. Peddlers bring grapes and melons to Staging Area.   |
| 23, 24, 25 | Routine strafing missions, another air raid alarm. Ground Echelon marking time.   |
| 26         | Standown for Squadron. Little exploration possible, north bound roads mined, pilots take a rest. Reconnaissance plane (Photo Freddie) leaves vapor trails over area. Ground Echelon again packs to move to P. of E.   |
| 27         | Ground Echelon boarded LST # 317 tonight. Shuttling supplies on with inadequate transportation. Air Echelon bombed 2 Seibel Ferries, encountering intense flak from Straits of Messina.   |
| 28         | LST # 317 remained in harbor till nightfall. Accomodations surprisingly adequate, food excellent.   |
| 29         | LST # 317 enroute. Air Echelon 2 routine missions. Natives bring eggs, grapes, vegetables to bivouac area.  |
| 30         | LST # 317 docks at Licata. Unloaded freight on docks and bivouaced in Staging Area. Air Echelon had another standown today. Lt. Brown while preparing to cook lunch suffered minor burns when gasoline exploded and was taken to evac hospital for treatment.   |
| 31         | Ground Echelon arrived this morning and set up new bivouac area widely dispersed in   |

Cont'd

31 cotton field. Orderly Room and Officers Mess set up in native house. Slightly colored reports of air raids, and whistling bullets accelerated digging in. Shovels and picks at a premium.

NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

Lt. ALBERT R. FLEISCHMANN, JR. MISSING.

ALBERT R. FLEISCHMANN, JR.  
MISSING  
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Lt. ~~Albert R. Fleischmann, Jr.~~ 22 years old, 1710 Orrington Avenue, Evanston, has been reported missing in action in Sicily since July 10, his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Albert R. Fleischmann were informed recently by the War Department. Lt. Fleischmann was the pilot of a fighter-bomber and has been stationed in Africa since May of this year. He enlisted in the Army Air Forces a few days before the outbreak of the war and received his wings in September, 1942. His father is Vice President of Standard Brands, Inc.

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INVADER PLANE NAMED TO WIN PRESS FAVOR

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS. (SEPT 1)

Allied Headquarters in North Africa, one of the Group of daring youngsters who have been battering the enemy with the United States' newest deadly divebomber, has been officially credited with giving the plane its name Invader.

Before the Sicilian invasion, a band of A-36 pilots complained their work would receive wider recognition if a good popular name was found for their plane. Lt. ~~Robert J. Walsh~~ of Felt, Idaho, suggested "Invader" remarking:

"When the Invasion comes we all expect these ships to be right in there from the start."

The name was indorsed from ~~Robert J. Walsh~~ of Lake City, Fla. on down. Correspondents soon learned of the proposal and the pilots were happy a few weeks later when they received clippings from home showing Lt. Walsh's proposal had been adopted generally.

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FIGHTER PILOT, WITH SICILY'S CONQUERERS DESCRIBES FLIGHTS

BUFFALO EVENING NEWS (AUG. 26)

"I wouldn't trade jobs with the President," wrote Lt. ~~Robert J. Walsh~~ to his parents here from Sicily. He works 18 hours a day planning bombing missions, deciding the type bombs to be used, the formation squadrons will keep, how they'll approach a target, and the like. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Kirsch, 4 Elgas Street.

"Everyone here feels optimistic about the whole thing, he said, mentioning the Allies recent success in Africa.

"Now if Hitler clears out as soon as we get up there, this war shouldn't take too long," he added.

"In all my life I've never seen people as poor as the Sicilians. The Germans made them work from dawn 'til dark for a crust of bread and when we give them an oc-



FIGHTER PILOT, WITH SICILY'S CONQUERERS DESCRIBES FIGHTS CONT'D

casual can of Army Ration stew, they practically kiss us in gratitude.

"They're turncoats and traitors though, everyone of them. Now that Mussolini is gone, they all expect to be treated like comrades-in-arms.

Hazards are many, he has frankly admitted to his mother, but described himself as "the luckiest boy in the world."

"Yesterday I took off with a full bomb load and crashed into another plane. My left landing gear crumpled as I was going down the runway and I veered off into the parking area at about 90 miles an hour. I hit this plane dead center and they both caught fire immediately.

"I managed to get out and start running and got about 50 feet when the first bomb went off. It knocked me on my face, and like a darn fool, I got up and started running again."

He was picked up and taken to Headquarters where a physician attended him and put him to sleep. The next day he was 'rarin' to go."

How does a fighter pilot feel when he's at the front?

"We're really on the business end of this war now. No barracks, shaving, clean clothes or anything. I've a beard a half inch long. I'm never more than a few yards from a slit trench and I sleep with a loaded .45 under my pillow. It's the nicest pillow I've ever had."

"Now I wish I could describe the butterflies that crawl around in my stomach before a mission. I'm afraid I've neither the time nor the paper."

"I hereby officially admit that I'm thoroughly scared, but that's just from imagination."

"Once you're off the ground, there's no time to feel that way. First you've got to worry about getting the formation together. Then about finding the target, then about dodging the ack-ack, and all the time keeping a constant patrol for enemy fighters.

Of Africa, Lt. Kirsch wrote:

"The natives are funny at first, and then they get disgusting. They have no sense of personal cleanliness, and they all steal you blind, if you're not careful. The country itself is beautiful, though. There are mountains around, and the ancient Moorish forts on top of them."

"Their sun baked mosques give the place an air of quiet mystery, quite unlike anything I've ever felt before."

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ALLIED COMMAND POST, NORTH AFRICA.

"FLIERS LIVE IN DUST" BY RAYMOND CLAPPER.

Out at a dusty airfield I arrived just in time to see a squadron of A-36's, light fighter-bombers come in from good hunting over Sicily.

One after another they landed on the converted goat pasture, having a few field tents put up for quarters. The small, trim, deadly A-36's skimmed down, bounced over the rough ground, settling to a stop amid clouds of African dust. The pilots climb out wringing wet because it is hot flying just a couple of hundred feet above the surface.

They throw off their fat Mae West life jackets, rub the dust off their eyes and the squadron leader, a lieutenant colonel, says, "Let's check in and get over to those Red Cross doughnuts."

FLIERS LIVE IN DUST BY RAYMOND CLAPPER CONT'D

The biggest thing is an American Red Cross girl under an olive tree serving coffee and doughnuts. Only after the second cup of coffee and the third doughnut do you begin to hear about what happened over Sicily a few minutes ago.

The most popular man in the squadron had his plane shot up by anti-aircraft fire and had to bale out. The formation flying at only 300 feet saw their pal land in a town and start running up an alley, followed by several Italians. The squadron followed the chase. Every time the American flier dodged around the corner, his pals, 200 feet up, would let go with their machine guns on the pursuing Italians.

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The fliers have been going out once or twice a day during the height of the Sicilian Campaign, particularly seeing the whites of the enemy's eyes in low strafing attacks on military trucks, railroad yards, radio stations and other targets.

One is apt to think of these boys in purple terms--glittering knights of the skies--but the hard fact is they live with their heads in the skies, but their feet six inches deep in dust.

All Sicily may be open to them in the air but on the ground they lead isolated, dusty lives like desert rats, too far from town to get in for a bath and recreation. And they must fly every day during a big drive like this so their visit to the Red Cross girl with the big tank of coffee and the crate of doughnuts becomes the most exciting event in their lives.

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The men climbed out of the planes from this mission unshaved, some with two day's growth of beard, uniform grimy, generally looking like working men at the end of a day digging ditches.

These are the boys who are doing men's work, who have saved thousands of lives of American ground troops, who are taking long chances to make the war shorter for everyone else and their own days fewer. They are the most spectacular figures of war yet they have no gallery for which to strut and only an hour or so at a time do they rise out of their dust-bound life to play their parts in this revolutionaries, these men and men like Arnold, Spaatz, Eaker, and Harris.

They would be horrified to think they are revolutionaries but they are showing how relatively few men with relatively few casualties can hop over defenses, changing the whole balance of forces in war.

More than that, the weapon which they are now demonstrating how to use has possibilities as a weapon of peace in the sense that none has existed before. It makes world police physically possible for the first time.

The real revolutionaries are these generals of the air and their fliers munching on Red Cross doughnuts on a dusty African field. They are the pioneers who make it possible to outlaw war and drive it out of existence.

