



S E C R E T

Month of April

I. Negative

II. STRENGTH COMMISSIONED and ENLISTED

1.	At beginning of Period:		
	OFFICERS -----	62	
	ENLISTED MEN -----	246	
2.	Net Increase:		
	OFFICERS -----	9	
	ENLISTED MEN -----	1	
3.	Net Decrease:		
	OFFICERS -----	12	
	ENLISTED MEN -----	1	
4.	At End of Period:		
	OFFICERS -----	59	
	ENLISTED MEN -----	246	

III. A echelon departed Y-34 Metz for Y-74 near Frankfurt. The move began on 12 April 1945 was completed by 15 April. The move was accomplished with Squadron transportation, quarter master trucks and C-47's. This was a permanent change of station by secret orders.

IV. On 11 April 1945 CAPTAIN CARLSON was leading the Squadron on an armed reconnaissance mission over Czechoslovakia. At about 0800 2nd LT PHILIP M. HOLSTINE went down to strafe an airdrome near Amberg. His airplane was hit by flak so he pulled up and bailed out. He was seen to float to the ground, land and walk into the woods. No word has reached us concerning his whereabouts. At the time, LT HOLSTINE had been flying number four position in the lead flight. He is being carried as M.I.A.

On 16 April 1945 LT ALFRED W. ANDERSON was flying number four position in the lead flight of the Squadron led by MAJOR MUMFORD. The mission was an armed recon to Karlsbad, Rakowitz, and Hilsen. LT ANDERSON'S airplane developed propeller trouble so he turned and set course for home. At a point

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Near Lauf 0-3007 LT ANDERSON was forced to make a crash landing. LT SHERMAN who escorted him on this return trip reported that LT ANDERSON landed without incident near an advancing American column. He further states that LT ANDERSON called him over the radio and said that he was being picked up by the 48th Infantry Division. We expected LT ANDERSON's early return because of this report but no word has reached us concerning him as yet. As a result he is being carried as M.I.A. until some definite information concerning him is secured.

On 25th April 1945 LT RUSSELL L. GRUBBS was flying number four position in the lead flight led by 1st Lt. J. R. SUNDSON. The Squadron was on an armed recon in the Munich area after a C-47 transport crash. CAPTAIN CARLSON spotted the airfield at Erding and his aircraft leader, LT DUFF, ordered to attack it. As LT DUFF and LT GRUBBS were within their initial pass, the anti-aircraft defense opened fire on them. LT GRUBBS' aircraft was hit and he was forced to bail out. As a result he was killed. Part of the Erding airfield is grassy and the rest is a cleared area. The aircraft wreckage is located in the cleared area and is being investigated by M.I.A.

On 25th April 1945 LT THOMAS L. COORE was flying number one position in the lead flight led by 1st Lt. J. R. SUNDSON. The Squadron was on an armed recon in the Munich area after a C-47 transport crash. CAPTAIN CARLSON spotted the airfield at Erding and his aircraft leader, LT DUFF, ordered to attack it. As LT DUFF and LT COORE were within their initial pass, the anti-aircraft defense opened fire on them. LT COORE's aircraft was hit and he was forced to bail out. As a result he was killed. Part of the Erding airfield is grassy and the rest is a cleared area. The aircraft wreckage is located in the cleared area and is being investigated by M.I.A.

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An award was made to the following named officers, in recognition of their gallantry and heroism, in the line of duty, during the month of April, 1945:

MAJOR WALTER W. WATSON O-372110  
CAPTAIN ROY W. BRISON O-372110

AIR MEDALS were awarded to the following named officers during the month of April:

1ST LT ALFRED W. ANDERSON O-372110  
1ST LT ROBERT D. ANDREWS O-372110  
1ST LT LLOYD F. CONNOR O-372110  
1ST LT WELBY F. CHESSELT O-372110

The following named Officer was awarded the Silver Star Medal this month:

1ST LT EUGENE R. SMITH O-703707

The following named Officers were presented and awarded the Distinguished Service Cross:

CAPTAIN WILLIAM J. GARRY O-675538  
1ST LT WILLIAM J. HAYLAND Jr. O-318470

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SECRET EVENTS  
Month of April /45

1. April's Fool Day and Easter Day -- but a cold take-off was no Easter Egg or April Fool -- just plain, cold, hard fact. LT WATLAND, his foot healed up, took 12 ships out into Germany again to scout around. The weather was pretty poor, but they managed to find a hole and drop bombs on a Messing Yards and raise some hell there. Over the target LT WATLAND got hit by flak again and managed to get over our lines where KILSAT I picked a place for him to land. In fact, the controller invited him to dinner as he was coming in right by them, so he sallied in and got out to wave to the rest of the Squadron who were sweating him out. I hope "RH" doesn't feed him too well -- or perhaps he'll never get back to the happyfield.

LT McROBE took off just before noon with the second but last mission of the day, but it was so overcast that it was hard to achieve any results. However, the Squadron did manage to beat up some rail activity by strafing. Just after dinner, LT DUFF came back, cheerful as ever, from Mainz; a service crew there had fixed up the damage to his plane and he had plenty of rumors but no automobiles.

2. Sometime in the middle of the night, Lt ROISTINE, OD for the night, got a call "Released" til daybreak of the 3rd. Was he annoyed? Up all night and everyone else could go out hunting souvenirs in Germany while he would be sleeping. Well, it didn't turn out quite that way for at about 10 AM another call came rescinding that order and putting us on alert at 12 noon. Why???? I don't know, and nor does anyone else around here. The weather was too bad for operations so we stuck around till about 3 PM when our release came through. DULL but restful day!
3. Today was mostly taken up by planning a mission, waiting for it, and then going up on an entirely different one.

They had us out of bed at a reasonable hour, then briefed the pilots on an escort mission which they were to fly with the 395th Fighter Squadron supporting British Bombers. Take-off for an R/V at Duren (good old stamping grounds) and then deep into Germany -- was held up for quite some while. Eventually, Major HUMAW led his pilots to the ships but they were all recalled -- Mission Scrubbed -- and all they had to report was their cockpit procedure!

Suddenly, out of a cloudy-sky, Group called through the "Squawk Box" Mission to take-off at approximately 1615. It will be an armed reccy beyond Kassel. Here are the courses -----

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It was then already 1605 but somehow they boys all managed to get out to thier ships with everything. The weather not being very good, nothing of great importance took place except that we ran into the formation of RAF we were supposed to have escorted had things worked as planned. In the mist and overcast, the Squadron saw ten odd Lancasters and went flying on. Getting nearer it turned out to be a skyful of the damned things in typical formation -- they were all going on way. There was much shooting of red flares but no incident.

BEYOND THIS -- everyone was glad when the ships were down and we took our weary way to bed at 8:30 just in case of another early morning.

4. Sure enough -- 0645 briefing. MAJOR LUTAN is sure a flying CO -- he took the early mission up but there wasn't very much doing. They went for an armed reccey out to Weimar but as they had a 10/10 cloud coverage -- they found nothing and saw less or visa versa.

Due to the fact that CAPT MILLER has been taken off combat status because of his ear, he is being transferred to Group Headquarters. We are very sorry to see him leave the Squadron -- one has only to think back a little to realize that he has been around for almost two years now. He is being replaced as Operations Officer by CAPT CHASE. From the 397th and I shall take the opportunity right now to assure him that he will have a pleasant time with the 198th.

As soon as the planes were loaded up again -- LT McCORONE took another 12 ships. There was nothing much to report from this either and we are all glad to get back and so to bed.

5. An 8 o'clock briefing -- quite a pleasant surprise to sleep in late again. The pilots were briefed on an escort mission but that was scrubbed once more, to be changed to Armed Reccey which was flown uneventfully due to an overcast. This month seems to have brought some poor weather, especially after our stretch of perfect days in March.

WHILE this milk run was out -- we were released for the remainder of the day. This gave us all the opportunity to get prettied-up for the party tonight. The party went off with a bang -- but it is as always, parties are no fun in

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relating -- just in participating but I shall say that this party can be entered for today and tomorrow.

MAJOR BOWLIN drop ed in with a P-38 looking very well and being very welcome -- long time no see Major -- drop around more often.

6. What a day. It really started by the ending of the party of yesterday but that is all by the way. We were called at 0400 for an 0515 briefing and 0815 take-off!! Something could be said, but so what?

CART CARLSON took the 8-ships up on time to find a complete overcast so he cruised around without incident -- except that he saw some strange P-47's but determined nothing.

The weather closed in again after the take-off time and so the next mission which LT McCROME was supposed to lead never did take-off. The rest of the day was spent in leisurely fashion and we felt pretty good by the end of the day.

Some more new pilots here today. LTS THOMAS N MILLS, RUSSELL L GRUBBS, JOE G HIGGS, DONALD R FALLING arrived and soon we will see how they make out in combat.

7. Late in bed again. This is the life. A 0915 briefing for an 8-ship close-support mission in the Eisenach area. LT McCROME took up the first flight which went out but being unable to contact the controllers beat-up train activity. Good work Mac, keep it up and you'll make your second tour better than the first and that was plenty good.

LT VIECK went up after lunch and worked with the ground controller by boing a town but couldn't see any results other than busting up some buildings and I hope the controller was satisfied.

Our "Ops" Officer went up at almost 4 o'clock in the afternoon which beat-up plenty of trains and M/T's again. LT ALDRUS did a good job on CART CARLSON'S wing -- he is getting in the groove of the '95 bridge-busters. He dropped his bombs fair and square on a railroad bridge.

Well, we're moving soon. Right now it is scheduled as the tenth.

8. Group "Ops" is taking a sordid pleasure in waking us early. Five o'clock briefing and that was followed by a seven o'clock take-off led by MAJOR MUMAW in which some troop concentrations were bombed and strafed but unfortunately it is as so often, no results could be observed but it is

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near Frankfurt and by gosh, so we are. When we arrived at Y7a it was to find that MAJOR PENDLETON and the Pre-A Eschelon had already more than laid the ground work. This is really a de luxe proposition all the way around. A nearby village, ZEPPELHEIM, was taken over lock, stock and barrel. A nearby village - 'tis very good -- No?? We couldn't be more comfortable even at home. The line has some disadvantages but these will be ironed out very shortly -- that's for sure.

13. It was up at 0600 with a lot of work to be done since the entire Squadron is expected to arrive the 15th.

S/Sgt Felizianni and his mess-hall crew had been doing a grand job of feeding us. It will be hard keeping our men off a Eschelon from here on in.

The rearranging and cleaning of the living area and the line took up most of the time. A break in the work came when our operations building caught fire by accident and really caused quite a bit of excitement. Heroic work led by MAJOR PENDLETON with ample contributions by LT HUBERT, SGT MORGAN and others finally subdued the fire and saved the building. The destruction of this building would have been a blow to our plans since it was intended to house the CO, S-2, S-3, Personnel Equipment, Snack Bar, Medics and what not. These men took a lot of risks to save an enemy building.

Supersticial day - sure 'nough -- began with a cloudy day, scrubbing (around noon) a mission to escort A-28's into Czechoslovakian target - a Fighter Sweep to Dresden was scrubbed - then the bomber escort was on and off again; after everybody was thoroughly "scrubb-happy" and the weather completely uncooperative with "fronts" and "thunderheads," the Fighter-Sweep finally came off in the late afternoon. LT EDGAR McCORMIE, Squadron Leader, became lost to the rest of the Squadron about 7000 feet in a heavy cloud and rain overcast which ran from 30,000 feet to the deck. There was no word from him over the R/T and the last was seen of him somewhere East of Saarbrucken. (One good man -- N.Y.R.) To complete the day, rain fell unrelentingly throughout the evening.

14. This has been a fairly successful day here. More equipment and more personnel keep rolling in but the MAJOR said part of the work had been done -- and that was something.

MAJOR PENDLETON, CAPTAIN BUCKMAN, LT COLBURN and LT HILL keep dashing off on scrounging trips and have added an air compressor and another trailer to our growing list of

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OF EQUIPMENT.

The incoming members of our Squadron can hardly believe their eyes when they see for the first time what constitutes our living area. It is unbelievable for we have been used to living a rough life. This will spoil all of us but a little spoiling won't really do as much harm.

We are all ready to go operational and word has it that tomorrow is the day. Moving day for the bulk of the ground crew -- the day dawned fresh and sunny with some low haze over the distant hills. The first mission (same as on April 12 -- bomber escort to Kempton NE of Lake Constance was scrubbed on account of bad weather in the target area. Shortly before noon there was great rejoicing in camp. Mac (LT MCGROHE) returned to the unit (brought back by a couple of Infantry boys stationed E of Saarbrucken where he had bailed out). The only injury he sustained was a badly bruised knee, relieved when he hit the rudder of his plane as he left it in the rough air and clouds. An xray taken at a German hospital over there showed no broken bones.

The Squadron was released at noon until daybreak of the 15th so everyone scattered to the four winds for one last "fling" before the big move.

15. This has been wonderful here the past few days for though there's been a great deal of work to do none has minded. However, this noon we became operational again. Most of the equipment and personnel have arrived by truck or by C-47 and with the exception of the necessary to run the few missions from Metz.

The meals at this strip have been wonderful beyond description. Fresh eggs, steaks, lambchops and coffee which brings back memories of those white tower restaurants at home. CAPTAIN BUCHMAN secured some aluminum pots and our coffee should continue to be good.

The first mission of the day landed here after a bomber escort. This was a pretty routine situation according to all reports with weather as the chief factor of consideration. An armed recon was called and take-off was finally decided upon as 1730 hours. This was really the first time things really snafued. LT KLUMHE couldn't get his wheels up so he came down. LT RUSSELL got jammed up so he came down, LT RUSSELL got jammed up and he returned. LT LONGAR's radio also went out so he returned

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is usually late. These missions have been powerhouses for creating destruction to enemy equipment and installations. The weather has been beautiful on the ground but in the air our pilots have been running into haze which has been raising heck with their visibility.

This business of living in civilian homes is quite an experience for our E.K.'s and Officers. Lawns are being sprinkled, pajamas and neckties brought forth -- 'Tis a rough war -- no doubt.

18. The same old routine today with an early rising and a late getting to bed. We are so far from the bombline that three and four hour missions are the rule rather than the exception. There was little excitement this day with the exception of the continuing process of mowing down enemy ground movement wherever it could be found. This war business is sure getting to be a long drawn-out process. It should be ending any year now.
19. The Group received a release from Operations today. This practise which was fairly common on Strip Three is a useful one for it makes possible maintenance and training which otherwise has to be shifted to some other time or slightly neglected. Too, it gives our pilots a rest for they've all been putting in a lot of time these days.

The morning was a quiet one with the various departments concentrating on their own maintenance. In the afternoon a meeting was held by MAJOR LUMAW and MAJOR FREDLETON clarifying our status and actions while in this country. It doesn't sound too good. Oh, to be elsewhere. Now -- especially that summer is here. A training film on Russian aircraft was shown but it looks like the Russians had better have big red stars painted all over their aircraft or else.

MAJOR LUMAW presented Sgt BASTAROLI with a Bronze Star in a public presentation near the Administration Building. Life and the war goes on.

20. The Squadron went back to work today with vigor. The missions this week have covered the same reccy area of Karlsbad, Pilsen and Prague. Our pilots did not stir up any unusual excitement with routine missions predominating all day long. 'Twas another long day but war is hell.

Some pleasant events transpired to liven up the day. LT KESTING who spent some time back in the good ol' USA finally returned and has been reassigned to our Squadron.

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LATOR BOWMAN an old boy with us, returned for a visit with the Group and Squadron and informed us that he is now Group Operations Officer for the 365th Fighter Group. This is a good break for him and there's no question about his being able to do the job. He will.

LT NEELY RIEGAN learned that he is on orders for R and R. We look for him to return in three months or so.

21. An early briefing this AM found LT WAYLAND leading the Squadron into the usual recy area. These early mission tend to find targets more so than the afternoon mission and this was true again today. A total of some ten loco's, twenty plus horse-drawn vehicles and fires and LT ANDRUS found 300 enemy troops resting along a highway and gave them the well known hotfoot. He claims to have killed at least fifty with more injured.

The second mission led by CAPTAIN CARLSON was a quite one compared to the morning mission but a few more M/T's were chalked up. Of late, our pilots have developed a habit of going a little too low on their strafing passes and as a result have had narrow escapes. LT HELLIG and LT ANDRUS both have struck trees without injury to themselves. There's no question that a P-47 can absorb punishment but I don't think the plane was designed for tree-top clipping.

22. This did not appear to be a day for too much flying but briefing was called for an early hour and our Squadron was airborne by 0800. LT HAYS took the Squadron of twelve ships out with one spare and found a fish ten ships as he had one one absorptive and one escort return. It's a peculiar sort of mission since our pilots flew one mission to the recy area then returned to Enfurt to refuel, rearm and flew to the same area again before returning home.

In the meantime, LT RIFE, an old boy, dropped in for a visit from a stay with the Fourth Armored Division. He will return to the Squadron again by the 1st of the month to go back on full flying status.

LT RIEGAN is going home on an R and R basis tomorrow now what he has received his promotion. He was sitting around sweating it out. A few other promotions came out but since no official publication of them has been made - we'll wait until later in the week to mention them. The promotions became official and now it's FIRST LT SIRINGS, FIRST LT LONGAR, FIRST LT HAYS, FIRST LT BERGMAN, FIRST LT SMITH, FIRST LT FORENEY, FIRST LT DICKS, FIRST LT MARSCH. It makes now for a well balanced Squadron.

Our Squadron finally returned to base after being gone all

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This was quite an interesting one. The Squadron ran across a enemy cub and LT EYRICH forced it to the ground and the rest of the Squadron proceeded to clobber the aircraft and pilot. What a blood-thirsty crew we have now -- just plain eager.

The rest of us had most of the day off for the Squadron had been released but we had to wait on the airborne flight to land. The ground forces had moved so far ahead that we are practically out of the war. However, rumor has it that this condition won't last long.

23. This was some day. It began with an early briefing where we were informed that it was doubtful that any mission would be flown because of the weather. It was true until 1630 when our Squadron was airborne on a patrol mission. Everyone was very happy about all this.

In the meantime the new 1st LTS were running shuttle-runs to Frankfurt to buy silver bars. Nothing like a promotion to raise morale ever so often.

We added two more pilots to our roster in 2nd LT MOORE and 2nd LT GILKES. We are a new Squadron now so far as pilots are concerned. Ah, to be back on strips such as strip # 3.

The patrol mission came back from a milk-run but still it's soft combat time. For all practical purposes this war is over but nobody seems to tell the Squareheads about it.

24. Our Squadron flew a series of patrol reccy's all day making for an uneventful day but good combat time for some of our war weary boys. I like to see these missions scheduled from time to time for they serve as a relaxation from the continual strain of pounding away at enemy targets. Too, they are such lovely missions to interrogate, time up, time down, no casualties, no loading, no flak, no nothing. I can do these standing on one leg. An easy day but a long one.

25. This day began at an early hour with a briefing for an armed reconnaissance mission. CAPTAIN CARLSON, LT FORTNEY and LT BERGMAN took their respective turns in leading the Squadron. The first mission did not find too much to work over in the way of ground targets except for an enemy airdrome which was loaded with airplanes. CAPTAIN CARLSON tried to catch a Me 109 but couldn't do it. The tragic note of this mission was that LT GRUBBS' airplane was hit by flak over the Erding airdrome and he was forced to bail out. His chute was seen to open and he floated to the ground but he's pretty deep in enemy territory so I expect he'll sit out the rest of this war. A good boy, LT GRUBBS was

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ically on DS to the service team where he's developed into quite a G-17 pilot. LT VIECK'S been around for a long time now and we look for him to be shipping home any day now.

The rumor concerning the move has shifted direction and it looks as if we are going to stay here for a time yet. Living in civilian comfort as we are none objects to this idea.

We've added a few new expressions to the vocabulary of our Squadron but the one which appeals to me most used -- frequently used by F/O BRYAN cannot be written on paper. Tsh Tsh, it covers a lot of ground and used properly, could grow grass.

LT BERGMAN has a short but affectionate nose according to hearsay. Its the type which gets kissed quite frequently -- mostly by a fist.

27. This was the kind of day when one could relax because flying was impossible -- it said in fine print. At any rate the morning hours after briefing were consumed with a Pilot's meeting with MAJOR KUMAW and CAPTAIN CARLSON ironing out a few wrinkles here and there. This pretty well took care of the afternoon.

The PM found the Pilot's taking it easy. But the mission boys had to sit around sweating out a takeoff. It rained most of the afternoon and just when the weather got real bad - Group ordered the boys into the blue -- what blue? As this is war they went. LT HAYS led the Squadron on a divebombing attack on the airdrome at Traum. The attack was a fairly successful one but hardly spectacular. Back here the sky was black and it was raining too hard for our pilots to try to come home so they were diverted to R-28. LT HAYS nosed over on landing and his injuries are such that he is hospitalized. We don't have an official report on his injuries but it is our hope that they are minor. Rather than risk any more crack-ups, LT DICKS took the Squadron to R29 where they bedded for the night. This is sure a funny business this war -- never can tell what's going to happen next and it usually does.

28. One word would cover the activities for today -- nothing. The squadron which had landed at R-28 returned to base early this morning. Another mission was briefed but it never was airborne.

No news of the extent of LT HAYS' injuries but our Squad-

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ron Doc is going up to check. At any rate, LT HAYS won't fly for a time.

The weather didn't let up all day but the sun started to shine through at about five o'clock and the boys started to sweat. However, nothing developed.

The move rumor has become a fact and we are making preparations to go to R42 near Nurnberg. It looks like tents again but war is rough. Tough/

29. The morning began eventfully when LT JETTY crashed on takeoff. Fortunately he was not injured but the Regulative took a beating. War has its rough moments and this is one of them. The Squadron led by LT MAXLARD took off for an armed recce again. A marshalling yard and a few unwary locomotives were clobbered.

LT FORTNEY'S mission was briefed but sat around from there-on in. I have seen everything or at least I thought I had until I walked into my office this afternoon. I no longer wonder why I talk to myself so much and it's not because of money in the bank -- "I'll give you a clue." I used to think monkeys were funny people -- no more.

The remaining hours did not develop into more flying except for CAPTAIN CARLSON'S flight. He went to R3C to check on LT HAYS and from all reports LT HAYS will not fly combat for some time at least. We hate to lose LT HAYS but if we had to it's nice to know that he will be alright. Thus ended another day for us. Dull day.

30. Traditional April showers turned to hail and sleet today. The Squadron was airborne on an armed recce with LT BERGMAN leading. Inclement weather forced the Squadron to be rerouted to R-28.

While we were waiting for the Squadron to return, we collected our marks. Here's another place where money is of no earthly use -- we'll still take it.

The Squadron which had landed at R-28 returned with a report of good hunting. The weather socked in so that was all the flying for this day. LT LONG scheduled to go to a flak home in England has been shaving and dressing for the past four days and nothing has developed as yet. LT VLOCK was to go along with him but our move to R-42 makes it necessary for him to stick around and fly the C-47.

Another month has come to an end bringing this war here to a definite climax. The question used to be how much longer we would remain on this continent. Now it is where do we go from here???

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