

[REDACTED]

DECLASSIFIED  
DOD DIR 5200.9

HISTORICAL DATA

SQUADRON HISTORY  
396TH FIGHTER SQUADRON  
368TH FIGHTER GROUP

FEBRUARY 1945

SQUADRON HISTORIAN - 1ST LT. MURRAY B. THALER  
RECORDER - CPL. THOMAS J. GRIFFIN

HISTORICAL DATA

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[REDACTED]

SQUADRON HISTORY  
FEBRUARY 1945  
396TH FIGHTER SQUADRON

1. ORGANIZATION: Nil

2. STRENGTH:

	OFFICERS	ENLISTED MEN
Beginning of Period	62	248
Net increase	0	0
Net decrease	5	1
Total at end of period	57	247
Total Officers and Enlisted Men	294	

3. MOVEMENTS: Nil

4. LOSSES IN ACTION:

Capt. Meredith W. Henry (KIA). His airplane was hit by flak while strafing on a mission over Germany south of Laacher Lake on 21 Feb. 1945. He probably tried to bail out when over friendly territory but no chute was seen in the vicinity about 9 miles south of Bastogne. Investigation the following day revealed his burial was at the Bastogne Cemetery, Belgium.

2nd Lt. Richard T. Schindling (MIA). His airplane started to burn on the left side of the fuselage while on an air-ground cooperation mission 23 Feb. 1945. He bailed out, chute was seen to open, then landed in the vicinity of L-087693 in enemy territory near Feuerscheid, Germany.

5. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

In accordance with GO #13, Hq. United States Strategic Air Force in Europe, dtd 4 Feb. 1945, the following award was made: (Copy of extract atchd)

Distinguished Service Cross

Lt. Col. Paul P. Douglas, Jr. (CO of sqdn at time of action)

In accordance with GO #9, Hq. XIX TAC, dtd 3 Feb. 1945, the following awards were made: (Copy of GO atchd)

AIR MEDAL

1st Lt. Abner L. Jones

5th, 6th, 7th Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
Maj. Dennis Crisp

1st Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
2nd Lt. Harold D. Hammett

1st & 2nd Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
2nd Lt. Arthur B. Holiman      2nd Lt. William J. Gemroy

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**SECRET**

R E S T R I C T E D

HEADQUARTERS  
UNITED STATES STRATEGIC AIR FORCE  
IN EUROPE  
Office of the Commanding General

4 February 1945

GENERAL ORDERS)  
:  
NO.....13)

AWARDS OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1943, and Circular #32, Hq European Theater of Operations, US Army, 20 March 1944, the DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS is awarded to the following named Officers and Enlisted Men:

PAUL P. DOUGLAS, JR., O-432187, Lieutenant Colonel, Army Air Forces, United States Army. For extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy, 20 October 1944. On this date, Lieutenant Colonel DOUGLAS was returning to base as leader of a squadron of fighter aircraft with his supply of gasoline almost exhausted, when a formation of more than 20 enemy aircraft carrying bombs was observed. Completely disregarding the odds against him, he ordered all but five of his aircraft to return to base, and with this small number unhesitatingly attacked the enemy formation with such ferocity that they were forced to jettison their bombs directly over the city of Coblenz and take evasive action. In the ensuing combat, Lieutenant Colonel DOUGLAS relentlessly pursued the enemy, destroying three of his aircraft and damaging a fourth. His own plane was continually under attack and sustained many hits. He was painfully wounded and his airplane's right wing was set on fire, yet he managed to return to base. The extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty displayed by Lieutenant Colonel DOUGLAS on this occasion are in keeping with the highest traditions of the Armed Forces of the United States.

By command of Lieutenant General SPAATZ:

E. P. CURTIS  
Brigadier General, USA.,  
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:  
s/ Harris F. Scherer  
HARRIS F. SCHERER  
Colonel, AGD.,  
Adjutant General.

A CERTIFIED TRUE EXTRACT:

*Murray B. Thaler*  
MURRAY B. THALER,  
1st Lieut., Air Corps.

R E S T R I C T E D

SQUADRON HISTORY

5. AWARDS AND DECORATIONS: Continued

1st, 2nd 3rd Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
2nd Lt. David J. Bess                      2nd Lt. William D. Dunbar  
2nd Lt. Richard T. Schindling

3rd & 4th Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
2nd Lt. George A. Myers                      2nd Lt. Talbert S. Newhart

4th Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
2nd Lt. Joseph S. Busenbark (MIA)

4th Bronze & 1st Silver Oak Leaf Cluster  
2nd Lt. Albert F. Brizendine

1st Silver Oak Leaf Cluster  
2nd Lt. Earl Kielgass                      2nd Lt. Boyd E. Johnson

6th Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
2nd Lt. Robert R. Waggoner                      2nd Lt. Theodore O. Taubert

6th & 7th Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
2nd Lt. Irvan F. Miller                      2nd Lt. Richard C. Cox

7th Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
2nd Lt. Kenneth L. Wilcox

7th & 8th Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
Capt. Meredith W. Henry                      2nd Lt. Albert A. Schnedler

8th Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
2nd Lt. William G. Dixon

9th Bronze & 2nd Silver Oak Leaf Cluster  
1st Lt. George W. Petrie                      2nd Lt. Leslie G. Hansen

2nd Silver Oak Leaf Cluster  
1st Lt. George L. Waegener

2nd Silver & 11th Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
1st Lt. Gerald J. Grace                      1st Lt. John W. Strickland

12th Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
1st Lt. Harold E. Glazier                      1st Lt. Robert H. Howie

12th & 13th Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
1st Lt. Jerry B. Tullis

14th Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster  
1st Lt. John M. Loeb