

TUSKEGEE AIRMEN CHRONOLOGY

**DANIEL L. HAULMAN
ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY BRANCH
AIR FORCE HISTORICAL RESEARCH AGENCY
MAXWELL AFB, AL 36112-6424**

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3 April 1939: President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a Public Law 18, which was sometimes called the Army Expansion Act of 1939, that appropriated funds to the War Department. While many interpreted a provision in the law as mandating the War Department to begin training black pilots in the Army Air Corps, others thought it was too vague for that, since it only authorized the Secretary of War, at his discretion, to choose a school or schools where black civilian pilots might be training, and lend it equipment for further training. The War Department did not immediately begin training black pilots, but it did begin considering that if it ever had to do so, that such training would be on a segregated basis. (Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops* [Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1966], pp. 56-60; Lt Col Michael Lee Lanning, *The African-American Soldier* [New York: Citadel Press, 2004] p. 189).

27 June 1939: Congress passed the Civilian Pilot Training Act. (Robert J. Jakeman, *The Divided Skies*.)

September-October 1939: The Civil Aeronautics Administration received Tuskegee Institute's application to be a civilian pilot training institution, and after Tuskegee obtained permission to use the Montgomery Airport as a facility, the application was approved. (Robert J. Jakeman, *The Divided Skies*)

November 1939: 14 men and 2 women qualified physically to enter civilian pilot training at Tuskegee Institute. (Randy Johnson, *From Cubs to Hawks*)

January 1940: Students in the civilian pilot training program at Tuskegee Institute began flying, using the airport at Montgomery, Alabama. (Randy Johnson, *From Cubs to Hawks*)

Late February 1940: The Civil Aeronautics Authority approved Tuskegee's Kennedy Field for Civilian Pilot Training, after improvements to the field, eliminating Tuskegee Institute's need to use the Montgomery Airport. (Robert J. Jakeman, *The Divided Skies*)

25 March 1940: George A. Wiggs arrived in Tuskegee to administer the standard written examination required of all Civilian Pilot Training students. Every student who took the examination passed, surpassing the passing rate of other schools in the South. (Robert J. Jakeman, *The Divided Skies*.)

20 May 1940: Tuskegee Institute applied to teach secondary civilian pilot training after securing approval to use the Alabama Polytechnic Institute (API) airfield at Auburn. (Randy Johnson, *From Cubs to Hawks*)

End of July 1940: Tuskegee Institute began secondary civilian pilot training, with new instructors who had been trained at Chicago, and using the Alabama Polytechnic Institute (API) airfield at Auburn. (Randy Johnson, *From Cubs to Hawks*)

16 September 1940: President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Burke-Wadsworth Act, also called the Selective Training and Service Act, which Congress had already passed. The law forbid racial restrictions on voluntary enlistments in the branches of the Armed Forces, including, presumably, the Army Air Corps. (Jakeman, *The Divided Skies*, p. 183). On the same day, the War Department announced that the Civil Aeronautics Authority, in cooperation with the U.S. Army, would start the development of “colored personnel” for the aviation service. (Public Law 783, 16 September 1940; War Department Press Release, 16 September 1940; 99th Fighter Squadron summary history in the lineage and honors folder of the 99th Flying Training Squadron at the Air Force Historical Research Agency (AFHRA), Maxwell AFB, AL)

9 October 1940: President Franklin D. Roosevelt released a War Department statement, which he received the previous day, indicating that “Negro aviation units” would be formed. (Jakeman, *The Divided Skies*, p. 187). At about the same time, the War Department promoted Benjamin O. Davis, Sr. to be the first black general in the U.S. Army and Judge William H. Hastie, the first black federal judge, as a civilian advisor to Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson. All three actions were designed to encourage black voters to support Roosevelt instead of Republican candidate Wendell Wilkie in the November 1940 Presidential election. (J. Todd Moye, *Freedom Flyers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 28, 72)

24 October 1940: The General Staff of the War Department asked the Army Air Corps to submit a plan for the establishment and training of a black pursuit squadron. [Robert J. Jakeman, *The Divided Skies* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1992), p. 197.]

20 November 1940: Yancey Williams, a Howard University student who completed civilian pilot training, applied to enter the Army Air Corps as an aviation cadet. Three days later he received a response that the War Department was holding his application because “appropriate Air Corps units are not available at this time, at which colored applicants can be given flying cadet training.” [Robert J. Jakeman, *The Divided Skies* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1992), pp. 204-205]

6 December 1940: General Walter R. Weaver of the Southeast Air Corps Training Center at Maxwell Field, Alabama, submitted to General Henry H. Arnold, commander of the Army Air Corps, a plan prepared by Major L. S. Smith for a black pursuit squadron to be based and trained at Tuskegee, Alabama. [Robert J. Jakeman, *The Divided Skies* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1992), p. 206]

10 December 1940: The Air Staff of the U.S. Army adopted the 6 December 1940 Maxwell plan, and added that technical training for support personnel of the black pursuit

squadron should be accomplished at Chanute Field, Illinois. [Robert J. Jakeman, *The Divided Skies* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1992), p. 211]

20 December 1940: The War Department issued Army Regulation 210-10 that required post commanders to insure that all officers at an installation be allowed full membership in the officers' club, mess, or other social organization.

16 January 1941: The War Department announced that a "Negro pursuit squadron" would be established within the Army Air Corps, the support personnel to be trained initially at Chanute Field, Illinois, and the pilots to be trained at Tuskegee, Alabama. [Robert J. Jakeman, *The Divided Skies* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1992), p. 221, 228, 240.

17 January 1941: Yancey Williams filed suit in Washington, DC to compel the War Department to consider his application for enlistment as a flying cadet in the Army Air Corps. He had applied in November 1940, but had been told his application was being held because no suitable units for "colored applicants" were available yet to train him. (*The Crisis*, vol. 48, no. 3 [March 1941], pp. 87-88). The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) legal department prepared to support the Yancey Williams lawsuit. (J. Todd Moye, *Freedom Flyers* [Oxford University Press, 2010], pp. 37-38.

January 1941: The Civil Aeronautics Authority approved Tuskegee Institute's Kennedy Field, which had been improved, for secondary civilian pilot training. The training had taken place at the Alabama Polytechnic Institute (API) airfield in Auburn. (Randy Johnson, *From Cubs to Hawks*)

February 1941: The Civil Aeronautics Authority certified Tuskegee Institute for both elementary and secondary civilian pilot training. The training would take place at an improved Kennedy Field. (Randy Johnson, *From Cubs to Hawks*)

19 March 1941: The 99th Pursuit Squadron was constituted. [Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 329]. At the same time, a new "Air Base Detachment" was constituted, which later became the 318th Air Base Squadron and finally the 318th Base Headquarters and Air Base Squadron (Colored) at Tuskegee. (organization record card)

22 March 1941: The 99th Pursuit Squadron was activated at Chanute Field, Illinois, under the command of Captain Harold R. Maddux, a white officer, but composed of African-American enlisted men. [Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 329] and lineage and honors history of the 99th Fighter Squadron.

29 March 1941: Ms. Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, visited Kennedy Field in the Tuskegee area and was taken up in an aircraft piloted by Chief C. Alfred Anderson, Tuskegee Institute's chief instructor pilot. Ms. Roosevelt was a

Rosenwald Fund trustee who helped secure financing for the construction of Moton Field at Tuskegee. [Robert J. Jakeman, *The Divided Skies* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1992), pp. 245-246.]

Early April 1941: With approval of officials from Maxwell Air Force Base, Tuskegee Institute selected land 3 miles north of the campus to develop into a primary flight training base under contract with the Army Air Corps. The site would be called Moton Field. (Jakeman, *The Divided Skies*, p. 249)

1 May 1941: An “Air Base Detachment” was activated at Chanute Field, Illinois, to support the 99th Pursuit Squadron. It was later redesignated as the 318th Air Base Squadron and still later the 318th Base Headquarters and Air Base Squadron (Colored) at Tuskegee. (unit’s organization record card)

7 June 1941: The War Department approved a contract that established a primary flying school at Tuskegee Institute. Lt. Col. Noel F. Parrish, a white officer, was assigned as one of the faculty members. (Tuskegee Army Flying School history yearbook, AFHRA call number 289.28-100)

12 July 1941: Construction began on Tuskegee Army Air Field, a military airfield a few miles northwest of Moton Field, which would provide basic and advanced military flight training for the pilots who had already received primary flight training at Moton Field. The base would cover 1,650 acres. It was located 7 miles northwest of Tuskegee. It would eventually become the only base offering basic, advanced, and transition flying training. (Lou Thole, *Forgotten Fields of America*, volume III [Missoula, MT: Pictorial Histories Publishing Co., Inc., 2003], pp. 1-5)

19 July 1941: The first class of aviation cadets (42-C) entered Preflight Training at Tuskegee Institute. It included Captain Benjamin Oliver Davis, Jr., who served as Commandant of Cadets. Twelve cadets served with him under Captain Noel F. Parrish, a white officer, and 2d Lieutenant Harold C. Magoon, another white officer, who served as the adjutant. The other cadets were: John C. Anderson, Jr., Charles D. Brown, Theodore E. Brown, Marion A. Carter, Lemuel R. Custis, Charles H. DeBow, Jr., Frederick H. Moore, Ulysses S. Pannell, George S. Roberts, Mac Ross, William H. Slade, and Roderick C. Williams. Only five of these cadets completed the flying training at Tuskegee, in March 1942. (J. Todd Moye, *Freedom Flyers* [Oxford University Press, 2010], p. 58; Lynn H. Homan and Thomas Reilly, *Black Knights: The Story of the Tuskegee Airmen* [Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 2006], pp. 38, 52-53; Robert J. Jakeman, *The Divided Skies* [Tuscaloosa and London: The University of Alabama Press, 1992], p. 256, 258)

23 July 1941: The Air Corps established an Air Corps Advanced Flying School to be activated at Tuskegee.

1 August 1941: The first of several white enlisted men, specialists in various support functions, arrived at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (Randy Johnson, *From Cubs to Hawks*)

Most personnel arriving at the field traveled by train to a small station at Chehaw, 3 miles east of the base. (Thole)

6 August 1941: The Air Corps Advanced Flying School at Tuskegee was activated. It was later redesignated as the Tuskegee Advanced Flying School; the Army Air Forces Advanced Flying School; and the Army Air Forces Pilot School (Basic-Advanced). (organization record card) The first commander at Tuskegee Army Air Field was Major James A. Ellison, a white officer. (Randy Johnson, *From Cubs to Hawks*)

21 August 1941: The first class of aviation cadets entered the first phase of military flight training (Primary) administered by Tuskegee Institute, under contract with the War Department, at Kennedy Field near Tuskegee, because Moton Field was not yet completed. (Jakeman, *The Divided Skies*, p. 267) Capt. Noel Parrish commanded the primary flight training, first at Kennedy, and later at Moton Field. (Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site) The first instructor pilots for primary flight training for the Army were Charles Alfred Anderson and Frank Shelton, the first black and the second white, who transferred from the civilian pilot training school. George W. Allen, also black, succeeded Anderson as chief of the civilian pilot training school. Other instructor pilots who remained at the civilian pilot training school at first were Lewis A. Jackson, Joseph T. Camilleri, Dominick J. Guido, and Frank Rosenberg. Allen and Jackson were black, but Camilleri, Guido, and Rosenberg were white. (Robert J. Jakeman, *The Divided Skies* [Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 1992], p. 264.

25 August 1941: Primary flight training of the first class of black pilots to enter the Army Air Corps moved from Kennedy Field to Moton Field, but the field still needed more construction and still suffered from drainage problems. Civilian pilot training continued at Kennedy Field, for a time, but the military primary flight training was thereafter at Moton Field. (Jakeman, *The Divided Skies*, p. 266).

September 1941: The runway at Moton Field became fully operational for primary flight training, under contract with the U.S. Army, at Moton Field. (Randy Johnson, *From Cubs to Hawks*)

19 September 1941: The first black enlisted support personnel arrived at Tuskegee Army Air Field. There were eighteen of them. Since the base did not yet have housing available, the newcomers were quartered at Tuskegee Institute. (Randy Johnson, *From Cubs to Hawks*) Tents were eventually erected at Tuskegee Army Air Field. The tent area came to be called Camp Hazard, named after base executive officer Capt. John T. Hazard. (Thole)

5 November 1941: The 99th Pursuit Squadron moved from Chanute Field, Illinois, to Maxwell Field, Alabama. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

8 November 1941: The first class of aviation cadets entered the second phase of military flight training (Basic) at Tuskegee Army Air Field, under military instructors. Only 6 of the 13 original cadets who had entered the earlier primary training phase

remained. On the same day, four BT-13 basic training aircraft arrived at the base. (Randy Johnson, *From Cubs to Hawks*)

10 November 1941: The 99th Pursuit Squadron moved from Maxwell Field to Tuskegee Army Air Field (Tuskegee Army Air Base), Alabama. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943). On the same day, 2d Lieutenant Clyde H. Bynum, a white officer, became the squadron's new commander. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). On the same day, the Air Base Detachment that would later serve with the 99th Pursuit Squadron as the 318th Air Base Squadron and later as the 318th Base Headquarters and Air Base Squadron (Colored) at Tuskegee moved from Chanute Field, Illinois, to Maxwell Field, Alabama, where the 99th Pursuit Squadron had been. On the same day, ground school began in an unfinished barracks at Tuskegee Army Air Field for the pilots in the first class. (Randy Johnson, *From Cubs to Hawks*)

3 December 1941: Major Noel F. Parrish transferred from the Primary Flying School at Tuskegee Institute to the Air Corps Advanced Flying School at Tuskegee Army Air Field as Director of Training. (Tuskegee Army Flying School yearbook, AFHRA call number 289.28-100). At the same time, Major William T. Smith assumed command of the primary flying training program at Moton Field, and command of the 66th Field Training Detachment. Both officers were white. (Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site)

6 December 1941: Captain Alonzo S. Ward became the third commander of the 99th Fighter Squadron. Like the first two commanders of the unit, he was white. (99 Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943).

7 December 1941: The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, bringing the United States into World War II. The need for combat pilots skyrocketed.

12 December 1941: Colonel Frederick Von H. Kimble assumed command of Tuskegee Army Air Field, succeeding Major James A. Ellison. Like Ellison, he was a white officer. (*Hawk's Cry*, vol. II, no. 11, dated 14 May 1943)

20 December 1941: Major C. Albright arrived at Tuskegee Army Air Field as a flying instructor. Like Kimble, he was a white officer. (*Hawk's Cry*, vol. II, no. 32, dated 8 Oct 1943, commemorating his long service at the base)

27 December 1941: The 100th Pursuit Squadron was constituted. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

5 January 1942: The Air Base Detachment that had served with the 99th Pursuit Squadron at Chanute Field, Illinois and then moved to Maxwell Field, Alabama on 10 November 1941 (when the 99th Pursuit Squadron moved to Tuskegee) moved from Maxwell to Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama. It would later be redesignated as the 318th Air Base Squadron and still later as the 318th Base Headquarters and Air Base Squadron (Colored). (organization record card)

11 January 1942: Five of the aviation cadets at Tuskegee entered advanced flying training, using AT-6 advanced training aircraft. (Randy Johnson, *From Cubs to Hawks*)

19 February 1942: The 100th Pursuit Squadron was activated at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama. It was the second African-American Army Air Forces flying unit ever to be activated. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

23 February 1942: The first class of advanced flying training cadets from Tuskegee Army Air Field arrived at Eglin Field, Florida, for gunnery and combat tactics fighter training. (Randy Johnson, *From Cubs to Hawks*)

7 March 1942: The first class of African-American pilots at Tuskegee Army Air Field, 42-C, completed advanced pilot training. There were only five who completed the training: Capt. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr and 2d Lieutenants Mac Ross; Lemuel R. Custis; Charles H. DeBow, Jr.; and George S. Roberts. Davis was assigned to the base, and the other four became the first African-American flying officers in the 99th Pursuit Squadron. Captain Davis was the first black American to hold a regular commission in the nation's air arm, having transferred on graduation from the infantry to the Army Air Corps. (Jakeman, *The Divided Skies*; 99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

13 March 1942: The "Air Base Detachment" at Tuskegee was redesignated as the 318th Air Base Squadron. (organization record card of the 318th Base Headquarters and Air Base Squadron (Colored). On the same date, the 96th Maintenance Group was constituted. (96th Service Group history, Mar 1942-Aug 1944)

21 March 1942: The 96th Maintenance Group (Reduced) (Colored) was activated at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama. At the same time, the 366th and 367th Materiel Squadrons were activated under the 96th Maintenance Group. (Organization record cards at Air Force Historical Research Agency). The same day, the Tuskegee weather station became active. Four days later, 2nd Lt. Wallace P. Reed took charge of the weather station. (Gerald A. White, Jr.)

14 April 1942: A Factory Training School associated with the Curtiss Wright Service School, Williamsville Branch, was activated in Buffalo, New York. It would later train African-American P-40 airplane mechanics. (organization record card)

17 April 1942: The Air Corps Advanced Flying School at Tuskegee Army Air Field was redesignated as Tuskegee Advanced Flying School. (organization record card at AFHRA)

29 April 1942: The second class of African-American pilots graduated from flying training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943)

April 1942: P-40 Warhawk airplanes arrived at Tuskegee Army Air Field during the month, for transition flying training for the pilots who had graduated from the advanced flying training. (Thole, *Forgotten Fields in America*, vol. 3)

15 May 1942: The 99th Pursuit Squadron was redesignated as the 99th Fighter Squadron and the 100th Pursuit Squadron was redesignated as the 100th Fighter Squadron. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

20 May 1942: The third class of African-American pilots graduated from flying training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943)

1 June 1942: 1st Lt. George S. Roberts assumed command of the 99th Fighter Squadron. He was the first African-American to command the squadron. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943).

1942: Robert A. Dawson from San Antonio, Texas, lost his life during advanced flying training at Tuskegee Army Air Field.

13 June 1942: The 318th Air Base Squadron at Tuskegee was redesignated as the 318th Base Headquarters and Air Base Squadron (Colored). It served with the 99th Fighter Squadron at Tuskegee. (organization record card of the 318th Base Headquarters and Air Base Squadron).

3 July 1942: The fourth class of African-American pilots graduated from flying training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943)

4 July 1942: The 332d Fighter Group was constituted (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*). The 301st and 302d Fighter Squadrons were also constituted that day, for eventual assignment to the group. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*)

25 July 1942: The 96th Maintenance Group was redesignated as the 96th Service Group (Colored) at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (Organization record card)

25 July 1942: The 96th Maintenance Group was redesignated as the 96th Service Group. At the same time, the 366th and 367th Materiel Squadrons were redesignated as the 366th and 367th Service Squadrons at Tuskegee. (Organization Record cards at AFHRA)

5 August 1942: The fifth class of African-American pilots graduated from flying training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943) Enough African-American pilots had completed training to bring the 99th Fighter Squadron to its full strength of 33 pilots.

19 August 1942: The 99th Fighter Squadron was attached to the III Fighter Command (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

Late August 1942: Several white pilots from the 20th and 58th Fighter Groups, both stationed in Florida, were assigned temporarily as instructors to the 99th Fighter Squadron. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943)

22 August 1942: Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. became commander of the 99th Fighter Squadron, replacing Lieutenant George S. Roberts in that position. Colonel Davis was the second black commander of the unit. (99th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history; 99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

27 August 1942: The War Department organized the Advisory Committee on Negro Troop Policies, with Assistant Secretary of War John J. McCloy as chairman. (Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops* [Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, United States Army, 1966], p. 157)

6 September 1942: The sixth class of African-American pilots graduated from flying training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943)

12 September 1942: Lt. Faythe A. McGinnis crashed on a routine flight and became the first casualty of the 99th Fighter Squadron. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

15 September 1942: The 1000th Signal Company, the 1051st Quartermaster Service Group Aviation Company, the 1765th Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Company, Aviation, and the 1901st and 1902d Quartermaster Truck Company (Aviation) were all activated at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (Organization record cards of each organization)

September 1942: After further gunnery training at Eglin and Dale Mabry Fields in Florida, the 99th Fighter Squadron returned to Tuskegee and was declared ready for combat. However, its planned deployment to defend Liberia was indefinitely delayed because of the diminished enemy threat to that country. During the same month, a post chapel was completed. (*Hawk's Cry*, vol. II, no. 29, dated 17 Sep 1943, which referred to the first anniversary of the chapel). By the end of September 1942, there were at least 33 trained black military pilots, enough for the squadron to be operational. (Lawrence P. Schott and William M. Womack Sr., *Double V: The Civil Rights Struggle of the Tuskegee Airmen* [East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1994], p. 159).

7 October 1942: Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson visited the 99th Fighter Squadron at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943)

9 October 1942: The seventh class of African-American pilots graduated from flying training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943)

13 October 1942: The 332d Fighter Group was activated at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, and the pre-existing 100th Fighter Squadron was assigned to it. The 301st and 302d Fighter Squadrons were also activated for the first time at Tuskegee, and assigned to the 332d Fighter Group. This group was the first African-American group in the Army Air Forces. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). Eventually, all four of the African-American

squadrons in the Army Air Forces were assigned to the 332d Fighter Group. On the same date, 13 October 1942, the 332d Fighter Control Squadron (Colored) was activated at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (organization record card)

19 October 1942: Lt. Col. Sam W. Westbrook, Jr., was appointed commander of the 332d Fighter Group. He physically took command of the group on 3 December. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*) By this date, the group had only 7 enlisted men and 2 officers, the latter being white. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)).

10 November 1942: The eighth class of African-American pilots graduated from flying training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. This was the last class of pilots to graduate in 1942. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943)

12 November 1942: 1st Lt. Charles W. Walker became the first black officer assigned to the 332d Fighter Group. He was a chaplain. (332d Fighter Group History, Oct 1942-1947)

17 November 1942: Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. addressed the assembled 99th Fighter Squadron (99 Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

23 November 1942: The 99th Fighter Squadron paraded for the first time (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

December 1942: Lt. Col. Noel F. Parrish, who had served as Director of Training at the Tuskegee Advanced Flying School, became commanding officer of the school, replacing Col. Frederick Kimble. Parrish allowed more desegregation of the facilities on the field than his predecessors. (Tuskegee Army Flying School Yearbook, AFHRA call number 289.28-100, and Jakeman)

3 December 1942: Although he was appointed first commander of the 332nd Fighter Group on 19 October, Major Sam W. Westbrook arrived at Tuskegee to take command of the organization. He was white and from Alabama, a graduate of Alabama Polytechnical College (later, Auburn University) and he was an experienced pilot. Although he was commander of the group, he was attached to it rather than assigned to it. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947).

13 December 1942: The ninth class of African-American pilots graduated from flying training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (Homan and Reilly, *Black Knights*)

22 December 1942-13 January 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron deployed at Dale Mabry Field in Tallahassee, Florida, for maneuvers. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943)

End of 1942: Most construction at Tuskegee Army Air Field was complete. The base had 3414 men, 67 of whom were white. 121 of the men were flying cadets. The base was congested, with one fighter group, four fighter squadrons, a service group, and three

phases of flying training. To control severe soil erosion, tens of thousands of trees were planted around the field. (Thole, *Forgotten Fields in America*, vol. 3)

15 January 1943: The emblem of the 332d Fighter Group as approved. On a blue shield with a gold band across the middle, a black panther breathing fire. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*). On that same date, Capt. James Hunter was commander of the 100th Fighter Squadron, and 1st Lt. Frederick E. Miles was commander of the 301st Fighter Squadron. (Lineage and Honors histories of the 100th Fighter and 301st Fighter Squadrons).

25 January 1943: The first class of African-American military personnel in any of the Army Air Forces technical schools began a twelve-week aerial photography course at the Army Air Forces Technical School at Lowry Field, Colorado. Forty-six students completed the course on April 16. (*The Lowry Field Rev-Meter* base newspaper, January 22, 1943, p. 3, and April 15, 1943, p. 2, both articles supplied by Craig Huntly)

26 January 1943: The 366th and 367th Service Squadrons and the 43d Medical Support Platoon, Aviation were all assigned to the 96th Service Group at Tuskegee. (Organization record card of the 96 Air Service Group). On the same date, 1st Lt. Mac Ross assumed command of the 100th Fighter Squadron, and Capt. Charles H. Debow became commander of the 301st Fighter Squadron. (Lineage and Honors histories of the 100th and 301st Fighter Squadrons).

30 January 1943: Lt. Richard A. Davis crashed, becoming the second casualty of the 99th Fighter Squadron (99th Fighter Squadron, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

8 February 1943: Capt. James P. Ramsey was appointed first medical officer of the 332nd Fighter Group. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

9 February 1943: Six 99th Fighter Squadron pilots engaged in a mock dogfight with six other pilots, for practice. (99 Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

11 March 1943: 2nd Lt. William T. Mattison assumed command of the 302nd Fighter Squadron. (302nd Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

15 March 1943: The 332nd Fighter Control Squadron (Colored) was disbanded at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (organization record card). On the same day, the 403rd Fighter Squadron was activated at Selfridge Field, Michigan, as an operational training unit under I Fighter Command, to prepare the way for the movement of the 332d Fighter Group from Tuskegee Army Air Field to Selfridge. The 403rd Fighter Squadron was a white unit designed to help train the squadrons of the 332nd Fighter Group at Selfridge. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons*, pp. 493-494; 332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

24 March 1943: Lt. Earl E. King became the third casualty of the 99th Fighter Squadron (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

26 March 1943: The ground echelon of the 332d Fighter Group and its 100th, 301st, and 302d Fighter Squadrons departed Tuskegee Army Air Field. The men boarded a train at a nearby station for the move to Michigan. The move eased overcrowding at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (332d Fighter Group History, Oct 1942-1947)

28 March 1943: The air echelon of the 332nd Fighter Group flew from Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, to Selfridge Field, Michigan. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

29 March 1943: The ground echelon of the 332d Fighter Group completed its move from Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama to Selfridge Field in Michigan (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*).

2 April 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron departed Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, for movement overseas for combat operations. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). Helping the men load on trucks for the journey to the train station were Col. Frederick V. H. Kimble and Colonel Noel F. Parrish, former and current commanders of Tuskegee Army Flying School, who wanted to express their support for the first black flying unit to deploy. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943)

4 April 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron arrived at Camp Shanks, New York, in preparation for deployment overseas for combat. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943). On the same day, the 96th Service Group completed its move to Selfridge Field, Michigan, in order to serve with the 332d Fighter Group. (Lineage and honors history of the 96th Logistics Group).

5 April 1943: 1st Lt. George L. Knox succeeded 1st Lt. Mac Ross as commander of the 100th Fighter Squadron. (Lineage and honors history of the 100th Fighter Squadron).

12 April 1943: The 332d Fighter Group moved from Selfridge Field to Oscoda, Michigan (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*).

16 April 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron sailed aboard the steamship *Mariposa* from New York harbor, bound eastward across the Atlantic Ocean for Africa. It arrived later at Casablanca, French Morocco. On the voyage, black officers of the 99th Fighter Squadron commanded lower-ranking personnel on the ship. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943)

16 April 1943: The first class of African-American military personnel in any of the Army Air Forces technical schools completed a twelve-week aerial photography course at the Army Air Forces Technical School at Lowry Field, Colorado. Forty-six students completed the course. (*The Lowry Field Rev-Meter* base newspaper, January 22, 1943, p. 3, and April 15, 1943, p. 2, both articles supplied by Craig Huntly)

24 April 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron arrived at Casablanca, French Morocco, its first overseas base, and began serving the Twelfth Air Force. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

25 April 1943: The 320th College Training Detachment (Aircrew) was activated at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama. (organization record card)

29 April 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron moved to Oued N'ja, French Morocco. There it engaged in maneuvers and prepared for combat. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

4 May 1943: The 403rd Fighter Squadron moved from Selfridge Field, Michigan, to Oscoda Army Air Field, Michigan.

5 May 1943: Lieutenants James T. Wiley and Graham Smith were the first two P-40 pilots of the 99th Fighter Squadron to land in North Africa, at Oued N'ja in French Morocco. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943)

7 May 1943: 2nd Lt. Jerome T. Edwards of the 100th Fighter Squadron crashed in his aircraft, becoming the first 332nd Fighter Group pilot to lose his life. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

9 May 1943: Personnel of the 99th Fighter Squadron took part in a victory parade in Fez, North Africa to celebrate the liberation of Tunisia. Captain Hayden C. Johnson led the squadron contingent in the ceremony. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar-Oct 1943)

9 May 1943: Back in Michigan, 2nd Lt. Wilmeth Sidat-Singh of the 332nd Fighter Group was killed when he crashed with his airplane into Lake Huron. His body was recovered 49 days later. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

13 May 1943: The 477th Bombardment Group (Medium) was constituted, along with the 616th, 617th, 618th, and 619th Bombardment Squadrons. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). Meanwhile, enemy forces in Tunisia surrendered, leaving all North Africa in Allied control.

16 May 1943: Col. Robert R. Selway, Jr., became commander of the 332d Fighter Group back in the United States. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*). Like his predecessor, he was a white officer. Selway was a graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point. He was a native of California. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

19 May 1943: Lieutenant General Carl Spaatz, commander of the Twelfth Air Force, inspected the flying field of the 99th Fighter Squadron at Oued N'ja. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar-Oct 1943)

Late May 1943: Experienced white pilots from other P-40 squadrons in North Africa began visiting the 99th Fighter Squadron as instructors in tactical maneuvers. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943).

22 May 1943: The first group of aviation students to complete a new 6-week intensive study at the College Training Detachment at Tuskegee Institute transferred to Tuskegee Army Air Field for the preflight stage of aviation cadet training. Formerly, the college training took 5 months. (*Hawk's Cry*, vol. II, no. 13, dated 28 May 1943)

28 May 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron was assigned to the XII Air Support (later, XII Tactical Air) Command. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

29 May 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron was attached to the 33d Fighter Group, which was under the command of Col. William M. Momyer. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). On the same date, back in the United States, 1st Lt. Robert B. Tresville assumed command of the 302nd Fighter Squadron, succeeding 2nd Lt. William T. Mattison. (302nd Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

30 May 1943: The air echelon of the 99th Fighter Squadron flew its P-40s from Qued N'ja, French Morocco, to Fardjouna, Tunisia, near Cape Bon, east of Tunis. One section of the ground echelon left Qued N'ja the same day, but most of the ground echelon departed three days later. The ground echelons of the squadron did not arrive at Fardjouna until June 7. (99th Fighter Squadron history, May-Oct 1943).

31 May 1943: The 332nd Fighter Group in Michigan by this date had 1,004 enlisted men and 110 officers. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

1 June 1943: The 477th Bombardment Group (Medium) was activated at MacDill Field, Florida, as a white organization, with the 616th, 617th, 618th, and 619th Bombardment Squadrons. Lt Col Andrew O. Lerche served as the commander, but the group was not yet a black organization. In August 1943, the group and its squadrons were inactivated. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*; Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*). In 1944, the group and its four squadrons were activated again, but that second time as black organizations. (477th Bombardment Group lineage and honors history).

2 June 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron flew its first combat mission, flying P-40 aircraft on patrol over the Mediterranean Sea while attached to the 33d Fighter Group. The 99th did not encounter enemy aircraft that day. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar-Oct 1943). Squadron P-40s flew from Fardjouna, Tunisia, although the ground echelon of the squadron did not arrive at the new base until June 7.

2-9 June 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron flew an average of two missions daily for the 99th Fighter Squadron during the campaign against Pantelleria Island, which ended on 11 June. Some of the missions targeted enemy gun sites on the island, and some escorted

A-20 and B-25 aircraft on raids against enemy targets there. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar-Oct 1943)

7 June 1943: The ground echelon of the 99th Fighter Squadron completed its move from Qued N'ja, French Morocco, to Fardjouna, Tunisia. The first elements had departed the old base on May 30. (99th Fighter Squadron history, May-Oct 1943; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

9 June 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron encountered enemy aircraft for the first time during a mission on which it escorted 12 A-20s over Pantelleria Island. Four of the P-40s of the squadron intercepted four Me-109 German fighters and the enemy fled. P-40s of another squadron escorted the A-20s home. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar-Oct 1943)

10 June 1943: The 96th Service Group moved from Selfridge Field to Oscoda Field, Michigan, to which the 332^d Fighter Group had moved in April. (96th Service Group organization record card)

11 June 1943: The surrender of enemy forces on Pantelleria paved the way for the Allied invasion of Sicily. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

15 June 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron flew four missions in one day, to cover Allied shipping in the Mediterranean Sea. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar-Oct 1943)

16 June 1943: Back with the 332nd Fighter Group in Michigan, 2nd Lt. Nathaniel N. Hill of the 100th Fighter Squadron and 2nd Lt. Luther H. Blakeney, a weather officer, were killed in a plane crash in thick fog. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

18 June 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron encountered enemy aircraft for the second time, and 1st Lieutenant Lee Rayford's P-40 was hit several times. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-Oct 1943)

20-21 June 1943: A major race riot broke out in Detroit, Michigan, leaving 34 people dead, including 25 whites and 9 blacks, and 670 people injured. (Arthur Herman, *Freedom's Forge* [New York: Random House, 2012], pp. 261-262). The riots concerned members of the 332nd Fighter Group, which had been stationed at Selfridge Field, near Detroit, and which would return there in July. In June, the group was stationed at Oscoda, Michigan, well north of Detroit, on Lake Huron. The group's white commander, Colonel Robert Selway, ordered black airman to stay on base. (Lawrence P. Schott and William M. Womack Sr., *Double V: The Civil Rights Struggle of the Tuskegee Airmen* [East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1994], p. 194-195).

29 June 1943: 1st Lt. Elwood T. Driver succeeded 1st Lt. Geroge L. Knox as commander of the 100th Fighter Squadron. (Lineage and honors history of the 100th Fighter Squadron).

c. 29 June 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron was attached to the 324th Fighter Group, under the command of Col. William K. McNown, and began flying escort missions between Tunisia and Sicily. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

June 1943: During this month, King George VI of the British Empire visited Grombalia Airfield in north Africa and reviewed approximately 50 enlisted men of the 99th Fighter Squadron. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943). The 789th Technical School Squadron at Lincoln, Nebraska, graduated its first class of African-American fighter mechanics. (newspaper article and program from Craig Huntly)

July 1943: The 332nd Fighter Group continued preparing for combat in Michigan. Airplane mechanics arrived from training at Buffalo, New York, and Chanute Field, Illinois. Armorers came from Buckley Field, Colorado; radar mechanics from Tomah, Wisconsin; and radio personnel from Fort Monmouth, New Jersey and Camp Crowder, Missouri. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

2 July 1943: While escorting B-25 medium bombers on a raid on Castelvetro in southwestern Sicily, Italy, 1st Lt. Charles B. Hall of the 99th Fighter Squadron earned the first Tuskegee Airmen aerial victory credit by shooting down an FW-190 enemy aircraft. Lt. W. I. Lawson also claimed probable destruction of another FW-190 and damaged an Me-109. On the same day, 1st Lt Sherman H. White and 2d Lt James L. McCullin were the first Tuskegee Airmen lost in combat. Although both went missing, one is believed to have landed on enemy-held Sicily. That afternoon, General Dwight D. Eisenhower also visited the 99th Fighter Squadron. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar-Oct 1943; XII ASC General Order 32 dated 7 Sep 1943; article by Joseph Caver, Jerome Ennels, and Wesley Newton)

3 July 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron joined three other fighter squadrons of the 324th Fighter Group, to which it was attached, in escorting medium bombers to Sicily. During that mission, enemy fighters shot down at least one of the bombers. (324th Fighter Group Operational and Intelligence Summary, Operations for July 3, 1943)

3 July 1943: Back at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, a new NCO Club opened. (*Hawk's Cry*, vol. II, no. 18, dated 2 Jul 1943)

June-July 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron earned the first of its three World War II Distinguished Unit Citations for missions over Sicily. The unit provided air support for Allied landing operations and for Allied offensives on the island. The 324th Fighter Group, to which the 99th Fighter Squadron was attached, also earned the award. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

6 July 1943: Air Vice Marshal Sir Arthur Conningham of the Royal Air Force, who commanded the North African Tactical Air Force, visited the 99th Fighter Squadron at Fardjouna. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943). On the same date, back in the United States, 1st Lt. Edward C. Gled assumed command of the 302nd Fighter

Squadron, succeeding 1st Lt. Robert B. Tresville. (302nd Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

6 July 1943: Back in the United States, Capt. Robert B. Tresville succeeded 1st Lt. Elwood T. Driver as commander of the 100th Fighter Squadron. (100th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

8 July 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron escorted medium bombers to Milo, Sicily. Two of the pilots claimed to have damaged enemy airplanes on the mission. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

9 July 1943: The 332d Fighter Group moved from Oscoda, Michigan, back to Selfridge Field, Michigan, but the 96th Service Group, which maintained the airplanes, remained at Oscoda (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; 96th Service Group organization record card). At the same time, the 403rd Fighter Squadron moved from Oscoda to Selfridge. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*)

10 July 1943: During the invasion of Sicily, the 99th Fighter Squadron covered the landing of Allied troops at Licata. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar-Oct 1943)

11 July 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron drove off 12 German FW-190 fighters attempting to attack Allied naval vessels in the Mediterranean Sea. 1st Lt. George R. Bolling was hit by antiaircraft artillery coming from some of the vessels and bailed out. Five days later, Bolling returned to the squadron after being rescued by an Allied destroyer. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

19 July 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron was attached again to the 33d Fighter Group, under Col. William W. Momyer. It provided cover for Allied shipping in the Mediterranean Sea and air support for the Seventh Army. On the same day, 29 C-47 transport planes helped carry personnel and equipment of the 99th Fighter Squadron from Tunisia to Licata, Sicily. Most of the ground echelon moved by ship later. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

21 July 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron flew 13 missions in one day. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

23 July 1943: The first three replacement pilots arrived for the 99th Fighter Squadron. They included Lieutenants Howard L. Baugh, Edward L. Toppins, and Morgan (first name not given). (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

23 July 1943: Tuskegee Advanced Flying School, at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, was redesignated as AAF Pilot School (Basic-Advanced). (organization record card)

26 July 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron flew 12 missions in one day. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

27 July 1943: Major General Edwin J. House, commander of the XII Air Support Command of the Twelfth Air Force, visited the 99th Fighter Squadron (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

28 July 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron moved from Tunisia in North Africa to Licata, Sicily, Italy. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). On the same day, Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. and 1st Lieutenant Herbert Carter of the 99th Fighter Squadron flew to Tunis to meet with Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

28 July 1943: Raymond Cassagnol of Haiti became the first foreign cadet to graduate from pilot training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (Zellie Rainey Orr, historian, Atlanta Chapter, Tuskegee Airmen, Incorporated; Lynn M. Homan and Thomas Reilly, *Black Knights: The Story of the Tuskegee Airmen* (Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 2006), p. 278.

June-July 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron earned its first Distinguished Unit Citation for missions over Sicily during the period June-July 1943. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

2 August 1943: Liaison pilot training began at Griel Field, six miles from Tuskegee Army Air Field, and an auxiliary airfield. 21 students arrived that day. (Thole)

7 August 1943: Tuskegee Army Air Field celebrated its second anniversary. Lt. Col. Noel Parrish gave a speech and base band performed in Hangar no. 3, and the P-40 and advanced trainer aircraft were placed on display near the “broad sun-bathed runways.” (*Hawk’s Cry*, vol. II, no. 24, dated 13-14 Aug 1943).

11 August 1943: Lieutenant Paul G. Mitchell was killed when his airplane crashed in mid-air with another airplane in his formation. He was the third 99th Fighter Squadron pilot lost in combat. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

15 August 1943: Brigadier General John K. Cannon, commander of Northwest African Training Command, visited the 99th Fighter Squadron. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

17 August 1943: The Sicilian campaign ended. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

24 August 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron received six replacement pilots from the United States. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

25 August 1943: The 477th Bombardment Group (Medium) and the 616th, 617th, 618th, and 619th Bombardment Squadrons were inactivated, but the group was activated

again in January 1944 (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*).

September 1943: The War Department announced that the training of Negroes as bomber pilots would begin at Tuskegee Army Air Field within 30 days. During the month, A-10 twin-engine training aircraft arrived at the field, and were assigned to the 1155th Flying Training Squadron. The prospective bomber pilots were selected from cadets in basic flying training. The plan was for them to receive 70 hours of advanced flying training with the A-10s, then move to another base for training in actual bombers. Late in the month, the first liaison pilots graduated at Tuskegee, after they had trained with Piper Cub airplanes to become field artillery officers. They would move on from Tuskegee to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, for further tactical training. During the same month, certain enlisted personnel at Tuskegee Army Air Field were appointed as warrant officers. (*Hawk's Cry*, vol. II: no. 29, dated 17 Sep 1943; no. 30, dated 24 Sep 1943; no. 31, dated 1 Oct 1943)

September 1943: A board of re-evaluation of pilots was activated at the 332nd Fighter Group base in Michigan. The board was composed of four white pilots from the 403rd Fighter Squadron, stationed at the same base (Selfridge Field). (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947). During the same month, the 332nd Fighter Group began receiving P-39 aircraft to replace its P-40s.

2 September 1943: Major George S. Roberts replaced Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin O. Davis as commander of the 99th Fighter Squadron as Davis began a return trip to the United States, where he would assume command of the 332d Fighter Group. Major Roberts had been the first black commander of the unit before Colonel Davis. Captain Lemuel R. Curtis succeeded Roberts as the squadron operations officer. (99th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history; 99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

4 September 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron moved to Termini, Sicily. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

11 September 1943: Advance elements of the 99th Fighter Squadron landed on a beach at Battapaglia in Italy, under enemy fire. For several days, enemy forces strafed the advance echelon by day and bombed it by night, after it retreated to a site near Paestum, Italy, where the 33rd Fighter Group was based. The main body of the 99th Fighter Squadron remained in Sicily. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

13 September 1943: the first class of liaison pilots graduated at Tuskegee Army Air Field. They would eventually be assigned to U.S. Army ground organizations, but fly liaison airplanes in their support.

13-14 September 1943: The 33rd Fighter Group, to which the 99th Fighter Squadron was attached, moved from Sicily to Paestum on the mainland of Italy, along with its three assigned fighter squadrons, the 58th, 59th, and 60th. The 99th Fighter Squadron, however, remained behind in Sicily, and stayed there until October 17, the day after it was detached

from the 33rd and attached to the 79th Fighter Group. It was during this period, between mid-September and mid-October 1943, that a memorandum from 33rd Fighter Group went up the Army Air Forces chain of command questioning the 99th Fighter Squadron's combat efficiency. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*, and Charles Francis, *Tuskegee Airmen: The Men Who Changed a Nation* [Wellesley, MA: Branden Books, 2008].

16 September 1943: Major General Edwin J. House, commander of the XII Air Support Command, sent a memorandum to Major General John K. Cannon, Deputy Commander of the Northwest African Tactical Air Force, regarding the "Combat Efficiency of the 99th Fighter Squadron". The letter criticized the black squadron as performing poorly in combat, based partly on information supplied by Colonel William Momyer, commander of the 33rd Fighter Group, to which the 99th Fighter Squadron was attached. The report recommended that the squadron trade in its P-40s for P-39s and be assigned to coastal patrols. It also recommended that a black fighter group not be deployed overseas for combat. (Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops* [Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, United States Army, 1966], p. 157; AFHRA call number 141.281-22; IRIS number 0011444)

16 September 1943: The September 20, 1943 issue of *Time* magazine appeared on newsstands containing an article, "Experiment Proved?" that raised the question about whether or not the 99th Fighter Squadron would be taken out of combat because of an alleged poor combat performance. (Lawrence P. Schott and William M. Womack Sr., *Double V: The Civil Rights Struggle of the Tuskegee Airmen* [East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1994], p. 187).

17 September 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron moved to Barcellona, Sicily. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). On the same day, 1st Lt. Sidney P. Brooks crashed, and died the next day, for the fourth pilot lost in combat. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

18 September 1943: Responding to the memorandum from Major General House of the XII Air Support Command, Major General J. K. Cannon, Deputy Commander of the Northwest African Tactical Air Force, prepared a memorandum for the commanding general of the Northwest African Air Force critical of the 99th Fighter Squadron.

19 September 1943: Lieutenant General Carl Spaatz, commander of the Northwest African Air Forces, and commander of the Twelfth Air Force, prepared a memo as he forwarded the memoranda from Generals House and Cannon on the combat performance of the 99th Fighter Squadron. Spaatz expressed his "full confidence in the fairness of the analysis made by both General Cannon and General House," he also noted that he had personally inspected the 99th Fighter Squadron several times, and found that "there has been no question of their ground discipline and their general conduct. It has been excellent." He noted that "In processing them for combat action they were given the benefit of our training system of the supervision of instructors with much combat experience. They were processed into combat action very carefully." Spaatz forwarded

the memoranda and his own note to the Commanding General, Army Air Forces, who was General Henry “Hap” Arnold, in Washington, D.C.

September 1943: During this month, German forces bombarded and strafed the base of the 99th Fighter Squadron for five consecutive days and nights, but there were no squadron casualties. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

September 1943: Twin-engine pilot training began at Tuskegee Army Air Field, using A-10 aircraft. When they graduated, the pilots began transition flying in B-25 medium bombers, first at Mather Field, California, and later with the 477th Bombardment Group.

20 September 1943: *Time* magazine published an article called “Experiment Proved?” regarding the combat performance of the 99th Fighter Squadron, the only black Army Air Forces squadron in combat, which included comments of its commander, Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. Although the article mentioned that the squadron “seems to have done fairly well,” it also noted that the Army Air Forces was considering reducing its combat role to coastal patrol duty. (Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops* [Washington, DC: Office of The Chief of Military History, United States Army, 1966], p. 452; *Time*, XLII [Sep 20, 1943], pp. 66-68)

23 September 1943: Ten P-40s of the 99th Fighter Squadron landed on the Italian mainland for the first time, but returned to the main base at Barcellona, Sicily after one day of operations, which included four patrol missions. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Mar 1941-17 Oct 1943)

23 September 1943: Back at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Lt. Col. Noel F. Parish received news that he was being promoted to colonel. (*Hawk’s Cry*, vol. II, no. 30, dated 24 Sep 1943)

28 September 1943: 2nd Lt. Johnson C. Wells of the 332nd Fighter Group at Selfridge Field, Michigan, was killed during a training flight. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

October 1943: The 332nd Fighter Group began its first full month flying P-39 aircraft instead of P-40s. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

3 October 1943: The 403rd Fighter Squadron moved back from Selfridge Field, Michigan, to Oscoda Army Air Field, Michigan. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons*)

8 October 1943: Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., who had served as commander of the 99th Fighter Squadron in combat in North Africa and Italy, became the first black commander of the 332d Fighter Group, replacing Col. Robert R. Selway, Jr. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*). Both Selway and Davis were graduates of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. (332d Fighter Group History, Oct 1942-1947)

11 October 1943: A formal reception was held at Selfridge Field, Michigan, to honor the new first black commander of the 332nd Fighter Group, Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr.. In attendance were his father, Brig. Gen. Benjamin O. Davis, Sr., who was the first black general in the U.S. Army; Col. Robert R. Selway, Jr, the outgoing commander of the group; Col. William L. Boyd, the Selfridge Field post commander, and Major Harriet M. West, one of two black majors in the Women's Army Corps (WAC). (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

13 October 1943: The Report on the Combat Efficiency of the 99th Fighter Squadron, prepared by Major General Edwin J. House of the XII Air Support Command, based in part on information from Colonel William Momyer, commander of the 33d Fighter Group, and endorsed by Major General John K. Cannon, Deputy Commander of the Mediterranean Allied Tactical Air Force and Lieutenant General Carl Spaatz, commander of the Twelfth Air Force, was presented to the War Department's Advisory Committee on Negro Troop Policies. (Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops* [Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, United States Army, 1966], p. 458) The report recommended a reduced combat role for the 99th Fighter Squadron, based on a perception of poor performance.

14 October 1943: 2nd Lt. William H. Walker and 2nd Lt. Leroi S. Williams of the 100th Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group were killed in an air collision at Selfridge Field, Michigan. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

16 October 1943: Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., met with members of the War Department's Advisory Committee on Negro Troop Policies (the McCloy Committee) and answered questions about the combat performance of the 99th Fighter Squadron he had led. Colonel Davis defended the unit's record, and recommended that it be allowed to remain in combat. On that same day, the War Department detached the 99th Fighter Squadron from Colonel William Momyer's 33d Fighter Group and attached it instead to the 79th Fighter Group, under the command of Col. Earl E. Bates, Jr. As the 99th Fighter Squadron served with the 79th Fighter Group, perceptions of its combat performance improved. (Ulysses Lee, *The Employment of Negro Troops* [Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, United States Army, 1966], p. 459; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II* and the lineage and honors history of the group)

17 October 1943: The advance echelon of the 99th Fighter Squadron arrived at landing field 3 at Foggia, Italy, having departed Paestum and the 33rd Fighter Group the previous day. (99th Fighter Squadron history, March 1941-October 1943; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). From that base it provided close air support for Allied ground troops and attacked surface targets such as ammunition dumps and enemy shipping.

18 October 1943: The advance air echelon of the 99th Fighter Squadron arrived at Foggia #3 airfield, joining the advance echelon that had arrived the previous day. (99th Fighter Squadron history, March 1941-October 1943).

22 October 1943: The first Negroes arrived at Hondo Field, Texas, to begin training as navigators. The training was scheduled for 18 weeks. Afterwards they would be assigned to bomber crews. (*Hawk's Cry*, vol. II, no. 40, dated 17 Dec 1943)

30 October 1943: Thirty men who had failed to complete pilot training at Tuskegee Army Air Field were sent to Hondo Army Air Field, Texas, for navigator training.

October 1943: During this month, the number of P-40s assigned to the 99th Fighter Squadron averaged 28. By the end of the month, 1st Lt. Thomas Malone and PFC James W. Jones each had been awarded the Purple Heart. (99th Fighter Squadron history, March 1941-October 1943).

1 November 1943: Fifty P-38s landed at Sal Solo Field in Italy, where mechanics of the 99th Fighter Squadron serviced them. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Nov 1943-Jan 1944).

1 November 1943: Back in the United States, the 553rd Fighter Squadron was activated at Selfridge Field, Michigan, to train replacement pilots for the 332nd Fighter Group, which was preparing to move from Selfridge to a combat theater overseas, and for the 99th Fighter Squadron, which was already serving in combat in Italy. (organization record cards)

5 November 1943: Lieutenants William A. Campbell, Span Watson, and Herbert V. Clark of the 99th Fighter Squadron departed for the United States after having served much combat time overseas, in north Africa, Sicily, and mainland Italy. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Nov 1943-Jan 1944)

7 November 1943: Major General John K. Cannon, now commander of the XII Air Support Command, visited the 79th Fighter Group and presented Air Medals to members of the 99th Fighter Squadron who were attached to the group. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Nov 1943-Jan 1944)

Early November 1943: 121 men who had failed to complete pilot training at Tuskegee Army Air Field were sent to Keesler Field, Mississippi, for possible bombardier training. After psychological testing there, only 9 were accepted. (Thole, p. 18)

12 November 1943: 1st Lt. Louis R. Purnell, a veteran of the 99th Fighter Squadron, still serving overseas in combat, was appointed commander of the 553rd Fighter Squadron at Selfridge Field, Michigan. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

15 November 1943: The AAF Pilot School (Basic-Advanced) at Tuskegee Army Air Field was assigned to the 28th Flying Training Wing, headquartered in Selma, Alabama. (organization record cards at AFHRA)

16 November 1943: The 553rd Fighter Squadron moved from Selfridge Field, Michigan, to Oscoda Army Air Field, Michigan. (organization record card)

18 November 1943: Captain (later Major) Harold C. Magoon assumed command of the primary flight school at Moton Field, succeeding Major William T. Smith. Magoon became commander of the 66th Flying Training Detachment. (Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site).

19 November 1943: 2nd Lt. Leon Purchase of the 302nd Fighter Squadron (332nd Fighter Group) was killed in an airplane crash 8 miles northeast of Selfridge Field, Michigan. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

22 November 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron moved to Madna, Italy. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

29 November 1943: After several days of not flying missions, the 99th Fighter Squadron flew five missions in Italy this day. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Nov 1943-Jan 1944).

29 November 1943: Back in Michigan, 2nd Lt William Edward Hill of the 302nd Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group drowned after parachuting from his P-39 into Lake Huron. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

30-31 November 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron took part with the 79th Fighter Group in attacks on ground targets in support of Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery's crossing of the Sangro River in Italy.

December 1943: In Italy, 99th Fighter Squadron was flying close air support missions for elements of the British Eighth Army, along with three squadrons of the 79th Fighter Group. Several individual fighter pilots of the 99th flew with the other squadrons, and not separately. The 99th Fighter Squadron officers enjoyed flying with the 79th Fighter Group, and were upset later when assigned to another group. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Nov 1943-Jan 1944).

4 December 1943: 1st Lt. Lee Rayford, 99th Fighter Squadron veteran, was reassigned to the 301st Fighter Squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

5 December 1943: The first class of twin-engine pilots graduated at Tuskegee Army Air Field. They would eventually fly B-25 bombers with the 477th Bombardment Group.

9 December 1943: General Henry H. Arnold, commander of the Army Air Forces, visited the 99th Fighter Squadron at Madna Airfield, Italy, accompanied by Lieutenant General Carl Spaatz, commander of the Twelfth Air Force, and Major General John Cannon, Deputy Commander of the Mediterranean Allied Tactical Air Force.

15 December 1943: The 403rd Fighter Squadron was disbanded at Selfridge Field, Michigan. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons*) Its mission was largely taken over by the 553rd

Fighter Squadron, which had been activated at Selfridge the previous month, but which was then stationed at Oscoda Army Air Field, Michigan.

16 December 1943: Enlisted men of the 332nd Fighter Group enjoyed a farewell party at Selfridge Field, Michigan, knowing they would soon depart for overseas combat service. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

20 December 1943: Officers of the 332nd Fighter Group enjoyed a farewell party at Detroit's Labor Temple. They would soon leave nearby Selfridge Field, Michigan, for overseas combat duty. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

21 December 1943: All 332nd Fighter Group personnel were restricted to Selfridge Field pending movement. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

22 December 1943: The 332d Fighter Group departed Selfridge Field, Michigan, for movement overseas (332d Fighter Group lineage and honors history and Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*). Group members boarded a train bound from Michigan to Virginia. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

22 December 1943: Meanwhile, in Italy, Lt. James Wiley of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania became the first 99th Fighter Squadron pilot to complete 50 sorties. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Nov 1943-Jan 1944)

December 1943: The 99th Fighter Squadron flew many missions while attached to the 79th Fighter Group to provide close air cover for ground troops of the British Eighth Army in Italy. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Nov 1943-Jan 1944)

December 1943: 1st Lt. Herbert V. Clark, 1st Lt. William Campbell, and 1st Lt. Spann Watson, combat veterans from the 99th Fighter Squadron in Italy, were assigned to the 553rd Fighter Squadron in Michigan to help in the training of replacement pilots. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947; *Hawk's Cry*, vol. II, no. 40, dated 17 Dec 1943)

December 1943: 1st Lt. Ray B. Ware was appointed historical officer of the 332nd Fighter Group, among other duties. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

24 December 1944: The first train bearing members of the 332nd Fighter Group and the 100th Fighter Squadron arrived at Camp Patrick Henry, Virginia. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

25 December 1944: A second train, bearing members of the 301st and 302nd Fighter Squadrons arrived at Camp Patrick Henry, Virginia, completing the move of the 332nd Fighter Group and its squadrons from Selfridge Field in the Detroit area of Michigan. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

27 December 1943: The 553rd Fighter Squadron moved from Oscoda Army Air Field, Michigan, back to Selfridge Field, Michigan, which had been vacated by the 332d Fighter Group when it moved overseas. (organization record card)

Late December 1943: 332nd Fighter Group personnel at Camp Patrick Henry, Virginia, wrote letters and prepared packages to send home to their families, knowing that they would soon be departing overseas for combat duty.

January 1944: By this month, the Tuskegee Army Air Field had 1,890 enlisted personnel, 700 full-time civilian employees, 303 officers, and 293 students. Of the officers, 80 were white, but none lived on the base. Thirteen of the white officers were flight instructors. Black flying instructors did not begin serving at the base until May. For advanced single engine pilot training, the base had 36 AT-6s. The base had no gym. (Thole, pp. 11, 14-15, 18)

January 1944: The 79th Fighter Group included several pilots of the 99th Fighter Squadron among its own squadrons on certain missions. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Nov 1943-Jan 1944)

2 January 1944: 1 Lt. John H. Morgan of the 99th Fighter Squadron died while serving overseas. (American Battle Monuments Commission)

2 January 1944: Back in the United States, Colonel Charles Gayle, commander of the 553rd Fighter Squadron, told black officers that they would be court-martialed if they entered the officers' club at Selfridge Field, Michigan, where they were based. (Lawrence P. Schott and William M. Womack Sr., *Double V: The Civil Rights Struggle of the Tuskegee Airmen* [East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1994], p. 200).

3 January 1944: 332d Fighter Group and its three fighter squadrons, the 100th, 301st, and 302d, departed Hampton Roads, Virginia, on four ships in a convoy to cross the Atlantic Ocean. The 332d Fighter Group headquarters squadron voyaged on the SS *William Few* (HR-814), which group members nicknamed the "Billy Foo." (332d Fighter Group History, Oct 1942-1947; organization record card, and lineage and honors folder). Squadrons of the group traveled on other ships in the convoy. The 100th Fighter Squadron rode aboard the SS *John M. Morehead* (HR-810); the 301st Fighter Squadron rode aboard the SS *Clark Mills* (HR-812); and the 302d Fighter Squadron rode aboard the SS *Thomas B. Robertson* (HR-811). (Information from Craig Huntly, organization record cards of the squadrons, and lineage and honors history folders for each squadron). On the same date, the 96th Service Group departed Hampton Roads Port of Embarkation, Virginia, for overseas duty. It sailed on ship 6122 (U.S.S. *Josiah Bartlett*) for the Mediterranean Sea. The 96th Service Group's 366th and 367th Air Service Squadrons also rode on the same ship. (Lineage and honors history of the 96th Logistics Group, organization record cards of the organization, and information supplied by Craig Huntly).

15 January 1944: The 477th Bombardment Group, Medium, was activated again at Selfridge Field, Michigan, along with the 616th Bombardment Squadron. The group was

equipped with B-25 medium bombers. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*)
Meanwhile, back in Italy, 2d Lt. William E. Griffin of the 99th Fighter Squadron was last seen in a smoking and diving P-40 at 2,000 feet during an attack on a target in the town of San Valentino, Italy. He was listed as missing in action. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Nov 1943-Jan 1944)

16 January 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron moved from Madna to Capodichino Airdrome near Naples, Italy. From there it began flying coastal patrol missions south of Rome. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

21 January 1944: The ship SS *William Few* that carried the headquarters squadron of the 332nd Fighter Group, along with other ships in a convoy, passed from the Atlantic Ocean into the Mediterranean Sea via the Strait of Gibraltar. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

21 January 1944: Back in the United States, Colonel Robert R. Selway Jr, a white officer who had commanded the 332d Fighter Group from 16 May to 8 Oct 1943, became commander of the 477th Bombardment Group at Selfridge Field, Michigan.

27 January 1944: Captain Clarence C. Jamison, while leading a formation of 16 fighters of the 99th Fighter Squadron, spotted 15 FW-190s dive-bombing shipping off St. Peter's Beach near Anzio. During the ensuing engagement, 10 members of the 99th shot down a total of 10 enemy airplanes. The victors included 2d Lt Clarence W. Allen (.5 credits), 1st Lt Willie Ashley Jr. (1 credit), 2d Lt. Charles P. Bailey (1 credit), 1 Lt. Howard Baugh (1.5 credits), Capt Lemuel R. Custis (1 credit), 1st Lt. Robert W. Deiz (1 credit), 2d Lt. Wilson V. Eagleson (1 credit), 1st Lt. Leon C. Roberts (1 credit), 2d Lt. Lewis C. Smith (1 credit), 1st Lt Edward L. Toppins (1 credit). All of the downed enemy airplanes were FW-190s. (Twelfth Air Force General Orders 66, 81, and 122, dated 24 May 1944, 22 Jun 1944, and 7 Aug 1944, respectively; 99th Fighter Squadron history, Nov 1943-Jan 1944). Lieutenant Samuel F. Bruce was killed in aerial combat with enemy FW-190s. He bailed out but his chute did not fill. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Nov 1943-Jan 1944)

28 January 1944: Following up the previous day's aerial victories, 2 members of the 99th Fighter Squadron shot down a total of 3 enemy airplanes that threatened American ground forces of the Fifth Army at Anzio. The victors were Capt. Charles B. Hall, who had been the first Tuskegee Airmen to shoot down an enemy airplane, and Lt. Robert W. Deiz. Captain Hall shot down two aircraft that day, raising his total to three. For his actions on this day, Hall earned the Distinguished Flying Cross. In two days, 27-28 January 1944, the Tuskegee Airmen shot down a total of 13 enemy airplanes over Anzio, Italy. (Twelfth Air Force General Orders 64 and 122, dated 22 May 1944 and 7 Aug 1944, respectively; 99th Fighter Squadron history, Nov 1943-Jan 1944). On the same day, the 96th Service Group arrived in North Africa. (Organization record card). On the same date, a multi-ship convoy carrying the 332d Fighter Group and the 100th, 301st, and 302nd Fighter Squadrons arrived in North Africa on the way to Italy. (organization record cards of the four organizations.

1-3 February 1944: Ships carrying the 332d Fighter Group and its 100th, 301st, and 302nd Fighter Squadrons arrived on different ships at the mainland of Italy after stopping briefly in North Africa and Sicily on the way, after having crossed the Atlantic Ocean from Virginia. The organizations debarked at Bari, Taranto, and Naples, Italy. During the same week, the 96th Air Service Group debarked at Bari, Italy. (332d Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947; Craig Huntly; organization record cards of the four organizations, and their lineage and honors history folders)

1 February 1944: The 821st Bombardment Squadron was activated as a B-25 training unit at Selfridge Field, Michigan, where the 477th Bombardment Group had been activated as a B-25 group for black crews the previous month. (organization record card)

2 February 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron dive-bombed a key bridge in the Anzio area to prevent escape of the enemy. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944)

3 February 1944: The 332d Fighter Group's 100th Fighter Squadron arrived at Montecorvino, Italy, the group's first overseas base of operations (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*).

5 February 1944: The 332d Fighter Group's 100th Fighter Squadron began flying P-39s in Italy, but not yet on combat missions. (332d Fighter Group History, Oct 1942-1947; Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). The group flew with the 62d Fighter Wing. At the same time, Lt. Elwood T. Driver, flying a P-40 for the 99th Fighter Squadron (not yet assigned to the 332d Fighter Group), shot down one FW-190. (Twelfth Air Force General Order 66 dated 24 May 1944). On the same date, the 99th Fighter Squadron received ten P-40s, bringing its inventory to 33 aircraft. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944)

7 February 1944: 3 Tuskegee Airmen of the 99th Fighter Squadron, flying P-40s, shot down 3 FW-190s. The victors included 1st Lt Clinton B. Mills and 2d Lts Wilson V. Eagleson and Leonard M. Jackson. All of the downed enemy airplanes were FW-190s. (Twelfth Air Force General Orders 66 and 122, dated 24 May 1944 and 7 Aug 1944, respectively). On that same day, the 302d Fighter Squadron arrived at Montecorvino, where the 100th Fighter Squadron was already stationed. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*; 332d Fighter Group history, Mar-Apr 1944).

8 February 1944: The 301st Fighter Squadron arrived at Montecorvino, Italy, where the 100th and 302d Fighter Squadrons were already stationed. All three of the 332d Fighter Group's squadrons were then stationed at the same base. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). Meanwhile, on the same date, six P-40s of the 99th Fighter Squadron escorted a DC-3 transport aircraft carrying Lieutenant General Mark Clark, commander of the Fifth Army, on a flight in Italy. Among the fighter escort pilots were Captain Charles B. Hall, who had been the first black pilot in the American military to shoot down an enemy airplane, and Captain Herbert Carter. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944)

10 February 1944: The 96 Air Service Group arrived at Montecorvino to serve there with the 332d Fighter Group. (lineage and honors history of the 96th Logistics Group). On the same date, the 332nd Fighter Group was assigned to the 62nd Fighter Wing. Its duties would be convoy escort, harbor patrol, and point patrol. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

14 February 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron in Italy received five replacement pilots, including 2nd Lieutenants George E. Gray, Charles F. Jamerson, John S. Sloan, Alva N. Temple, and John Daniels. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

15 February 1944: The 332d Fighter Group's 301st Fighter Squadron entered combat for the first time, from Montecorvino, Italy. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947). Within days, all three of the group's squadrons, including the 100th and 302d Fighter Squadron, had also flown combat missions. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). Meanwhile, American Red Cross women visited and served the 99th Fighter Squadron. Among them was Miss Gretchen Almede, who had earlier visited the squadron when it was in Sicily. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944).

February 1944: During the month, the majority of the missions of the 99th Fighter Squadron in Italy involved P-40s dropping 1,000-pound bombs in support of Allied ground troops. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944).

17 February 1944: The 302nd Fighter Squadron flew its first operational mission, from its base at Montecorvino, Italy. On the same day, the 332nd Fighter Group received its first pay since leaving the United States. Mail also began to arrive for the group at Montecorvino on this date. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

19 February 1944: Captain Charles P. Hall and 1st Lieutenant James T. Wiley each flew his 80th combat sortie. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944).

21 February 1944: The 100th Fighter Squadron moved to Capodichino, Italy, but the other three squadrons of the 332d Fighter Group remained with group headquarters at Montecorvino. The squadrons would not all be located at the same base again until mid-April. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*) Meanwhile, the 99th Fighter Squadron, not yet assigned to the 332d Fighter Group, flew four patrol missions that day. 2nd Lt. Alwayne M. Dunlap of the 99th was killed in an aircraft crash after overshooting his landing field. 2d Lt. Pearlee E. Saunders was wounded the same day after crash landing his P-40, and Lt. Herbert Carter's airplane was hit by flak. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944; American Battle Monuments Commission)

22 February 1944: Nine pilots of the 332nd Fighter Group journeyed to Sidi Amor, Tunisia, to ferry P-39 airplanes from there to Montecorvino, Italy. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

23 February 1944: 2d Lieutenant Harry J. Daniels of the 332d Fighter Group's 301st Fighter Squadron was reported missing after flying into bad weather during a mission to

Pompei, Italy. He was the first 332d Fighter Group pilot reported to have been killed overseas. (Craig Huntly; Missing Air Crew Report [not numbered] dated 24 Feb 1944) (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

24 February 1944: The 332nd Fighter Group received a C-78 as a courier aircraft, to fly between Montecorvino, where the 301st and 302nd Fighter Squadrons were located with the headquarters of the group, and Capodichino, where the 100th Fighter Squadron was stationed. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

28 February 1944: Capt. Lee Rayford assumed command of the 301st Fighter Squadron, succeeding Capt. Charles H. DeBow. (301st Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history). DeBow was relieved of command and temporarily suspended from flying because of physical disabilities. He was one of the first five black pilots in the Army. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

29 February 1944: 2d Lt. George T. McCrumby of the 99th Fighter Squadron disappeared with his P-40 on a mission to Anzio. His plane was last seen over water near Gaeta Point, about 3 miles off the west coast of Italy. The last two pilots to see McCrumby were 1st Lts. Howard Lee Baugh and Erwin B. Lawrence, also of the 99th Fighter Squadron. They supposed McCrumby left the formation to return to Capodichino because he had experienced engine trouble. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944; Missing Air Crew Report 2812).

February 1944: During this month, the 99th Fighter Squadron flew 55 missions, mostly dive-bombing, but also patrol, while attached to the 79th Fighter Group of the Twelfth Air Force. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944)

March 1944: Captain Charles H. DeBow was restored to full flying status. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

6 March 1944: The 302d Fighter Squadron moved from Montecorvino to Capodichino, Italy, where the 100th Fighter Squadron had already moved, but the 332d Fighter Group headquarters, and the 301st Fighter Squadron, remained at Montecorvino. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*; 332d Fighter Group history, Mar-Apr 1944)

6 March 1944: In a letter to Major General Barney Giles at Headquarters, Army Air Forces, Major General Ira C. Eaker, commander of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces, recommended that the 332d Fighter Group be equipped with P-47 fighters instead of P-39s so that the group could begin to escort heavy bombers as its primary mission. However, the group had to wait until June to begin flying heavy bomber escort missions for the Fifteenth Air Force.

9 March 1944: Lt. Wayne Vincent Liggins of the 301st Fighter Squadron was killed while on a training mission. His engine failed. (332d Fighter Group summary history, Oct 1942-1947). Meanwhile, in the 99th Fighter Squadron, not yet assigned to the 332d Fighter

Group, 2d Lt. John Hamilton was wounded in the leg by flak during a dive-bombing mission in the Anzio area. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944)

13 Mar 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron flew 3 missions. The first of these dive-bombed two heavy gun positions with 1000-pound bombs, with five hits recorded. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944)

15 March 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron flew two dive-bombing missions on targets in the Cassino area of Italy. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944)

16-17 March 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron temporarily acquired three P-47 fighter aircraft and began transition training with them, but continued to fly P-40 aircraft in combat. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944)

18 March 1944: 2d Lt. Clemenceau McAdoo Givings of the 100th Fighter Squadron was killed on a routine flying mission when his plane crashed into the sea. (332d Fighter Group summary history, Oct 1942-1947; American Battle Monuments Commission) Meanwhile, the 99th Fighter Squadron, in another part of Italy, witnessed the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944)

22 March 1944: Mount Vesuvius erupted near Naples, Italy, spreading ash over the 332d Fighter Group at Montecorvino the rest of the day and the next. (332d Fighter Group History, Oct 1942-1947)

24 March 1944: A shift in the wind relieved the 332nd Fighter Group at Montecorvino, Italy, from ash falling from the continuing eruption of Mount Vesuvius. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

26 March 1944: Mount Vesuvius became calm again, after four days erupting. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947) Its ash fall had crippled B-25s stationed near it.

29 March 1944: Sgt. Jenkins H. Bluitt of the 332nd Fighter Group was killed in a collision between a truck and a train in Italy. In the same accident, Sgt. Cathedral H. Smith of the group was injured. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

30 March 1944: The Statistical Control Division, Office of Management Control, issued a report on "Operations of the 99th Fighter Squadron Compared with Other P-40 Aircraft Squadrons in the MTO (Mediterranean Theater of Operations), 3 July 1943-31 January 1944." The report noted that the black 99th Fighter Squadron had performed as well as other squadrons with which it served, implying that the letter of General House dated 16 September 1943, which had called the squadron inferior, had been wrong. (AFHRA call number 134.65-496; IRIS number 112858)

31 March 1944: 2d Lt. Norvel Stoudmire was killed while flying on a harbor patrol mission. His aircraft caught on fire and he was not able to bail out safely. (332d Fighter Group summary history, Oct 1942-1947)

March 1944: During the month of March 1944, the 99th Fighter Squadron flew 39 missions, mostly dive-bombing enemy targets on the ground. During the month, squadron Lieutenants John Hamilton and John S. Sloan received purple hearts for having been wounded. That same month, Mount Vesuvius, not far from the 99th Fighter Squadron base, erupted. (99th Fighter Squadron, Feb-Apr 1944)

April 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron flew a series of missions during which each of up to twelve P-40s dropped a 1,000 pound bomb on an enemy target. The airplanes flew despite enemy antiaircraft fire from the ground. (99th Fighter Squadron history, April 1944).

1 April 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron was attached again to the 324th Fighter Group after having been attached for months to the 79th Fighter Group. The commander of the 324th Fighter Group at the time was Col. Leonard C. Lydon. Some of the squadron members complained about the move, since they had grown to like their association with the 79th Fighter Group. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

2 April 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron moved to Cercola, Italy, the 324th Fighter Group base. It had been one year since the squadron departed Tuskegee. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944)

4 April 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron flew its first mission from Cercola, while attached to the 324th Fighter Group, also stationed there. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944)

8 April 1944: Lt. Ray B. Ware, public relations officer for the 332nd Fighter Group, visited the public relations office of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces at Caserta, Italy. The commander of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces, Lt. Gen. Ira C. Eaker, would visit the 332nd Fighter Group later that month and give it a new mission. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

10 April 1944: The 115th Army Air Forces Base Unit was organized at Selfridge Field, Michigan, home of the 477th Bombardment Group. (115th AAF Base Unit organization record card). At the same time, the 821st Bombardment Squadron, a B-25 training unit, was disbanded at Selfridge.

11 April 1944: Captain Erwin B. Lawrence succeeded Major George S. Roberts as commander of the 99th Fighter Squadron. Major Roberts was preparing to return to the United States for rest and recuperation (on 13 April), but he would eventually return to command the squadron again, for the third time. (99th Fighter Squadron history, April 1944; 99th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

12 April 1944: Captain Leon C. Roberts succeeded Captain Lemuel R. Custis as operations officer of the 99th Fighter Squadron. (99th Fighter Squadron history, April 1944).

15 April 1944: The 332d Fighter Group and the 301st Fighter Squadron moved from Montecorvino, Italy, to Capodichino, Italy, to which the 100th and 302d Fighter Squadrons had already moved. For the first time since early February 1944, when the 332d Fighter Group and its three squadrons were all stationed at Montecorvino, the units were all collocated. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). On the same day, back in the United States, the 617th Bombardment Squadron was activated again and assigned to the 477th Bombardment Group, Medium. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

17 April 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron flew its 400th mission, and its 2592nd sortie. The mission involved the dropping of eight 500-pound bombs and 96 twenty-pound fragmentation bombs on enemy motor transport targets, from an altitude ranging from 2,000 to 9,500 feet. (99th Fighter Squadron history, April 1944).

19 April 1944: Major George S. Roberts, Captain Lemuel R. Custis, and Captain Herbert “Gene” Carter bade farewell to the enlisted personnel of the 99th Fighter Squadron as they prepared to return to the United States. Major Roberts and Captain Custis had been in the first class of five Tuskegee Airmen pilots. Other squadron personnel departing were Captain Charles B. Hall, who had scored the first aerial victory by a black American military pilot, Captain James T. Wiley, and Lieutenants Willie Ashley and Willie Fuller. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944). 2d Lieutenant Beryl Wyatt of the 100th Fighter Squadron died from injuries suffered in an aircraft crash. (332d Fighter Group history, Mar-Apr 1944)

20 April 1944: Lieutenant General Ira C. Eaker, Commanding General, Mediterranean Allied Air Forces, visited the 332d Fighter Group at Capodichino, Italy. On the same day, Lieutenant Ray B. Ware, the 332d Fighter Group public relations officer, announced that the group would soon be converting from P-39 to P-47 aircraft and move to the east coast of Italy, presumably for bomber escort duty. (332d Fighter Group history, Mar-Apr 1944; 332d Fighter Group War Diary, April 1944) Later that day, General Eaker, accompanied by Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., commander of the 332d Fighter Group, visited the 99th Fighter Squadron at Cercola. The 99th Fighter Squadron, which Colonel Davis had commanded earlier, would eventually be assigned to the 332d Fighter Group for the bomber escort duty. On the same day, the 99th Fighter Squadron flew its 200th mission in Italy. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944)

22 April 1944: Capt. Melvin T. Jackson assumed command of the 302nd Fighter Squadron, succeeding 1st Lt. Edward C. Gleed. (302nd Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

23-25 April 1944: The 332nd Fighter Group received its first P-47 airplanes, to replace some of the P-39s the group had been flying. The P-47 was more capable of engaging in aerial combat, and had a range long enough to escort bombers on long missions. (332nd Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947)

24 April 1944: 2d Lieutenant Edgar L. Jones was killed in an aircraft crash on takeoff for a strafing mission. That night, thirty to forty German JU-88 airplanes raided the 332d Fighter Group area, wounding one enlisted man, Staff Sergeant Alvin H. Kent, who earned the Purple Heart. (332d Fighter Group history, Mar-Apr 1944; 332d Fighter Group War Diary, April 1944)

25 April 1944: The 332d Fighter Group received its first six P-47 airplanes, two of which were assigned to each of the group's fighter squadrons, the 100th, 301st, and 302d. P-47s eventually replaced all of the P-39 fighters the group had flown. (332d Fighter Group history, Mar-Apr 1944)

30 April 1944: The 320th College Training Detachment (Aircrew) was disbanded at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama. On the same day, the 318th Base Headquarters and Air Base Squadron (Colored) at Tuskegee Army Air Field was disbanded. (organization record cards) Personnel of the 318th transferred to the 2143d Army Air Forces Base Unit (history of the 318th Base Headquarters and Air Base Squadron for Mar-Apr 1944).

30 April 1944: In Italy, 99th Fighter Squadron P-40s dropped seven 500-pound bombs and 14 clusters of six 20-pound fragmentation bombs on an enemy supply dump southeast of Avezzano. The attack produced spectacular explosions that sent flames and smoke a thousand feet into the air. It was the most memorable mission of the squadron for the month. (99th Fighter Squadron history, April 1944).

April 1944: During the month of April, the 99th Fighter Squadron flew 32 missions, mostly dive-bombing enemy targets. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Feb-Apr 1944)

May 1944: 1st Lt. Ray B. Ware was appointed photo interpreter of the 332nd Fighter Group, and 1st Lt. Robert G. Pitts was appointed as group historian. (332nd Fighter Group history, May 1944).

1 May 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron in Italy was assigned to the 332d Fighter Group but remained attached to the 324th Fighter Group for combat operations. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). On the same day, back at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama, the 2143d AAF Base Unit was activated. It operated the pilot school for basic and advanced training there. (unit's organization record card)

5 May 1944: Lt. James R. Polkinghorne, Jr. of the 301st Fighter Squadron was reported lost with his P-39 near Teragina, Italy while on a strafing mission. The cause was unknown (Missing Air Crew Report 4518; 332nd Fighter Group history, May 1944).

6 May 1944: An advance party of the 99th Fighter Squadron moved to Pignataro Airfield in Italy. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Jun 1944).

6 May 1944: Back in the United States, the 477th Bombardment Group, Medium, moved from Selfridge Field, Michigan, to Godman Field, Kentucky. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*). Unlike the situation at Selfridge, black officers of the group were allowed to use the base officer's club. White officers used another officer's club at neighboring Fort Knox. (Lawrence P. Schott and William M. Womack Sr., *Double V: The Civil Rights Struggle of the Tuskegee Airmen* [East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1994], p. 210). The 115th Army Air Forces Base Unit moved from Selfridge Field, Michigan, to Godman Field, Kentucky, along with the 477th Bombardment Group with which it served. (115 AAF Base Unit organization record card).

6 May 1944: The 126th Army Air Forces Base Unit was organized at Walterboro Army Air Field in South Carolina, to prepare for the movement of the 553rd Fighter Squadron from Selfridge Field, Michigan, to Walterboro. (organization record card)

7 May 1944: The 553rd Fighter Squadron, which trained replacement pilots for the 332nd Fighter Group, which was serving in Italy, moved from Selfridge Field, Michigan, to Walterboro Army Air Field, South Carolina. On the same day, the unit was disbanded. The 126th Army Air Forces Base Unit continued active at Walterboro. Pilots who graduated from single-engine flight training at Tuskegee Army Air Field transferred to the unit to serve as replacement fighter pilots who would eventually deploy overseas to serve with the 332nd Fighter Group. (organization record cards) The unit could use the officer's club at Walterboro, because white officers rented another club off base for themselves. (Lawrence P. Schott and William M. Womack Sr., *Double V: The Civil Rights Struggle of the Tuskegee Airmen* [East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1994], p. 200).

10 May 1944: The main body of the 99th Fighter Squadron moved to Pignataro, Italy. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Jun 1944; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

12 May 1944: Capt. Howard L. Baugh of the 99th Fighter Squadron earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroism on a mission on this date. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 4041 dated 19 Oct 1944)

12-14 May 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron earned its second Distinguished Unit Citation for missions over Cassino, Italy, an honor it shared with the 324th Fighter Group to which it was attached. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

15 May 1944: Back in the United States, the 618th Bombardment Squadron was activated again and assigned to the 477th Bombardment Group, Medium. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

19 May 1944: The 332nd Fighter Group received ten new P-47 airplanes. (332nd Fighter Group history, May 1944).

20 May 1944: The 332nd Fighter Group learned that it would be reassigned from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Air Force and would move to Ramitelli for primarily bomber escort duties. (XV Air Force Service Command weekly activity report dated 20 May 1944)

21 May 1944: 1st Lt. Charles W. Tate of the 99th Fighter Squadron earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroic actions on this date. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 449 dated 31 Jan 1945)

22 May 1944: 2d Lt. Henry Pollard Jr. of the 302d Fighter Squadron was lost while flying a training mission from Capodichino. (American Battle Monuments Commission; 332nd Fighter Group history, May 1944). The 332d Fighter Group was reassigned from the XII Fighter Command of the Twelfth Air Force to the Fifteenth Air Force. (Twelfth Air Force General Order 70, dated 31 May 1944; Army Air Forces, Mediterranean Theater of Operations General Order 28 dated 22 May 1944; Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*). The group came under the operational control of the 306th Fighter Wing, which administered the fighter escort groups of the Fifteenth Air Force. The commander of the 306th Fighter Wing at the time was Brigadier General Dean C. Strother. At the same time, the 99th Fighter Squadron was relieved from attachment to the XII Tactical Air Command, although it remained assigned to the 332d Fighter Group and attached for operational control to the 324th Fighter Group. (Twelfth Air Force General Order 70 dated 31 May 1944 and Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*, p. 329). At the same time, the 96th Service Group and the 366th and 367th Service Squadrons were reassigned from the XII Air Force Service Command of the Twelfth Air Force to the Fifteenth Air Force (organization record card of the group and Twelfth Air Force General Order 70 dated 31 May 1944). Other organizations reassigned from XII Air Force Service Command to the Fifteenth Air Force that day included the 99th Army Air Forces Service Detachment, the 99th Aviation Ordnance Detachment, the 1765th Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Company, the 1901st Quartermaster Truck Company, Aviation, the 1000th Signal Company Service Group, and the 1051st Quartermaster Company, Service Group, Aviation. (Twelfth Air Force General Order 70, dated 31 May 1944). While the effective date of all these organizational changes was 22 May, the order that authorized them was dated 31 May.

24 May 1944: 1st Lt. John H. Prowell of the 301st Fighter Squadron was reported lost with his P-39 over the Mediterranean Sea, with possible engine failure, while flying a convoy protection mission (Missing Air Crew Report 13687; 332nd Fighter Group history, May 1944).

26-29 May 1944: The 332nd Fighter Group moved from Capodichino, Italy, to Ramitelli Air Field, on the east coast of Italy, next to the Adriatic Sea. It was not far from the bases of other fighter escort groups of the Fifteenth Air Force, and just north of the bomber bases. By then, the group completed its transition from P-39 to P-47 airplanes. (332nd Fighter Group history, May 1944).

27 May 1944: 1st Lt. Clarence W. Dart of the 99th Fighter Squadron in Italy earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroism on this date. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 449 dated 31 Jan 1945). On the same date, the 99th Fighter Squadron reported losing 2nd Lt. James B. Brown and his P-40 near Prossinone, Italy. The cause was not known. (Missing Air Crew Report 5372). Back in the United States, the 619th Bombardment Squadron was activated again and assigned to the 477th Bombardment Group, Medium. The group now had all of its original squadrons active again under it, this time at Godman Field, Kentucky. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*).

27-30 May 1944: The 366th Service Squadron, which serviced and repaired the airplanes of the 332nd Fighter Group, moved in three echelons from Capodichino Air Field to Ramitelli Air Field in Italy. This was in accordance with a 24 May 1944 order that also transferred the squadron from XII Air Force Service Command to XV Air Force Service Command. The commander of the squadron at the time was Capt. Elmer E. Jones, Jr. (366 Service Squadron history, May 1944).

28 May 1944: The 332d Fighter Group moved from Capodichino, Italy, to Ramitelli Airfield, Italy, where it would remain for the rest of the war in Europe (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; 332d Fighter Group lineage and honors history).

29 May 1944: The 96th Air Service Group was assigned to the XV Air Force Service Command of the Fifteenth Air Force. On the same date, a great many P-47 fighter airplanes landed at Ramitelli, home of the 332nd Fighter Group, to replace the group's P-39s. The P-47s came from the 325th Fighter Group, which was acquiring P-51 fighter airplanes. (38th Service Group history, Dec 1943-Jun 1944). A 301st Fighter Squadron pilot, 2nd Lt. Lloyd S. Hathcock, disappeared on a flight to ferry a P-47 that day from Foggia Main Airport to Ramitelli. He reportedly overshot his target and landed accidentally at another airfield held by the enemy. He was captured and held as a prisoner of war in a German stalag. (Missing Air Crew Report 6921; Alexander Jefferson, *Red Tail Captured, Red Tail Free* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), p. v; Craig Huntly e-mail to Daniel Haulman dated 26 October 2012).

31 May 1944: An outdoor amphitheater opened at the northern edge of Tuskegee Army Air Field with a performance by Ella Fitzgerald and the Inkspots. Entertainers who performed at the base later included Louis Armstrong and Lena Horne. (Thole, p. 15) Overseas, the 332nd Fighter Group was assigned to the 306th Fighter Wing, which included six other fighter escort groups (31st, 52nd, 325th, 1st, 14th, and 82nd) (332nd Fighter Group history, May 1944; 306 Fighter Wing General Order 70 dated 31 May 1944).

2 June 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron celebrated the first anniversary of its first combat mission. That same day it flew its 500th combat mission, led by squadron commander Capt. Erwin B. Lawrence. The same mission was the 298th the squadron had flown in Italy. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Jun 1944). Meanwhile, MSgt. William M. Harris, line chief, of the 302d Fighter Squadron of the 332d Fighter Group, was killed

during an aircraft take-off. 2d Lt. Elmer Taylor, a pilot also of the 302d Fighter Squadron, was killed in a crash during a training mission. (332d Fighter Group history for June 1944).

4 June 1944: Captains Edward L. Toppins and Leonard M. Jackson, both of the 99th Fighter Squadron, each earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroic actions on this date. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 4041 dated 19 Oct 1944 and Fifteenth Air Force General Order 4876 dated 5 Dec 1944).

5 June 1944: Captain Elwood T. Driver of the 99th Fighter Squadron earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroic actions on this date. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 449 dated 31 Jan 1945). The 99th Fighter Squadron was detached from the 324th Fighter Group. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Jun 1944). The 96th Air Service Group moved from Montecorvino Air Field to Foggia, Italy, very near Ramitelli. Serving under the 96th Air Service Group were the 366th Service Squadron at Ramitelli and the 367th Service Squadron, at first at Foggia and later at Vasto and Falconara. (Organization record cards of the organizations)

5-9 June 1944: The 100th Fighter Squadron moved from Capodichino, Italy, to Ramitelli Air Field. (332nd Fighter Group history, June 1944).

6 June 1944: Lt. Leonard M. Jackson crash-landed on no-man's land between enemy and Allied lines. He returned the next day with two captured Germans. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Jun 1944)

7 June 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew its first mission with the Fifteenth Air Force. The mission was a fighter sweep of the Ferrara-Bologna area. 2d Lt. Carroll N. Langston, Jr. of the 301st Fighter Squadron was reported lost with his P-47 near San Benedetti, Italy. The cause was probable engine failure. On the same mission, Captain Lee Rayford was wounded by flak. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 1; Missing Air Crew Report 5639; 332d Fighter Group summary history, Oct 1942-1947) Meanwhile, the 99th Fighter Squadron, not yet flying with the 332d Fighter Group, flew four 4-ship strafing missions to destroy 24 motor vehicles, damage 47 others, and destroy one self-propelled gun, with no friendly aircraft lost. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Jun 1944)

8 June 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew its first heavy bomber escort mission, protecting B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing on a mission to Pola, Italy (332d Fighter Group mission report number 2). Meanwhile, 1st Lt. Lewis C. Smith failed out of his plane and went missing after being hit by flak on a dive-bombing mission with the 99th Fighter Squadron, which had not yet joined the 332d Fighter Group for bomber escort. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Jun 1944)

9 June 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s and B-17s of the 5th, 47th, 49th, 55th, and 304th Bombardment Wings on a raid to Munich, Germany, the group's first mission over Germany (332d Fighter Group mission report number 3). Four Tuskegee Airmen shot down a total of five enemy Me-109 airplanes that day. The victors included 2d

Lt. Frederick D. Funderburg, who shot down 2 Me-109s, and 1st Lts Charles M. Bussy, Melvin T. Jackson, and Wendell O. Pruitt, who each shot down one Me-109 (Fifteenth Air Force general order number 1473, issued on 30 June 1944; 332d Fighter Group history for June 1944). These were the first aerial victories of the 332d Fighter Group. (332d Fighter Group history, December 1944 [summary of year's accomplishments]). For this mission, group commander Colonel Benjamin O. Davis Jr. earned a Distinguished Flying Cross for so skillfully handling his squadrons that "only a few bombers were lost" (Fifteenth Air Force General Order number 2972 dated 31 August 1944). Enemy airplanes actually shot down only two B-24s of the escorted wing's 459th Bombardment Group during the time the 332d Fighter Group was escorting them (Missing Air Crew Reports 6317 and 6179). This was the first time 332d Fighter Group-escorted bombers fell to enemy airplanes. The losses were very understandable, given the fact that the number of bombers far exceeded the number of escort fighters to cover them. The group reported 2d Lt. Cornelius G. Rogers of the 301st Fighter Group lost with his P-47D to an unknown cause near Pols, Italy (Missing Air Crew Report 5758). On the same date, 9 June 1944, a general from the XV Air Force Service Command visited Ramitelli Air Field, possibly to discuss the painting of the 332d Fighter Group aircraft for identification. (366 Service Squadron history, Jun 1944)

11 June 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron moved to Ciampino, Italy. That same day it was attached to the 86th Fighter Group under Col. Harold E. Kofahl, but remained assigned to the 332d Fighter Group (99th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history; 99th Fighter Squadron history, Jun 1944; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). On the same day, the 332d Fighter Group, from which the 99th Fighter Squadron was then detached, escorted B-17 and B-24 bombers of the 5th and 55th Bombardment Wings to the Smedervo area (99th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history; 332d Fighter Group mission report number 4).

13 June 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17 and B-24 bombers of the 5th and 49th Bombardment Wings to the Munich area (332d Fighter Group mission report number 5). Enemy fighters shot down one of the B-24s over northern Italy (Missing Air Crew Report 6097).

14 June 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17 and B-24 bombers on a mission to the Budapest area of Hungary (332d Fighter Group narrative mission report number 6). 2d Lt. Roger D. Brown of the 100th Fighter Squadron was reported missing, along with his P-47 airplane, southeast of Ramitelli Air Base, Italy. He experienced engine trouble on a training flight that day (Missing Air Crew Report 6922). Meanwhile, over in the 99th Fighter Squadron, Lt. C. W. Allen went missing on a dive-bombing mission. He returned two days later after evading the enemy for two days. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Jun 1944)

15 June 1944: the 99th Fighter Squadron flew six dive-bombing missions. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Jun 1944). On the same date, enlisted men at Ramitelli Air Field organized an Enlisted Men's Club and elected SSgt. James Webb as its president. Webb was an accomplished piano player. (366 Service Squadron histories, Jun and Aug 1944)

16 June 1944: For the second day in a row, the 99th Fighter Squadron flew six dive-bombing missions. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Jun 1944). Meanwhile, the 332d Fighter Group escorted Fifteenth Air Force heavy bombers to the Bratislava area of Slovakia (332d Fighter Group mission report number 7).

17 June 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron moved to Orbetello, Italy (99th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*).

19 June 1944: Workers from the 366th Service Squadron laid the framework for the Enlisted Men's Club building at Ramitelli. (366 Service Squadron history, Jun 1944).

22 June 1944: Maj. Andrew D. Turner succeeded Capt. Robert B. Tresville as commander of the 100th Fighter Squadron. (100th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history). On the same date, the XV Air Force Service Command learned that the 332nd Fighter Group would be trading in its P-47 fighters for P-51 Mustangs, by direction of Major General Nathan Twining, commander of the Fifteenth Air Force. (XV Air Force Service Command staff journal entry for 22 Jun 1944)

23 June 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted Fifteenth Air Force heavy bombers to the Bucharest-Giurgiu area of Rumania (332d Fighter Group mission report number 9, number out of sequence with the date).

24 June 1944: P-47 fighters of the 332d Fighter Group strafed Airasca-Pinerole landing ground. Captain Robert B. Tresville, Jr., 2d Lieutenant Samuel Jefferson, and 2d Lieutenant Charles B. Johnson, all of the 100th Fighter Squadron, were reported missing, one near the northern coast of Italy, and another off Corsica in the Mediterranean Sea. Captain Tresville was a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. (332d Fighter Group history for June 1944; 332d Fighter Group mission report number 8, and Missing Air Crew Reports numbered 6078 and 6079. The Missing Air Crew Reports erroneously note 22 June 1944, but no 332d Fighter Group mission was flown that day). On the same day, the emblem of the 99th Fighter Squadron, still detached from the 332d Fighter Group, was approved. It consisted of a gold winged diving panther on a blue disk, with a background of 9 stars, 4 above and 5 below the panther (99th Fighter Squadron emblem folder).

25 June 1944: In the morning, eight P-47 pilots of the 332d Fighter Group, including 2d Lt. Gwynne W. Pierson and Lieutenants Wendell O. Pruitt, Laurence D. Wilkins, and Freddie E. Hutchins, strafed a German warship in the Adriatic Sea (Gulf of Venice) near Pirano not far from Trieste, then in Italy. They reported the ship was a German destroyer and that they had sunk it. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 11 dated June 25, 1944; 332d Fighter Group history for June 1944; account by Gwynne Peirson in *The East Coast Chapter Newsletter* for Tuskegee Airmen Incorporated, vol. 4, no. 8). The ship was probably the TA-22, which had been converted into a German torpedo boat from the captured Italian warship *Giuseppe Missori*. The 240-foot-long ship might

have appeared to be a German destroyer. No other German warship was reported hit by Allied aircraft that day, and the time and place agree. The TA-22 suffered so much damage that it was permanently taken out of service. It was reported scuttled on May 3, 1945 off Trieste (Jurgen Rohwer, *Chronology of the War at Sea, 1939-1945: The Naval History of World War II* [London: Chatham Publishing, 2005], p. 338; David Brown, *Warship Losses of World War II* [Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1990], pp. 95, 114, 149, 182).

25 June 1944: The 99th Service Detachment of the 38th Service Group was disbanded, and most of its men, who were already at Ramitelli, were reassigned to the 366th Service Squadron. (366 Service Squadron history, Jun 1944) The detachment had once served with the 99th Fighter Squadron, which was now a part of the 332nd Fighter Group.

26 June 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew a bomber escort mission to the Lake Balaton area of Hungary (332d Fighter Group mission report number 12). Capt. Andrew Maples, Jr. and 1st Lt. Maurice V. Esters, both of the 301st Fighter Squadron, suffered engine failure or mechanical trouble, and bailed out of their P-47D airplanes (Missing Air Crew Reports 7061 and 7062). On the same date, the first P-51s arrived at Ramitelli Air Field, Italy, home base of the 332nd Fighter Group. There were thirteen of them. (332nd Fighter Group history, June 1944).

27 June 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17 bombers of the 5th Bombardment Wing and B-24 bombers of the 47th Bombardment Wing to the Budapest area of Hungary and reported no losses (332d Fighter Group mission report number 13). On the same date, eighteen more P-51 Mustangs arrived at Ramitelli. (332nd Fighter Group history, June 1944).

28 June 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17 bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing to the Ferdinand area. Lt. Edward Laird of the 100th Fighter Squadron crashed and was killed on takeoff (332d Fighter Group mission report number 14). 2d Lt. Othel Dickson of the 301st Fighter Squadron was also killed in a crash that same day while on a transition mission. (332d Fighter Group history for June 1944). On the same date, the 99th Fighter Squadron received orders to move to Ramitelli Air Field, Italy, where the 332d Fighter Group was already based. (99th Fighter Squadron history, June 1944)

29 June 1944: 2d Lt. Floyd A. Thompson of the 99th Fighter Squadron was hit by flak and bailed out of his plane. He landed near Spescia, Italy. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Jun 1944)

29-30 June 1944: Anticipating its move to Ramitelli Air Field, where the rest of the 332nd Fighter Group was stationed, the 99th Fighter Squadron gave up its P-40 airplanes, sending 10 of them to the 324th Fighter Group (to which it was formerly attached), 9 to a replacement center at Capodichino Airfield, and the remainder to a service squadron. (99th Fighter Squadron history, Jun 1944)

30 June 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted heavy bombers of the Fifteenth Air Force to the Vienna area (332d Fighter Group mission report number 15). Five of the bombers were shot down by enemy aircraft, but probably after the 332d Fighter Group's escort duty had finished (Missing Air Crew Reports 6335, 6394, 6395, and 6396). On the same date, the 99th Fighter Squadron transferred most of its remaining P-40 fighter aircraft and prepared to move to Ramitelli Air Field, home of the 332d Fighter Group, to which it was assigned. (99 Fighter Squadron history, June 1944)

3 July 1944: Major General Nathan Twining, commander of the Fifteenth Air Force, and Brigadier General Dean C. Strother, commander of the 306th Fighter Wing, visited the 332nd Fighter Group at Ramitelli. (332nd Fighter Group history, July 1944)

4 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew its first mission in the P-51 Mustang aircraft, which replaced the P-47s the group had been flying. (332d Fighter Group History, July 1944). The group was assigned to escort B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing and B-17s of the 47th Bombardment Wing, but the 332d Fighter Group and the bombers failed to rendezvous as planned. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 16).

5 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted Fifteenth Air Force heavy bombers on their way to an enemy target (332d Fighter Group mission report number 17).

5-6 July 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron moved from Orbetello, Italy, to Ramitelli Airfield, Italy, with the help of the 2236th Quartermaster Truck Company. Elements of the squadron spend the night outside Caserta, Italy. (332nd Fighter Group history, July 1944).

6 July 1944: At Ramitelli, the 99th Fighter Squadron joined the rest of the 332d Fighter Group, which already included the 100th, 301st, and 302nd Fighter Squadrons. The 332nd Fighter Group was the only one with four squadrons assigned, and now they were all located on the same base. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*; 332d Fighter Group History, July 1944; War Diary of 99th Fighter Squadron). Although the 99th Fighter Squadron had been assigned to the 332d Fighter Group since 1 May, it had flown combat missions while attached to other fighter groups stationed in other parts of Italy (99th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history; 332d Fighter Group history for July 1944). Other squadrons of the 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 47th Bombardment Wing to Latisana and Tagilamento-Casarsa (332d Fighter Group mission report number 18).

7 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group failed to rendezvous with bombers of the Fifteenth Air Force, probably because the 332nd Fighter group followed plan B and the bombers followed plan A, which took them to Blechhammer, Germany, instead of Vienna, Austria, with a different rendezvous time. Apparently the 332nd Fighter Group did not receive the Fifteenth Air Force message to go with plan A. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 19 and Fifteenth Air Force mission folder for that day).

8 July 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron received its first P-51 Mustang aircraft, which was far superior to the P-40s it had flown in the past (99th Fighter Squadron lineage

and honors history; 332d Fighter Group History, July 1944; 99th Fighter Squadron War Diary). Other squadrons of the 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from Muchendorf Airdrome. Enemy fighters were reported to have attacked the escorted bombers. The 332d Fighter Group mission report number 20 for that day noted “2 B-24s destroyed over target area. 1 B-24 seen to disintegrate, 2 chutes seen to open from 2nd B-24.” These bomber losses are not confirmed by Missing Air Crew Reports. On the same date, Captain Cornelius Vincent, Jr. became the 332nd Fighter Group S-2 officer, and began serving as the group’s historian. (332nd Fighter Group history, July 1944).

9 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew its first mission to Ploesti, escorting B-24s of the 47th Bombardment Wing on a raid on important petroleum refining facilities (332d Fighter Group mission report number 21). The same week, the XV Air Force Service Command was busy modifying P-51s to use P-47 fuel tanks and bombs. (XV Air Force Service Command, weekly activity report dated 9 Jul 1944).

10 July 1944: Captain Mac Ross, who was one of the first five Tuskegee Airmen pilots, in the first graduating class at Tuskegee Army Air Field, and who had been the 332nd Fighter Group operations officer, was killed in a crash while on a local transition flight during the squadron’s conversion from P-40 to P-51 aircraft. Captain Alfonza Davis replaced Ross as group operations officer. (332d Fighter Group history for July 1944)

11 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew its first mission over occupied France, escorting B-24 bombers of the 47th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from Toulon (332d Fighter Group narrative mission report number 22). Meanwhile, Captain Leon C. Roberts of the 99th Fighter Squadron was killed in a crash on a transition flight as his squadron was converting from P-40 to P-51 aircraft. Captain Roberts had been 99th Fighter Squadron operations officer, and had a total of 116 combat sorties. (332d Fighter Group history for July 1944)

12 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted the B-24s of the 49th Bomb Wing to raid the marshalling yards at Nimes in southern France and downed four enemy airplanes (332d Fighter Group mission report number 23; 332d Fighter Group history for July 1944). 1st Lt. Harold E. Sawyer shot down one FW-190 (the first 332d Fighter Group victory in the P-51 Mustang), while 1 Lt. Joseph Elsberry shot down three of them, earning a Distinguished Flying Cross for the achievement (Fifteenth Air Force General Orders numbered 2032 and 2466, dated 23 Jul and 10 Aug 1944 respectively). Enemy airplanes shot down 3 of the escorted B-24s (Missing Air Crew Reports 6894, 6895, and 7034; 461 Bombardment Group mission report for 12 July 1944; Fifteenth Air Force mission folder for 12 July 1944).

13 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted two B-17 groups of the 5th Bombardment Wing to bomb the Pinzano railroad bridge and the Vinzone viaduct in northern Italy (332d Fighter Group mission report number 24).

14 July 1944: A “rest camp for colored enlisted men,” located between Termoli and Vasto, Italy, was expected to be in operation by 31 July 1944. (XV Air Force Service Command staff journal entry for 14 Jul 1944)

15 July 1944: The 99th Fighter Squadron flew its first combat mission for the Fifteenth Air Force, and its first combat mission with the other three squadrons of the 332d Fighter Group. (332d Fighter Group History, July 1944; 99th Fighter Squadron War Diary). This was the second group mission to Ploesti. The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 55th Bombardment Group, and encountered enemy aircraft, but reported no losses that day (332d Fighter Group mission report number 25).

16 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group conducted a fighter sweep in the Vienna area of Austria (332d Fighter Group mission report number 26). Two Tuskegee Airmen shot down 2 enemy airplanes. The victors included 1st Lt Alfonza W. Davis and 2d Lt. William W. Green, Jr. (Fifteenth Air Force General Orders 2029 and 2030, both issued on 23 July 1944). They each earned a Distinguished Flying Cross for their heroic actions on this date. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3541 dated 22 Sep 1944 and Fifteenth Air Force General Order 49 dated 3 Jan 1945).

17 July 1944: 3 members of the 302d Fighter Squadron each shot down 1 Me-109 during a mission to escort B-24s of the 304th Bombardment Wing to Avignon, France (332d Fighter Group mission report number 27). The victors included 1st Lts. Luther H. Smith, Jr., Laurence D. Wilkins and 2d Lt Robert H. Smith. All of the downed airplanes were ME-109s (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 2350 dated 6 Aug 1944). For their heroic actions on this date, 1st Lts. Luther H. Smith and Laurence D. Wilkins, both of the 302nd Fighter Squadron, each earned a Distinguished Flying Cross. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 5068 dated 18 Dec 1944 and Fifteenth Air Force General Order 49 dated 3 Jan 1945).

18 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing on a raid against an airfield at Memmingen, Germany (332d Fighter Group mission report number 28). Nine Tuskegee Airmen shot down 12 enemy airplanes on this mission in air battles over northeastern Italy and then near the target. 2d Lt. Clarence Lester shot down 3 Me-109s, and 1st Lt Jack D. Holsclaw shot down 2. Other victors that day included Capt Edward L. Toppins, 1st Lt Charles P. Bailey and Weldon K. Groves, and 2d Lts Lee A. Archer, Walter J. A. Palmer, Roger Romine, and Hugh S. Warner (Fifteenth Air Force General Orders 2202, 2350, and 2484, issued on 31 Jul 1944, 6 Aug 1944, and 11 Aug 1944, respectively; 332d Fighter Group history for July 1944). Three of the 332d Fighter Group P-51C pilots, including 2d Lt. Gene C. Browne and 2d Lt. Wellington G. Irving of the 301st Fighter Squadron, were shot down by enemy aircraft near the target area (Missing Air Crew Reports 6973 and 7027 and 332d Fighter Group history for July 1944). Lieutenant Browne became a prisoner of war in Germany, but Lieutenant Irving was killed. P-51 pilot Lt. Oscar Hutton of the 100th Fighter Squadron was also reported lost that day (332d Fighter Group narrative mission report 28). 21 of the 332d Fighter Group’s fighters had returned to base after the air battle over northern Italy, leaving only 36 of the group’s fighters to escort the bombardment groups of the 5th Bombardment Wing. Unfortunately,

enemy aircraft shot down 15 of the B-17 bombers in the last two groups of the 5th Bombardment Wing to arrive in the Memmingen target area. (Missing Air Crew Reports 6856, 6953-6954, 6975-6981, 7097-7099, 7153, 7310; Fifteenth Air Force mission folder for 18 July 1944). For their heroism on the Memmingen mission this day, the following five members of the 332d Fighter Group each earned the Distinguished Flying Cross: 2nd Lt. Clarence D. Lester (100th Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Jack D. Holsclaw (100th Fighter Squadron); Capt. Andrew D. Turner (100th Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Walter J. A. Palmer (100th Fighter Squadron); and 1st Lt. Charles P. Bailey (99th Fighter Squadron). (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3617 dated 6 Sep 1944; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 4009 dated 17 Oct 1944; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 654 dated 13 Feb 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3484 dated 29 May 1945). The order awarding Distinguished Flying Crosses to Lts. Lester and Holsclaw noted that the bomber formation they guarded was attacked by “300 enemy fighters” on this date. Given the very large number of bombers to escort and the very many enemy fighters that attacked them, relative to the number of escort fighters, it is understandable that many of the bombers were shot down by enemy aircraft. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3617 dated 6 Sep 1944).

19 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 49th Bombardment Wing to Munich/Schleisheim Airdrome (332d Fighter Group mission report number 29).

20 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted bombers to the Friedrichshafen area of Germany (332d Fighter Group mission report number 30). Four Tuskegee Airmen shot down four Me-109s. The victors included Capts Joseph D. Elsberry, Armour G. McDaniel, and Edward L. Toppins, and 1st Lt Langdon E. Johnson. Elsberry became the first Tuskegee Airmen to earn four aerial victory credits (Fifteenth Air Force General Orders 2202, 2284, and 2484, dated 31 Jul 1944, 3 Aug 1944, and 11 Aug 1944, respectively). Unfortunately, two of the escorted B-24s were shot down by enemy aircraft (Missing Air Crew Reports 6914 and 6919). The same day, 20 July 1944, the 332d Fighter Group flew two air-sea rescue missions over the Adriatic Sea (332d Fighter Group mission reports numbered 31 and 32). Capt. Henry B. Perry of the 99th Fighter Squadron earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroic actions on this date. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 4993 dated 14 Dec 1944).

21 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17 bombers of the 5th Bombardment Wing home after they had bombed the Brux synthetic oil refinery in Bohemia (German-held Czechoslovakia). The group reported losing one pilot on the mission, Lt. William F. Williams of the 301st Fighter Squadron (332d Fighter Group mission report number 33 and 332d Fighter Group history for July 1944).

22 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 55th Bomb Wing to and from Ploesti, Rumania (332d Fighter Group mission report number 34). 1st Lt. James Alonza Walker of the 302d Fighter Squadron was reported lost with his P-51C over the Kraljevo area of Yugoslavia, probably as a result of enemy anti-aircraft artillery fire (Missing Air Crew Report 6852). He returned safely on 28 Aug 1944 after having

evaded enemy forces in Yugoslavia. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group)

24 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 47th Bombardment Group on a raid to Genoa harbor in northwestern Italy (332d Fighter Group mission report number 35).

25 July 1944: Lt. Harold Sawyer of the 301st Fighter Squadron shot down 1 Me-109 German fighter during a mission to escort B-24s of the 55th Bombardment Wing to Linz, Austria (332d Fighter Group mission report number 36; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 2284 dated 3 Aug 1944). For his heroic actions on this date, Capt. Sawyer earned the Distinguished Flying Cross. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 4876 dated 5 Dec 1944). On the same mission, the 301st Fighter Squadron reported two of its pilots missing in action, Lieutenants Starling B. Penn and Lt. Alfred Q. Carrol. (332d Fighter Group history for July 1944)

25 July 1944: 387 Service Group (later 387 Air Service Group) was activated at Daniel Field, Georgia, which ultimately became the “housekeeping” group to support the 477th Bombardment Group. It was composed of primarily black personnel, but the first commander, who served until 21 June 1945, was a white officer named Lt. Col. David H. Thomas. The 590th Air Materiel Squadron and the 602d Air Engineering Squadron were eventually assigned to the group. (387th Air Service Group organization record card and 387th Air Service Group history for the period 25 July-31 December 1944)

26 July 1944: Four Tuskegee Airmen each shot down 1 Me-109 during a mission to escort B-24s of the 47th Bombardment Wing to Markendorf Airdrome (332d Fighter Group mission report number 37). The victors included Capt Edward L. Toppins, 1st Lts Freddie E. Hutchins and Leonard M. Jackson, and 2d Lt. Roger Romine (Fifteenth Air Force General Orders 2350 and 2482, dated 6 Aug 1944 and 11 Aug 1944, respectively). Toppins earned his fourth aerial victory credit that day. Unfortunately, 2d Lt. Charles S. Jackson, Jr. of the 100th Fighter Squadron was reported lost that day with his P-51B after experiencing engine trouble 25 miles northwest of Zagreb, Yugoslavia. He bailed out. He later returned safely, on 27 August 1944, after evading enemy forces for more than a month. (Missing Air Crew Report 7007 and Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group). The 332d Fighter Group mission report for that day also noted “1 B-24 spiraling out of formation after attack by enemy aircraft,” but there is no corresponding Missing Air Crew Report for the bomber.

27 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 47th Bombardment Wing raiding an arms factory in the Budapest area of Hungary (332d Fighter Group mission report number 38). North of Lake Balaton they encountered enemy aircraft and six Tuskegee Airmen shot down a total of 8 enemy airplanes. 1st Lt Edward C. Glead and 2d Lt. Alfred M. Gorham each shot down 2 FW-190s. Other victors, who each shot down one Me-109, included Capt Claude B. Govan, 1st Lts Leonard M. Jackson and Felix J. Kirkpatrick, and 2d Lt. Richard W. Hall (Fifteenth Air Force General Orders 2284, 2350, 2484, and 2485, dated 3 Aug 1944, 6 Aug 1944, 11 Aug 1944, and 11 Aug 1944,

respectively). 2d Lt. Emory L. Robbins, Jr. of the 302d Fighter Squadron was reported missing that day with his P-51C in the area of the air combat (Missing Air Crew Report 7151). 1st Lt. Edward C. Gleed earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroism on this date. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3106 dated 4 Sep 1944).

28 July 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 55th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from Ploesti, Rumania. Three B-24s were seen to go down in flames (332d Fighter Group mission report number 39). The bomber losses are not confirmed by corresponding Missing Air Crew Reports.

28 July 1944: Captain Ranz of the 11th Air Depot Group telephoned XV Air Force Service Command headquarters asking the command's policy regarding "white and colored E.M. [enlisted men] attending the same dance at the group club. He was informed that "the policy of this command is no discrimination" and the no was underlined. (XV Air Force Service Command staff journal dated 28 July 1944.)

30 July 1944: 2d Lt. Carl Johnson shot down an enemy airplane during a mission to escort B-17 bombers of the 5th Bombardment Wing to Budapest, Hungary (332d Fighter Group mission report number 40; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 2485 dated 11 Aug 1944).

July 1944: During the month of July 1944, members of the 332d Fighter Group and its squadrons shot down 39 enemy aircraft, more for them than in any other month of the war.

August 1944: During the month, Lt. Edward Gleed was promoted to captain and named operations officer of the 332d Fighter Group in place of Captain Alfonza Davis, who became the group's deputy commander. Major George S. Roberts, who had been in the first class of pilot graduates from Tuskegee Army Air Field, who had served as commander of the 99th Fighter Squadron, and who had returned to the United States in April 1944 to take part in War Bond fund drives, arrived at Ramitelli Air Field, Italy, to serve the 332nd Fighter Group. (332nd Fighter Group history, August 1944). During the same month, August 1944, Roscoe Brown arrived at Ramitelli, and was assigned to the 100th Fighter Squadron. He would later be one of the three Tuskegee Airmen who shot down German jet aircraft. Capt. Ray B. Ware succeeded Capt. Cornelius Vincent Jr. as 332nd Fighter Group historian. (332nd Fighter Group history, August 1944).

2 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to bomb Le Pousin Oil Storage and Portes Le Valences, France. The 332d Fighter Group mission report for that day (number 42) noted that "Formation of bombers was spread out over area of approximately 50 miles...It was impossible to cover all groups or afford desired protection from E/A (enemy aircraft)."

3 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group again escorted B-17 bombers of the 5th Bombardment Wing, this time to raid Ober Raderach Chemical Works in Germany. Although four Me-109s were seen in the Udine area on the way, the group reported no

encounters and no attacks on the bombers (332d Fighter Group mission report number 43).

6 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 55th Bombardment Wing to the Avignon area of southern France (332d Fighter Group mission report number 44). One B-24 was shot down by enemy antiaircraft artillery fire.

6 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew a second mission on 6 August, this time to escort a single B-25 over Yugoslavia (332d Fighter Group mission report number 45).

6 August 1944: The Enlisted Men's Club building opened at Ramitelli Air Field. It was named "Club Exotic." (366 Service Squadron history, Aug 1944)

7 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 55th Bombardment Wing and B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to raid enemy oil refineries at Blechhammer. One Me-109 dove through the bombers during the raid. Bombers were shot down that day, but after the 332d Fighter Group had finished escorting them (332d Fighter Group mission report number 46 and Missing Air Crew Reports for 7 August 1944).

9 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bomb Wing on a mission to Győr, Hungary (332d Fighter Group mission report number 47). 2d Lt. Alphonso Simmons of the 100th Fighter Squadron was reported missing with his P-51C about 10 miles south of Banja Luka, Yugoslavia (Missing Air Crew Report 7327). He evaded enemy forces in Yugoslavia for almost a month, returning on 8 September 1944. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group)

10 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing against the Campina Stevia Romana Oil Refineries (332d Fighter Group mission report number 48).

12 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group attacked radar stations in southern France on a strafing mission in preparation for the Allied invasion of southern France (scheduled for 15 August) (332d Fighter Group mission report number 49). 1st Lt. Langdon E. Johnson of the 100th Fighter Squadron was seen crashing into the Mediterranean Sea with his P-51C that day after being hit by flak, in the area 10 miles southeast of Marseilles, France (Missing Air Crew Report 7469 and 332d Fighter Group history for August 1944). Other 332d Fighter Group P-51 pilots reported shot down that day included Lieutenants Alexander Jefferson, Robert Daniels, Jr., Richard Macon, and Joseph Gordon. (332d Fighter Group history for August 1944; Don Dodd and Amy Bartlett-Dodd, *Deep South Aviation*, p. 98). Lieutenants Jefferson, Daniels, and Macon all became prisoners of war in Germany (Alexander Jefferson, *Red Tail Captured, Red Tail Free*). Lt. Gordon did not survive. (American Battle Monuments Commission). For their heroic actions on this date, the following six members of the 332d Fighter Group each earned the Distinguished Flying Cross: Capt. Lee Rayford (301st Fighter Squadron); Capt.

Woodrow W. Crockett (100th Fighter Squadron); Capt. William T. Mattison (100th Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Freddie E. Hutchins (302nd Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Lawrence B. Jefferson (301st Fighter Squadron); and 1st Lt. Lowell C. Steward (100th Fighter Squadron). (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 5068 dated 18 Dec 1944; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 49 dated 3 Jan 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 231 dated 15 Jan 1945).

13 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 304th Bombardment Wing on a mission to destroy railroad bridges in the vicinity of Avignon in southern France (332d Fighter Group mission report number 50).

14 August 1944: 2d Lt. George M. Rhodes Jr. of the 100th Fighter Squadron shot down 1 FW-190 enemy fighter during a strafing and fighter sweep mission in the Toulon area (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 2831 dated 25 Aug 1944). 2d Lt. Robert O'Neil of the 100th Fighter Squadron was last seen in a spin over the Toulon area, and Lt. Allen was reported to have bailed out safely over the island of Elba. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 51 and 332d Fighter Group history for August 1944). O'Neil eventually returned to his unit after having evaded enemy forces in France for almost two weeks. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group). The strafing mission was in preparation for the Allied invasion of southern France. For their heroic actions on this date, the following four members of the 332nd Fighter Group each earned a Distinguished Flying Cross: Capt. Melvin T. Jackson (302nd Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Gwynne W. Pierson (302nd Fighter Squadron); Capt. Arnold W. Cisco (301st Fighter Squadron); and Capt. Alton F. Ballard (301st Fighter Squadron). (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3689 dated 29 Sep 1944; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 287 dated 19 Jan 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 839 dated 21 Feb 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 1153 dated 5 Mar 1945).

15 August 1944: The Allies invaded German-occupied southern France, and the 332d Fighter Group escorted the 55th Bombardment Wing to hit targets in southern France (332d Fighter Group mission report number 52). Two Me-109 enemy airplanes were seen, but they did not appear to attack the bomber formation and were too distant for interception. One 332d Fighter Group pilot, Lt. Wilson V. Eagleson, was reported missing.

16 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 55th Bomb Wing on a mission to bomb the Ober Raderach Chemical Works in Germany (332d Fighter Group mission report number 53). P-51C pilot 1st Lt. Herbert V. Clark of the 99th Fighter Squadron was shot down by enemy antiaircraft artillery over Italy that day (Missing Air Crew Report 7691 and 332d Fighter Group history for August 1944). He survived and returned in May 1945 after evading enemy forces in Italy for more than eight months. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group)

17 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 heavy bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from Ploesti's oil refineries in Rumania (332d Fighter Group mission report number 54). Nine bombers were shot down, according to Missing Air Crew Reports for that day, but the reason given was enemy antiaircraft artillery fire.

17 August 1944: Back in the United States, a cadet named Edward S. Bishop stationed at Tuskegee Army Air Field in Alabama crashed in an AT-6C training aircraft near Roswell, Georgia. (Aircraft record card for aircraft serial number 42-48883, provided by Archangelo Difante)

18 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group returned to Ploesti a second day in a row, this time to escort B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing. No losses were reported. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 55).

19 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group completed its eighth mission escorting bombers to Ploesti, Rumania, and its third in a row to that target. That was its last mission to that target during the war. This time the group escorted B-24 bombers of the 47th Bombardment Wing. Lt. Thomas was reported to have crash landed on Pianosa Island, but was reported safe. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 56 and 332d Fighter Group history for August 1944).

19 August 1944: Back at Tuskegee Army Air Field, fourteen black officers entered a section of a dining facility reserved for white officers, and demanded service. They were served. When certain white officers complained to the field's commander, Col. Noel Parrish, he refused to restore segregation at the dining facility because such an action would have violated a War Department regulation that had been issued in 1940, entitling all officers at an Army base to use its facilities. (Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., *Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., American* [Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991], p. 129.)

20 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17 heavy bombers of the 5th Bombardment Wing to raid the Oswiecim Oil Refinery. The mission encountered some sixteen Me-109 and FW-190 enemy fighter airplanes, but did not report any attack on the bombers. (332d Fighter Group narrative mission report number 57).

22 August 1944: the 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 55th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from the Korneuburg Oil Refineries in Vienna, Austria (332d Fighter Group mission report number 58). They encountered enemy Me-109 fighters over Lake Balaton in Hungary. According to Missing Air Crew Reports for that day, two bombers were lost on the mission, one to enemy anti-aircraft artillery, and one to an unknown cause. The 332d Fighter Group flew a second mission on this day, this time to provide escort cover for six C-47s over Yugoslavia (332d Fighter Group mission report number 59). Those C-47s apparently carried former prisoners of war, most of them American airmen, from Yugoslavia to Italy, and at least three other fighter groups of the Fifteenth Air Force, besides the 332d, were also assigned to escort them. On the same day, the 96th Air Service Group moved from Foggia to Iesi (Jesi), Italy. (Lineage and honors history of the 96th Logistics Group)

22 August 1944: In the afternoon, Staff Sergeant Joe Louis, the heavyweight boxing champion of the world, visited Ramitelli Air Field, home of the only black Army Air Forces flying units in combat. (366 Service Squadron history, Aug 1944)

23 August 1944: Flight Officer William L. Hill of the 302d Fighter Squadron shot down 1 Me-109 during a mission to escort B-24 bombers of the 55th Bombardment Wing to Markersdorf Airdrome, Germany (332d Fighter Group mission report number 60; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3538 dated 21 Sep 1944). Fourteen enemy Me-109 fighters were encountered in the target area. The mission report also noted “1 B-24 seen to go down in flames in T/A (target area).” There was no corresponding Missing Air Crew Report.

24 August 1944: Three Tuskegee Airmen each shot down an enemy aircraft during a mission to escort B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to Pardubice Airdrome, Czechoslovakia (332d Fighter Group mission report number 61). The victors included 1st Lts Charles E. McGee and William H. Thomas, who each shot down a FW-190, and 1st Lt. John F. Briggs, who shot down an Me-109 (Fifteenth Air Force General Orders 3153, 3174, and 449, dated 6 Sep 1944, 7 Sep 1944, and 31 Jan 1945, respectively). Enemy aircraft shot down one of the escorted B-17 bombers after flak had crippled it and forced it to drop out of the formation (Missing Air Crew Report 7971). 1st Lt. John F. Briggs of the 100th Fighter Squadron and 1st Lt. William H. Thomas of the 302nd Fighter Squadron each earned a Distinguished Flying Cross for their heroic actions on this date. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 49 dated 3 Jan 1945 and Fifteenth Air Force General Order 449 dated 31 Jan 1945).

25 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing on a raid against Brno Airdrome. Four enemy Me-109 aircraft were seen on the mission, but there was no apparent aerial combat. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 62). French partisans had helped him remain hidden from the Germans, and helped him get back to his unit. (332nd Fighter Group history, August 1944).

26 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group provided close escort to B-24 bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing to Banasea Airdrome. 2d Lt. Henry A. Wise is reported to have bailed out of his P-51 during the mission, and to have landed safely near Krujino, Yugoslavia. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 63; 332d Fighter Group history for August 1944). 2d Lt. Robert O’Neil, who was reported Missing in Action on 14 August, returned after having evaded enemy forces in France for eleven days. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group)

27 August 1944: While returning from a mission to escort B-24s of the 304th and 55th Bombardment Wings to Blechhammer, Germany, units of the 332d Fighter Group attacked airfields in Czechoslovakia, destroying 22 enemy aircraft on the ground (332d Fighter Group mission report number 64). On the same day, 2d Lt. Charles S. Jackson returned safely after evading enemy forces in Yugoslavia for more than a month. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group). For heroic actions on this date, the following three members of the 332nd Fighter Group each earned the Distinguished Flying Cross: Capt. Wendell O. Pruitt (302nd Fighter Squadron); Capt. Dudley M. Watson (302nd Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Roger Romine (302d Fighter Squadron). (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3950 dated 15 Oct 1944; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 4009 dated 17 Oct 1944; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 5068 dated 18 Dec 1944).

28 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 47th Bombardment Wing against Miskolc Min marshalling yards. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 65). On the same day, 1st Lt. James Alonza Walker, who had been reported missing in action on 22 July 1944, returned safely after having evaded enemy forces in Yugoslavia for more than a month. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group). Lt. Charles S. Jackson also returned to the group, after having been shot down over Yugoslavia on 26 August. (332nd Fighter Group history, July 1944).

29 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bomb Wing to Bohumin, Privoser, and Morvaska Main (332d Fighter Group mission report number 66). On the mission, 2d Lt. Emile G. Clifton, Jr. of the 99th Fighter Squadron bailed out of his P-51B after losing coolant while flying over the area of Zgon, Yugoslavia (332d Fighter Group mission report 66; Missing Air Crew Report 8101; 332d Fighter Group history for July 1944). Clifton returned on 9 September 1944 after successfully evading enemy forces in Italy for eleven days. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group)

30 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group strafed Grosswardein Airdrome in Rumania and claimed to have destroyed 83 enemy aircraft on the ground and to have damaged another 31. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 67 and its supplement). 2d Lt. Charles T. Williams of the 301st Fighter Squadron was reported lost with his P-51 over Yugoslavia during the mission (Missing Air Crew Report 8332). He became a prisoner of war. Capt. Clarence H. Bradford of the 301st Fighter Squadron earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroic actions on this date. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 1811 dated 27 Mar 1945).

31 August 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the second wave of 5th Bombardment Wing bombers to and over Popesti Airdrome (332d Fighter Group mission report number 68). On a second mission that day, fighters of the 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the third wave to Popesti Airdrome (332d Fighter Group mission report number 69). These bombers were not on a bombing mission, but on an air evacuation mission, to carry former prisoners of war out of Rumania to Italy. The B-17s had been modified temporarily to serve as troop transports for this special series of missions. The same day the 366th and 367th Service Squadrons at Ramitelli and Vasta were redesignated as the 366th and 367th Air Service Squadrons. They were still assigned to the 96th Air Service Group, headquartered in Foggia. (Organization record cards of the three organizations)

Late August 1944: Major Feetwood M. McCoy, president of the Tuskegee Army Air Field Officers' Club, announced that the club would donate all of the funds it had left over at the end of the war to the Negro College Fund and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Half of the money would go to each. (*Hawk's Cry*, vol. III, no. 34, dated 26 Aug 1944)

1 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to Popesti for a second day (332d Fighter Group mission report number 70), for a continuation of the air evacuation of former prisoners of war from Rumania to Italy. On the same day, Major George S. Roberts replaced Captain Erwin B. Lawrence, Jr., as commander of the 99th Fighter Squadron. Major Roberts had commanded the squadron twice previously, and had been the first black commander of the squadron. (99th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history)

31 August and 1 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group, along with five other fighter groups of the Fifteenth Air Force, escorted more than 50 B-17s bombers of the 5th Bombardment Wing's 2d and 97th Bombardment Groups that flew to Rumania's Popesti Airdrome to carry more than 1,000 American airmen who had been held as prisoners of war from Rumania to Italy. Operation Reunion, as it was called, involved B-17s that had been modified to carry up to 20 personnel each in their bomb bays.

2 September 1944: the 332d Fighter Group conducted a strafing mission to Stalac, Cuprija, and Osipaonica Road in Yugoslavia (332d Fighter Group mission report number 71).

3 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing to Szolnok and Szeged, Hungary (332d Fighter Group mission report number 72). On the same day, Brigadier General Yantis H. Taylor replaced Brigadier General Dean C. Strother as commander of the 306th Fighter Wing, under which had served the seven fighter squadrons (6 white and 1 black) of the XV Fighter Command of the Fifteenth Air Force. Strother at the same time became commander of the new XV Fighter Command. At the same time, the Fifteenth Air Force organized a provisional 305th Fighter Wing, which assumed management of the three P-38 groups, while the 306th Fighter Wing retained direct control of the four P-51 fighter groups, including the 332d. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; Organization record card of 305 Fighter Wing (P))

4 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing again, this time to Tagliamento Casarsa and Latisana, Italy (332d Fighter Group mission report number 73).

5 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to Budapest, Hungary, and back (332d Fighter Group mission report number 74).

6 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing for a second day in a row, but this time to the Oradea Main marshalling yards in Rumania (332d Fighter Group mission report number 75).

7 September 1944: the 67th AAF Base Unit was organized at Tuskegee (Tuskegee Weather Detachment). (organization record card)

8 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group claimed to have destroyed 36 enemy airplanes on the ground at two airfields during a strafing mission to Yugoslavia. P-51 pilot Lt. James A. Calhoun crashed and was killed in the target area. (332d Fighter Group narrative mission report 76; Missing Air Crew Report 8261; American Battle Monuments Commission). 2d Lt. Alphonso Simmons, who went Missing in Action on 9 August 1944, returned after having evaded enemy forces in Yugoslavia for a month. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group). Maj. George S. Roberts of the 332d Fighter Group and 1st Lt. Heber C. Houston of the 99th Fighter Squadron each earned a Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroic actions on this date. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 137 dated 8 Jan 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3484 dated 29 May 1945).

10 September 1944: Lt. Gen. Ira C. Eaker, commander of the Mediterranean Allied Air Force; Maj. Gen. Nathan F. Twining, commander of the Fifteenth Air Force; Brig. Gen. Dean C. Strother, commander of the XV Fighter Command; and Brig. Gen. Benjamin O. Davis, Sr., Inspector General's Department, attended an impressive awards ceremony for members of the 332d Fighter Group at Ramitelli Airfield in Italy. At that ceremony, General Davis presented the Distinguished Flying Cross to his son, Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., commander of the group, for an escort mission he led on 9 June 1944. (332d Fighter Group history, Oct 1942-1947; 332d Fighter Group history, September 1944). The elder Davis was the first black general in the U.S. Army, and Captain Joseph D. Elsberry, Lieutenant Jack D. Holsclaw, and Lieutenant Clarence D. "Lucky" Lester were also awarded Distinguished Flying Crosses in the same ceremony that day. Elsberry was recognized for shooting down three enemy aircraft on 12 July 1944 on a mission over France; Lester was honored for shooting down three enemy aircraft on 18 July 1944 on an escort mission to Memmingen; Holsclaw was honored for shooting down two enemy aircraft on the 18 July 1944 mission to Memmingen. (Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. *Benjamin O. Davis, Jr, American* Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991).

12 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17 bombers of the 5th Bombardment Wing on a mission to an unspecified target. The group mission report states "10 Me 109s attacked rear of bomber formation from below...1 B-17 was left burning. 6 chutes seen to open" (332d Fighter Group mission report number 77). The 301st and 463d Bombardment Groups of the 5th Bombardment Wing each reported a bomber lost (Fifteenth Air Force daily mission folder for 12 September 1944). Missing Air Crew Reports do not confirm these bombers were lost to enemy aircraft. Members of the 332d Fighter Group claimed to have damaged 4 enemy aircraft during the mission.

13 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 and B-17 bombers of the 304th and 5th Bombardment Wings to Blechhammer North Oil Refinery. The mission report notes "Two B-24s hit by flak seen to explode and crash. No chutes seen." Lt. Wilbur Long and his P-51 were reported missing near Szombathely (332d Fighter Group mission report number 78; Missing Air Crew Report 8626). Lt. Long became a prisoner of war in Germany (Jefferson, *Red Tail Captured, Red Tail Free*).

17 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to raid the Rakos marshalling yards of north Budapest, Hungary. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 79).

18 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing to raid the Shell Oil Refinery and railroad bridges in Budapest, Hungary. The group reported seeing a B-24 hit by flak in the target area, and 7 men parachuting from it. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 80).

20 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 304th Bombardment Wing again, this time to attack the Makacky Airdrome in Czechoslovakia. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 81).

21 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17 bombers of the 5th Bombardment Wing to raid the Debrecen Marshalling Yards in Hungary. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 82).

22 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17 bombers of the 5th Bomb Wing to hit the Allach BMW Engine Works in Munich, Germany (332d Fighter Group mission report number 83). Flight Officer Leonard R. Willette of the 99th Fighter Squadron and his P-51 were reported lost near Lake Chien, Germany, on the mission (Missing Air Crew Report 8947).

23 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to bomb the Brux synthetic oil plant. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 84).

24 September 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing as they raided enemy targets in Athens, Greece (332d Fighter Group mission report number 85).

4 October 1944: The 332d Fighter Group took part in three missions, two to escort C-47 transport aircraft to Sofia, Bulgaria and Bucharest, Rumania, and one to strafe targets in Tatoi, Kalamaki, and Eleusis, Greece. In Greece, the group reported destroying 9 enemy aircraft on the ground. Captains Erwin B. Lawrence and Kenneth I. Williams, both of the 99th Fighter Squadron, were reported lost or missing in the Athens area on the mission to Greece. (332d Fighter Group mission reports numbered 86, 87, and 88; Missing Air Crew Reports 8981 and 8982). For their heroic actions on this date, the following five members of the 332d Fighter Group each earned the Distinguished Flying Cross: 1st Lt. Samuel L. Curtis (100th Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Dempsey Morgan (100th Fighter Squadron); Capt. Claude B. Govan (301st Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Herman A. Lawson (99th Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Willard L. Woods (100th Fighter Squadron). (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 158 dated 10 Jan 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 231 dated 15 Jan 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 255 dated 16 Jan 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 449 dated 31 Jan 1945).

6 October 1944: The 332d Fighter Group strafed enemy airdromes in Tatoi, Kalamaki, Eleusis, and Megara Airdromes in Greece, similar to the mission two days earlier (332d Fighter Group mission report number 89). This was in preparation for the Allied invasion of Greece. Four 332d Fighter Group pilots were reported missing on this mission, including 1st Lt. Freddie E. Hutchins of the 302d Fighter Squadron, who was seen to crash about 3 miles west of Megara after the explosion of an ammunition dump; 1st Lt. Carroll S. Woods of the 100th Fighter Squadron, whose P-51 was seen flaming in the area of Kalamaki Airdrome; 2d Lt. Joe A. Lewis of the 301st Fighter Squadron, who was seen to crash near Athens after being hit by antiaircraft artillery fire; and 2d Lt. Andrew D. Marshall of the 301st Fighter Squadron. (Missing Air Crew reports 8980, 8983, and 9035). Marshall returned on 14 October 1944 after evading enemy forces in Greece for eight days. Hutchins also returned from Greece, but not until 25 October. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group). For their heroic actions on this date, the following five members of the 332d Fighter Group each earned a Distinguished Flying Cross: 1st Lt. Alva N. Temple (99th Fighter Squadron); Capt. Lawrence E. Dickson (100th Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Edward M. Thomas (99th Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Robert L. Martin (100th Fighter Squadron); and Capt. Robert J. Friend (301st Fighter Squadron). (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 231 dated 15 Jan 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 287 dated 19 Jan 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 517 dated 6 Feb 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 839 dated 21 Feb 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 1811 dated 27 Mar 1945).

7 October 1944: The 332d Fighter Group returned to escorting bombers, this time protecting B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing on a raid against the Lobau Oil Refineries at Vienna, Austria. Lieutenant Robert Wiggins, 2d Lt. Roosevelt Stiger of the 302d Fighter Squadron and Flight Officer Carl J. Woods of the 100th Fighter Squadron were reported lost on this mission. Stiger and Woods were last seen over the Adriatic Sea. (Missing Air Crew Reports 9029 and 9034). One B-17 was reported hit at 30,000 feet, but there is no corresponding Missing Air Crew Report. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 90).

11 October 1944: The 332d Fighter Group strafed railroad and river traffic along the Danube Riber from Budapest to Bratislava, and reported destroying 17 enemy airplanes on the ground. Lt. Rhodes was reported to have crash landed at Ramitelli. The airplane was destroyed, but the pilot survived. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 91). Capt. William A. Campbell, 1st George E. Gray, and 1st Lt. Richard S. Harder of the 99th Fighter Squadron and 1st Lt. Felix J. Kirkpatrick of the 302nd Fighter Squadron, each earned a Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroic actions on this day. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 4215 dated 28 Oct 1944; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 4425 dated 10 Nov 1944; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 4876 dated 5 Dec 1944; and Fifteenth Air Force General Order 836 dated 21 Feb 1945).

12 October 1944: The 332d Fighter Group strafed railroad traffic from Budapest to Bratislava for a second day in a row. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 92). Six members of the 332d Fighter Group's 302d Fighter Squadron shot down a total of 9 enemy airplanes. 1 Lt. Lee Archer shot down 3 Me-109s, bringing his total aerial victories score to 4. Capt Wendell O. Pruitt shot down 2 enemy airplanes that day, including an He-111 and

an Me-109. Other victors included Capt Milton R. Brooks, 1st Lts William W. Green, Jr, Roger Romine, and Luther H. Smith, Jr. (Fifteenth Air Force General Orders 4287 and 4604, dated 1 Nov 1944 and 21 Nov 1944, respectively). Enemy antiaircraft artillery shot down 1st Lt. Walter L. McCreary of the 100th Fighter Squadron that day about 25 miles southeast of Lake Balaton, Hungary, at approximately 2 p.m. (Missing Air Crew Report 9084). For their heroic actions on this day, the following nine pilots of the 332d Fighter Group each earned the Distinguished Flying Cross: 1st Lt. Lee Archer (302nd Fighter Squadron), Capt. Milton R. Brooks (302nd Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Frank E. Roberts (100th Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Spurgeon N. Ellington (100th Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Leonard F. Turner (301st Fighter Squadron); Capt. Armour G. McDaniel (301st Fighter Squadron); Capt. Stanley L. Harris (301st Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. Marion R. Rodgers (99th Fighter Squadron); and 1st Lt. Quitman C. Walker (99th Fighter Squadron). (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 4876 dated 5 Dec 1944; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 255 dated 16 Jan 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 287 dated 19 Jan 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 449 dated 31 Jan 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 836 dated 21 Feb 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 1430 dated 15 Mar 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 1811 dated 27 Mar 1945; and Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3484 dated 29 May 1945).

13 October 1944: The 332d Fighter Group resumed bomber escort duty, protecting B-24s of the 304th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from Blechhammer South Oil Refinery. On the mission the group reported having destroyed 7 enemy airplanes on the ground. Enemy antiaircraft artillery fire shot down three of the 332d Fighter Group pilots, all of whom belonged to the 302d Fighter Squadron. They were 1st Lieutenants Walter D. Westmoreland, William W. Green, Jr., and Luther A. Smith, Jr. Westmoreland was seen to crash in Hungary, and Smith was seen to parachute over Yugoslavia. Lieutenant Smith was injured trying to abandon his burning P-51, and was captured. Green disappeared over Yugoslavia. (Missing Air Crew Reports 9085, 9086, and 9087). One B-24 was also seen to crash, probably also as result of flak. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 93). 1st Lt. Milton S. Hays of the 99th Fighter Squadron earned a Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroic actions on this day. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 719 dated 16 Feb 1945).

14 October 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 49th Bombardment Wing on a raid against the Odertal Oil Refineries in Germany. Flight Officer Rual W. Bell of the 100th Fighter Squadron was seen to parachute out of his P-51C after engine trouble over Yugoslavia. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 94 and Missing Air Crew Report number 9140). Bell returned on 23 October after having evaded enemy forces in Yugoslavia for nine days. On 14 October 2d Lt. Andrew D. Marshall of the 301st Fighter Squadron, who went Missing in Action on 6 October, returned after having avoided enemy forces in Greece for eight days. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group). 1st Lt. George M. Rhodes Jr. of the 100th Fighter Squadron earned a Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroic actions on this day. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 49 dated 3 Jan 1945).

16 October 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to bomb the Brux oil refineries. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 95).

17 October 1944: The 332d Fighter Group conducted two missions, one to escort B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to the Blechhammer South Oil Refinery, and one to escort a single B-17 of the same wing to Bucharest, Rumania. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 96 and 97).

20 October 1944: The 332d Fighter Group conducted two missions, one to escort B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to raid the Brux Oil Refineries (target cover and withdrawal) and one air-sea rescue escort to Rimini to protect a Catalina search and rescue aircraft. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 98 and 99). Captain Alfonza W. Davis assumed command of the 99th Fighter Squadron that same day. (99th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history)

21 October 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew its 100th mission for the Fifteenth Air Force. It escorted B-24s of the 304th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from Gyor, Hungary. On the same day, the 332d Fighter Group flew its 101st mission, this one a search of the Venezia area. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 100 and 101). Capt. Vernon V. Haywood of the 302nd Fighter Squadron earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroic actions on this day. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 5068 dated 18 Dec 1944).

23 October 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing to Regensburg and back. 1st Lieutenants Robert C. Chandler and Shelby F. Westbrook, both of the 99th Fighter Squadron, were reported missing with their P-51Cs. Chandler survived a crash that day, and eventually returned. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 102; Missing Air Crew Report numbers 9447 and 9448). Westbrook also returned, a month after he was reported Missing in Action, having evaded enemy forces in Yugoslavia for a month. Flight Officer Rual W. Bell, who was reported Missing in Action on 14 October, returned on 23 October, after having evaded enemy forces in Yugoslavia for 9 days. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group)

25 October 1944: 1st Lt. Freddie Hutchins of the 302nd Fighter Squadron, who went Missing in Action on 6 October, returned after having evaded enemy forces in Greece for nineteen days. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group)

29 October 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew four missions. One escorted B-24 bombers of the 49th Bombardment Wing to and from Regensburg. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 103). Two members of the 332d Fighter Group, Captain Alfonza W. Davis, who had been deputy commander of the group, in a P-51D, and 2d Lieutenant Fred L. Brewer, Jr. of the 100th Fighter Squadron in a P-51C, were reported missing that day, Davis over the Gulf of Trieste and Brewer over Germany. (Missing Air Crew Report numbers 9586 and 9600). Captain Edward Glead probably replaced Captain Alfonza Davis as group operations officer when Davis failed to return (332d Fighter Group history for

October 1944). Two other 29 October 1944 mission reports each noted that the group escorted a P-38 for reconnaissance of the Munich area (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 104 and 105). Finally, a fourth mission report for the day noted that the 332d Fighter Group escorted two B-25s on a mission to Bredgrad and Glina, Yugoslavia. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 106). On the same day, Major William A. Campbell assumed command of the 99th Fighter Squadron. (99th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history)

1 November 1944: The 332d Fighter Group reported flying three missions, one to escort 2 B-25s to Yugoslavia (duplicate of mission 106?), one to escort B-24 bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing to Vienna, Austria, and back, and one to escort one C-47 transport aircraft to Yugoslavia. (332d Fighter Group mission reports numbered 107, 108, and 109).

2 November 1944: The 302d Fighter Squadron emblem was approved. On a disk, it depicted a winged running red devil with a machine gun, over a cloud. (Unit emblem folder)

3 November 1944: Major George S. Roberts became commander of the 332d Fighter Group, temporarily replacing Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., who returned to command the group on 24 December (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*).

4 November 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17 bombers of the 5th Bombardment Wing to Regensburg, Germany. On the same day, the 332d Fighter Group also flew two reconnaissance escort missions, each to escort a lone P-38, one over the Linz area of Austria (then part of Germany) and one over the Munich area of Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission reports numbered 110, 111 and 112)

5 November 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions again in one day. One escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to and from Florisdorf, Austria (Germany), and two others each to escort a single P-38 reconnaissance aircraft over the Munich area. (332d Fighter Group mission reports numbered 113, 114, and 115).

6 November 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to and from Mossbierbaum oil refinery in the Vienna area of Austria (Germany). Captain William J. Faulkner, Jr. of the 301st Fighter Squadron was reported missing over Austria on that mission, possibly because of mechanical failure of his P-51C. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 116 and Missing Air Crew Report number 9681)

7 November 1944: The 332d Fighter Group provided target cover for B-24s of the 55th Bombardment Wing raiding the Trento and Bolzano areas of northern Italy. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 117)

11 November 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to and over the Brux oil refineries. At least one of the group pilots reported seeing a jet-propelled aircraft in the distance. Lt. Payne crash landed at Lesina. The airplane was

destroyed, but he survived, while 2d. Lt. Elton H. Nightingale of the 301st Fighter Squadron was reported missing over Italy with his P-51B. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 118 and Missing Air Crew Report number 9697)

16 November 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing to and from Munich West marshalling yards. During the mission, the group encountered several Me-109 enemy fighters that attempted to shoot down the bombers. Captain Luke J. Weathers of the 302d Fighter Squadron shot down 2 of the enemy fighters. The 52d Fighter Group also escorted the 304th Bombardment Wing that day. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 119 and Fifteenth Air Force General Order 4990 dated 13 Dec 1944). For his heroic actions following a take-off accident on this day, Capt. Woodrow W. Crockett of the 100th Fighter Squadron was awarded the Soldiers Medal. After two P-51s crashed into each other and caught fire, Captain Crockett, at the risk of his own life, entered the burning wreckage to aid the trapped pilots. He was able to rescue one of them, Lt. William Hill, before the burning planes exploded. Unfortunately, Lt. Roger Romine died in the accident. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 2132 dated 6 Apr 1945, and Diary of Henry Peery Bowman, excerpt of which was sent by Craig Huntly). Capt. Luke J. Weathers of the 302nd Fighter Squadron earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroic actions on this day. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 5228 dated 28 Dec 1944).

17 November 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing back to Brux synthetic oil refinery. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 120)

18 November 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted heavy bombers raiding the Vicenza-Villafranca area of northern Italy. Lt. Peoples was reported missing. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 121)

19 November 1944: The 332d Fighter Group conducted a strafing mission against enemy railway, highway, and river traffic targets in the Gyor-Vienna-Esztergom area of Austria. 1st Lieutenant Roger B. Gaiter of the 99th Fighter Squadron was seen to bail out of his P-51 after it was hit by enemy anti-aircraft fire (flak). 1st Lieutenant Quitman Walker, also of the 99th Fighter Squadron, was also reported missing after also being hit by flak. Both were lost near Lake Balaton, Hungary. For this mission, Fifteenth Air Force commander Major General Nathan F. Twining commended the 332d Fighter Group. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 122; Missing Air Crew Report numbers 9932 and 9933). For their heroic actions on this day, the following four members of the 332d Fighter Group each earned the Distinguished Flying Cross: Capt. Albert H. Manning (99th Fighter Squadron); Capt. John Daniels (99th Fighter Squadron); 1st Lt. William N. Alsbrook (99th Fighter Squadron); and 1st Lt. Norman W. Scales (100th Fighter Squadron). (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 4876 dated 5 Dec 1944; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 5068 dated 18 Dec 1944; and Fifteenth Air Force General Order 836 dated 21 Feb 1945).

20 November 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17 bombers of the 5th Bombardment Wing to and from Blechhammer South oil refinery. The group also escorted B-24s of the 55th Bombardment Wing to the same target. 1st Lieutenant Maceo A. Harris, Jr. of the 100th Fighter Squadron was reported missing after his P-51C lost coolant over Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 123 and Missing Air Crew Report number 9951).

20 November 1944: Eugene G. Theodore of Trinidad became the last foreign cadet to graduate from pilot training at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (Zellie Rainey Orr, historian, Atlanta Chapter, Tuskegee Airmen, Incorporated; Lynn M. Homan and Thomas Reilly, *Black Knights: The Story of the Tuskegee Airmen* (Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 2006), p. 309).

22 November 1944: 332d Fighter Group fighters escorted two B-25 medium bombers to and from Pedgrad, Yugoslavia. (332nd Fighter Group mission report number 124)

25 November 1944: The 100th Fighter Squadron emblem was approved. It depicted, on a disk, a winged panther on a globe. (Unit emblem folder)

26 November 1944: 332d Fighter Group P-51s escorted one reconnaissance P-38 aircraft to and from Grodenwoh and Nurnberg, Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 125)

December 1944: At least by the end of the week ending on 2 December 1944, the 366th Air Service Squadron at Ramitelli Airfield in Italy began issuing 110-gallon auxiliary fuel tanks to the 332d Fighter Group. The 332d Fighter Group had been using smaller 75-gallon wing tanks. The larger fuel tanks, also attached to the wings of the P-51 airplanes, allowed them to fly on longer missions, such as the famous one to Berlin almost four months later (24 March 1944). (38th Air Service Group histories for November and December 1944).

2 December 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 49th and 55th Bombardment Wings on a raid to Blechhammer oil refinery (South). Lt. Cornelius P. Gould, Jr. of the 301st Fighter Squadron was reported to have bailed safely out of his P-51B after experiencing engine trouble over Czechoslovakia. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 126 and Missing Air Crew Report number 10045)

3 December 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 49th Bombardment Wing to and from the Udine Pass area of northern Italy. Lt. Marion R. Rodgers was reported to have crash-landed safely at Ramitelli Air Base, home base of the 332d. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 127)

9 December 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to Brux, Germany. For the first time, they encountered some German Me-262 jet

aircraft. Lt. Rich and Lt. Brown were reported missing. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 128 and 332d Fighter Group history for December 1944)

11 December 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to escort B-24s of the 47th Bombardment Wing to and from the Moosbierbaum oil refinery of Austria (Germany), and one to escort a reconnaissance aircraft to Praha, Czechoslovakia. On the Moosbierbaum mission, one B-24 was seen to explode in the Vienna area. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 129 and 130)

15 December 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 47th Bombardment Wing to and from Innsbruck, Austria (Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission report number 131)

16 December 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to escort B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to and from Brux, Germany, and one to escort a single B-25 to Mrkoplj, Yugoslavia. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 132 and 133)

17 December 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing and B-24s of the 49th and 304th Bombardment Wings on withdrawal from a raid on Olomouc (Olmütz), Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 134)

18 December 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to escort B-24 Liberators of the 49th Bombardment Wing to and from oil refineries at Blechhammer, and one to escort a P-38 on a reconnaissance mission to Innsbruck, Austria (Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 135 and 136)

19 December 1944: The 332d Fighter Group again flew two missions, one to escort B-24s of the 55th Bombardment Wing to and from Blechhammer South oil refinery, and one to escort a P-38 on a reconnaissance mission to Praha (Prague), Czechoslovakia. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 137 and 138).

20 December 1944: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to escort B-17 Flying Fortresses of the 5th Bombardment Wing to and from an oil refinery at Brux, and one to escort a single P-38 on a reconnaissance mission to Prague, Czechoslovakia. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 139 and 140)

22 December 1944: After a day without a mission, the 332d Fighter Group escorted one P-38 on a reconnaissance mission to and from Ingolstadt, Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 141)

23 December 1944: The 332d Fighter Group again escorted a single P-38 on a reconnaissance mission, this time to Praha (Prague), Czechoslovakia. Captain Lawrence E. Dickson of the 100th Fighter Squadron was reported to have bailed out of his P-51D over Italy because of engine trouble. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 142 and Missing Air Crew Report number 10734)

24 December 1944: Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., resumed command of the 332d Fighter Group, replacing Major George S. Roberts, who had commanded the group since 3 November (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*).

25 December 1944: After a day without a mission, the 332d Fighter Group escorted Fifteenth Air Force Bombers (number and wing not specified) during a raid on the Brux oil refinery, Germany. Although no enemy aircraft were encountered, Me-109 German fighters were seen chasing B-26 medium bombers in the distance. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 143)

26 December 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing and B-24s of the 55th Bombardment Wing on withdrawal from the Odertal and Blechhammer oil refineries of Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 144)

27 December 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s Flying Fortresses of the 5th Bombardment Wing to and from oil refineries in the Vienna area of Austria (Germany at the time). During the mission, a B-17 was seen to explode in the Linz area. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 145)

28 December 1944: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 304th Bombardment Wing to and from the Kolin and Pardubice oil refineries in Czechoslovakia. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 146)

29 December 1944: For the second day in a row, the 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 304th Bombardment Wing, this time to and from targets in Muhldorf and Lanshut, Germany. At noon, 1st Lt. Frederick D. Funderburg, Jr. and 2d Lt. Andrew D. Marshall, both of the 301st Fighter Squadron, were reported missing with their P-51Cs over the Munich area of Germany. Lieutenants Robert J. Friend and Lewis Craig were reported to have bailed out of their P-51s. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 147, Missing Air Crew Report numbers 10931 and 10932, and Lynn M. Homan and Thomas Reilly, *Black Knights*) On the same day, bad weather forced many Fifteenth Air Force B-24 crews returning from their mission to land their bombers at alternative fields. Eighteen of the Liberators, seventeen from the 485th Bombardment Group and one from the 455th Bombardment Group, landed at Ramitelli Air Field, Italy, the home base of the 332d Fighter Group, where the bomber crews spent five days enjoying the hospitality of the Tuskegee Airmen. (Fifteenth Air Force mission folder for 29 December 1944; 485th Bombardment Group history for December 1944; 332d Fighter Group history for December 1944).

1 January 1945: Brigadier General Dean C. Strother, commander of the XV Fighter Command, awarded Distinguished Flying Crosses to seven 332d Fighter Group pilots, including Major Lee Rayford and Captains Andrew D. Turner, William A. Campbell, Melvin T. Jackson, Vernon Haywood, Dudley Watson, and George E. Gray. (332d Fighter Group history for January 1945)

3 January 1945: 332d Fighter Group pilot strength was noted as 121, with overall personnel numbering 1250. After four days without missions, the 332d Fighter Group provided reconnaissance escort for a P-38 to the Munich and Linz areas of Germany and Austria. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 148)

5 January 1945: The 332d Fighter Group escorted one Mosquito aircraft on a reconnaissance mission to the Munich area of Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 149)

8 January 1945: After two days without missions, the 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 Liberators of the 47th Bombardment Wing to and from the marshalling yards of Linz, Austria (Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission report number 150)

11 January 1945: The 387th Air Service Group moved from Daniel Field, Georgia, to Godman Field, Kentucky, where it was welcomed by Colonel Robert R. Selway, Jr., commander of Godman Field. (387th Air Service Group history for January 1945). According to the group history, "Recreational facilities at Godman were adequate to satisfy most of the men" under Colonel Selway. Selway was also commander of the 477th Bombardment Group. (387th Air Service Group history, February-April 1945).

15 January 1945: After six days without missions, the 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 304th Bombardment Wing to and from a raid on targets in Vienna, Austria (Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission report number 151)

January 1945: Capt. Armour G. McDaniel assumed command of the 301st Fighter Squadron, succeeding Capt. Lee Rayford. (301st Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history). Capt. Vernon V. Haywood assumed command of the 302nd Fighter Squadron, succeeding Capt. Melvin T. Jackson. (302nd Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

18 January 1945: After two days without a mission, the 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, each to escort a single P-38 for reconnaissance photographs over Germany. One went to Stuttgart and the other went to Munich. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 152 and 153)

19 January 1945: Six P-51s of the 332d Fighter Group escorted a single P-38 to Praha (Prague), Czechoslovakia for reconnaissance photographs. The P-38 suffered engine failure and the pilot had to bail out. One of the six escorts landed at a field other than Ramitelli. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 154)

20 January 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one that escorted B-17 Flying Fortresses of the 5th Bombardment Wing to oil storage targets at Regensburg, Germany, and one that escorted a single P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission to and from Praha (Prague), Czechoslovakia. On the latter mission, the escort formation ran into a snowstorm and became separated. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 155 and 156). On the same day, the 96th Service Group was officially redesignated as the 96th Air Service Group. (Organization Record Card)

21 January 1945: the 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing for a second day in a row, but this time to and from Vienna Lobau Distillation Unit and Schwechat Oil Refinery. Two German fighter jet Me-262s were seen following the bomber formation. According to Missing Air Crew Reports, 3 of the bombers were lost, two because of mechanical difficulty, and one to an unknown cause. Two of the 332d Fighter Group P-51 pilots, both from the 100th Fighter Squadron, were also reported lost, both because of engine trouble. Flight Officer Samuel J. Foreman was reported missing over northern Yugoslavia at 1100 hours, and 2d Lt. Albert L. Young was reported missing at 1205 near Vienna, Austria. A Lt. Smith was hit by enemy anti-aircraft artillery at Wiener Neustadt. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 157; Missing Air Crew Report numbers 11387, 11539, 11540, 11541, 11542)

22 January 1945: Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., commander of the 332d Fighter Group, presented Distinguished Flying Crosses to eleven 332d Fighter Group pilots, including Major George S. Roberts, Captains Woodrow W. Crockett, Samuel L. Curtis, Claude B. Govan, Freddie B. Hutchins, William T. Mattison, Gwynne W. Pierson, Lowell C. Steward, Alva N. Temple, Luke J. Weathers, Jr., and 1st Lieutenant Frank Roberts.

31 January 1945: After nine days without missions, because of bad winter weather that obscured targets, the 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 47th and 55th Bombardment Wings to and from the Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery in the Vienna area of Austria (then Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission report number 158).

1 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two different missions that day, one to escort B-24s of the 49th Bombardment Wing and one to escort B-24s of the 47th Bombardment Wing, but both wings with their escorts raided the same target: Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery in the Vienna area of Austria (then Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 159 and 160)

3 February 1945: P-51 fighter pilots of the 332d Fighter Group escorted a single P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over the Munich area of southern Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 161)

5 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 Liberators of the 47th Bombardment Wing to and from the marshalling yards and main railroad station at Salzburg, Austria (then Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission report number 162)

6 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group conducted a fighter sweep over Yugoslavia. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 163)

7 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two different missions that day, one to escort B-24s of the 47th Bombardment Wing and one to escort B-24s of the 304th Bombardment Wing, but both wings raided the same target: Moosbierbaum Oil Refinery in the Vienna area of Austria (then Germany). The two missions were similar to those on February 1). (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 164 and 165)

8 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions on the same day. On one of the missions, P-51 fighters escorted a single P-38 aircraft on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Stuttgart, Germany. On a second mission, 332d Fighter Group pilots conducted a fighter sweep over Yugoslavia. On the third mission of the day, the 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 55th Bombardment Wing to and from Vienna South depots in Austria (then Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission reports numbered 166, 167, and 168)

11 February 1945: 2d Lt. Thomas C. Street of the 99th Fighter Squadron died while serving overseas. (American Battle Monuments Commission)

12 February 1945: P-51 fighter pilots of the 332d Fighter Group escorted a single P-38 airplane on a photographic reconnaissance mission to and from Praha (Prague), Czechoslovakia. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 169)

13 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions. On one mission, the group escorted a P-38 aircraft on a reconnaissance mission over Munich in southern Germany. On the second mission, the group escorted B-24 Liberators of the 49th Bombardment Wing to and from Vienna Central railroad repair shops in Austria (then Germany). On its third mission that day, the 332d Fighter Group escorted bombers over Zagreb, Maribor, and Graz. A pilot reported seeing an unidentified jet-propelled enemy aircraft in the distance. One of the 332d Fighter Group pilots also reported hearing a radio transmission from a bomber noting a jet-propelled aircraft had made a pass at the bombers. (332d Fighter Group mission reports numbered 170, 171, and 172).

14 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to escort B-17 Flying Fortresses of the 5th Bombardment Wing, and one to escort B-24 Liberators of the 55th Bombardment Wing, but both wings attacked the same targets: oil refineries in Vienna, Lobau, and Schwechat. On both missions, the 332d Fighter Group provided penetration, target cover, and withdrawal escort for the bombers. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 173 and 174).

15 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions to escort two different sections of the B-24s of the 49th Bombardment Wing (Red Force and Blue Force) to and from the Penzinger marshalling yards in Vienna, Austria (then Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 175 and 176).

16 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions. The group escorted a Mosquito aircraft on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Munich and a P-38 aircraft on another photographic reconnaissance mission over Munich. On the third mission P-51 pilots of the 332d Fighter Group escorted B-17 Flying Fortresses of the 5th Bombardment Wing to and from the airdrome at Lechfeld, Germany. On this mission, 2d Lt. John M. Chavis of the 99th Fighter Squadron was reported lost with his P-51C at 1020 hours over Italy. On this mission, 332d Fighter Group pilots reported seeing three bombers explode in the air, including two B-17s near Bolzano, Italy, and a B-24 (not

assigned to the 332d Fighter Group for escort that day) near Innsbruck, Austria (then Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 177, 178, and 179). Capt. Emile G. Clifton of the 99th Fighter Squadron earned a Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroic actions on this day. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3484 dated 29 May 1945).

17 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions in one day, again. The group escorted a P-38 on a reconnaissance mission to Nurnberg, Germany. The group also escorted a Mosquito aircraft on another reconnaissance mission, this one to Munich, Germany. A pilot reported seeing jet aircraft in the distance on this mission. On its third mission of the day, the group strafed railroad targets between Linz and Vienna, Austria (then Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 180, 181, and 182). Capt. Louis G. Purnell of the 301st Fighter Squadron earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroic actions on this day. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 2362 dated 14 Apr 1945).

18 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to escort B-24 bombers of the 47th Bombardment Wing to and from the Wels marshalling yards in the Linz area of Austria (then Germany), and one to escort a single P-38 aircraft on a photographic reconnaissance mission in the Linz area. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 183 and 184)

19 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 Liberator bombers of the 49th Bombardment Wing to and from the Vienna area of Austria (then Germany). A Spitfire with British markings was seen firing on the formation. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 185)

20 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to escort a single P-38 aircraft on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Nurnberg, Germany, and another to escort B-24s of the 47th Bombardment Wing to and from Vipitento and Brenner marshalling yards. The second mission report for the day noted that the “fighters had to leave bombers because of shortage of gas”. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 186 and 187)

21 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 Liberators of the 304th Bombardment Wing on a raid to Vienna’s central marshalling yards. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 188)

22 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions. The group escorted B-17 Flying Fortresses of the 5th Bombardment Wing to provide target cover during raids on marshalling yards in southeastern Germany. The other two missions escorted P-38s on photographic reconnaissance missions, one to Prague, Czechoslovakia and Linz, Austria (then Germany), and one to Stuttgart, Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 189, 190, and 191)

23 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 Liberator bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing to Gmund West marshalling yards in Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 192)

24 February 1945: P-51 fighter pilots of the 332d Fighter Group escorted a Mosquito aircraft on a photographic reconnaissance mission over the Munich area of southern Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 193)

25 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to strafe railroad traffic in southern Germany and Austria (then part of Germany), and one to escort a single P-38 aircraft on a photographic reconnaissance mission over the Munich area. Three of the 332d Fighter Group P-51C pilots were reported missing that day. 1st Lt. Alfred M. Gorham of the 301st Fighter Squadron was reported lost at 1145 hours east of Munich after experiencing mechanical failure. 2d Lt. Wendell W. Hockaday of the 99th Fighter Squadron was reported missing at 1225 over Uttendorf, Austria after suffering damage during a strafing attack. 2d Lt. George J. Iles, also of the 99th Fighter Squadron, was reported missing at 1245 hours over Augsburg, Germany after being hit by anti-aircraft artillery fire. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 194 and 195 and Missing Air Crew Report numbers 12664, 12665, and 12670). 1st Lt. Roscoe C. Brown and 1st Lt. Reid E. Thompson, both of the 100th Fighter Squadron, each earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroism on this day. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 1430 dated 15 Mar 1945 and Fifteenth Air Force General Order 2270 dated 11 April 1945).

26 February 1945: P-51 fighters of the 332d Fighter Group escorted a Mosquito aircraft on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Munich in southern Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 196)

27 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24s of the 49th Bombardment Wing to and from the Augsburg marshalling yards in Germany. No enemy aircraft were encountered, but at least one pilot saw what he believed to be a German Me-163 in the distance. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 197)

28 February 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions, two of them to escort P-38 airplanes on two separate photographic missions over Praha (Prague), Czechoslovakia, and one to escort B-17 Flying Fortresses of the 5th Bombardment Wing over Verona in northern Italy. The third mission of the day was the 200th mission of the 332d Fighter Group for the Fifteenth Air Force. Of those 200 missions, 138 had been to escort bombers. (332d Fighter Group mission reports numbered 198, 199, and 200)

March 1945: The First Air Force selected Freeman Field, Indiana, to be the new base for the 477th Bombardment Group, the 387th Air Service Group, and the Replacement Crew Training Program (for black bomber crews). Freeman Field was larger than Godman Field, Kentucky, which was not even large enough for all the 477th Bombardment Group's four squadrons. (History of Freeman Field, Indiana, 1 March-15 June 1945, AFHRA call number 283.28-6)

1 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew four missions. One escorted a P-38 airplane on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Praha (Prague), Czechoslovakia, and two escorted P-38s on photographic reconnaissance missions over Stuttgart, Germany. The fourth mission escorted B-24 Liberator bombers of the 55th Bombardment Wing to and from the Moobierbaum oil refineries in the Vienna area of Austria (then part of Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 201, 202, 203, and 204)

2 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to escort a single P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Praha (Prague), Czechoslovakia, and the other to escort B-24 bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from the marshalling yards of Linz, Austria (then part of Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 205 and 206)

2 March 1945: The 618th Bombardment Squadron moved from Atterbury Army Air Field, Indiana, to Freeman Field, Indiana, where it would at last be stationed with the other three squadrons of the 477th Bombardment Group. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of World War II*)

3 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group conducted a strafing mission against railroad targets between Maribor, Bruck, and Weiner-Neustadt. First Lieutenants Robert L. Martin and Alphonso Simmons, both P-51D pilots of the 100th Fighter Squadron, were reported missing on that mission after having been hit by antiaircraft artillery fire at 1410 hours over Graz Airdrome, Austria. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 207 and Missing Air Crew Report Numbers 12827 and 12828) Simmons had been reported Missing in Action before, in August 1944, but had returned in September of that year. Martin later returned after his 3 March 1945 loss, after evading enemy forces in Yugoslavia for more than a month. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group)

4 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to escort B-24s of the 49th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from the marshalling yards of Graz. On that mission, one B-24 was seen going down, with six crew members parachuting out of the bomber. On the other mission, P-51 fighter pilots of the 332d Fighter Group escorted a Mosquito type aircraft on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Munich in southern Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 208 and 209)

5 March 1945: The 477th Bombardment Group moved from Godman Field, Kentucky, to Freeman Field, Indiana, a larger base which had recently been vacated as a twin-engine pilot training station. (477th Bombardment Group history for period 16 Jan-15 April 1945). The field consisted of more than 117 acres, and contained four large runways, each 150 by 5,500 feet. (Freeman Field history, 1 Mar-15 Jun 1945, AFHRA call number 283.28-6)

5-7 March 1945: The 616th, 617th, and 619th Bombardment Squadrons moved from Godman Field, Kentucky, to Freeman Field, Indiana, the new home of their 477th Bombardment Group. The 618th Bombardment Squadron had already moved to the new

base on 2 March. The commander of Freeman Field then was Major Wilmer E. McDowell. The commander of the 477th Bombardment Group, Col. Robert R. Selway, did not become commander of the field until April. (History of Freeman Field, Indiana, 1 March-15 June 1945, AFHRA call number 283.28-6; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*; organization record card of the 477th Bombardment Group)

6 March 1945: 332d Fighter Group pilots escorted a P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over the Klagenfurt and Linz areas of Austria (Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission report number 210) On the same day, the 302d Fighter Squadron was inactivated, leaving the 332d Fighter Group with three fighter squadrons, the 99th, 100th, and 301st. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). From then until the end of the war, the 332d Fighter Group had the same number of fighter squadrons as the other six fighter groups of the Fifteenth Air Force.

7 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group again escorted a P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission, this time over Munich, Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 211)

7 March 1945: The 387th Air Service Group moved from Godman Field, Kentucky, to Freeman Field, Indiana, to which the 477th Bombardment Group, which the 387th Air Service Group supported, had already moved two days earlier. (387th Air Service Group history for the period February-April 1945).

7-9 March 1945: Several black officers of the 477th Bombardment Group entered the officers' club assigned to white "base and supervisory" personnel, instead of the other officers' club assigned to them. They were told to leave and to use the other officers' club. (History of Freeman Field, Indiana, 1 March-15 June 1945, AFHRA call number 283.28-6)

9 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions in one day. Two of them escorted P-38s on photographic reconnaissance missions, one to Linz, Austria (then part of Germany) and one to the Munich area of Germany. The third mission that day escorted B-17 Flying Fortress bombers of the 5th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from the marshalling yards at Bruck, Austria. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 212, 213, and 214).

9 March 1945: Mr. Truman K. Gibson, civilian aide to the Secretary of War (Henry L. Stimson) visited the 332d Fighter Group at Ramitelli Air Field, accompanied by Maj. Gen. James M. Bevans, deputy commander of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces. The visit reflected the War Department's interest in the success of the group. (332d Fighter Group history for March 1945)

10 March 1945: An article by Roi Ottley entitled "Dark Angels of Doom" was published in *Liberty Magazine*. It suggested that members of the 332d Fighter Group had never lost a bomber in more than 100 missions, despite the fact some of the group's escorted bombers were shot down by enemy aircraft the previous summer. (Roi Ottley, "Dark Angels of Doom," *Liberty Magazine*, 10 March 1945).

12 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group, after not flying missions for two days, flew three missions, as it had on 9 March. Two escorted P-38s on photographic reconnaissance missions, one to the Linz area of Austria (then part of Germany) and one to Munich, Germany. The third mission escorted B-24s of the 47th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from the Floridsdorf oil refinery in the Vienna area of Austria. During the mission, pilots reported having heard on the radio that an aircraft was being jumped by enemy aircraft. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 215, 216, and 217). Capt. Walter M. Downs of the 301st Fighter Squadron earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroic actions on this date. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3484 dated 29 May 1945).

13 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group again flew three missions. Two escorted P-38s on photographic reconnaissance missions, one to Stuttgart, Germany, and the other to Nurnberg, Germany. The third mission escorted B-17 Flying Fortress bombers to, over, and from the marshalling yards at Regensburg, Germany. On two of the missions, enemy FW-190 fighter airplanes were seen. On the bomber escort mission, the bombers were early and the fighters were late to the rendezvous point. (332d Fighter Group mission reports 218, 219, and 220)

14 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew four missions. One strafed targets on the railroad line connecting Bruck, Leoben, and Steyr. One escorted B-24s of the 47th Bombardment Group to, over, and from a railroad bridge and marshalling yards at Varazdin, Yugoslavia. The other two missions escorted P-38 airplanes on photographic reconnaissance missions over Munich. On one of those missions, at least one pilot reported seeing a German Me-262 jet in the distance. 1st Lt. Harold H. Brown of the 99th Fighter Squadron was reported lost with his P-51C at 1115 hours east of Bruck, Austria after being damaged during a strafing attack. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 221, 222, 223, and 224; Missing Air Crew Report number 12996). For their heroic actions on this day, the following five members of the 332d Fighter Group and its 99th Fighter Squadron each earned a Distinguished Flying Cross: 1st Lt. Shelby F. Westbrook; 1st Lt. Hannibal M. Cox; 2nd Lt. Vincent I. Mitchell; 1st Lt. Thomas P. Braswell; and 2nd Lt. John W. Davis. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 2362 dated 14 Apr 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3031 dated 5 May 1945; Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3484 dated 29 May 1945).

15 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to provide target cover for Fifteenth Air Force B-24s on raids in the area from Flotsam to Geisha, Yugoslavia, and one to escort B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to Zittau, Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 225 and 226)

16 March 1945: Lt. William S. Price III of the 301st Fighter Squadron shot down an Me-109 during a strafing mission against railroad targets. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 1734 from 1945, and 332d Fighter Group mission report number 227). This was the first day in four months that members of the 332d Fighter Group shot down enemy aircraft, reflecting the diminished enemy aircraft opposition during the winter. One 332d

Fighter Group P-51B pilot, 1st Lt. Jimmie D. Wheeler of the 99th Fighter Squadron, was lost with his P-51B at 1320 hours over Muhldorf, Germany, after he struck a tree on the strafing mission. There were three other missions that day. Two escorted Mosquito type aircraft on photographic reconnaissance missions, one over Munich, Germany, and the other over Prague, Czechoslovakia. The fourth mission escorted Fifteenth Air Force B-24s over and from Monfalcone Harbor, Italy. (332d Fighter Group mission reports 228, 229, and 230 and Missing Air Crew Report number 13060). 1st Lts. Roland W. Moody, Henry R. Peoples, and William S. Price III, all of the 301st Fighter Squadron, each earned the Distinguished Flying Cross for their heroic actions on this day. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 2834 dated 28 Apr 1945).

17 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions to escort P-38s on photographic reconnaissance missions, one to Prague, Czechoslovakia, and the other to Linz, Austria (then part of Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission reports 231 and 232)

19 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions, two to escort Mosquito type aircraft on photographic missions, one to the Linz and Munich areas of Austria and Germany, and the other to Linz. The third mission escorted B-24 Liberator bombers of the 55th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from the marshalling yards at Muhldorf. At least one of the pilots reported seeing an enemy jet-propelled aircraft over the Brenner Pass between Italy and Austria. (332d Fighter Group mission reports 233, 234, and 235).

20 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions. One escorted a Mosquito type aircraft on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Linz, Austria and Munich, Germany, one to escort a C-47 transport type aircraft over Sanki Most, Yugoslavia, and one to escort B-24 bombers in the second wave of 304th Bombardment Wing bombers to Kralupy oil refinery in Czechoslovakia. On the bomber escort mission, Flight Officer Newman C. Golden of the 99th Fighter Squadron was reported missing after bailing out of his mechanically troubled P-51B aircraft at 1132 hours over Wels, Austria. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 236, 237, and 238 and Missing Air Crew Report number 13126)

20 March 1945: Lt. Col. William R. Bradford succeeded Major Wilmer E. McDowell as commander of Freeman Field. Col. Robert R. Selway, commander of the 477th Bombardment Group at the field, was not yet commander of the field itself, but would take command at Freeman Field in early April. (Freeman Field history, 1 Mar-15 Jun 1945, AFHRA call number 283.28-6)

21 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew four missions. One escorted B-24 bombers of the 47th Bombardment Wing to an airdrome at Neuberg, Germany. The other three missions escorted P-38 aircraft on photographic reconnaissance missions over Linz, Austria; Munich, Germany; Nurnberg, Germany; and Prague, Czechoslovakia. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 239, 240, 241, and 242)

22 March 1945: P-51 fighters of the 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to escort one P-38 airplane on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Ruhland, Germany. On that mission, one of the P-51s was damaged by enemy antiaircraft artillery fire. The other 332d Fighter Group mission that day escorted two waves of B-24 bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from the Kralupy oil refinery in Czechoslovakia. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 243 and 244)

23 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group escorted two waves of B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from the Ruhland oil refinery, Germany. 2d Lt. Lincoln T. Hudson of the 301st Fighter Squadron was reported missing with his P-51C at 1310 hours northeast of Vienna, Austria after suffering engine trouble. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 245 and Missing Air Crew Report number 13256)

23-24 March 1945: The 366th Air Service Squadron at Ramitelli was able to overcome a shortage of 110-gallon fuel tanks in order to supply them to the 332d Fighter Group for a long mission to Berlin on 24 March. Documents suggest that the 366th Air Service Squadron obtained the wing tanks from the 55th Air Service Squadron. (38th Air Service Group history for March 1945)

24 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group took part in the longest World War II raid of the Fifteenth Air Force. Along with other fighter groups of the Fifteenth Air Force, it escorted B-17 bombers of the 5th Bomb Wing on a mission to Berlin, the German capital. On the way the Tuskegee Airmen encountered German jet Me-262 fighters and shot down three of them (332d Fighter Group mission report number 246). The three victors were 1st Lt. Roscoe Brown, 1st Lt. Earl R. Lane, and 2d Lt. Charles V. Brantley, all of whom belonged to the 100th Fighter Squadron (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 2293 dated 12 Apr 1945). For this mission, the 332d Fighter Group earned its only Distinguished Unit Citation of World War II (332d Fighter Group lineage and honors history; Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*). The group's 99th Fighter Squadron earned its third Distinguished Unit Citation for this mission (99th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history). Five members of the 31st Fighter Group's 308th Fighter Squadron also each shot down a German jet that day. Missing Air Crew Reports indicate five 332d Fighter Group P-51 fighters as missing that day. The pilots included Captain Armour G. McDaniel and Flight Officers James T. Mitchell, Jr. and Leon W. Spears of the 301st Fighter Squadron and 2d Lieutenants Ronald Reeves and Robert C. Robinson of the 100th Fighter Squadron. McDaniel, commander of the 301st Fighter Squadron, was shot down by enemy aircraft, and Spears might have been, as well, south of Berlin, at about 1215 hours. Reeves and Robinson ran out of fuel over the Udine area of northern Italy at about 1400 hours, and Mitchell probably experienced mechanical failure south of Chemnitz, Germany, at 1315 hours. (Missing Air Crew Reports 13266, 13267, 13268, 13269, and 13270). Enemy fighters also shot down 3 of the escorted bombers (Missing Air Crew Reports 13274, 13278, and 13375, and mission reports of the 2d, 463d, and 483d Bombardment Groups for 24 March 1945). A combination of enemy antiaircraft artillery (flak) and enemy aircraft shot down two additional escorted bombers. (Missing Air Crew Reports 13374 and 13271) On that same day, the *Chicago Defender* newspaper published an article stating that the 332d Fighter Group had flown its 200th mission without losing any bombers, despite the fact that

group-escorted bombers had been shot down by enemy airplanes the previous summer. A bomber under the escort of the 332d Fighter Group had not been shot down by enemy aircraft since at least September 1944, a period of more than six months. For their heroic actions on this day, 1st Lt. Earl R. Lane and 2nd Lt. Charles V. Brantley, both of the 100th Fighter Squadron, each earned a Distinguished Flying Cross (Roscoe Brown, the other pilot with an aerial victory credit over a jet this day, had already earned a Distinguished Flying Cross for an earlier mission). (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 2834 dated 28 Apr 1945)

25 March 1945: Despite the very long mission of the previous day, the 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to escort a P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Linz, Austria, and one to escort B-24 Liberator bombers of the 49th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from the Prague/Nbely Airdrome in Czechoslovakia. One witness saw what appeared to be a Russian aircraft attacking the P-51s. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 247 and 248)

c. 25 March 1945: Capt. Walter M. Downs assumed command of the 301st Fighter Squadron, succeeding Capt. Armour G. McDaniel. (301st Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

26 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group again flew two missions, one to escort a Mosquito type aircraft on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Munich, Germany, and one to escort B-17 Flying Fortress bombers to, over, and from the Wiener Neustadt marshalling yards. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 249 and 250).

29 March 1945: 2nd Lt. Roland M. Moody of the 301st Fighter Squadron died while serving overseas. (American Battle Monuments Commission)

30 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group sent P-51s to escort a P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Munich, Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 251)

31 March 1945: The 332d Fighter Group conducted a fighter sweep and strafing mission against railroad and other targets in the Munich area of southern Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 252) During the mission, twelve members of the group shot down a total of 13 enemy airplanes, including FW-190s and Me-109s. The victors included 1st Lt Robert W. Williams, who shot down 2 FW-190s, and Maj William A. Campbell, 1st Lts Roscoe C. Brown, Earl R. Lane, and Daniel L. Rich, 2d Lts Rual W. Bell, Thomas P. Brasswell, John W. Davis, James L. Hall, Hugh J. White, and Bertram W. Wilson, Jr, and Flight Officer John H. Lyle, who each shot down one enemy aircraft. (Fifteenth Air Force General Orders 2292 and 2293 from 1945) Three 332d Fighter Group P-51D pilots were reported missing that day, including 2d Lt. Arnett W. Starks, Jr and 1st Lt. Clarence N. Driver of the 100th Fighter Squadron, and 2d Lt. Frank N. Wright of the 99th Fighter Squadron. Driver went missing at 1315 hours over northern Italy probably because of low fuel. Wright went into a spin while in pursuit of the enemy at 1420 hours over Landshut, Germany. Starks was hit by enemy anti-aircraft artillery at 1430 hours

over Voklammerkt, Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 252 and Missing Air Crew Report numbers 13211, 13212, and 13216). 1st Lts. Robert W. Williams and Bertram W. Wilson Jr., both of the 100th Fighter Squadron, each earned a Distinguished Flying Cross for heroic actions on this day. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3484 dated 29 May 1945).

March 1945: During that month, members of the 332d Fighter Group and its squadrons shot down a total of 17 enemy airplanes.

Late March 1945: TB-25 airplanes, training versions of the B-25s, arrived at Tuskegee Army Air Field. Before that, twin-engine pilots had used AT-10s. The B-25s would later fly training missions between Tuskegee and Troy, Alabama. (Thole, 17)

1 April 1945: Seven members of the 332d Fighter Group's 301st Fighter Squadron shot down a total of 12 enemy airplanes during a mission to escort B-24s of the 47th Bombardment Wing to raid the St. Polten marshalling yard and conduct a fighter sweep of Linz, Austria. The victors included 1st Lt Harry T. Stewart, who shot down 3 FW-190s, 1st Lt. Charles L. White, who shot down 2 Me-109s, 2d Lt Carl E. Carey, who shot down 2 FW-190s, 2d Lt John E. Edwards, who shot down 2 Me-109s, 2d Lts Walter P. Manning and Harold M. Morris, who each shot down one FW-190, and Flight Officer James H. Fisher, who shot down another FW-190. Two of the 332d Fighter Group P-51 pilots were reported missing: 2d Lt. Walter P. Manning and Flight Officer William P. Armstrong, both of the 301st Fighter Squadron, at 1400 over Wels, Austria, after encountering enemy aircraft. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 253 and Fifteenth Air Force General Order 2294 of 1945; Missing Air Crew Report numbers 13376 and 13377). On the same day, the 332d Fighter Group sent a set of P-51s on a second mission, to escort a single P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Prague, Czechoslovakia. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 254). For their heroic actions on this date, 1st Lt. Charles L. White, 1st Lt. John E. Edwards, 1st Lt. Harry T. Stewart Jr., and 2nd Lt. Carl E. Carey, all of the 301st Fighter Squadron, each earned a Distinguished Flying Cross. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 2834 dated 28 Apr 1945 and Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3484 dated 29 May 1945).

2 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions. Two escorted P-38s on photographic reconnaissance missions, one to the San Severo area of Italy and one to the Munich area of southern Germany. On the Munich mission, they encountered an Me-262 German jet fighter, which attacked the small formation. On the third mission that day, the 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 Liberator bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing over the Krems marshalling yards in Austria (then part of Germany). (332d Fighter Group mission reports 255, 256, and 257)

3 April 1945: The 96th Air Service Group was disbanded at Jesi (Iesi), Italy, along with the 1766th Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Company and the 1051st Quartermaster Company, Air Service Group, which were also stationed at Jesi. At the same time, the 366th Air Service Squadron, the 1765th Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Company, and the 1000th Signal Company, Service Group (Aviation), all at Ramitelli, Italy, were

disbanded. On the same day, the 367th Air Service Squadron at Falconara, Italy, and the 43rd Medical Supply Platoon (Aviation) at Seracapriola, Italy, were also disbanded. (XV Air Force Service Command General Order 23 dated 28 Mar 1945, copy furnished by Craig Huntly).

4 April 1945: The 523rd Air Service Group was activated at Ramitelli, and the 524th Air Service Group was activated on the same date at Jesi (Iesi), Italy, where the 96th Air Service Group had been stationed. Organizations assigned to the groups and activated at the same time were the 949th and 950th Air Engineering Squadrons and the 773rd and 774th Air Materiel Squadrons. These organizations, stationed at Jesi, Ramitelli, and Faconara, assumed the functions of the organizations that had been disbanded the previous day. (Organizational record cards of the 523rd and 524th Air Service Groups at the Air Force Historical Research Agency and XV Air Force Service Command General Order 23 dated 28 Mar 1945, copy furnished by Craig Huntly)

5 April 1945: 332d Fighter Group P-51 fighters escorted a P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Linz, Austria, while other group fighters, on another mission, escorted B-17s Flying Fortress bombers of the 5th Bombardment Wing on a raid against a major enemy airfield at Udine, Italy. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 258 and 259)

5 April 1945: Colonel Robert R. Selway, commander of the 477th Bombardment Group that had been stationed at Freeman Field, Indiana, since 5 March, became commander of Freeman Field, in place of Lt. Col. William R. Bradford. Selway arranged for two officers clubs on the base. Officers Club 1 was to be for black officers of the 477th Bombardment Group, "E" Squadron (Trainee), and the 118th Army Air Force Base Unit, while Officers Club 2 was to be for base and supervisory personnel. When the 477th Bombardment Group, under Selway, was at Godman Field, the white base and supervisory personnel had gone to the white officers club at neighboring Fort Knox, leaving the officers club at Godman for the black officers. There was no such neighboring white base near Freeman Field. (History of Freeman Field, Indiana, 1 Mar-15 Jun 1945, AFHRA call number 283.28-6). Selway apparently intended to have a white officers club and a black officers club. On the same day, the 115th Army Air Forces Base Unit, which supported the 477th Bombardment Group, moved from Godman Field, Kentucky, to Freeman Field, Indiana, where the 387th Air Service Group was already located. (115 AAF Base Unit organization record card). On the late evening of the same day, 36 black officers from the unit attempted to enter the officers' club assigned to white "base and supervisory" personnel, since they believed they were "base personnel". The assistant base provost marshal, who attempted to block the entrance of the black officers, was pushed. Three black officers were accused of doing the pushing: Lieutenants Roger C. "Bill" Terry, Marsden A. Thomson, and Shirley R. Clinton. (History of Freeman Field, Indiana, 1 March-15 June 1945, AFHRA call number 283.28-6; J. Todd Moye, *Freedom Flyers* [Oxford University Press, 2010], p. 133 and 138)

6 April 1945: 25 additional black officers attempted to enter the officers' club at Freeman Field that had been reserved for white "base and supervisory" personnel. They

and the 36 black officers who had attempted to enter the club the day before, at total of 61, were arrested in quarters and charged with disobeying an order of a superior officer, some with violence. (History of Freeman Field, Indiana, 1 March-15 June 1945, AFHRA call number 283.28-6). Freeman Field was made a Control Base, and base functions changed. The 387th Air Service Group was made responsible only for the supply and maintenance of the 477th Bombardment Group, and its squadrons were moved to another part of the base, which lowered group morale. (387th Air Service Group history for the period February-April 1945).

6 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to escort B-24 Liberators of the 304th and 47th Bombardment Wings to, over, and from the Verona ordnance depot and marshalling yards in northern Italy, and the other to escort a P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Prague, Czechoslovakia. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 260 and 261)

7 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group again flew two missions. One escorted six groups of 5th Bombardment Wing B-17s raiding the Vipiteno, Camp Di Trens, and Bressanone railroad bridges in northern Italy. One of the group P-51 fighter pilots was initially reported missing, but he later returned. On the second mission that day, 332d Fighter Group P-51s escorted a P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Munich, Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 262 and 263) 2 Lt. Ferrier H. White of the 100th Fighter Squadron died while serving overseas. (American Battle Monuments Commission)

8 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions. One escorted a Mosquito-type aircraft on a photographic reconnaissance mission over the Linz and Munich areas of Austria and southern Germany. Another escorted a P-38 on a similar photographic reconnaissance mission over Prague, Yugoslavia. The third mission escorted B-17 Flying Fortresses of three groups of the 5th Bombardment Wing on a raid against the Campdazzo railroad bridge in northern Italy. On that mission, one of the B-17s was seen to crash into the Adriatic Sea. The mission report noted that "Bombers were strung out making them difficult to cover." (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 264, 265, and 266) 1st Lt. Robert L. Martin of the 100th Fighter Squadron, who was reported Missing in Action on 3 March 1945, returned after having evaded enemy forces in Yugoslavia for more than a month. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group)

9 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group again flew three missions in one day. The first escorted a P-38 airplane on a photographic reconnaissance mission over the Linz and Nurnberg areas of Austria and Germany. On that mission an enemy Me-262 was seen. On the second mission, group P-51 fighters escorted another P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over the Linz and Prague areas of Austria and Czechoslovakia. On the third 332d Fighter Group mission of the day, Tuskegee-trained pilots escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing and B-24s of the 304th Bombardment Wing to and from the vicinity of Bologna in northern Italy. On that mission, a B-17 was seen spinning down,

with three crewmen parachuting out of it. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 267, 268, and 269)

9 April 1945: All but 3 of the 61 black officers who had been arrested in quarters at Freeman Field for attempting to enter an officers' club closed to them were released. The three not released had been accused of disobeying the orders of a superior officer and offering violence to him. They included Lieutenants Roger C. "Bill" Terry, Marsen A. Thomson, and Shirley R. Clinton. At the same time, Colonel Robert Selway, commander of the base and of the 477th Bombardment Group there, issued Base Regulation 85-2, noting which personnel were to use each of the two base officers' clubs. Of the 422 black officers at Freeman Field, 101 refused to sign the regulation, and were taken into custody. 321 of the other black officers signed the regulation, some of them adding notes that they disagreed with the segregated officers club policy. (History of Freeman Field, Indiana, 1 March-15 June 1945, AFHRA call number 283.28-6; J. Todd Moye, *Freedom Flyers* [Oxford University Press, 2010], pp. 133, 135, 138)

10 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions. One of them escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing and B-24s of the 304th Bombardment Wing on a raid to Bologna, Italy. The other escorted a P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over the Munich area of southern Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 270 and 271)

10 April 1945: The 115th Army Air Forces Base Unit was discontinued, but the 387th Air Service Group remained to take up its functions, supporting the 477th Bombardment Group. (115 AAF Base Unit organization record card).

10-11 April 1945: 101 African-American officers of the 477th Bombardment Group refused twice to sign a paper stating that they acknowledged a new 9 April 1945 order issued by Colonel Robert Selway, commander of the group, stating his policy for separate admission for the two officers' clubs at Freeman Field. The black officers were arrested and later, on 13 April, sent to Godman Field under arrest. (Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., *Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., American* [Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991], pp. 142-143; Alan L. Gropman, *The Air Force Integrates* [Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1985], pp. 22-25; Ms. Zellie Rainey Orr)

11 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions again. One escorted B-24 Liberators of the 304th Bombardment Group to the Ponte Gardena railroad bridge in northern Italy. The mission report noted that the bombers were strung out, making them difficult to cover. The second mission of the day escorted a P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Munich, Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 272 and 273)

12 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew four missions in one day. Two of them escorted photographic reconnaissance aircraft, one over Linz, Austria (then part of Germany) and one over Munich, Germany. The other two missions escorted B-24 Liberator bombers, one for the 47th Bombardment Wing on a raid against the Casarsa

Diversion railroad bridge of northern Italy, and one for the 49th Bombardment Wing against the St. Veit railroad bridge. On the last mission, two of the escorting P-51s collided. One pilot was reported lost, and the other one was reported as missing. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 274, 275, 276, and 277). 2d Lt. Samuel G. Leftenant of the 99th Fighter Squadron was reported missing with his P-51C at 1508 hours north of Klagenfurth after the mid-air collision. (Missing Air Crew Report number 13984).

13 April 1945: The 101 black officers who had been arrested at Freeman Field for refusing to sign a regulation regarding separate officers' clubs were flown in six C-47 airplanes to Godman Field, Kentucky. Once there, the officers in custody were placed under arrest in quarters. (History of Freeman Field, Indiana, 1 March-15 June 1945, AFHRA call number 283.28-6)

14 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions. One escorted a photographic reconnaissance aircraft over Munich in southern Germany. The other escorted four British Halifax bombers of the 148th Squadron (Royal Air Force) to, over, and from Voschia. The British bombers dropped supplies to friendly personnel on the ground. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 278 and 279)

15 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions. The first escorted a single P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over Bolzano and Prague, Czechoslovakia. The second escorted B-24 bombers of the 304th Bombardment Wing ("Blue Force" section) to, over, and from an ammunition factory and storage facility at Ghedi. The third mission strafed railroad targets in the areas of Munich, Salzburg, Linz, Pilsen, and Regensburg in Germany and Austria (then part of Germany). On this last mission, Lt. Jimmy Lanham of the 301st Fighter Squadron shot down an Me-109 in the Munich area. One of the 332d Fighter Group pilots was reported lost, one was reported missing, and two were reported to have landed at friendly fields. There are missing air crew reports on Flight Officers Morris E. Gant and Thurston L. Gaines, both of the 99th Fighter Squadron, who flew P-51Cs. Gaines went missing at 1430 hours about 40 miles from Muhldorf, Germany after being hit by enemy anti-aircraft artillery fire, and Gant was reported missing at 1600 hours about 12 miles east of Pescara, Italy after running low on fuel. For his leadership of this outstanding railroad strafing mission, in which the 332d Fighter Group destroyed or damaged 35 locomotives, 8 oil cars, 44 other units of rolling stock, 4 barges, 4 motor transports on a flat car, and one aircraft in the air, Colonel Benjamin O. Davis earned the only Silver Star awarded to any member of the 332d Fighter Group. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3496 dated 31 May 1945; 332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 280, 281, and 282; Missing Air Crew Report numbers 13798 and 13813; and Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3484 issued in 1945). For their heroic actions on this day, Capt. Gordon M. Rapier and 1st Lt. Jimmy Lanham of the 301st Fighter Squadron and Capt. William A. Campbell and 1st Lt. Gentry E. Barnes of the 99th Fighter Squadron each earned the Distinguished Flying Cross. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3324 dated 21 May 1945 and Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3484 dated 29 May 1945).

16 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew five missions in one day. The first escorted three C-47 transports that went to northern Yugoslavia. Three of the missions

escorted P-38s on photographic reconnaissance missions to the Munich and Linz areas of southern Germany and Austria. The other mission escorted B-24 Liberators of the 49th and 55th Bombardment Wings to the Bologna area of northern Italy. The latter mission report noted that the bombers were “strung out and difficult to cover.” (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 283, 284, 285, 286, and 287)

17 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to escort a P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over the Linz area of Austria and the Munich area of southern Germany. The other escorted B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing and B-24s of the 304th Bombardment Wing over and from Bologna, Italy. The report noted that the B-24s were split up by enemy antiaircraft artillery fire (flak) in the target area, and fighter coverage was quite difficult. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 288 and 289)

18 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group again flew two missions. One escorted a P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over the Brno area. The other escorted B-24s of the 304th Bombardment Wing (although originally assigned to escort B-17s of the 5th Bombardment Wing) over and from Bologna, Italy. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 290 and 291)

19 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions, one to escort B-24 Liberator bombers to, over, and from the Puchheim railroad yards and Wels, and one to escort a P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over the Munich area of southern Germany. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 292 and 293)

20 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group again flew two missions, one to escort B-24s of the 49th and 55th Bombardment Wings raiding railroad bridges in northern Italy, and one to escort a P-38 on a photographic reconnaissance mission over the Praha and Brno areas of Czechoslovakia. On the first mission, one of the P-51 pilots was at first reported missing, but he eventually returned. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 294 and 295)

21 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions in one day. It flew a fighter sweep south of a line running from Augsburg to Munich to Regensburg. Another mission escorted B-24 Liberators of the 49th Bombardment Wing to, over, and from the Attang and Puchheim marshalling yards. The third mission escorted two British bombers, one Halifax and one Lancaster, on a supply-dropping mission over Yugoslavia. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 296, 297, and 298). Flight Officer Leland H. Pennington of the 301st Fighter Squadron was reported missing with his P-51B at 1050 hours 15 miles west of Zara off the coast of Yugoslavia. (Missing Air Crew Report number 14022). 1st Lt. Hugh J. White of the 99th Fighter Squadron was also reported missing on 21 April. He returned eight days later, having evaded enemy forces in Italy. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group)

22 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group was assigned to escort a photographic reconnaissance aircraft over Brno, Czechoslovakia. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 299) On the same day, the group conducted an armed reconnaissance mission

over northern Italy. This was the 300th mission the 332d Fighter Group flew for the Fifteenth Air Force. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 300)

23 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew three missions, one to escort a P-38 on a reconnaissance mission over the Prague area of Czechoslovakia, one to escort another P-38 on another reconnaissance mission over the Linz and Brno areas, and one to escort B-24 Liberators of the 55th and 304th Bombardment Wings to and over the Padua and Cavarzere areas of Italy. On the latter mission one of the 332d Fighter Group P-51 fighters was hit by enemy anti-aircraft artillery, but the pilot bailed out safely. He was 1st Lt. Hugh J. White of the 99th Fighter Squadron, who was reported missing at 1150 hours over Stanghella, Italy. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 301, 302, and 303; Missing Air Crew Report number 14035)

23 April 1945: The 101 black officers who had been arrested at Freeman Field and later transported to Godman Field were released by order of Major General Frank O'D Hunter, commander of the First Air Force. At the same time, Colonel Robert Selway gave each of the officers an administrative reprimand. (History of Freeman Field, Indiana, 1 March-15 June 1945, AFHRA call number 283.28-6) The three officers who had been arrested at Freeman Field on April 5, however, remained under arrest, awaiting court martial.

24 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group escorted B-24 bombers of the 47th and 49th Bombardment Wings to, over, and from enemy targets in northern Italy. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 304)

25 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew four missions, including one armed reconnaissance mission over the Verona area of northern Italy. Two other missions escorted Mosquito-type aircraft on reconnaissance missions, one over the Munich area of southern Germany and one over the Linz area of Austria (then part of Germany). The fourth mission escorted a P-38 on a reconnaissance mission over the Salzburg area of Austria. (332d Fighter Group mission report numbers 305, 306, 307, and 308)

26 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew two missions. One escorted a P-38 on a reconnaissance mission over Linz, Prague, and Amstettin in central Europe. On that mission, the group encountered German Me-109 fighters. 2d Lieutenant Thomas W. Jefferson shot down two of the enemy airplanes, and 1st Lieutenant Jimmy Lanham and 2d Lieutenant Richard A. Simons each shot down one. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 309 and Fifteenth Air Force General Orders 2990 and 3362 from 1945). These were the last aerial victories of the Tuskegee Airmen during the war. The 332d Fighter Group had shot down a total of 94 enemy aircraft during World War II. The 99th Fighter Squadron had shot down a total of 18 enemy airplanes before joining the 332d Fighter Group. Together, African-American pilots shot down a total of 112 enemy airplanes during World War II. The other mission that day was the 332d Fighter Group's final bomber escort for the Fifteenth Air Force, protecting B-24s of the 47th and 55th Bombardment Wings on raids over the Casarsa and Malcontenta ammunition storage dumps. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 310). 1st Lt. Thomas W. Jefferson of

the 301st Fighter Squadron earned a Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroic actions on this day. (Fifteenth Air Force General Order 3343 dated 22 May 1945).

26-27 April 1945: In the United States, the 477th Bombardment Group and its four squadrons (616th, 617th, 618th, and 619th) moved from Freeman Field, Indiana, where there had been a racial incident, back to Godman Field, Kentucky, where the group had been based before 5 March. ((477th Bombardment Group history for the period 16 April-15 July 1945).

28 April 1945: The 387th Air Service Group moved back from Freeman Field, Indiana, to Godman Field, Kentucky, where it had been stationed before 7 March. (387th Air Service Group history for the period February-April 1945).

29 April 1945: 1st Lt. Hugh J. White of the 99th Fighter Squadron, who had been reported Missing in Action on 21 April, returned, after evading enemy forces in Italy for eight days. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group)

30 April 1945: The 332d Fighter Group flew its 311th mission for the Fifteenth Air Force, providing escort for a reconnaissance aircraft to Bolzano, Italy. (332d Fighter Group mission report number 311). Since the 332d Fighter Group was assigned to the Fifteenth Air Force, which managed U.S. strategic bombing in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations, the group had flown 179 bomber escort missions, 172 of them to protect heavy bombers such as B-17s or B-24s. This is the last 332d Fighter Group mission for the Fifteenth Air Force for which a mission report was found.

April 1945: During that month members of the 332d Fighter Group and its squadrons shot down a total of 17 enemy airplanes.

1 May 1945: The 332d Fighter Group was scheduled to launch 48 P-51s to escort bombers to Klagenfurt, Austria, and also to escort a reconnaissance mission over San Severo, Italy, but no narrative mission reports for these missions were found. The 332d Fighter Group might have flown more than 311 missions for the Fifteenth Air Force, but no reports on other missions were found. (XV Fighter Command Field Orders 323a and 325a, both dated 30 Apr 1945, and a message in the Fifteenth Air Force mission folder for 1 May 1945).

4 May 1945: 1st Lt. Herbert V. Clark of the 99th Fighter Squadron, who went Missing in Action on 16 August 1944, returned after having evaded enemy forces in Italy for more than eight months. (Escape, Evasion, and Repatriation Reports, 332d Fighter Group)

c. 4 May 1945: The 332d Fighter Group moved from Ramitelli Airfield, Italy, to Cattolica, Italy (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; 332d Fighter Group lineage and honors history).

c. 5 May 1945: The 99th Fighter Squadron moved to Cattolica, Italy. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*)

6 May 1945: 1st Lt. Hugh J. White of the 99th Fighter Squadron returned to his unit after repatriation from northern Italy. On the same day, an armada of “Red Tails” took part in a Fifteenth Air Force Review over Caserta and Bari, Italy. (332d Fighter Group history, May 1945). A note in the Fifteenth Air Force mission folder for 6 May 1945 notes that “48 P-51s of the 332nd Fighter Group taking off at 0800 will intercept 304th Wing at 0912 and provide close escort on PTW.” (penetration, target cover, and withdrawal). No mission report was found to confirm that the plan was executed. (Fifteenth Air Force Mission Folder for 6 May 1945)

7 May 1945: P-51 pilots of the 332d Fighter Group flew through the Brenner Pass between Italy and Austria and then over the Linz airdrome in Austria to test whether the Germans would honor the armistice they signed that day. (Leo Gray) On the same day, 1st Lt. Herbert V. Clark, who had been missing in action since 16 Aug 1944, returned to the 332d Fighter Group, after having evaded capture for more than 8 months. During that time, he had led a band of partisans in northern Italy that conducted raids against German forces there. (332d Fighter Group history for May 1945)

8 May 1945: The 332d Fighter Group held a ceremony to celebrate VE (victory in Europe) Day. During this ceremony, Colonel Yantis H. Taylor, commander of the 306th Fighter Wing, awarded honors to 332d Fighter Group personnel. (332d Fighter Group history, May 1945)

10 May 1945: Flight Officers James T. Mitchell and Leon W. Spears of the 301st Fighter Squadron returned to their unit after repatriation from Poland. (332d Fighter Group history, May 1945)

11 May 1945: 2d Lt. James L. Hall, Jr. of the 99th Fighter Squadron returned to his unit after repatriation from Romania. That same day, the 332d Fighter Group assembled for a ceremony in which Major General Nathan F. Twining, commander of the Fifteenth Air Force, presented various honors, including the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal, and the Bronze Star, to various members of the 332d Fighter Group. (332d Fighter Group history, May 1945)

18 May 1945: The War Department’s McCloy Committee published a report on the April 1945 Freeman Field incident, noting that Colonel Robert Selway’s 9 April 1945 order for separate officers’ clubs for 477th Bombardment Group and other base personnel conflicted with U.S. Army regulations such as 210-10.

29 May 1945: Maj. William A. Campbell was awarded the first oak leaf cluster to his Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC), becoming the first black pilot to earn two DFCs. (332d Fighter Group History, Oct 1942-1947)

30 May 1945: The 332d Fighter Group held a Memorial Day ceremony to honor members of the organization who died during the war. The program included a reading of the Gettysburg Address. (332d Fighter Group history, May 1945)

1 June 1945: The 67th AAF Base Unit (Tuskegee Weather Detachment) was discontinued. (organization record card)

8 June 1945: In an impressive ceremony, Colonel Yantis H. Taylor, commander of the 306th Fighter Wing, presented Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., commander of the 332d Fighter Group, the Silver Star for gallantry in action. He also awarded five Distinguished Flying Crosses, five Air Medals, and one Bronze Star. The troops passed in review to bid farewell to Colonel Davis as commander, who departed that day for the United States. Colonel Davis had been chosen to command the 477th Composite Group at Godman Field, Kentucky. In his farewell speech, Colonel Davis noted that the 332d Fighter Group had been a credit to itself and the Army Air Forces. (332d Fighter Group, Jun 1945)

9 June 1945: Major George S. Roberts resumed command of the 332d Fighter Group, succeeding Col. Benjamin O. Davis. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*)

12 June 1945: The 332d Fighter Group was relieved of its assignment to the XV Fighter Command (Provisional). (332d Fighter Group history, June 1945)

June 1945: Capt. Roscoe C. Brown succeeded Maj. Andrew D. Turner as commander of the 100th Fighter Squadron. (100th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

21 June 1945: Colonel Benjamin O. Davis, Jr. assumed command of the 477th Bombardment Group, replacing Colonel Robert R. Selway, Jr.. At the same time, Colonel Davis also became temporary commander of the 387th Air Service Group, which supported the 477th Bombardment Group at Godman Field. Davis replaced Lt. Col. David H. Thomas, a white officer who had been in command of the 387th Air Service Group since July 1944. (387th Air Service Group history for period April-July 1945; 387th Air Service Group Special Order 51 dated 23 June 1945).

22 June 1945: The 99th Fighter Squadron, under the command of Capt. Wendall M. Lucas, moved to Godman Field, Kentucky, and was reassigned from the 332d Fighter Group to the 477th Group, which was redesignated from a Bombardment Group to a Composite Group, since it would have both bombers and fighters. At the same time, the 616th and the 619th Bombardment Squadrons of the group were inactivated, but the 617th and 618th Bombardment Squadrons remained. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*; Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; *Lineage and honors history of the 99th Fighter Squadron*)

26 June 1945: Major Elmer D. Jones, Jr. assumed command of the 387th Air Service Group, relieving Lt. Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., who remained commander of the

477th Bombardment Group. (387th Air Service Group history for the period April 1945-July 1945; 387th Air Service Group General Order 11 dated 26 June 1945).

29 June 1945: The emblem of the 301st Fighter Squadron was approved. It consisted of a disk depicting a cat on a flying machine gun. (Unit emblem folder)

2 July 1945: A court martial trial began for 3 black officers who had been arrested at Freeman Field on April 5 for forcibly entering an officers' club reserved for whites. The defendants were Lieutenants Roger C. "Bill" Terry, Marsden A. Thomson, and Shirley R. Clinton. The court found Thomson and Clinton not guilty, but Terry was convicted. He was fined \$150 and confined to base for 3 months because of "jostling." (J. Todd Moye, *Freedom Flyers* [Oxford University Press, 2010], pp. 133, 138, 141-142).

3 July 1945: Maj. William A. Campbell assumed command of the 99th Fighter Squadron, which he had commanded in the autumn of 1944. (Lineage and honors history of the 99th Fighter Squadron).

c. 18 July 1945: The 332d Fighter Group moved from Cattolica, Italy, to Lucera, Italy. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; 332d Fighter Group lineage and honors history)

26 July 1945: Pilot training continued at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, despite the fact the war in Europe had ended. A Tuskegee cadet Perry A. Dillman, crashed in his AT-6C training aircraft near Tallassee, Alabama. (Aircraft record card for aircraft serial number 42-48885, provided by Archangelo Difante).

September 1945: The 332d Fighter Group departed Lucera, Italy, for movement to the United States of America. (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; 332d Fighter Group lineage and honors history)

4 October 1945: The War Department directed that a 3-man board of officers prepare a policy for the use of Negro manpower in the post-war period, "including the complete development of the means required to derive the maximum efficiency from the full authorized manpower of the nation..." (Preface of the Gillem Report, AFHRA call number 170.2111-1, Nov 1945)

8 October 1945: The 618th Bombardment Squadron was inactivated, leaving the 477th Composite Group with only two squadrons, the 99th Fighter Squadron and the 617th Bombardment Squadron. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*).

17 October 1945: The 332d Fighter Group arrived at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*).

19 October 1945: The 332d Fighter Group was inactivated, along with the 100th Fighter Squadron and the 301st Fighter Squadron (Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*). The 302d

Fighter Squadron had already been inactivated in March. That left only the 99th Fighter Squadron active, and it had already been assigned to the 477th Composite Group.

17 November 1945: A War Department board of general officers headed by Lieutenant General Alvan C. Gillem, Jr. submitted a report, "Policy for Utilization of Negro Manpower in the Post-War Army" to U.S. Army Chief of Staff, General George C. Marshall. Besides General Gillem, Maj. Gen. Lewis A. Pick and Brig. Gen. Winslow C. Morse served on the board. Although the so-called "Gillem Report" called for more Negro officers, more Negro combat units, more opportunities for professional and leadership development for Negroes, equal treatment of all officers, and continued "experimental groupings of Negro units with white units in composite organizations," it did not call for immediate or complete desegregation of the Army. The report compared the 332d Fighter Group with the other three P-51 fighter escort groups in the Fifteenth Air Force during World War II, but was somewhat contradictory. On the one hand, it praised the bomber escort performance of the 332d Fighter Group and its leader, Col. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., and on the other hand the report negatively criticized the group for staying with the bombers (which was the policy of Colonel Davis) instead of racking up higher numbers of aerial victory credits by leaving the bombers in search of enemy airplanes to shoot down. It claimed that the other three P-51 groups each destroyed more than two enemy aircraft for each one it lost in combat, but that the 332d Fighter Group lost more aircraft in combat than it destroyed. It criticized the 332d Fighter Group for not taking part in any major air battles, despite the fact that did indeed take part in some major air battles, during which it both shot down large numbers of enemy aircraft and sometimes also lost some of its escorted bombers to enemy aircraft. For example, on the June 9, 1944 mission, the 332d Fighter Group encountered very many enemy fighters, and while it shot down five of them, two of the escorted bombers were shot down. On July 18, 1944, on the Memmingen mission, the 332d Fighter Group encountered more than a hundred enemy fighters, and while it shot down 12 German airplanes that day, fifteen of the bombers it was assigned to escort were also shot down. The report implies that the group had a choice between protecting bombers and shooting down enemy fighters, and that it chose to protect bombers instead, resulting in lower aerial victory credit totals. However, the mission reports indicate that, regardless of group, when more enemy airplanes showed up, there were both more aerial victory credits and more bombers lost. Certainly, on a mission in which no enemy aircraft were encountered, which was a majority of the missions for all the groups, there could have been no bombers shot down by enemy aircraft, and no aerial victory credits, either. In other words, a group did not really have much control over whether a mission would produce more opportunity for aerial victory credits, and at the same time, more bomber losses. (Gillem Report, AFHRA call number 170.2111-1; IRIS number 00128007)

28 November 1945: In a memorandum to Secretary of War Robert B. Patterson, Truman K. Gibson Jr., Civilian Aide to the Secretary of War, criticized the Gillem Report for failing to clearly address the issue of segregation and called for the War Department to issue a clear policy statement on the issue. ("Supplemental Report of War Department Special Board on Negro Manpower," AFHRA call number 170.2111-1A, 26 Jan 1946)

31 January 1946: The 126th Army Air Forces Base Unit at Walterboro Army Air Field, South Carolina, was inactivated.

13 March 1946: The 99th Fighter Squadron moved to Lockbourne Army Air Base, Ohio, along with the 477th Composite Group to which it was assigned. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*; Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*)

14 April 1946: The 2143rd AAF Base Unit (Pilot School, Basic-Advanced) was discontinued at Tuskegee Army Air Field, but the field did not close yet, and the last class, (46-C) continued training there. (organization record cards for both organizations; folder on Tuskegee Army Air Field at Air Force Historical Research Agency).

15 April 1946: The 385th AAF Base Unit was organized at Tuskegee Army Air Field, Alabama, replacing the 2143d AAF Base Unit that had served there. (385 AAF Base Unit organization record card).

29 June 1946: The last class of pilots (46-C) graduated at Tuskegee Army Air Field. There were only 9 pilots in the class. 992 pilots had trained there since the first class (42-C) entered in early November 1941. (385th AAF Base Unit history, Jun-Oct 1946, vol. I; Thole, p. 19)

30 June 1946: Tuskegee Army Air Field was placed on temporarily inactive status, with permanent inactivation to come, because personnel were still assigned to the base. (385th AAF Base Unit history, Jun-Oct 1946, vol I).

20 August 1946: Col. Noel F. Parrish was reassigned from Tuskegee Army Air Field, which he had commanded, to Air University at Maxwell Field, Alabama. (385th AAF Base Unit history, Jun-Oct 1946, vol. I).

31 August 1946: Lt. Col. Donald G. McPherson assumed command of the 385th AAF Base Unit, the only unit remaining at Tuskegee Army Air Field. (385th AAF Base Unit history, Jun-Oct 1946, vol. I).

1 September 1946: The training department at Tuskegee Army Air Field inactivated. It had remained active after pilot training at Tuskegee ended (29 June) in order to provide continuation flying training of rated personnel still stationed there. (385th AAF Base Unit history, Jun-Oct 1946, vol. I).

12 June 1947: Tuskegee Army Air Field closed permanently when the 385th AAF Base Unit, the last unit there, was discontinued. (385th AAF Base Unit organization record card).

1 July 1947: The 477th Composite Group and the 617th Bombardment Squadron, which had been assigned to it, were inactivated at Lockbourne, Ohio. At the same time, the 99th Fighter Squadron, which had also been assigned to the 477th Composite Group, was reassigned to the newly reactivated 332d Fighter Group at Lockbourne. Capt. Melvin T.

Jackson was commander of the 99th Fighter Squadron at the time. At the same time, the inactivated 100th and 301st Fighter Squadrons were activated again, and assigned, like the 99th Fighter Squadron, to the 332d Fighter Group. Maj. Andrew D. Turner became commander of the 100th Fighter Squadron. The group and its squadrons were equipped with P-47 aircraft. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*; Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; Lineage and honors history of the 99th Fighter Squadron; 100th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history)

28 July 1947: The 332d Fighter Wing was established.

15 August 1947: The 332d Fighter Wing was activated under the command of Major Edward C. Glead at Lockbourne Army Air Base. The 332d Fighter Group was assigned to the wing. At about the same time, Capt. Elwood T. Driver assumed command of the 100th Fighter Squadron, succeeding Maj. Andrew D. Turner. (100th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

28 August 1947: By this date, Maj. William A. Campbell had assumed command of the 332nd Fighter Group. (332nd Fighter Group lineage and honors history).

October 1947: By this month, Capt. Charles I. Williams had assumed command of the 301st Fighter Squadron. (301st Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

October-November 1947: The 99th Fighter Squadron of the 332d Fighter Group (332nd Fighter Wing) took part in Operation Combine and performed so well that it was awarded a certificate of appreciation signed by Maj. Gen. William D. Old, commander of the Ninth Air Force. The certificate noted that the squadron's personnel worked under difficulties and handicaps not normally expected, but in spite of them, performed with exceptionally high efficiency. Operation Combine was a training exercise involving a simulated invasion of the United States, and involved the dropping of airborne forces and tactical air support for them. (Certificate of Appreciation, Ninth Air Force, to 99th Fighter Squadron, 332d Fighter Group, 1947, sent by Ms. Zellie Orr; Ninth Air Force History, Jul-Dec 1947, part 2).

April 1948: Capt. Marion R. Rodgers replaced Capt. Melvin T. Jackson as commander of the 99th Fighter Squadron. (Lineage and honors history of the 99th Fighter Squadron). Capt. Herbert V. Clark replaced Capt. Elwood T. Driver as commander of the 100th Fighter Squadron. (100th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

April 1948: In a letter to Lemuel E. Graves of the *Pittsburgh Courier*, General Carl A. Spaatz, the first Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force, stated "the ultimate Air Force objective must be to eliminate segregation...", although he did not give a date when that would be accomplished. That same month, in testimony to the National Defense Conference on Negro Affairs, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force Eugene Zuckert used the same words. Stuart Symington, the first Secretary of the Air Force, also supported the racial integration of the Air Force, and later helped draft President Truman's Executive Order 9981, issued in late July, that mandated the desegregation of all the military services.

(Alan L. Gropman, *The Air Force Integrates, 1945-1964* [Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1985] pp. 88-89.

May 1948: Capt. Joseph D. Elsberry assumed command of the 100th Fighter Squadron, succeeding Capt. Elwood T. Driver. (100th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

June 1948: 1st Lt. Samuel W. Watts Jr. succeeded Capt. Joseph D. Elsberry as commander of the 100th Fighter Squadron. (100th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

14 July 1948: Capt. Joseph D. Elsberry resumed command of the 100th Fighter Squadron, a position he had held in May. (100th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

26 July 1948: President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981, which stated “It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the Armed Services without regard to race...” The same order called for the creation within the national Military Establishment of “an advisory committee to be known as the President’s Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity in the Armed Services...” which he authorized to examine the “rules, procedures, and practices of the Armed Services...to determine in what respect such rules, procedures, and practices may be altered or improved with a view to carrying out the policy of this order.” While the order did not specifically mention the words “integration” or “desegregation,” that is what resulted. The Air Force had already announced in April that it would integrate, and that was accomplished in May 1949. (Alan L. Gropman, *The Air Force Integrates, 1945-1964* [Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1985], p. 109)

25 August 1948: Capt. Richard C. Pullam assumed command of the 301st Fighter Squadron, succeeding Capt. Charles I. Williams. (301st Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

30 September 1948: Capt. Elwood T. Driver succeeded Capt. Joseph D. Elsberry as commander of the 100th Fighter Squadron. He remained commander until the squadron was inactivated and ceased to be a segregated unit on 1 July 1949. (100th Fighter Squadron lineage and honors history).

8 October 1948: The 387th Air Service Group was inactivated and disbanded at Godman Field, Kentucky. (387th Air Service Group organization record card.)

20 January 1949: Members of the 332d Fighter Group took part, as ordered by 332d Fighter Wing Special Order 15 dated 19 January 1949, in the inaugural parade for President Harry S. Truman, who had in the previous year issued Executive Order 9981

calling for equality of treatment and opportunity in the Armed Forces. (332d Fighter Wing Special Order 15 dated 19 January 1949, copy of which was provided by Ms. Zellie Orr).

2-11 May 1949: At the 1949 USAF Gunnery Meet in Las Vegas, Nevada, the 332d Fighter Group team won top honors in the conventional aircraft division. Among the victors were Capt. Alva N. Temple, Lt. James H. Harvey, Jr., and Lt. Harry T. Stewart, Jr. (332d Fighter Group history, May 1949)

11 May 1949: The Department of the Air Force issued Air Force Letter no. 35-3, which noted that “all Negroes will not necessarily be assigned to Negro units. Qualified Negro personnel may be assigned to fill any position vacancy in any Air Force organization or overhead installation without regard to race.” The same letter noted “All individuals, regardless of race, will be accorded equal opportunity for appointment, advancement, professional improvement, promotion, and retention in all components of the Air Force of the United States.” The U.S. Air Force was the first of the armed services to officially integrate. (Alan L. Gropman, *The Air Force Integrates, 1945-1964* [Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1985], p. 243, and note from Dr. Gropman to Dr. Haulman, 14 June 2010.

1 July 1949: The 332d Fighter Group and its three fighter squadrons, the 99th, 100th, and 301st, were inactivated. (Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*; Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*) Members of those organizations were reassigned to other organizations that became racially integrated.

Sources: 99th Fighter Squadron histories; 332d Fighter Group histories; 332d Fighter Group daily narrative mission reports; Maurer Maurer, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force, World War II*; Maurer Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of World War II*; Twelfth Air Force General Orders (for aerial victory credits); Fifteenth Air Force General Orders (for aerial victory credits); Fifteenth Air Force daily mission folders; Missing Air Crew Reports of the Army Air Forces, World War II (for airplane losses).

Some Tuskegee Airmen statistics: More than 989 missions of the 99th, 100th, 301st, and 302nd Fighter Squadrons for the Twelfth Air Force; 500 missions of the 99th Fighter Squadron by early June 1944; at least 311 missions of the 332d Fighter Group for the Fifteenth Air Force (June 1944-May 1945); 179 bomber escort missions of the 332d Fighter Group for the Fifteenth Air Force; 172 heavy bomber escort missions of the 332d Fighter Group for the Fifteenth Air Force; 112 aerial victories of the 99th Fighter Squadron and the 332d Fighter Group combined during World War II; 96 Distinguished Flying Crosses awarded to members of the 332d Fighter Group or its squadrons; 94 aerial victories of the 332d Fighter Group for the Fifteenth Air Force between June 1944 and the end of April 1945; 61 was the number of missions under the Fifteenth Air Force for which the 332d Fighter Group reported one or more of its own aircraft lost or missing; 46 was the average number of bombers shot down by enemy aircraft for each of the other six fighter groups of the Fifteenth Air Force; 35 was the number of missions in which the 332d Fighter Group reported enemy aircraft encounters; 27 was the number of bombers shot down by enemy aircraft when those bombers were in groups the 332d Fighter Group was assigned to

escort; 25 was the number of 332d Fighter Group missions for the Fifteenth Air Force on which its members reported seeing bombers go down (some of these were bombers not assigned to the 332d Fighter Group to escort); 21 was the number of additional missions in which the 332d Fighter Group reported seeing enemy aircraft but reported no encounters with them; 21 was the number of 332d Fighter Group missions for the Fifteenth Air Force in which Tuskegee Airmen shot down enemy aircraft; 18 was the number of aerial victories earned by the 99th Fighter Squadron before it joined the 332d Fighter Group; 7 was the number of bomber escort missions of the 332d Fighter Group for the Fifteenth Air Force on which bombers under escort were lost to enemy aircraft; 4 was the highest number of aerial victory credits scored by a Tuskegee Airman, but three Tuskegee Airmen earned that number of aerial victories (Lee Archer, Joseph Elsberry, and Edward Toppins); 4 was the number of types of aircraft the Tuskegee Airmen flew in combat (P-40s, P-39s, P-47s, and P-51s); 4 was the number of Tuskegee Airmen who each earned 3 aerial victory credits in one day (Joseph Elsberry, Clarence Lester, Lee Archer, and Harry Stewart); 3 was the number of German jets shot down by the Tuskegee Airmen; 3 was the number of Distinguished Unit Citations earned by Tuskegee Airmen organizations (99th Fighter Squadron earned two before it was assigned to the 332d Fighter Group, and the 332d Fighter Group earned one after the 99th Fighter Squadron was assigned to it).

Daniel L. Haulman, PhD
Chief, Organization History Division
Air Force Historical Research Agency
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