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g. Operations:

- (1) Campaign: Italian.
- (2) Nature of operations: Combat missions by flights of A-36A type aircraft, on dive-bombing, strafing, rhu barb and patrol, particularly in close support of ground troops, and principally of dive-bombing type.
- (3) Number of missions and sorties for period: 288 sorties; 31 missions.

(4) Results of the most important missions:

(a) Mission: 7 April 1944: Mission flown in extremely inclement weather to bomb railroad at Attigliano, Italy, one element of the flight being unable to reach the target because of the weather. 1) The Germans were using this rail yard extensively for transportation of supplies; 2) probability of successfully completing mission was small due to 9/10 overcast; 3) our own forces greatly aided by destruction of many enemy rolling stock; 4) which were destroyed by bombing, together with a railroad station, railroad tracks; the other element bombing a group of imposing buildings at the mouth of the Tiber causing great damage thereto, also destroying or damaging an enemy command car, six personnel tents, and two motor trucks, 5) causing extreme damage and loss to the enemy.

(b) Mission: 12 April 1944: 12 planes in b d weather dropped 14 bombs on a bridge at A-6925, 1) which the enemy was using extensively for transportation of supplies, 2) bad weather and terrain making mission exceptionally difficult, 3) destruction of bridge denying the enemy use of rail facilities to bring supplies to the front for use against our troops, 4) caused by said destruction, 5) seriously crippling enemy transportation.

(c) Mission: 16 April 1944: 8 planes dropped 8 bombs in the mouth of a railroad tunnel near A-727167, 1) which the enemy was using extensively, 2) mission being difficult due to haze and broken terrain, 3) preventing material to be brought to the front, 4) the tunnel being blocked, 5) and the enemy's rail transportation being crippled.

h. Commanding officers important missions: None to report.

i. Losses in action: officers and men. Mission) 16 April 1944: Capt. Stanley G. Wright did not return from mission bombing trucks near Capranica, Italy, seen bailing out and landing safely at F-5988, near Lake Bracciano. Carried as missing in action.

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

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| (1) Major Harry W. Dorris | Awarded D.F.C. |
| (2) 1st Lt. Charles W. Place | Awarded Silver Star |

2. Inclosed is War Diary, 526th Fighter Bomber Squadron, for the

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Period 1 April to 1 May 1944.

For the Commanding Officer:

Frederic M. Merrick

FREDERIC M. MERRICK
Capt., A.C., S-2 G.
526 Y.S. Sq., 80 F.S. Gr., APO 650

Incl: War Diary orig & 2.

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Sheet No. 03. War Diary. 520 F-B Sq., 80th F-B Gp., APO 050, New York, N.Y.

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Capt., above-named sq.

DAY

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fall, little suspecting the true reason. Everybody has eight or ten visitors every day, which makes the hospital a delightful place to swap yarns, tell dirty jokes, and become embarrassed at a bit of profanity unconsciously uttered as a nurse whisks by. This visiting also provides a golden opportunity to remake one's bed after each visit. Most of the visiting, I believe, is to see the nurses rather than the patient -- and all this panderonium while patient and sympathetic Dr. Henry daily examines each pulse, eyeball and fracture. Life dulls progressively -- and I'm getting out of here my first opportunity.

- 3 One mission flown today. The 525th Squadron lost two boys today.
- 4 One mission flown today.
- 5 One mission flown today. The weather has been poor and it has been difficult for the pilots to reach their targets, resulting in many bombs being brought back or dropped on alternate targets.
- 6 One mission flown to the railroad yards at Capranica. The "itch" which many of the boys have had has now been definitely diagnosed as scabies or the Seven Year's Itch. We discovered that treatment for it is a bath, application of benzyl benzoate solution, wait a day, apply again, wait a day and take a bath. It works, although there is considerable conjecture as to why there is no bath in between the first and second applications. Lt. Chandler came back from Foggia today. The movie "A Guy Named Joe," showed ootn at Marigliano and the hospital today.
- 7 One mission today. Vesuvio has completely calmed down, as has the activity around Cassino and the Anzio beachhead. Trucks, tank trailers and hundreds of other vehicles, however, are speeding up and down the highways. Huge stores of ammunition, bombs, belly tanks and other materiel are piling up alongside the roads. Naples harbor is very active, and from where we are, nine miles away, we can keep score of the shipping in the harbor by watching the number of the barrage balloons which float over Naples.
- 8 One mission today to knock out a bridge. Bridges have been the chief target lately. Riding up and down the highways around here provides considerable amusement. Every jeep and other vehicle has a name. The huge British tank carriers have groups which use only one letter in the alphabet to begin their names, some interesting names in the "C" group being "Cock Robin," "Cock Sparrow" and "Cockroach." Others in the "L"

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Sheet No. 04. War Diary. 520th F-3 Sq., 80th F-3 Gp., APC 650, New York, N.Y.
Month of April, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Capt., above-named sq.

DAI WAR DIARY

group for example, have "Loch Lomond," etc. The jeeps, like aeroplanes, are the source of the funniest names, such as "Cesspool Sadie," Seven Copies, "Texas, by God," "Long Dick," "Styx Ferry" and "Juicy Lucy."

9 As a result of sundry indiscretions committed by some officers of the squadron, the squadron has been dubbed "Major Dorris' School for Wayward Boys," a name suggested when Capt. Calamai, one night liquefied, repeatedly confronted his C.O. with a demand to know if that was what he was running. There is now a suitable plaque hanging in the Officers' Mess with this title emblazoned on it with Capt. Murphy designated as Dean, Capt. Calamai as Superintendent and Capt. Henriod as Head Coach. The last title resulted from the encounter with the Italians which landed him in the hospital. Today is Easter Sunday and the natives are streaming out into the roads wearing the best clothes they have, which are frequently nothing but rags. Tomorrow, however, is a bigger "feast" for them, and they will take food and gifts to a shrine in Pomigliano at the Church. Thousands of soldiers are pouring from Naples northward on trains, trucks and afoot. There are Englishmen, Americans, Gmukas and all other types. Major Dorris went to the Anzio beachhead today under a plan to exchange pilots for army personnel for observation purposes. One mission flown by the squadron today.

10 The Italians are really celebrating Easter today. Large groups of native men, women, girls and boys, barefooted and dressed in white pajama-like clothes with red sash and shoulder straps, are running up and down the highways. We have heard that these people are supposedly miraculous cures and are annually showing their gratitude and present health by conducting a sort of alms gathering marathon. Major Dorris received a Distinguished Flying Cross today and Lt. Place received the Silver Star, thus augmenting the already enviable number of awards and decorations of our squadron.

11 One mission today in inclement weather. Lt. Russell returned from Cairo today. Lt. Nordell and others came home from Capri which is still thriving as an alleged rest camp for the Air Force. There was an air raid alert about 3:00 a.m. There is still an amazing amount of military traffic up and down the highways. Joe E. Brown is showing for the boys at the Marigliano Theatre. Considerable thunder and lightning today but no rain.

12 Our boys went out on a mission today, and after reaching the beachhead, returned to base on account of bad weather. Lt. Col. Blend, group operations officer, apparently irritated because of the failure of the

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Sheet No. 05. War Diary. 520th F-3 Sq., 80th F-3 Gp., APO 050, New York, N.Y.
 Month of April, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Anriod, Capt., above-named sq.

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squadron to reach the target, refused to give the boys credit for a sortie. This caused the boys to be irritated and provoked no end of caustic criticism by the pilots who particularly complained that the group officers for one reason or another, would not fly the planes themselves. The criticism, though perhaps exaggerated, is at least justified by the record. Things have not been going so well, apparently, as evidenced today by a visit by General Cannon of XII A.F., who reportedly did not spare the horses. The traditional Army custom prevailed when Col. Kofahl came down to the squadrons and, in Army parlance, "chewed their asses out." Col. Kofahl rode as observer on the second mission, and after some criticism of our squadron's conduct of the mission in comparison with the other squadron that went, became convinced that our squadron scored direct hits on the target while the other squadron missed the target, although due to no one's fault in particular. Everything seemed to turn out all right, however, since everyone was shaking hands with everyone else. Our guess, however, is that we haven't heard the end of it. A lot of the boys have been seeing Irving Berlin in person at the San Carlo Theatre in Naples where he is being starred in the hit show "This is the Army." Old Berlin ballads punctuate the show, which is strictly G.I. from cast to the burlesque jokes. It is first class entertainment. Even the lineys seem to enjoy it. A P-40 pilot made one of the most beautiful and spectacular belly landings that we've seen. He didn't scratch a wing and hardly bruised the prop. A 2nd Lt. at that.

- 13 No mission today on account of bad weather. Col. Bland received the Purple Heart today and the pilots are now complaining about the award, since rumor has it that Col. Bland was not injured. The complaint was not lessened by the fact that yesterday they were denied a sortie when they felt they were entitled to it. Adding to the pilots' discontent is the fact that Command has adopted a new policy concerning the award of Air Medals and clusters, tightening up on the requirements so that now it is very difficult to get an Air Medal. Formerly the Air Medal and clusters were awarded automatically on the basis of ten sorties per cluster. Many pilots have gone home with the Air Medal and seven or eight clusters, which fact seems to make palpably unfair the new system -- at least the pilots are so commenting. Everything has turned green and the leaves are out. Hundreds of native carts with sleepy drivers hollering "Caw" which is Italian for "Giddap," still present the greatest traffic hazard. Eight new replacement pilots were assigned to our squadron today, and they look like a fine, eager bunch.
- 14 Things are still stirring in the group. General Saville came to the field today and made it clear that conditions would have to change or else. The mortality in pilots has been high and their morale is very low. Everyone was vaccinated for typhus today, and everyone is putting

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Sheet No. 60. War Diary. 520th F-B Sq., 80th F-B Gp., APO 650, New York, N.Y.

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Harriod, Capt., above-named sq.

DAY

WAR DIARY

up a mosquito net preparatory to the coming of the noted little insects. Outdoor movies have been inaugurated at the athletic field on the Alfocomeo factory grounds adjacent to the airfield. AMG is moving the natives out of our apartment building to make room for Army personnel and also to get rid of a nuisance. The natives loaf around the entrances and beg or steal anything they can lay their hands on. They have cut the leather out of the seats of our vehicles and have even stolen the seats themselves. They have proven to be nothing but bums in this part of Italy.

15 One mission was flown today. Lts. Schiller, Ray and Culbertson returned from a two-week rest at Cairo, Egypt today. The 527th Squadron lost a pilot today. The boys saw Judy Garland in "Presenting Lily Mars" at the Marigliano Theatre today. We have two P-38 pilots from England here taking notes and flying with our squadron.

16 Early this morning about 5:00 a.m. there was a heavy raid on Naples, with an undetermined amount of damage. For one reason or another, these raids are apparently not published. We lost Capt. Wright in a mission north of Rome. He was seen to have bailed out safely after being struck by enemy flak. On the same mission, Lt. Col. Bland, flying his first mission under the new group policy of having a group man go along each day, also bailed out after his plane was struck by flak. Losing these two men has not helped the situation in the group any and we are looking for some kind of a shake-up. The morale of our pilots hasn't been heightened by the events of the past couple of months.

17 Major Kirach of the 527th was appointed group operations officer to replace Col. Bland. Major Dorris reputedly talked to Col. Kofahl and asked to be transferred out of the group. Dorris returned from the Anzio beach-head full of yarns. He accompanied the foot soldiers on night patrol over No Man's Land, and had a talk with General Frederick. One mission was flown today.

18 The 525th Squadron lost another pilot today. The boys were treated to an exceptionally fine movie titled "Battle of Russia," at the Marigliano Theatre. Its gruesomeness was impressive and a testimonial to the tenacity of the Russians. A companion showing was "Stormy Weather," with Lena Horne. The G.I.'s have stopped their usual practice at the theatre of blowing up condoms and letting them sail about in the theatre.

19 No missions today on account of the weather. The 525th lost another pilot which brings the mortality in the past two or three weeks to a staggering and discouraging total. Major Dorris went to Caserta and talked with General Saville about conditions in the squadrons and group, and returned expressing the view that he would probably be transferred.

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Sheet No. 07. War Diary. 520th F-3 Sq., 6th F-3 Gr., APO 050, New York, N.Y.

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Capt., above-named sq.

DAY

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- Our new replacement pilots spent the day flying transition. There is a lot of grumbling and criticism and mental attitudes have hit a new low. It is one of those times experienced by every unit when everyone seems discouraged. Some say the condition is probably due to the type of missions our pilots have been required to fly: long sorties north of Rome, attacking rails and roads, quite different than the close support type missions the pilots were accustomed to and which they feel our plane was designed for. Lt. Col. Cassidy was transferred from group.
- 20 Major Dorris was today transferred to the XII A.F. and Capt. Graham Weigle of the 525th was appointed to succeed him as squadron commander. Capts. Hood and Schmitt and Lt. Russell went to Foggia to determine their status with respect to going back to the States. Two missions flown today.
- 21 Hood, Schmitt and Russell returned from Foggia. Schmitt is to go home. Russell is to continue combat flying and Hood has been grounded and will be transferred to a ground position, probably at Caserta. All were disappointed except Schmitt. The activity on the highways portends something big in the offing. Two missions flown today, continuing the policy of attacking railroad tracks north of Rome.
- 22 The group shake-up which was expected and which started with the elimination of Col. Cassidy, was continued today, when suddenly Major Barrett, group intelligence officer, Major Stern, group engineering officer and Capt. Valukonis, group communications officer, were transferred. It came as a greater surprise to the officers concerned than anyone else. Capt. Versept was appointed to replace Maj. Barrett and Capt. Hendrickson to replace Stern. Capt. Schmitt left today for the Port of Embarkation to go home. Major Dorris and Lt. Chandler went to Foggia. The topic of conversation today is the general shake-up. A lot of other officers are wondering, but few seem worried about the possibilities. One mission was flown today, but the boys were unable to reach the target on account of bad weather.
- 23 Had two missions today, one at dawn and the other almost dusk. They were reminiscent of Sicily when day after day we had an early and late mission with general loafing in between. Although everything is quiet at Anzio and Cassino, there seems to be something big in the air.
- 24 Flew two more missions again today. The 527th Squadron lost another boy today, which makes our operations for the last month very discouraging. Naples had a big air raid tonight and most everyone watched the fireworks. An estimated forty German planes took part, for about an hour. Opl. Hare and Ripkin indulged in a few fisticuffs today, one receiving a black eye and the other a badly skinned face.
- 25 Two missions flown today in continuation of the policy of attacking rail communications.
26. 0 missions were flown today on account of rain. The enlisted men of the

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Sheet No. 08. War Diary. 520th F-5 Sq., 80th F-5 Gr., APO 050, New York, N.Y.

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Capt., above-named sq.

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squadron had a party tonight at the group officers' club and the affair was a huge success. There were dozens of WACs and nurses present, and liquor flowed freely. Although many were obviously under the influence, it was a well-behaved party and everybody had a good time. The party was topped off with real ice cream and chocolate cake. The group orchestra, consisting of about twelve pieces, compared favorably with any in the vicinity. A highly unusual and amusing incident arose when one girl present swore so profusely that some rough G.I.s got embarrassed and had to admonish her to temper her language.

27 There were the usual headaches this morning, and fortunately for many of the fellows there were no missions because of rain. The consensus of opinion was that the party was a huge success. It is the first real squadron party we have had since Camp Kilmer, a year ago. In the evening the fellows were treated to a piano concert by Capt. Rubenstein, an accomplished concert pianist, followed by a movie.

28 Today the Group started a five day stand-down period for tactical training and formation flying for the new pilots.

29 One year ago today we left the United States on our way overseas. A lot of water has run under the bridge since then. We have lost a lot of men, but in exchange the Germans have lost a hundred or more to one besides losing an astronomical number of guns, vehicles, railroad cars etc. In the afternoon we were advised we were going to move to a new base at Marcianese, Italy. This did not prevent us from having the regularly scheduled Group Anniversary party at the Officer's Club, which was a howling and silently wet success. The enlisted men spent the afternoon packing. One year overseas saw us still on the move.

30 The fellows flew their planes to the new field, about 2 1/2 miles South of Caserta. The rest of the personnel loaded trucks, jeeps and even motorcycles and moved. It was a bitter cold day, but the boys did a beautiful job of unpacking, pitching tents, etc. We are bivouacked in a grove, the enlisted men on one side of a narrow country road and the officers between two rows of tall trees on the other side. Singularly enough, we didn't lose a meal on schedule, and by the time all the personnel had arrived, by dinner time, our portable, screened-in mess kitchen was functioning as usual, and we had a hot meal--a welcome relief to the cold wind that was blowing. Our new field is part asphalt and part steel mat, and there is a slight rise or bump in the middle. About 9 P.M. a Beaufighter crashed on the field and sent two or three fliers to a terrible burning death. The flames shot a hundred feet in the air and tracers were shooting in all directions for 15 or 20 minutes. In contrast to this inferno, most of the men almost froze during the night. After nearly seven months of quartering in buildings, we are now again out on damp, colder Earth, in

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Sheet No. 09. War Diary. 526th F-B Sq., 86th F-B Gp., APO 050, New York, N.Y.

Month of April, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henricd, Capt., above-named sq.

WAR DIARY

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pyramidal tents--and strangely enough, most of the men welcome the change. The natives here are just as dirty and bothersome, but apparently not so numerous, since the village is further removed than at Fomigliano. No one wants to go to Caserta, since we've heard that the F.B.S. officials and M.I.s have recently come to town, and rightly or wrongly, hardly a man in our outfit has any use for this bunch, who, safely behind the front lines, impose what we think are rather childish regulations about military courtesy and proper dress. We prefer to be ordinary G.I.s out in the dust, trying the best we know how to win the war without being subjected to the impositions of chair sitting F.B.S. April is gone. Admiral Nimitz was wrong in his predictions and more and more it appears that General Eisenhower's statement that the war would end in '44 is equally erroneous. Anything may happen in an election year, and even the Good General may err.

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526th Fighter Bomber Squadron

Outline History, May 44

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By Auth. OC.
526th FB Sq.
31 May 44
Initials _____

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

31 May 1944

AG 314.7

SUBJECT: Historical Records.

TO : Commanding General, XII Air Support Command, A.F.C. 374.

1. Outline History of the 526th Fighter Bomber Squadron for the period 1 May to 1 June.

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

b. Changes in organization.

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

c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted men.

(1) Month of May 1944.

- (a) At beginning: 49 officers; 230 E.M. assigned.
- (b) Net increase: 7 officers; 22 "
- (c) Net decrease: None.
- (d) At end: 57 officers; 234 E.M. assigned.

d. Stations: Marsianise, Italy.

e. Movements: None.

f. Campaigns: Continued Italian Campaign.

g. Operations:

- (1) Campaign: Italian

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

(3) Number of missions and sorties for period: 561 sorties; 71 missions.

(4) Results of most important missions:

(a) Mission: 5 May 1944: 3 planes flew in hazy weather to strafe enemy airdromes. 1) These fields were used extensively by enemy fighters to harass our air activities; 2) probability of success was poor due to haze and enemy anti-aircraft fire; 3) our aircraft was being harassed by enemy fighters operating from these fields and our bombing ended this pressure; 4) our attack damaged planes and revetments; 5) eliminating future threat of interception from these fields.

(b) Mission: 6 May 1944: 12 planes bombing and strafing railroad Montefiascone to Viterbo. 1) The enemy was using this railroad extensively to transport supplies. 2) Probability of success was almost nil due to almost complete cloud cover. 3) Elimination of these rail facilities eased the pressure on our ground troops. 4, Numerous box cars and oil cars were damaged by strafing and the tracks seriously damaged. 5) crippling enemy transportation in this area.

(c) Mission: 9 May 1944: 12 planes in almost solid overcast bombed and strafed rail facilities in (vte area, 1) being extensively used by the enemy, 2) the overcast making probability of a successful mission almost nil. 3) However, the mission was completed denying the enemy the use of these facilities, 4) the tracks being cut and destroyed in several places, numerous railroad cars being destroyed, 5) effectively crippling enemy rail organization in this area.

(d) Mission: 13 May 1944: 8 planes bombing enemy highway bridge, 1) which was being used by the enemy to transport supplies and personnel to the front. 2) In 6/10 a ver, in which probability of success was only fair, 3) the mission destroyed the bridge, 4) effecting a road block, 5) denying the enemy the use of this highway. The Squadron received the following message from (11 ASC: "Your mission A15 caused road block. Traffic piling up. Good work."

(e) Mission 19 May 1944: 8 planes on armed reconnaissance Highway # 7, 1) which was being extensively used by the enemy in bringing reinforcements to the front. 2) The weather was bad and probability of success almost nil. 3) Nevertheless, the mission was completed through almost solid overcast and 4) a road block effected in Terracina, 5) denying the enemy the use of this road, the mission also accounting for 5-10 enemy trucks destroyed as many damaged. The following message was received from the V Army: "Congratulations on your work today."

(f) Mission: 24 May 1944: 12 planes on armed reconnaissance front line area, 1) where fighting was on a see-saw basis and

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our troops were being hard-pressed, 2) probability of success being poor due to almost solid overcast. 3) However, flying through the overcast and beneath it, over 30 enemy motor trucks and tanks were destroyed and many more damaged, 4) seriously frustrating the enemy. 5) After running out of ammunition the leader of the mission called a flight of P-40s in the area and led this other unit flight to an observed concentration of enemy vehicles, our Squadron leader leading the P-40s down in a dive burst to hit and destroy the concentration of enemy vehicles.

(g) Mission: 26 May 1944: 8 planes strafing enemy convoys on Highway 2, 1) which were transporting enemy supplies and personnel, 2) probability of success being fair, although anti-aircraft fire in the vicinity was known to be intense. 3) 40 plus of those vehicles were destroyed and the enemy denied the use of them, and a like number damaged, resulting in untold damage to our troops on the eve of their big push.

h. Commanding officers important missions: none to report.

i. Losses in action: officers and men.

(1) 3 May 1944: 2nd Lt. Everett H. Wheeler was killed when his plane crashed at Marcianise, Italy following a collision in the air. Carried as killed.

(2) Mission) 6 May 1944: 1st Lt. Charles R. Womack did not return from mission bombing railroad tracks between Montefiascone and Vitorbo, Italy. Crashed in the Tyrrhenian Sea 8-10 miles Southeast of Anzio, Italy after having apparently been hit by flak. Killed in action.

(3) Mission) 18 May 1944: 2nd Lt. Peyton E. Reedman did not return from mission bombing and strafing trucks on road between Montecorvo-Pico-Pondi. Plane crashed into mountain at approximately O-645160. Wingman observed what might have been a parachute. Carried as missing in action.

(4) Mission) 18 May 1944: 2nd Lt. Theodore J. Baron did not return from mission bombing and strafing trucks on road between Montecorvo-Pico-Pondi, Italy. Last seen gaining altitude at 4000 feet and headed Southwest at approximately O-6312. Plane was on fire. Carried as missing in action.

(5) Mission) 29 May 1944: 2nd Lt. Charles E. Meyer did not return from mission bombing and strafing road nets North of Rome. Last seen at approximately A-5605, headed Southwest, wheels down and plane seemingly out of control. Carried as missing in action.

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

(1) None

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

For the Commanding Officer:

FREDERIO H. HENRICE

Capt., A.C., S-2 C.

526 F.B. Sq., 86 F.B. Gp., AP. 650

Incl: War Diary orig & 2.

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Sheet No. 70. War Diary. 526th F-B Sq., 86th F-B Gp., APO 650, New York, N.Y.

Month of May, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Capt., above-named Sq.

DAY

WAR DIARY

- 1 After some little confusion, we are settled in our new home which is situated in a field of rye. Our kitchen is up and operating. The pilots are flying transition, but no missions. The three Squadrons are separated from the Group headquarters. The natives around our present camp are pretty much as they were at Pomigliano--dirty and sticky-fingered. The familiar "Joe wash" can be heard all day.
- 2 A company of colored air base security troops is parked on the airfield across from our bivouac area. The natives flock around them like fleas. The colored boys encourage them more than the white fellows. Our boys spent most of the day cutting weeds and grain around the area. Capt. Hood was transferred to the XII TAC Hq. to be re-assigned, probably to the ATC in Africa, where he will no doubt ferry planes.
- 3 The pilots are still practicing formation and bombing tactics. Tragedy occurred when Lts. Wheeler and Bishop crashed in mid-air over the field and Lt. Wheeler was killed when his plane crashed. The VIII Army is apparently still shifting from the Adriatic to the Cassino area, since tanks and tank trailers fill the Caserta highway all day long. The boys in our Squadron are proving their continued ingenuity by rigging up a home-made hot shower system. Some alert G.I. found a pipeline running through our area from Naples to Caserta and have casually and conveniently tapped it for the showers.
- 4 Two missions today. The traffic on the roads is not consistent with the Cassino calm and our money is on a big push in the near future. We have heard of General Clark's visit to the White House and we don't think it was for the purpose of playing table tennis. A couple of G.I.s passing through here to rest camp verify this theory by telling us preparations up front are anything but Lilliputian. The nights are pleasantly cool under five woolen blankets and one of dust that we gather during the day-time.
- 5 Capt. Schmitt and Pop Grice are still at the 6th Personnel Replacement Center at the racetrack at Bagnoli, sweating out a boat ride home. Two more or less uneventful missions flown today.
- 6 Lt. Wozack, one of our best liked pilots, crashed in the Tyrrhenian Sea today after having apparently been hit with flak. A boat in the vicinity reported nothing but an oil slick where he went in. The boys flew three highly successful missions today. A bunch of Limeys are quartered on our field near our Operations tent. They are airdrome maintenance men and are composed of wounded or long experienced front line personnel. They daily go through calisthenics and close order drill.

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Sheet No. 71. War Diary. 526th F-B Sq., 86th F-B Gp., APO 650, New York, N.Y.

Month of May, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Capt., above-named Sq.

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WAR DIARY

7 Two missions today. Lt. Dixon successfully crash-landed his plane on the field after being forced down. The enlisted men seem more contented in our present rougher existence. There isn't as much wandering off to Naples and other nearby towns. Since all of our men have roamed all over Naples and are acquainted intimately with its flora and fauna, a word might be said about the esprit de corps which has come to that town with P.B.S. The gentlemen of P.B.S. have treated us of the tactical outfits to a rare display of military courtesy and discipline. While it is reported that 25 % of supplies coming into Naples is hijacked or otherwise diverted into black market channels, under the very noses of P.B.S.,--and while enemy agents, if they are inclined, are immune from searches and seizures if they wear a civilian suit with a black arm-band--full Colonels receive their base pay in Naples for checking G.I. dog tags, examining underwear, half-zipped jackets, or giving lectures that would make a Congressman blush, to officers who have committed the unpardonable sin of forgetting his necktie. Men who have lain in foxholes for weeks have been known to spend their 3-day rest in Naples in a stockade for the criminal loss of a shirt-button. Their spending money has often been contributed in the form of a fine for their stupid thoughtlessness in failing to salute on the crowded streets of Naples, even though the average soldier has ample time to salute properly in every ten or fifteen feet he meets a senior officer. To drive from our area to Naples almost invariably results in a real or imaginary traffic violation and when one is stopped by a P.B.S. M.P., one must show the following documents: A WD AGO pass, with the embarrassing passport photo, a drivers license on Form something or other, a trip ticket with a history of the vehicle properly inscribed thereon, a pass authorizing one to be out of his billet, a special pass allowing locomotion in the City of Naples, and an accident report form. After a minute examination of these various instruments, a line of traffic has accumulated a mile or so long, and the fellows at Cassino still haven't got their overshoes. If one is fortunate enough to get to Naples the same day without being short-stopped by a Summary Court Officer, he will then be the subject of the niceties of military courtesy and discipline mentioned hereinabove. The war is rough and tough in Naples, as evidenced by the campaign ribbons seen going in and out of the busy, sumptuous office buildings which Mussolini built for P.B.S., A.M.S., M.T.O. and several other initialed sanctuaries.

8 Flew two missions today. In one, a boat which was in enemy waters and which gave no identifying signals, was sunk by our pilots. It turned out to be an English rescue craft on its way to rescue an airman down in the sea.

9 Lt. Chandler is leaving tomorrow to go back to the States to attend medical school. Some of the officers had a party for him in the evening which

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Sheet No. 72. War Diary. 526th F-B Sq., 86th F-B Gp., APC 650, New York, N.Y.

Month of May, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Capt., above-named Sq.

DAY

WAR DIARY

- resulted in a hurried departure of the honored guest into the unconscious. This was insufficient excuse for terminating the party which continued far into the night. Two missions were flown today, strafing German communications. The Germans are beginning to feel the pinch of the continued hammering of their rails and roads by bombers and dive-bombers. Capt. Barber and Lt. McAbee went to the Capri rest camp today.
- 10 Lt. Chandler left for the 6th Personnel Center to go home. Sgt. Tuzzio also left for home today. Capt. Hood left the Squadron to assume his new duties with ATC in Africa. One mission flown today.
- 11 Today is D day for the push which appears to be the real McCoy. From Cassino to the sea, all forces moved forward at 2300 hours. The Poles are North of Cassino, the VIII Army along the Rapido River, the French and Ghoums to the South and center and the American V Army along the Garigliano to the sea. Lt. Taylor got his orders to go home, and will leave for the Personnel Center tomorrow. Lt. White was transferred out of the Squadron today.
- 12 Lt. Taylor and Cpl. Phillips left for the Personnel Center for rotation to the States. The Personnel Center is situated in an extinct volcano over the hill from Naples and near the Port of Bagnoli. The area is in the racetrack built by Mussolini to accommodate visitors to his hoped-for Worlds Fair of 1944, so unceremoniously called off by our Doughfoots. It has an elaborate grandstand which is presently used to show movies to the 8 or 10 thousand troops quartered there. These troops are mostly replacements for the front, but many are waiting for a boat home. Many of these later look tired, some look like mental and physical cases. It is interesting, however to see 2,000 men in one chow line. Eight are quartered in a tent. The ones that have "gone around the bend" so to speak, do peculiar things. One ran shrieking out of his tent at night, apparently not knowing where he was. Another set out to drink himself to death, and after raising all the Hell he could, was finally overpowered a couple of days later almost at his avowed destination. The rigors of war on unwounded men's nerves can be seen daily in this Personnel Center. Capt. Fleming went to Foggia today with Capt. Weigle. Capt. Fleming has completed his tour of duty and is going home. The fellows flew two missions today. The following message was received from VIII Army Hq: "Well done. You have all coped magnificently. Thank you very much."
- 13 Our pilots did a swell job on two missions of bombing and strafing today. Our Squadron received the following message from the ASC: "Your mission A-15 caused road block. Traffic pilling up. Good work." Sgt. Caputo got arrested for speeding, and after demanding a trial was acquitted.

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S E C R E T

Sheet No. 73. War Diary. 526th F-B Sq., 86th F-B Gp., APC 650, New York, N. Y.

Month of May, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Capt., above-named Sq.

DAY

WAR DIARY

- 14 Lt. Seteneich was assigned to our Squadron today. The Red Cross girls came to our field today for the first time since we've been here. Capt. Fleming went to the Personnel Center for rotation to the States. Last night Naples was bombed by Jerry. The enemy planes flew directly over our field. There were considerable shell fragments flying around the area but no one got hurt. The natives around our bivouac stole Capt. Calamai's blankets and shoes and Lt. Babcock's pants. We are putting a guard on the Officers area to prevent a recurrence of these thefts. The pilots had a heavy day today, flying three missions, bombing and strafing enemy communications.
- 15 Naples had another air raid early this morning. The pilots flew three more missions today. Lt. Simpson of the 527th, after completing his 93rd mission, and the last prior to his departure for home, was killed on the runway when another plane taxied into his.
- 16 Two missions were flown today. The pilots have been doing a magnificent job of knocking out German motor vehicles, roads and railroads. The following message was received from the V Army ASC today: "Fifth Army Commander very appreciative your efforts. Request all personnel be informed. Keep up the good work." A Beaufighter ran into a B-17 on the runway and wrecked both planes. Cpl. Bushey hit an Italian barber who insisted on wandering through our area. Bushey is now in trouble with Group, since the Italian turned out to be the Group barber.
- 17 The French Ghoms appear to be the fiercest fighters on the front. They often puncture enemy lines and form spearheads deep into enemy territory, frequently losing communication with their rear echelons. They have advanced so rapidly on several occasions that they have been strafed and shelled by our own planes and artillery. The boys flew two more good missions today. 2nd Lts. Nordell, Watson and Michaud were made 1st Lts. today.
- 18 Four missions today. On one of them Lts. Reedman and Baron failed to return. The weather was bad and no one could determine what happened to them. Sgt. Jenkins left for the U.S. on the rotation plan. A message from V Army Hq. to the XII TAC highly commended the pilots and the good work they have been doing.
- 19 Two more missions today with the usual targets--trucks and roads. Cassino was taken today, and the whole line is moving faster.
- 20 One mission flown today before the weather closed in and prevented flying in the afternoon. Formia and Pico were captured today and the big push is rolling faster than ever. The writer had occasion to visit the Hospital Incuribile in Naples today and it may be of interest to mention it. Long corridors with beds packed tightly together are filled with patients, mostly elderly women, who moan and scream all day long. The hospital is operated by Italians. Apparently they have little or no medicine. One old

S E C R E T

Sheet No. 74. War Diary. 526th F-B Sq., 86th F-B Gp., APC 650, New York, N.Y.

Month of May, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Capt., above-named Sq.

DAY

WAR DIARY

- lady had a skinny arm burned and seared to the bone. Another had a hole clear through her breast and back, and these are typical of all the patients. Here and there is a hopelessly crippled or incurable child. Everyone who isn't moaning or crying asks for "Caramelli." In one long ward with at least 100 patients crowded into it, there was a single medical cabinet with no more than half-filled bottles of simple medicines. We saw a woman being operated on without anaesthetics. The pain and torture are pitiful and depressing. This hospital is only one of many in Naples for the natives--indicative of the pestilence and suffering that must exist among the population that is not seen, but that goes on behind closed doors in this area.
- 21 Lt. Culbertson went to Foggia to get his orders to go home. Lt. Drew, a pilot from the 525th, came back today after having lived behind enemy lines for 3½ months. His plane had blown up, he landed on a rooftop near Gaeta Gulf, and took to the hills where he lived with other evaders on grass until some French Ghoums finally rescued him. The V Army sent another message to the Group today as follows: "Congratulations on your work today." Lt. Archibald was injured on a mission today, but not seriously.
- 22 Today the boys had a field day and went on 6 missions, knocking out enumerable German vehicles, roads etc. The enlisted men have a clubhouse which consists of a large fly supported by poles and ropes. They have furnished it with good furniture, card table and crap table. They get considerable enjoyment out of its crude facilities, however. Our officers mess hall is completely screened-in, as is our kitchen. The E.M. mess hall is under construction. Anyone can take a hot shower any afternoon. Very few of the men are interested in going either to Naples or Caserta, except to see the movies which are shown every night. Lt. Culbertson left for the U.S. today.
- 23 The push from Anzio Beachhead started today and they expect to join forces with the Southern V Army in 3 days. Due to the push, all Pilots' days off are cancelled, as is rotation. The 525th lost a pilot today. Four missions were flown today in bad weather.
- 24 The boys had another field day today and accounted for at least 80 enemy trucks destroyed and as many damaged. The 527th lost a pilot today. Lt. Plowden of the 525th Sq. came back after being in enemy territory since January.
- 25 Four missions today with excellent results, destroying many German vehicles. Flak hit Lt. Dixon's canopy. Lt. Bartlett's plane hit in the right wing also. The ground forces are still forging ahead and are fighting it out with the Germans principally in the Valmontone area. Cisterna and Velletri have been captured, and the Beachhead and troops from the Gaeta district have made contact.

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S E C R E T

Sheet No. 75. War Diary. 526th F-E Sq., 86th F-B Gp., APO 650, New York, N.Y.

Month of May, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Capt., above-named Sq.

DAY

WAR DIARY

- 26 The boys are continuing at breakneck speed, most of them averaging a mission a day for the past 3 weeks. Three missions flown again today.
- 27 Over 500 heavy bombers flew over the field today on their way North. Our boys flew 3 more missions.
- 28 The enlisted men have been playing baseball the past couple of weeks. Each section has a team. The "Pill Rollers", "Vino Kids", "Belly Robbers", etc. are some of the names assigned to the various teams. We have an excellent ball diamond a couple of hundred yards from the bivouac area, dragged out of a wheat field.
- 29 In one of the three missions flown today Lt. Archibald was hit by flak. In another, Lt. Meyer failed to return.
- 30 Memorial Day today, but it passed unnoticed by most everyone in the excitement of the advance upon Rome. Two missions flown in bad weather today. We have now been overseas exactly thirteen months. The fellows are all getting used to our outdoor life after a month of tents. Rumors are flying about that we are going to move soon. Our A-36s are quickly vanishing and we don't know yet if our replacements will be P-47s or P-51s. We are all hoping they will be the latter.
- 31 We wound up a near record month with 5 missions today. The push on Rome looks like it will result in that City's fall within a short time. Casualties have been heavy on both sides. There has been considerable less drunkenness among the enlisted men and officers since we came to Marcianise airfield.

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526th Fighter Squadron
Outline History, June 1944

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By [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
I [REDACTED]

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

30 June 1944

AG 314.7

SUBJECT: Historical Records.

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

1. Outline History of the 526th Fighter Squadron for the period 1 June to 1 July 1944.

a. Present Designation: 526th Fighter Squadron, 86th Fighter Group, XII Tactical Air Command.

b. Changes in organization.

(1) Changes in designation: 23 June 1944, changed to 526th Fighter Squadron, 86th Fighter Group.

(2) Disposition of echelons and subordinate units: Same.

(3) Changes in commanding officers: None.

(4) Changes of staff officers: None.

c. Strength, commissioned and enlisted men.

(1) Month of June 1944.

(a) At beginning: 37 officers; 235 E.M. assigned.

(b) Net increase: 7 E.M. assigned.

(c) Net decrease: 6 officers;

(d) At end: 31 officers; 242 E.M. assigned.

d. Stations: Marcianise, Italy--Ciampino, Italy--Orbetello A/F, Italy.

e. Movements: 11 June 1944. Moved from Marcianise Airfield to Ciampino Airfield, Italy. Moved from Ciampino, Italy to present Station, Orbetello Airfield, near Albinia, Italy, 17 June 1944.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

f. Campaigns: Continued Italian Campaign.

g. Operations:

(1) Campaign: Italian.

(2) Nature of operations: Combat missions by flights of A-36A type aircraft, on dive-bombing, strafing, rhu barb and patrol, particularly in attacking enemy communications, and principally of dive-bombing and strafing type.

(3) Number of missions and sorties for period: 277 sorties; 43 missions.

(4) Results of most important missions:

(a) Mission 4 June 1944: 12 planes in inclement weather, with 2000 foot ceiling on bombing and strafing mission in Rome area. 1) The highways North and East of Rome were being extensively used by the enemy to transport men and materiel and it was highly desirable to effect road blocks and destroy enemy equipment; 2) Probability of success was poor due to poor visibility resulting from low overcast; 3) At a time when our forces were pressing advantage in an effort to capture Rome, elimination of enemy communications and harrassment thereof was of vital importance. 4) A road block was effected by the bombing and the following results obtained by strafing: 45 enemy trucks and armored vehicles destroyed, 20 enemy trucks and armored vehicles damaged and put out of commission, 5) seriously crippling enemy communications. On this mission the flight exhausted its ammunition by strafing. Low on fuel, forced landings were required by 7 of the flight at the Nettuno beach head. Another of the flight bailed out safely in friendly territory after an engine failure.

(b) Mission: 4 June 1944. Four of the pilots mentioned in (a) above, who landed at the beach head because of lack of fuel, talked the officials at the airfield into allowing them to re-fuel and re-arm. Re-arming has not been permitted at the beach head. An exception was made for our boys, who re-fueled, re-armed and took off on a strafing mission planned by themselves to a road network where they had observed numerous vehicles after they had run out of ammunition. Their ingenuity and resourcefulness resulted in the destruction of 4 more enemy armored vehicles and rendering inoperative 8 more. The men who distinguished themselves on the mission were Lts. Saunders, flight leader, Benear, Watson and Babcock.

(c) Mission: 5 June 1944: 8 planes participated in bombing and strafing mission to cut rails and attack enemy communications Capranica to Orte, Italy. 1) The railroads and highways in this vicinity were being used by the enemy in a desperate effort to prevent the fall of Rome; 2) Probability of success: poor on account of 9/10 cloud cover at 5,000 feet and extremely poor visibility. 3) The railroad was cut in two places by bombing 4) denying the enemy the use of this railroad, and the flight destroyed 24 and damaged 10 enemy trucks and armored vehicles on the highways, and destroyed 8 and damaged 20 railroad cars by strafing, 5) seriously harrassing the enemy and denying him the use of these facilities and communications. Two of the planes in this flight were damaged by enemy anti-aircraft.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

(d) Mission: 26 June 1944: 8 planes on mission to bomb highway and form road block North of Vergato, Italy, 1) which was being extensively used by the enemy. 2) The weather was extremely hazy and probability of success was poor. 3) This mission was to follow by 15 minutes an identical mission flown by the 525th Squadron. The purpose was to effect a road block, allow enemy traffic to pile up and then have night and day strafing and bombing missions by other units of the Command to knock out this traffic. 4) The 525th Squadron, because of the weather was unable to locate the target. However, our Squadron located the target, bombed it and effected the road block desired, 5) causing heavy damage to enemy communications by denying Germans the use of this highway and causing a traffic pile-up which was vulnerable to devastating air attack. The next morning, the 527th Squadron attempted to locate the target but was unable to do so on account of the weather.

h. Commanding Officer's important missions: None to report.

i. Losses in action: Officers and men: None.

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

(1) 1st Lt. George Mudrich was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross 6 June 1944.

(2) 2nd Lt. James H. Warren was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross 7 June 1944.

(3) 1st Lt. Paul R. Nordell was awarded the Purple Heart 15 June 1944.

(4) 2nd Lt. Gilfred D. McLean was awarded the Purple Heart 15 June 1944.

(5) 1st Lt. Thomas G. Archibald was awarded the Purple Heart 29 June 1944.

2. Inclosed is War Diary, 526th Fighter Squadron, for the period 1 June to 1 July 1944.

For the Commanding Officer:

Frederic H. Henriod

FREDERIC H. HENRIOD

Capt., A.C., S-2 O.

526th F. Sq., 86th F. Gp., APO 650

Incl: War Diary orig & 3.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

Sheet No. 76. War Diary. 526th Fighter Sq., 86th Fighter Group, APO 650, N.Y., N.Y.

Month of June, 1944. Prepared by Frederic H. Henriod, Capt., above named Sqdn.

WAR DIARY

- 1 June dawned at Marcianise, bright and sunny, also dusty. Our pilots had a busy day, flying 7 missions, knocking out enemy motor vehicles and roads. The ground forces are pushing quickly toward Rome and it appears like this ancient city will fall in a matter of a few days. The fighting around Velletri and Valmontone has been exceptionally fierce. The V Army has moved much faster and more effectively than the VIII which is lagging along Highway # 6. The Ghoums have done exceptionally well in thrusting spearheads through the German lines. The Germans mortally fear them since the Ghoums seldom bother to take prisoners.

- 2 Seven more missions today. The heavy schedule takes its toll on the pilots' nerves. Reports indicate the Germans are leaving Rome in droves, leaving only rearguard detail. The prisoners that have been taken are a hodge-podge lot, mostly non-Germans. Our casualties have been high and the going rough at times. The enlisted men still get a lot of pleasure out of their club. The motor pool fellows adopted a honey bear, a small animal that looks like a cross between a monkey and an ant-eater. One of our pilots, while slightly inebriated bought it from a sailor who had toted the homely creature from Africa.

- 3 The enlisted men had a party today and a lot of them got hilarious long into the night. They have been a well-behaved bunch and no one objects when they blow off a little steam once in a while. It is amazing, however, where the liquor suddenly appears from when a party is in the offing. The Italians still hang around our bivouac area. They have an almost insane desire to wander through bivouac areas for no apparent reason unless it is to steal what they can. As a result we're eternally bothered by these natives. They continue to charge 20 cents for an egg, but will trade 2 eggs for a package of cigarettes. This is because they can get about 50 lira on the black market for a package of American cigarettes. Even the English will trade their Scotch whiskey for American cigarettes. Our boys flew three missions today. Our field is more and more being used by high ranking officers to land and take off, since we are only 2 1/2 miles South of Caserta, where the XII TAC has its headquarters, as does the MAAF. Caserta is also an evacuation center and air transports and long strings of railroad cars with large red crosses can be seen coming to and leaving Caserta with wounded. There is also a large hospital on the Southern edge of town. Across the street from our airfield pre-fabricated buildings are springing up like mushrooms for the new personnel replacement center being placed there, similar to the one at Bagnoli. Thousands of men to be assigned to the front lines or air units are processed through this center, and a lesser number await orders to go home. It is interesting to watch brand new pilots inside the fence, fresh from the States, looking longingly at our planes across the highway.

