

**R E S T R I C T E D**

**HEADQUARTERS 86TH FIGHTER GROUP AAF (SE)**

November 1945

**UNIT HISTORY**

**I. ORGANIZATION AND CURRENT STATUS**

- 1. **Organization**
  - a. The current T/O of this organization: 1-27 A.C. dated 22 December 1943, with Change 1 dated 26 February 1944 and Change 2 dated 23 November 1944. Total Strength authorized: 30 officers, 70 enlisted men.
- 2. **Strength**
  - a. For the period of this report: 111 officers, 264 enlisted men.
  - b. Gains and losses for November: Gain: 63 officers, 184 enlisted men. Losses: None.
- \* Information compiled from the morning report, Hq., 86th Fighter Group.
- 3. **Stations**
  - a. No change in station. Present station, Schweinfurt, Germany, 26 September 1945.
- 4. **Losses in Action:** Negative.
- 5. **Awards and Decorations:**
  - a. The Distinguished Flying Cross is awarded the following named officers per headquarters, Ninth Air Force, General Order No. 195, Section II, 26 October 1945:

OLUF W. JEFSON, O-704680, 1st Lt., Air Corps, 86th Fighter Group. For extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight against the enemy on 22 March 1945. Lt JEFSON distinguished himself while leading four aircraft in an armed reconnaissance over Western Germany. Despite haze and smoke that limited visibility, he located an active marshalling yard and without regard for his personal safety in the face of intense antiaircraft fire he led his flight in a dive-bombing attack which resulted in the destruction of 10 railroad cars, four buildings and severely damaged eight additional cars as well as two oil cars, horse-drawn vehicles and motor transport in subsequent strafing attacks. The aggressiveness and daring displayed by Lt JEFSON on this occasion was indicative of his deep devotion to duty and reflect great credit upon himself and the Army Air Forces.

RAFAEL R. MARINO, O-721465, 1st Lt., Air Corps, 86th Fighter Group. For extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight against the enemy on 24 April 1945. While serving as pilot of a P-47 type aircraft Lt MARINO carried out a mission in close cooperation with the ground forces in Germany. Displaying skilled leadership and daring Lt MARINO courageously

led his formation in a series of brilliantly executed strafing attacks on enemy ME-262's which resulted in the destruction of nineteen and damaged four buildings, motor vehicle and one tractor. The devotion to duty and combat proficiency demonstrated by Lt MARINO on this occasion contributed in large measure to the sustained operations of his group.

MYRON W. WHEAT, O-719482, 1st Lt., Air Corps, 86th Fighter Group. For extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight against the enemy in the European Theater of Operations. On 1 April 1945, Lt WHEAT was leading a flight of P-47 type aircraft on an armed reconnaissance over Western Germany. Despite almost solid overcast extending to 13,000 feet, he successfully located two live locomotives and a moving troop train in the vicinity of Schweinfurt. Leading his flight in repeated precision dive-bombing and strafing attacks that destroyed two locomotives and heavily damaged a troop train, Lt WHEAT was instrumental in the outstanding results of this mission, and brought great credit to himself and his organization.

## II. NARRATIVE

The month of November saw personnel of the 86th Fighter Group so depleted that the impracticability of retaining operational squadrons was obvious; therefore, all squadron personnel were transferred to Group Headquarters, pending replacements for squadrons, to enable this organization to operate at maximum efficiency. Staff meetings resulted in the issue of a series of orders throughout the month for the purpose of making personnel stationed here military conscious; appearance, bearing and increased efficiency of all departments were the objects. Our football team ended the season undefeated, being tied only once. Transfers of ground officers to the Zone of the Interior has resulted in pilots assuming many of the ground jobs in the organization. Not a few officers were depressed at news of the new discharge system which, apparently, will keep them in service for a longer time. The venereal disease rate climbed to a new high this month and an intensive preventive program is under way. The aforementioned transfer of squadron personnel to Group Headquarters left this headquarters with 111 officers and 264 enlisted men at the end of the month.

## III. DIARY

November, 1945.

1. 2nd Lt Clifford J. Harrison joined Headquarters from the 527th Fighter Squadron to take over the duties of I & E in place of Major Kraft, who started for home last month. Seven enlisted men were fortunate enough to appear on orders for that highly coveted trip resulting in civilian attire. A motor-cycle accident last night is possibly responsible for the order prohibiting the use of any non-government vehicles on this airbase; all such vehicles are now to be turned in to the Motor Pool. The enlisted men's council met and are in favor of a Base Enlisted Men's Club; the present club is in Schweinfurt.

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2. The War Department has now dropped the critical score from 70 to 60 points

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making many more of our enlisted men eligible for discharge. A Liberty Run has been established from the Base to Schweinfurt every evening. Twenty-five men of the Advance Party of the XII Tactical Air Command arrived on the field; XII Tactical Air Command will assume command of Ninth Air Force units and will operate from Bad Kissingen, the former Headquarters of the Ninth Air Force.

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3. Our firing range is temporarily closed pending more satisfactory safety precautionary measures. The enlisted mens' quarters were inspected this morning and everything proved in order. Officers, more and more, are expressing their unprintable views on the present discharge system which appears to remain almost static insofar as officers are concerned.

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4. Sunday, and another day of victory for our "Red Rabbits" eleven who faced the 36th Fighter Group and defeated them by a score of 19-0, the game was played at Kassel, Germany.

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5. 2nd Lt. Glen Batten has been given the job of Group Communications Officer in place of Capt. Price who left for home last month. Finally made available to officers, saving them a trip to Bad Kissingen, are laundry, dry cleaning and shoe repair facilities. A barber has also been acquired here.

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6. The Base Theater has begun a "Bank Nite" in order to give winning personnel an opportunity to purchase special, critical items.

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7. Our usually too liberal soldiers were again reminded in an order today that tipping civilians such as barbers, bootblacks, etc., is forbidden. The current film showing is "Keep Your Powder Dry" with (oomph) Lana Turner.

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8. Squadrons in the Group had an inspection and all seemed in order. A Staff Meeting was held and closer cooperation requested between everyone in the Group. The possibility of permitting Germans in the officers club was discussed but no decision reached. Our football team, undefeated this season, is planning another game; this time with the 79th Ftr Gp

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9. 1st Lt John F. Carmody has been appointed Group Photo Officer; since the duties of this job are practically nil at this time, Lt Carmody may handle miscellaneous photography jobs. Eleven enlisted men were sent on the first leg toward home; the lowest point man sent had a score of 70. 1st Lt Mowrer, our medical administrative inspector, was also sent on his way to the States.

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10. T/Sgt Edwards has been granted a 90-day furlough in Missouri as a result of his reenlistment in the army. Officers may now make application for

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permits to drive a government vehicle on the airbase.

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11. Sunday - and Armistice Day. By direction of General Eisenhower, tomorrow, as well as today, will be a legal holiday to army personnel in the European Theater. The much anticipated football game with the 79th Fighter Group was postponed due to weather which prevented the opposing team from reaching our airbase. Fifteen 75-point-officers departed yesterday on their homeward journey.

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12. 1st Lt. Donald D. Adams, formerly of the 525th Fighter Squadron, has been appointed as Group Engineering Officer. Lts. Anderson, Blowers and Perez, along with Major Lay, saw their names on a beautiful Special Order --- imagine, "ordering" them to go home!

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13. Our "Red Rabbits" football team, champions of the Bavarian League, defeated the 79th Fighter Group at Schweinfurt Stadium; the score was 21-0. The ARC in Bad Kissingen offers Bingo as the attraction tonight with promises of a large variety of prizes.

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14. Our Daily Bulletin today printed an ample week's entertainment in Bad Kissingen, covering Jam Sessions, Art Classes, Ping-pong and Bowling Tournaments; this, with the regularly scheduled nightly movie on our own base, an ARC club and a library, permits all soldiers their diversion from routine.

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15. Capt. McCormick, Dental Corps, has now left for home. All offices appear to have plenty of work to keep them occupied but this probably due to the state of "not enough", and inexperienced, personnel; the "not enough" will soon be rectified as we plan to put all squadron personnel in Group Headquarters and form a Headquarters detachment in order to have fewer offices and, consequently, more personnel in each office.

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16. For economy's sake, no vehicles are to be used for attending the Base Theater or for visiting the ARC club. Recently, there has been trouble with military personnel tearing down parts of the fence surrounding the field; published orders state that, henceforth, violators will be severely punished.

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17. Due to personnel unfamiliarity with army correspondence, all officers were given a set of rules to which we are expected to adhere from now on. Squadron personnel flows daily into Group to increase the efficiency of Headquarter's departments by bringing them up to T/O strength.

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25. The day of rest rolled 'round again and another Ground Forces security check of civilians required the restriction of our soldiers to base. No unusual activity to report.

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26. The Staff meeting scheduled for tonight was postponed and personnel went to see the show "Arsenic and Old Lace", playing at the Base Theater. It's becoming so cold now that precautions are being taken in an attempt to keep pipes from freezing in the buildings. Officer morale was definitely not bolstered by the news of U. S. vessels having 34,000 more available berths than there are troops scheduled to return home.

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27. In an effort to curb the rise of venereal disease cases, plans are being made for more recreation facilities; Information and Education and Special Services can play an important part in the prevention of VD if their aid can be successfully enlisted.

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28. Capt Elkin, Medical Corps, who has probably "sweated out" going home more than any other man in the organization, has finally received orders assigning him to a unit which will soon see him on the way. The Staff meeting this evening was devoted mainly to ascertaining the present status of each department, i.e., what they are doing, difficulties encountered, progress made, etc.

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29. Due to the increasing number of stray dogs on the base, wandering in and out of buildings at will and interrupting programs at the theater with their barking, the Provost Marshal now has orders to pick up and dispose of all untagged mongrels. In an effort to make our soldiers more "appearance conscious", violators of uniform regulations are now prohibited from attending movies at the Base Theater.

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30. A meeting of venereal disease officers was held in order to promote a VD Poster Contest. Prizes have been arranged for with the assistance of the Post Exchange officer who can furnish certain critical items currently sold at the PX. Because of the wet weather now here, personnel have been cautioned to refrain from walking over dirt paths in order to control the spread of mud.

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IV. COMBAT OPERATIONS - Negative

V. NON-COMBAT OPERATIONS - Negative

VI. TRAINING

a. Regularly scheduled training is at present negligible due to the

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main task of training inexperienced personnel in all departments for more efficient functioning of the entire organization.

VII. STATISTICS

a. The venereal disease rate has risen to 160.35 per annum per 1000 personnel for November from 65 per annum per 1000 personnel in October.

VIII. STAFF ACTIVITIES AND CONFERENCES

a. It is the policy of this organization to hold one Staff Meeting every week; during the past month, the main topics under discussion were: Venereal Disease Control, Economy of Transportation, Economy of Personnel, Cooperation between Departments, Military Courtesy and The Issue of Warm Clothing for Guard Personnel and Motor Vehicle Operators.

IX. PRESS RELEASES AND PHOTOGRAPHS - Negative.

X. APPENDIX - Negative.

THEODORE W. PETERSON,  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
Unit Historian.

GP-86-171  
DEC. 1945

**RESTRICTED**

**HISTORICAL DATA**

of

**HQ, 86th Fighter Group AAF (SE)**

for the period 1 December 1945 thru 31 December 1945

Inoperational Nov. - Dec. 1945	}	525th	Fighter	SG.
		526th	"	"
		527th	"	"

HEADQUARTERS 86TH FIGHTER GROUP AAF (SE)

December 1945

UNIT HISTORY

ORGANIZATION AND CURRENT STATUS

1. Organization

a. The current T/O & E of this organization: 1-12R dated 5 March 1945. Total Strength authorized: 27 officers, 70 enlisted men.

2. Strength

a. For the period of this report: 118 officers, 207 enlisted men.  
b. Gains and losses for November: Gain: 7 officers  
Loss: 57 enlisted men.

\*Information compiled from the morning report, Hq., 86th Fighter Group.

Note: Overstrength in Headquarters is due to the fact that our three squadrons are inoperative, all personnel having been transferred to this Headquarters; each squadron has 1 officer and 1 enlisted man assigned to it. Considering Group Headquarters and the three squadrons, this group is understrength 23 officers and 575 enlisted men.

3. Stations

a. No change in station. Present station, Schweinfurt, Germany (WH-74261;2), 26 September 1945.

4. Losses

a. The following named men, while flying in a C-47 type aircraft, were later discovered to have crashed into a mountainside 3 miles south of Gersfeld, Germany; all were killed:

- 1. Mitzner, Robert A., 1st Lt., O-713863, pilot.
- 2. Jones, Donald W., 1st Lt., O-721421.
- 3. Threlkeld, Richard R., S/Sgt., 34823506.

5. Awards and Decorations: Negative.



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D I A R Y

December 1945.

1. The first day of the month was marked by the determination of the Commanding Officer to lower the appalling venereal disease rate which skyrocketed off our graph last month; a VD film was shown today. All personnel were notified that the American Red Cross Club would be open, henceforth, to American personnel only; no displaced persons will be permitted to enter. Major Young, former Deputy CO of the Group, has been assigned to another outfit for return to the Zone of the Interior. 1st Lt. Leonard W. Conrad has been appointed Group Engineering Officer vice Lt. Adams, relieved; 2nd Lt. Charles W. Vandenberg is now Group Armament and Ordnance Officer and 2nd Lt. Perry J. DeStevens has assumed the duties of Group Photo Officer.

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2. Today, being Sunday, a good percentage of personnel missed breakfast for the luxury of remaining in the sack. Nothing of undue importance occurred during the day.

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3. All German civilians and displaced persons employed here were required, commencing today, to have their passes stamped; this is to be a regular procedure to insure the removal of unauthorized civilians from the base, such as those who might have been recently discharged, and who retained their passes.

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4. The weekly staff meeting this evening was held this evening with discussions covering the lack of heat in barracks and economy of transportation; shortage of fuel prevents trucks from being sent for coal. Three enlisted men signed up for the regular army and twenty more, with point scores ranging from 55 to 59 - which means they'll be heading home soon - were assigned to the Group.

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5. Daily courier service from the 64th Fighter Wing and the XII Tactical Air Command, permits speedy correspondence between these organizations and our Group. A meeting of all members of the officers' club was held this evening for the purpose of adopting the club constitution and by-laws.

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6. A report on the enlisted men's council meeting reveals the following main points as having been under discussion: An attempt to have men who pull guard duty given time off the following day; the desire to have guards accompany truck drivers who make runs off the base; the wish to secure some skiing equipment.

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7. Today marks four years since the bombing of Pearl Harbor; the peaceful blanket of snow covering the airbase puts all thoughts of war far in the background. Another meeting was held of venereal disease control officers of all units on the base and the progress of the VD Control Program was discussed.

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- 8. A venereal disease film was shown this afternoon to Group personnel; base units were notified and invited to attend. The remainder of the day was marked by inactivity.

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- 9. Another dreary Sunday has passed. No unusual activity to report.

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- 10. All personnel have been reminded of the wearing of identification tags due to reports from higher headquarters in which individuals involved in accidents could not be identified. The main topics under discussion at the staff meeting this evening were the venereal disease control program, gas shortage, German civilian personnel using the latrines and baths in the officers' barracks. The Communications Section has now begun a cable service to the United States; messages are mailed from here to Paris for transmission. Two more enlisted men reenlisted in the Regular Army.

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- 11. Thirty-four enlisted men joined this organization from XII TAC Headquarters; all had points scores ranging from 56 to 59, so we won't have them long. 2nd Lt. Ferrell A. Goodroe was appointed Group Surveying Officer. Supply managed to scrounge rifty light bulbs for use in the Base Theater. One more enlisted man reenlisted today.

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- 12. A basketball court is being set up on the airbase -- an added recreational facility which may help in the battle against venereal disease.

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- 13. Ten enlisted men joined the outfit from the 10th Recon Co; today. Due to isolated instances of thefts of small arms, an order has been issued that such weapons be turned in to supply and be kept under lock and key until such time as the owner is scheduled to return here; Government issue weapons will also be under guard when not being used for duty purposes. There was another enlisted men's council meeting this evening.

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- 14. An air show was held over Bad Kissingen today; pilots met and discussed show upon returning. Jewish services will no longer be held in Schweinfurt, but on the airbase instead.

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- 15. Fifty-six enlisted men were promoted; all capable personnel are assured of promotions because of the large amount of T/O vacancies. An inspection was made of the flight line by Capt. Erickson, Administrative Inspector, this morning. In the afternoon a VD film was shown. The Schweinfurt Airbase VD Poster Contest extended its closing date for acceptance of entries from today to next Saturday with the number of prizes raised from one to three.

- 16. Sunday - sack day. Time can be occupied by going hunting during the day, attending the Red Cross, utilizing the base library or attending the evening movie. The S-4's of our Group and the 503rd Air Service Group began plans for consolidation; the 503rd S-2 has moved into the office of the 86th Group S-2. Gradually, we hope to have the two groups almost completely consolidated.

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- 17. Arrangements have been made for the issuance of hunting licenses to interested personnel as all previous licenses issued are now void. The staff meeting tonight was rather brief as there were no topics of particular worth to discuss at length.

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- 18. Base units were reminded of the location of the recruiting officer in our effort to secure more enlistees. Lt. Gunnoe had to belly-land his P-47 type aircraft when engine trouble forced him out of his formation; he landed in a field 3 miles east of Schweinfurt and was unhurt.

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- 19. Officers have been cautioned to refrain from entering the enlisted men's club unless by invitation. Notification has come of our APO number changing from 374 to 633 on 1 January 1946. Our S-4 managed to acquire (?) a snow plow in anticipation of a rough winter, although the weather has been delightfully warm, to date.

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- 20. Effective 31 December, the point score for discharge will be lowered to 50 for enlisted men and 70 for officers. Due to recent instances of petty thievery, soldiers and motor vehicles operators being molested by civilians when off the airbase, etc., all personnel have been instructed to report such incidents to their unit S-2 officer. Four officers and 136 enlisted men were sent to Fritzlar, Germany, for casual shipment home --- lucky people.

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- 21. Stars and Stripes, our overseas newspaper, reported USFET G-1 as saying that enlisted men with 3 1/2 years service and officers with 4 years service since 16 Sept 1940 are now eligible for discharge. The rear entrance to this airbase has now been closed due to the inadequate number of guards allotted the Provost Marshal.

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- 22. Beginning today, all personnel will have hot water during the morning hours as well as in the evening. Notices were posted in the Daily Bulletin for the purpose of discouraging individuals from making long distance phone calls from this airbase unless they were of an official nature.

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- 23. Sunday - with most personnel resting up in anticipation of the Christmas Eve celebration. Gen Kepner of XII TAC was prevented from attending Gen Patton's funeral because of weather which forced him to turn back to this airbase shortly after take-off. The American Red Cross held a Christmas party this evening from 1900 to 2130 hours.

24. All personnel, except those urgently needed for duty purposes, knocked off from work at noon today -- it being the day before Christmas. On X-mas Eve, the enlisted men celebrated in their club in Schweinfurt and the officers in their base club. Casting a shadow on X-mas festivities was the C-47 crash into a mountainside which killed three men of this organization.

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25. Today, Christmas, was declared a holiday in the army; meal hours were changed for the benefit of those who partied too late last night. The dinner was roast turkey with all the trimmings and free drinks were had by all. Capt Bussey and Lt Bean spent a good portion of Christmas Day by investigating yesterday's accident. Catholic Mass was held at 1000 hours and Protestant Christmas Services at 1130 hours in the Base Theater.

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26. Back to work after two nights of celebrating. Fog kept planes aground today. The Air Inspector and the Commanding Officer have posted notice that they will hold personal conference hours once weekly. Our Provost Marshal, Lt Whittington, has returned home on a thirty day leave.

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27. Hazy weather prevented any local flying today. All base units were notified to remove obsolete road and building signs posted on the airbase as they tend to cause confusion when viewed by an individual not stationed here.

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28. Henceforth, any repairs to teletype and telephone installations which utilize Schweinfurt Airbase cables, will be cleared through the 503rd Air Service Group, now assigned to this Headquarters. Pfc Carl Ferraro left for the USAFE Technical Training School at Mellingen, Germany, for two weeks. The staff meeting this evening was devoted, in the main, to the consolidation of the Service Group with the 86th Fighter Group.

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29. Another venereal disease film was shown today - the "Story of Syphilis". Despite attempts made here to curb VD rate, the percentage has risen to an alarming extent. Movies have been shown every week, preceded by a short lecture. Posters have been placed in conspicuous places and vehicles checked to assure their carrying pro kits and rubbers before they leave the airbase. Special Services activity, although not exactly flourishing, is of sufficient amount to enable the average soldier to occupy his time in ways other than sexual. The coming cold weather may, possibly, help to cut down the rate. Meanwhile, the struggle continues.

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30. 1st Lt John C. Schuett of the 503rd Air Service Group has now been appointed Base Provost Marshal in place of Lt Whittington who has gone home on leave. It's Sunday again and all is quiet.

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31. No organizational histories have been made up by the squadrons under this Headquarters as they are temporarily inactive, all their personnel having been transferred to Group Headquarters. This history covers the activity of the entire 86th Fighter Group. It's New Year's Eve and the Officers held a "come as you are" party, with all officers dressed in anything except military clothing. The enlisted men's club in Schweinfurt remained open later than usual. Special Services has had a movie almost every night this month, which helps the venereal control program somewhat.

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HEADQUARTERS 86TH FIGHTER GROUP AAF  
Office of the Group Intelligence Officer

AG 314.7

14 June 1945

SUBJECT: Historical Records.

TO : Commanding General, XII Tactical Air Command.  
Attention: Historical Section

1. OUTLINE HISTORY, Hq. 86th Fighter Group, period 1 - 31 May 1945.
  - a. Present designation: Hq. 86th Fighter Group AAF, XII Tactical Air Command, APO 374, U. S. Army.
  - b. Changes in Organization: None.
  - c. Changes in designation, assignment, or attachment: Formally assigned to First Tactical Air Force, now attached to XII T.A.C. 9th Air Force.
2. Subordinate units: None.
3. Changes in Command: None.
4. Changes of Staff Officers: Capt. V.K. Reeves Trf'd to U.S. 8 May 1945, Major R. (NMI) Taylor appointed Gr. Ops. Officer 8 May 1945, Major J.R. Core relieved as Gr. Ops. Officer 8 May 1945, Capt. J.B. Gross appointed Group Exc. Officer 8 May 1945, Chaplain F.F. Fischer trf'd to 63rd. Wing, 10, May 1945. Chaplain J.E. Murphy assigned 11 May 1945, Major J.R. Core trf'd to U.S. 17 May 1945, Capt. J.C. Covington appointed Air Insp. 24 May 1945, Major R. (NMI) Taylor trf'd to SHAEF 27 May 1945, Capt. J.C. Covington relieved and appointed Group Ops Officer, Lt. Col. Thomas Trf'd to U.S. 30 May 1945.
5. Changes in T/O: None.
  - d. Strength: 30 Officers, and 78 Enlisted Men.
  - e. Present Station: Y-72, Braunschardt, Germany, 18 April 1945.
  - f. Campaigns: Sicilian - 6 July 1943 to 17 August 1943.  
Naples Foggia - 18 August 1943 to 21 January 1944.  
Rome Arno - 22 January 1944 to 21 February 1945.  
Southern France - 15 August 1944 to 26 September 1944.  
German - 25 February 1945 to 8 May 1945.
  - g. Operations:
    - (1) Nature of Operations:

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(1) Nature of Operations: Since V-E day the group had been flying local sorties for the purpose of training.

(2) Number of Missions and Sorties:

- a. 3,645 Missions
- b. 28,662 Sortis

(3) Outstanding Missions: See Sq. Histories.

h. Leaders of outstanding missions: See Sq. Histories.

i. Losses in action: None for Headquarters.

j. Awards recieved during period: See Incl.

Incl. War Diary

*Paul E. Verseput*

PAUL E. VERSEPUT,  
Major, Air Corps,  
Group Historian.

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WAR DIARY OF THE 86TH FIGHTER GROUP AAF

- Group Headquarters -

Braunschardt Airfield, Germany

May 1945

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1. A special mission was assigned the Group today. Thirty-six planes were to fly to the Munich area, pick up some enemy fighters and escort them back to this field, where they would land. Inclement weather prevented this show from taking place. The assignment of this mission caused considerable speculation as whether the end of the war was imminent. A barber shop sponsored by the 319th Air Service Group is now open for business in Gross Gerau. Hair cut, one mark. Because of the cool weather, as yet no one has taken advantage of the use of our swimming pool.

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  2. Our deer hunters are definitely on the ball these days, what with generous portions of venison served at last evenings chow and again this evening. An added treat was all the Ice Cream you could hold. Baseball is in the air, and due to the slow up in Operations, time is afforded the men to play with neighboring outfits several times a week.

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  3. Furloughs to the United Kingdom are now in order. Sgts. Collins and MC Laughlin wasted no time by leaving today for a seven day sojourn to the land of fog, tea and pubs. "Tally - Ho the Fox!" Sgt. Collins is looking forward to a reunion with a brother he hasn't seen for three years.

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  4. Lack of Dances, Personal dates and feminine company in general is bringing out signs of restlessness among the men. Sports and the clubs tend to help some, but everyone is looking forward to their respective turn for furlough, which now gives the men a choice of Paris, Cannes, Nancy and the United Kingdom and the opportunity to again turn on their charms with the femmes and really fraternize.

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  5. Seems strange - no targets, so few missions and definitely too much time to think about the point system and home. Discussions regarding potential points and their relative value towards discharge are now a daily event and the men are really sweating out what their respective changes might be.

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  6. The latest rumor concerns our moving again to a field in the vicinity of Stuttgart. We're all wondering what possible motive there can be behind this move when everything points to German surrender any day now. Few missions were flown today with no strafing or bombing targets to be found.

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  7. Yesterdays rumor was partially confirmed today. Several officers and enlisted men left for field R-50 near Stuttgart, primarily to guard the field and its property. Nothing definite as to whether this will serve as our next field. Tonights movie was the delightful comedy "Doughgirls" with Ann Sheridan, Jack Carson and an excellent supporting cast.
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8. The day we have all been looking forward to: Unconditional Surrender of all German forces was announced today by Winston Churchill. Half the battle is now over with and naturally everyone is more than anxious to learn what disposition will be made of the 86th. Occupational duty -- C.B.I. -- or back to the states. The Group's last combat mission was flown today, ending operations in this theatre with 3,045 combat missions to its credit. 28,662 sorties were flown to mass this total. Our airmen destroyed and damaged a total of 1,114 locomotives, 10,420 rail cars, 515 enemy planes, and 9,981 motor transports plus beaucoup bridges, ammo dumps, warehouses etc. Two more War Department unit citations are now in channels. One was recommended for our use of fire bombs in the allied attack which took Monte Belmonte and Monte Grande toward the close of 1944; the other was for great number of enemy aircraft destroyed during the Seventh Army offensive which began on March 15th of this year. We were at Tantonville then. Where women were legal and the men were able. Remember? The Group will miss "Pappy" Captain Vincent Relyea and Major Jesse R. Core III. Both have been relieved from duty and are returning to the states. Lt. Col. James K. Thomas has also been relieved from duty and will shortly leave for the states. A pleasant surprise was the appointment of Captain Jack B. Gross as Group Executive Officer succeeding Col. Thomas.

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9. The 86th held a "Victory in Europe" observance this morning. Both officers and enlisted men in class "A" uniform participated in the ceremony. A tribute to the dead by Lt. Col. Kirsch preceded, the raising of the flag to full mast. After taps were sounded, a formation of thunderbolts zoomed to tree top level over the ceremony. Lt. Col. Lee our C.C. addressed the men as did Chaplain Francis Fischer. This was probably the Chaplain's last official act with the Group, as he is transferring to HQ & HQ Squadron, 63rd Fighter Wing. Chaplain Fisher has been with Group since Key Field and is going to be missed by all.

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10. Furloughs are now well under way. The majority of the men have been going to Paris or England. Judging by those who have already returned, a good time can be had in either place, with unlimited opportunities to date the fair sex and participate in the numerous forms of entertainment offered the G.I.'s. A new Group plan calls for one Squadron a day standing by and two Squadrons stood down. The pilots are already complaining about so little flying time. Both the officers and enlisted men clubs are in full swing with the usual desired effects and naturally beaucoup hangovers.

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11. Captain Joseph B. Murphy our new chaplain arrived today. Chaplain Murphy is thirty eight years of age. He attended Duquesne University and St. Mary's Seminary in Norwalk, Connecticut. He spent four years doing missionary work in East Africa, one year lecturing in eastern colleges and two years in a parish in Charleston, S.C. After his enlistment in the Air Force in August 1941, his Army career commenced with the 56th Fighter Group (The first group to fly P-47's). Then to the 93rd Bomb Group (Noted for its B-24 low level attacks on the Ploesti Oil Fields) and prior to joining the 86th was with the 446th Group. He has been in England two and a half years all that time with the Eight Air Force. The men extend a cordial welcome to Chaplain Murphy.

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12. Air Force, the official publication of the AAF wired our C.O. to send an article on the fine points of Dive-Bombing and Strafing. The story will be slanted to catch the eyes of the cadets and newly commissioned pilots headed to the C.B.I. so they can avail themselves of the knowledge Col. Lee acquired the hard way in his two and one half years of combat flying. Our "Old Man" ended V-E day with 258 combat missions - - more than any other pilot in the European and Mediterranean theatres. Transition flying is well under way now. The Group received a batch of new pilots today, The majority of which are former C-47 pilots. They will be indoctrinated and start cockpit time in P-47's as soon as possible.

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13. Sixty of the enlisted men were assigned a pretty rough detail today. The field engineers left suddenly during the night, leaving the runway in the process of repair. No alternative but to have the men pitch in with shovels, picks, brooms and etc. Rough!!! Conversation concerning the point system still goes on. There seems to be some confusion as to how many stars we have, and some of the men who are just on the border line are sweating out at least one more star.

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14. Shortly after V-E day the Public Relations officer circulated a questionnaire asking officers and enlisted men what they would prefer if they had a the choice of (1) remaining in Germany as part of the Occupational forces, (2) going direct to C.B.I., (3) returning to the states for rest or re-training and to be later sent to the C.B.I.. 438 answers were returned. Five men prefer to remain as an occupational force. Sixteen would rather go direct to the C.B.I. 289 would like to return to the states for rest or re-training then be sent to the C.B.I. in remarks section of form, many of the men preferred #3 qualified their choice with "if necessary. 107 men wrote that they wanted to return to the states to stay. 21 were either undecided or had no preference. Last evenings movie was "Hollywood Canteen".

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15. 1st. Lt. Cecil Hayes of the 527th Squadron had a most interesting experience recently. Lt. Hayes was working near Salzburg with the 106th Cavalry Group, a spearhead for the Seventh Army. A Luftwaffe major approached and said his Colonel would surrender the airfield outside Salzburg, with one provision, namely, the surrender must be to an Air Force Officer. Hayes and an American Sergeant drove to the field which was a base for ME 262 Jet Propelled aircraft. Lt. Hayes ordered the Colonel to assemble all his officers and men in one place. He and the Sergeant collected all rifles and ammunition and locked them in a room. The Colonel and the Major drove the two Americans back to Salzburg where Hayes notified the 3rd Division to post guards over the enemy personnel pending their transfer to the P.W. camp. The Colonel and the Major then gave their pistols to Hayes as official token of surrender. Good news! Rumors now have it that we will not move to Stuttgart and that the personnel now stationed here will be recalled. The issue of P.X. rations in addition to the showing of the film "My Reputation" with Barbara Stanwyck, George Brent and Eve Arden wound up an otherwise uneventful day.

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16. An award ceremony was conducted today near Group Operations tent. The awards; 47 Air Medals and 5 purple Hearts were presented to Airmen by Lt. Col. Lee assisted by Major Fauskin. At this ceremony a War Bond was also presented to 1st Lt. Aegerter Jr. of the 525th Squadron, who was the first man to shoot down an enemy plane after a date set by Major Paul E. Verseput, the donor of the War Bond. We were fortunate in having a travelling U.S.O. unit stop by to entertain us with a comedy entitled "Parade Rest". The men enjoyed it immensely. A group of men were sent to Innsbruck on detached service to guard some captured technical equipment. This makes the situation more confusing than ever,

