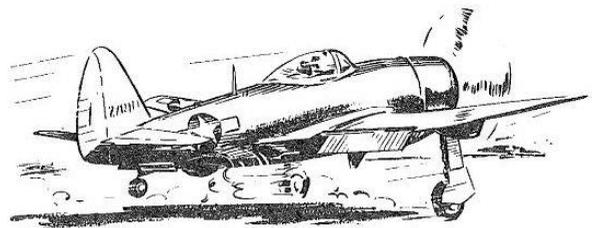




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Dear Friends and 367th Fighter Group members,

The first article deals with the move of the 367th Fighter Group to France. This move is a radical change for the men of the outfit. They left the confort of their English base to live in tents on landing grounds created quickly in the middle of cow pastures in Normandy. The sources for this article are a mix of squadron reports, letters, diaries and pictures taken in 1944 but also in the recent years. A lot of pictures will illustrate this article. Some of those pictures are in color and I hope that you will like them as as I like them.

We saw in the last issue the dedication in honor of LT. Donald K. Erickson. The second article of this issue deals with the investigation of the crash site of his P-38.

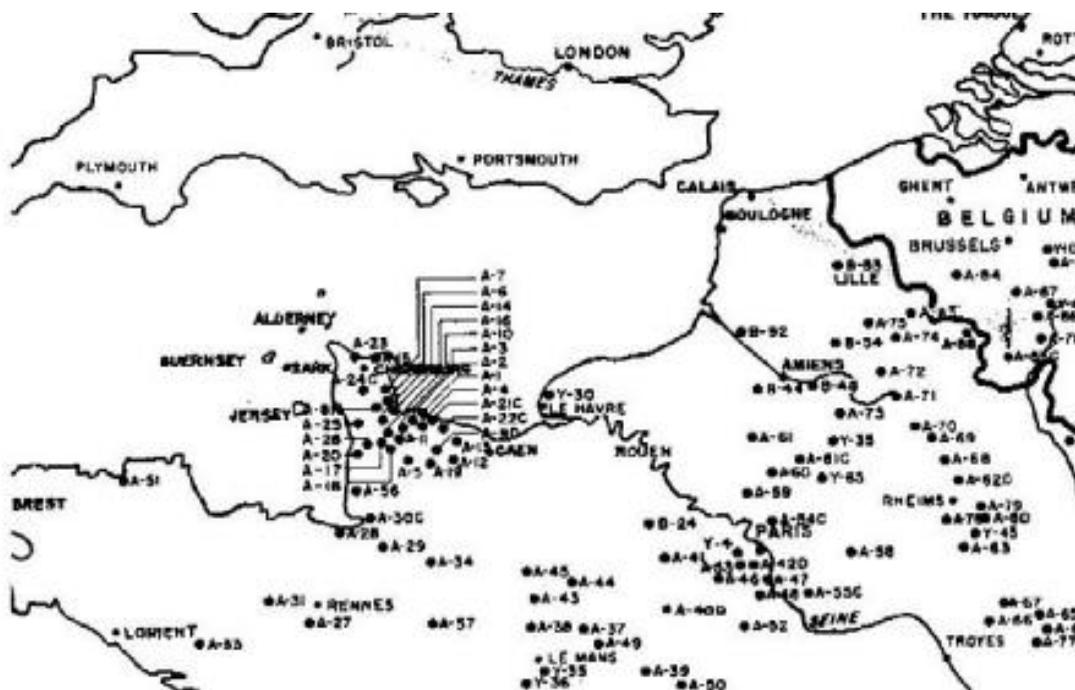
The information on the « honored pilot » article are rather meager but the video posted on youtube is far better than an article.

No idea for your Thanksgiving menu? Go to page 17 !

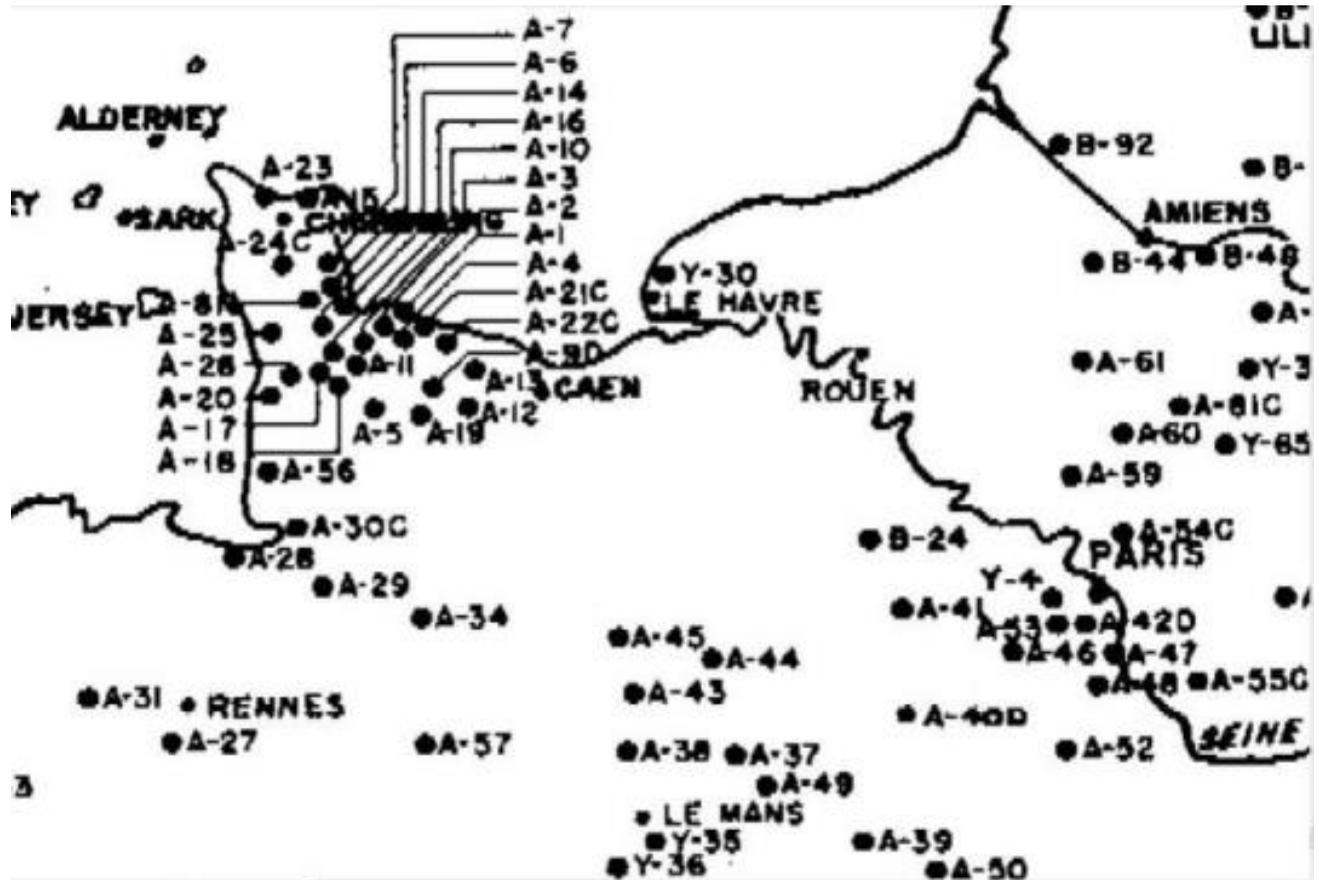
I wish you a good reading and a happy Thanksgiving.

Olivier Le Floch

The advanced landing grounds in Normandy



American Advanced Landing Grounds in France. The first ALGs were built in the Cotentin Peninsula (9th AF Report)



Closer view of the first American airfields in the Cotentin Peninsula and northern France. Note the large number of airfields. The English airfields are not shown on the drawing (9th AF Report)

A long time before the Invasion of France the Allied planners had scheduled to build airfields close to the coast of Normandy. These advanced landing grounds (ALG), as they were named, would avoid the fighter-bombers to cross the Channel and lose a precious time to support the ground troops. Furthermore, less flying time would help to replace belly tanks by bombs and to schedule additional missions each day.

The photo reconnaissance groups sent months and weeks before the Invasion of France a lot of aircrafts flying over this part of France to bring pictures which would help to find the most appropriate places to build those airfields.

With the first troops which landed in France on D-day and during the following days were engineer battalions in charge of the construction of those airfields. Those last were named after an alpha-numeric code. "A" for the American ALGs, "B" for the British ones and "1" for the first ALG built, "2" for the second, etc. And to help to find them on a map, the name of a nearby town would be added. So, for the American ALGs, ALG-1 Saint Pierre du Mont, was built very close to the coast between Pointe du Hoc and Omaha Beach on the territory of the small town of Saint Pierre du Mont. The American ALGs were built in all the Cotentin Peninsula but most of them close to the American sector of the Invasion. The English ALGs were built near the English landing beaches of the Invasion more close to Caen. When the 367th FG was scheduled to cross the Channel and settle down on his own ALG, all the ALGs were already occupied, mainly by P-47s groups.



Lt. Lloyd Andrews on "The thing", a captured German Kettentraktor (Lillian Dillon/archives 367th FG)



Lts Hugh Hallman and Ray Jackson just after they arrived to A-10 Carentan at the end of July 1944, certainly on July 27th (Clyde Deavers/archives 367th FG)



Cap. Joe Griffin just after he arrived to A-10 Carentan at the end of July 1944, certainly on July 27th (Clyde Deavers/archives 367th FG)

So the three squadrons of the 367th FG were assigned to a different ALG.

The 392nd FS was sent to ALG-10 Carentan, the 393rd FS was sent to ALG-14 Cretteville and the 394th FS and Headquarter to ALG-6 Beuzeville. A-10 Carentan was 2 miles east of Carentan but was built on the surface of 3 tiny villages, Catz, Saint Pellerin and Les Veys. It was built by the 826th Engineer Aviation Battalion (EAB). This battalion went ashore on June 12th, two days before the site of A-10 was captured from the enemy. The runway was 5000 feet long and 120 feet large and made of square mesh track. The engineers built the runway parallel to the highway 13 in the middle of apple trees orchards and farm lands. I met some year ago Mr. Claude Haize who was a teenager at the time. The farm of his father was inside the airfield perimeter. He told me that the engineers came to their farm land one early morning and without asking permission to anybody a ndstarted to cut the apple trees with chain saws.



André Gidon and Claude Haize in front of the big stone dedicated to the 50th FG in A-10 Carentan , explaining to Joe Cobb (son-in-law of Lt. Ray Jackson), their experience with the American air men during summer 1944. They were around 15 years old in summer 1944.



P-47s of the 50th FG in A-10 Carentan. The cows are the ones of Claude Haize's father. This group occupied the airfield before the 392nd FS. (USAAF)

As he had never seen a chain saw he rushed to his father and said "American soldiers are cutting the apple trees with machines". His father did not want to believe him and he almost kick his butt...But a few minutes later he saw also the chain saws. The American troops would not only bring with them the Coca Cola, the chewing-gums or other typical American stuffs but they would also bring to France some modernity. France was still a very rural country at the time. The chain saws, the scrappers and other vehicles used to build the airstrips were also not known from a lot of French.

The first aircrafts to land on the runway of A-10 were the P-47s of the 50th FG. One of Mr. Haize's friend, André Gidon, who also leaved inside the airfield perimeter told me that her mother was doing the laundry for the ground crew of a P-47 whose hard stand was just in front their farm. The P-47 was named "Pee Wee". The taxiway on the north side of the airstrip was just behind the farm and André could see the P-47s and next the P-38s taxiing to go to the end of the runway before takeoff. For both André and Claude this time of their life left vivid memories and there is not a single day they do not think about the few months the American airmen stayed close to their farms. As teen agers they were eager to help or just going around with the ground crews, pilots or other men of the outfits.

According to them the 25 P-38s of the 392nd FS were parked to the southern part of the airfield as the rest was occupied by



"Doc" Bleich, surgeon of the 392nd FS in A-10 Carentan. Note the German helmets on the jeep and the apple trees (Clyde Deavers/archives 367th FG)

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the 75 P-47s of the 50th FG.

As seen above, the 393rd FS was sent to ALG-14 Cretteville. The 819th EAB started to build this ALG on June 23rd. It was operational on July 4th. The airfield was built of square mesh track, pierced steel plank and prefabricated Hessian surface. When the 393rd FS came from Ibsley, it was already occupied by the P-47s of the 358th FG. The runway was 3600 feet long and 120 feet large and was later extended with 1400 feet of packed hearth.



ALG A-14 Cretteville in June 2016. It is hard to imagine that these farm lands were a very noisy and busy place during summer 1944



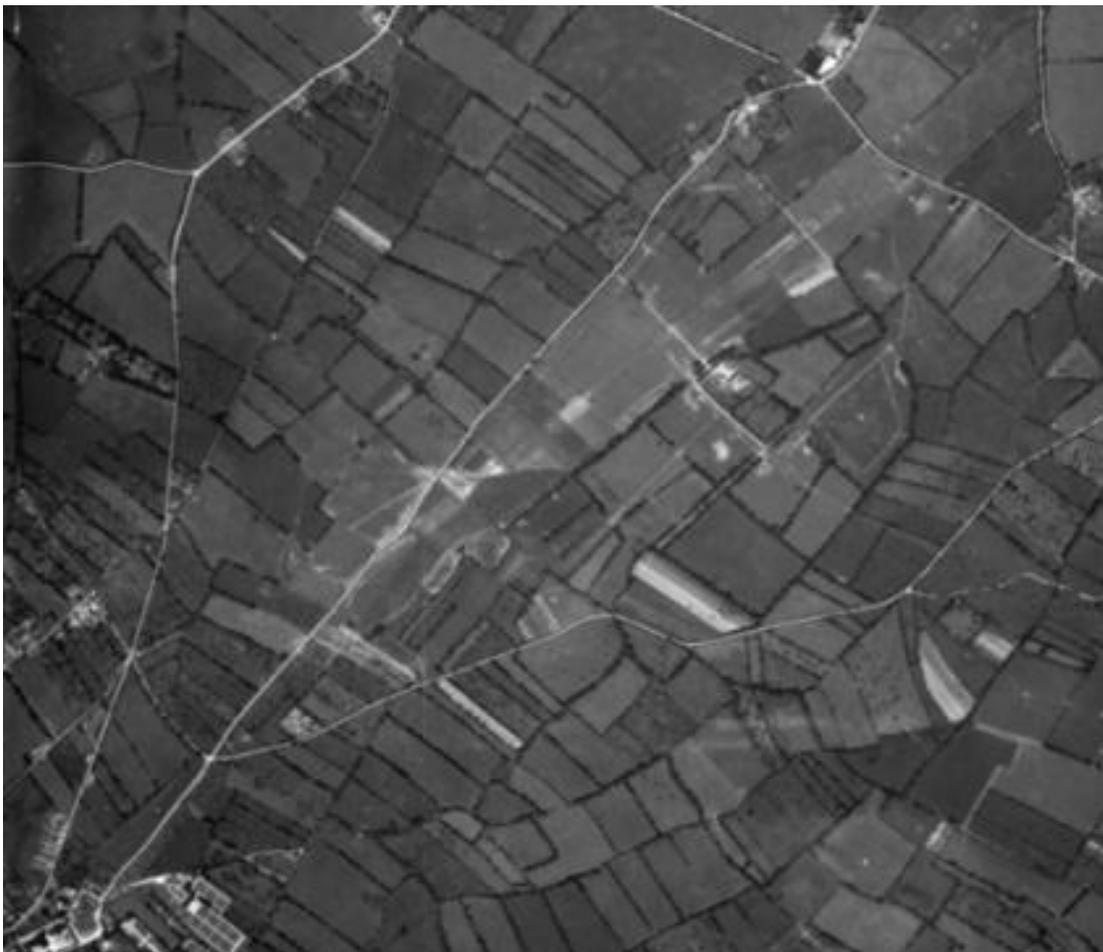
Another view of ALG A-14 Cretteville.

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The 394th FS as well as the Headquarter were assigned to ALG A-6 Beuzeville called also A-6 Sainte-Mère-Eglise as Sainte-Mère-Eglise, the first French village liberated by the American paratrooper on D-Day, was very close to the airfield. It was also called A-6 La Londe, La Londe being a farm right in the middle of the airfield, along the taxiway. This airfield was built by the 819th EAB from June 6th to June 15th, 1944. The engineers started to work on the airfield although the German troops were pretty close. The battalion lost 7 men to the enemy artillery while building the airfield. The runway was 5000 feet long and 120 feet large and made of square mesh track. The 394th FS had to share the airfield with the 371th FG and its P-47s. The runway was aligned in the direction of Sainte-Mère-Eglise, the aircrafts flew pretty close of the steeple of the church just after take off. The children of the village liked to climb to the steeple to see the aircrafts taking off.



After that the ALG were returned to the landlords, the population used the square mesh track net to built the fences of their fields. So when you see such fences, you know that an advanced landing field was really close



ALG A-6 Beuzeville in 1947 taken by the French Geographic institut. The landing strip can be seen diagonally in the middle of the picture. A small part of Sainte-Mère-Eglise can be seen on the left low corner (USAAF)

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The monthly reports of each squadron of the 367th FG were either scarce on the move from England to France or very detailed. The 392nd FS' report was rather poor : "On the 27th, the air echelon moved, their destination, France. After staying two days in the marshaling area, they were herded on a Liberty ship in which they crossed the Channel. Sergeant George H. Sather was seriously wounded aboard ship when an ack-ack fragment hit him. He was treated and then evacuated to a shore hospital".

But we can have some information from letters written by Lts Eugene Fleming and Aden Parmenter to their folks. Gene Fleming wrote his letter on July 30th, 1944, the day before he was killed in action:

"Yes, the country is very bad for (unreadable) fighting. It's swell for a defense though. The whole countryside is covered with hedgerows in this part of France. It's beautiful country – all green trees, (unreadable), etc. Most of the little towns are almost destroyed completely – some of them are. The noise of the gunfire and enemy planes kept us awake the first 2 nights but I only woke up once last night. A couple of nights ago the A.A. (anti aircraft) gun crews here at the field shot down a German raider plane. It hit about a mile from the field. It really made a big flash when it hit. It rains every day almost, not hard, just on and on more or less local shower. It's pleasant weather so far as the temperature is concerned. It's a little on the cool side, however, most of the time.

The front is moving pretty fast now. We have up to date maps of day to day and hour to hour situations. We need them so we won't shoot up our own troops. That's how fast things move sometimes. However we don't hear news flashes very often and I imagine you all know as much or more about general situation than we do. We all expect plenty of fighting yet. Well, yesterday I got my first really first-hand view of the war. Ray, Clyde, Hugh and I hitch-hiked up to the front lines. We started at 9:00 in the morning and got back at 6:00 in the evening. Altogether we covered about 80 miles, I guess. The traffic over here is really terrible but the M.P.'s are doing a swell job of handling it. The dust is terrible and we were



Lt. Clyde Deavers, on the left, and squadron mates of the 392nd FS settling down to A-10 Carentan at the end of July 1944, certainly on July 27th (Clyde Deavers/archives 367th FG)



Pilots of the 392nd FS settling down to A-10 Carentan at the end of July 1944, certainly on July 27th (Clyde Deavers/archives 367th FG)

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all filthy dirty when we got back. We managed to find a hot shower and clean up things.

Yesterday was the first time I've ever see a dead person other than at funerals. We saw dozens of dead Germans, also dead horses and cattle. Saw lots of German prisoners also. We didn't see any dead Americans, I guess they get them out pretty fast.

The stench of dead soldiers, horses and cattle is really bad in spots, some of them have been there for several days. Most of them have been stripped of souvenirs by the front line boys on their way through. Naturally we didn't touch any of them or try to get souvenirs off them. I managed to get a German helmet, belt buckle, book, cantina and cartridges. We were trying to find a luger p-38 pistol but we couldn't locate any. I understand the boys up front that have them won't part with them for less than \$35 to \$100.

We finally turned around at a little town that had been captured that day. It had been shelled just an hour or so before we got there. The lines were within 120 yards of the town at one point. We stood by our front line tanks and watched them shell a little town.

Our C.O. has issued orders that we are not to go up the front anymore so I guess we won't go anymore.

One thing is sure after going up into the front line seeing the battle blasted towns and people at close range I'm surely glad I'm a pilot. It sure beats being on the ground. When we are not flying, we are in practically no danger.

In fact, even when we are flying it's not very dangerous. I've seen German, planes twice. Our worst enemy is flak. You can't fight flak, you just take evasive action and hope you are lucky. So far I haven't been hit at all. Knock on wood”.



Lt. Robert Moorhead using gas to do his laundry in A-10 Carentan or A-2 Cricqueville (Clyde Deavers/archives 367th FG)



German prisoners. This picture was certainly taken during the day Lt Fleming and his buddies « visited » the front line (Clyde Deavers/archives 367th FG)

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Aden Parmenter wrote his letters on July 29th 1944: “Well, I am in France now, permanently anyway at least until the war is over. Living conditions aren't too bad. I and two fellows are living in a six men tent so we have plenty of room. I have a good G.I. Army cot for a bed so I manage to sleep very comfortable. Our food is very good just as good as any army food I have eaten anywhere. I eat out of my mess kit and have to sit on the ground but it isn't so bad. I guess I will have to do my own laundry now since I am over here. I have been using my helmet as a wash pan to wash and shave in. It makes a very good wash pan”.

And he also wrote the following memories: “My log shows 1:00 hour mission on July 27 but this was for flying a P-38 from England to France and landing at a new airfield in France. I had a 300 gallon belly tank fixed so you could carry baggage in it and carried my personal possessions in that. I also had a bicycle but had to send it over on a boat and never saw it again. The land fields in France were pretty crude, iron mats about 3000 to 3500 feet long and very rough. However we could get the P38 in and out. Until after the allied armies broke out of the beach heads we were flying very close to the

ground action and often would pick up enemy flak before gaining our flying altitude after takeoff”.

Don Huling in his book “Commandation” gives us other information: “Two men of each fighter squadron were sent ahead of the rest of the fellows to set up the radio equipment on the beaches of Normandy. We were known as the ‘Air Echelon’ and at one time we had visions of flying over, but as it turned it took us a whole week to arrive from England. Most of the time was spent on the boat in France, waiting our turn to unload. Or squadron, the 392nd, took our transmitter truck, the 393rd had the homing truck and the 394th took their receiver truck. I sure got a thorough knowledge of the contents in the Army's C rations. A day ration consists of 6 cans, two for each meal. Breakfast consists of coffee, biscuits, meat, and beans. Dinner is lemonade, biscuits, and vegetables stew. Supper is cocoa, more biscuits, meat and vegetable hash. The biscuits and dry drink are in one can and the meat, etc, are steam heated and served that way out of the can. It's very nourishing food but it sure gets tiresome eating that same menu day after day. When we started off from England we slept on bunks four high in our

ship's hold. None of us expected to be aboard ship very long, so we didn't bring our blankets along from the trucks, which were all locked up way down another hold of our ship. For four nights I just piled into bed with all my clothes on, put my leather jacket over my shoulders, my raincoat over my legs and feet, and fell sound asleep right away. The last night I didn't sleep hardly at all. Maybe it was because I knew I was going ashore in the morning and also because of those darn anti-aircraft guns that seemed to be off every time I went to sleep. At first the guns were a curiosity to us, but we see learned to respect them and wear our helmets if we were on deck when they started going off. One of our boy got a crack on his head from falling flack. It still looked like a glorified Fourth of July when everything started to go off at once. We unloaded from our Liberty Ship onto a flat-bottom barge that brought us right up to the beach, where all we had to do was drive off. There is still a lot of evidence of the war being only a few weeks ahead of us and these boys at the beach are doing a wonderful job of getting things ashore and straightening up the place. We drive on right side of the street again and we found our camp near Sainte-Mère-Eglise with very little trouble”.



This picture is thought to have been taken on July 27th, 1944, when the pilots of the 392nd FS were embarking a C-47 for their flight from Ibsley to A-10 Carentan (Clyde Deavers/archives 367th FG)



Above and below, two other pictures of the pilots of the 392nd FS, more than probably embarking a C-47 for their flight from Ibsley to A-10 Carentan (Clyde Deavers/archives 367th FG)



On the other hand, the monthly report of the 393rd FS is several pages long. The first part describes the move of the Air Echelon: "On 19th of July 1944 eight officers and ninety-seven enlisted men departed from Ibsley, Hants, for overseas, leaving the area at 0850. This contingent was our Air echelon, which was to prepare a new base for us in France. Upon arrival at the Marshaling area near Dorchester, all English money was exchanged for francs, and all personnel received a partial pay of 94.03 in French currency. The morning of the 20th, two officers and 49 enlisted men, composing the vehicle party, left the Marshaling area for Southampton. At 1900 that evening they boarded the 'Cyrus H. McComick' and at 2000 set sail for the far shore. There were mixture of emotion among the men, some a little sorry to leave, other's curious as to what Southampton looked like from the water, but the greatest curiosity of all was lay ahead.

Speculations as to where we were going flew thick and fast, a few became sea sick, but this excitement soon were off, and we headed for the sack. The next morning we were served "C" rations, and at 1100 Chaplain Bell conducted church services on the forward deck. At 1700 land loomed up and was identified by the ship's crew as Cherbourg. At 2245 the ship anchored off of the "Omaha beach". The night was quiet except for an occasional burst of antiaircraft fire.

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For four days we remained aboard at this point of anchorage, with little to do except shower, eat and sleep. But on the 5th evening the squadron disembarked and spent the night on the beach. The only excitement of debarkation was the stalling out of jeeps in the landing procedure. The following morning we departed for landing strip number 16. At this point the marching party joined the vehicle party and camp was set up. At 2300 orders transferring 1st Lts Nensteil and O'Shaughnessy to the officers pool at Ninth Air Force Headquarter, to await shipment back to the States, to attend the Civil Affairs school. Also orders were received for the squadron to move to strip number 14. This movement was accomplished without mishap and upon arrival at the new field, we were greeted by the flight echelon.

The marching party of the Air Echelon remained in camp C-9 of Marshalling Area, when the vehicle party left. It was expected that there were to depart this area within eight to ten hours after the vehicle party, but events proved otherwise as we remained here three days before embarkation. Conditions in the Marshalling Area were quite satisfactory, in fact the supreme of all was delicious white bread, because all we had received since we had arrived in England was a dry brown variety. One "GI" expressed surprise when he saw the white bread when passing through the chow line, where-upon a colored boy stationed in the Marshalling Area answered with a proud expression on his face 'We always gets white bread'.

On the fourth day of our stay here we departed for docks arriving there at 1500, just as the vessel which was to take us to France was docking. After waiting until 1730 we embarked, and immediately thereafter departed for France. Our vessel was an English ship of fair size, of the Castle Lines.

We arrived at the Omaha Beach the next morning and in our turn, climbed aboard boat which put us ashore. After marching about three miles we reached our area and bedded down for the night. The next morning we entrucked and joined the vehicle party at ALG # 16".



Mess tent in A-10 Carentan or A-2 Cricqueville but more probably A-10 (Clyde Deavers/archives 367th FG)

The move of the Ground Echelon is also described next: *"The morning of 27 July 1944 was the beginning of an eventful day for the Ground Echelon of the Squadron. The motor convoy consisting of Squadron vehicles with detachment from the 394th Fighter Squadron departed from Ibsley, Hants at 0827. This convoy was commanded by 1st Lt. James P. Valent and along with him rode 35 eager enlisted men who acted as drivers and assistant drivers. Briefing disclosed that the first destination was the Marshalling Area near Dorchester. The convoy was scheduled to arrive at destination at 0957. At 1100 hours the Ground Echelon Personnel consisting of 140 enlisted men and 2 officers departed Ibsley, Hants by SOS vehicles for the same destination. Five enlisted men were under the supervision of Captain James D. Erwin, a group officer. Captain Little commanded the ground echelon personnel which detrucked at Ringwood then boarded a train for Dorchester. Arriving at this city we detrained and entrucked again. After travelling six miles the land of tents met our eyes.*

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Personnel were assigned tents and briefed on the location of latrines, showers and messes. While in the Marshalling Area personnel were issued “K” rations, cigarettes, candy, sea sick pills and insect powder. Individual equipment shortages were replaced and the conversion of British currency to French currency also were accomplished here. Here we also met the motor convoy which departed before us. Many of us attempting to carry too much equipment in our packs relieved ourselves of it at this time. During our stay it was noted that the discipline and morale of the enlisted men was good.

On the night of 28 July the men were briefed again on our short sea voyage and also received our orders for the following day which was Saturday. The motor convoy was regrouped and departed at 0830 for the far shore. Personnel were assembled and entrucked at 1010 and away we drove to the embarkation point at Weymouth. The men appeared to be serious and determined, realizing that this was it.

Arriving at Weymouth we were greeted by the American Red Cross and served coffee and doughnuts. Of course the Weymouth girls received their last whistles from the boys of the 393rd for a while at least. Here we boarded an LCI and received a nice reception from the naval personnel. The men ridded themselves of their packs and hit the sack for a needed rest. We steamed out and assumed the position of Flag ship for the convoy. Towards nightfall we set sail for the coast of France. A few of the men proved to themselves that a little more experience was needed before becoming sea worthy, of course the issue of vomit bags came in handy.

During the night our ship hit a bouy and boys thought the enemy had the bead on us until the crew informed them differently. At least the men didn't waste any time hitting the deck.

The coast of France was sighted the next day which was Sunday around 1300. We anchored off shore until 2300 and debarked at this time after the tide had receded so we could walk ashore. Being warned of a probable air raid we left the shore as quickly as possible and started a search for the Marshalling Area. We marched in the night for a distance of approximately seven miles with the aid of an M.P. and signs our weary 140 enlisted men and 2 officers reached the destination. Throwing ourselves on the ground we cuddled up in our blankets for a couple of hours rest. No one seemed to be interested in pitching a shelter half. The next



Cap. Lloyd Hinkley, 394th FS, putting up his tent on July 27th, 1994, in ALG 6 La Londe. The man on the left is not identified. The aircraft in the back ground are P-47s Thunderbolt, certainly of the 371th FG (Ken Jorgensen via Jean-Luc Gruson/archives 367th FG)



Lt. Ken Jorgensen and crew chief in ALG 6 La Londe (Ken Jorgensen via Jean-Luc Gruson/archives 367th FG)

morning we enjoyed a breakfast of 'K' rations and entrucked again for our temporary location, site 14, as our destination. Arriving at 1100 we joined the Air and Flight Echelons and began pitching tents and digging fox holes for a temporary stay.

On 27 July Col. Crossen the Group Deputy Commander, assumed command of the Squadron, Major Joy assuming his former role as operation officer, with Captain Moody as his assistant. At 1115 Col. Crossen lead the Squadrons P-38's across the Channel to air strip 14, where we were to begin operations the following day. The remainder of us in the Flight Echelon followed in C-47's with bag and baggage landing at Air Strip #2, and proceeding to Air Strip #14 in 'G1' trucks, through the thick powdering yellow dust of the crowded French roads. Here we joined our air echelon and informed its commander our adjutant, 1st Lt. John V. Hefton, that he was now a Captain effective 17 July 1944. With the dawn at our new home in France found us sweating out a mission".

As the Air Echelon was not arrived yet at the field, man power and equipments were missing to prepare the P-38s for other missions. But thanks

to the 83rd Airdrome squadron and the 358th FG already on the ALG, the 393rd received all the required assistance. So thanks to those two outfits the squadron was back to the saddle.

Cap. Jack Reed, 394th FS, gives a short entry in his diary for 27 July 44: "We moved to site 6 in France today. We are stationed temporarily with 371st, a P-47 group. Col. Jim Daley, a friend of mine from R.A.F. days, is Group Ops so we get along pretty well. Sort of celebrated a get together last nite 'with my bourbon'. We are sleeping on the ground in pup tents and eating C rations but it could always be worse. No Ops as yet. Group is with the 394th (Itmar) on this site. The 392 (Fido) is on site 10 and the 393rd is on site 14".

To be continued in newsletter # 14

Investigation of a crash site

In the last issue of the newsletter, we saw in the « Honoring the pilot » article the dedication which took place in July 2007 in honor of Lt. Donald k. Erickson. I was really pleased that a lot of person of the village were eager to honor this young American pilot who made the ultimate sacrifice. I had the chance that they were also eager to take me to the crash site of Lt. Erickson's P-38.



This piece of burned metal was the first part found when we were approaching the crash site



Mr. Simier, the mayor of Sonzay, Marc Roy and Jean Cabal hold some parts we had just found under the leaves the day we found the crash site of P-38J-10-LO 42-67909 'MISWIS' flown by Lt. Don Erickson on 31 July 31 1944. This aircraft was usually flown by Lt. Milton Jaeger



Left and above left : while searching close to the surface we found the top part of the plane. It soon became clear that we had found the canon sunk vertically into the ground. It took a long time to our ittle team to remove it.



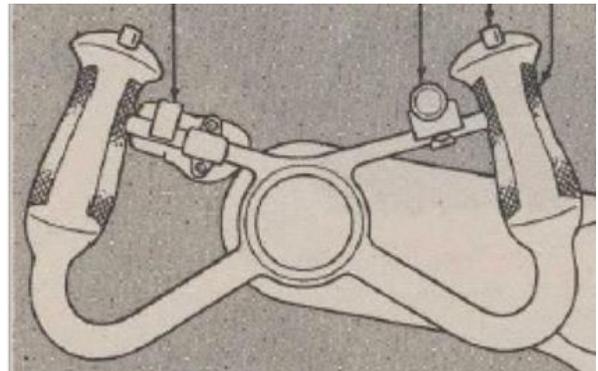
Mr. Jean Cabal had good sandwiches in his basket as well as a bottle of good Bordeaux. The French baguette is in the basket !



Middle of the control wheel of P-38J-10-LO 42-67909 'MISWIS' found just below the leaves the day we discovered the crash site



One of the weight balance fund just below the surface. It still had its olive drab paint in some places

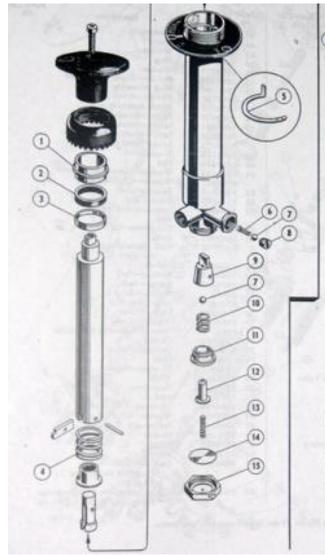
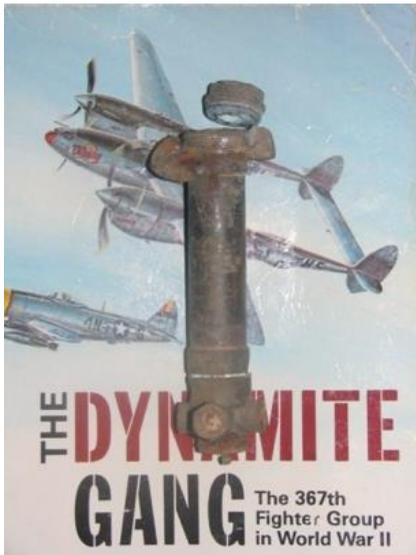


Control wheel of P-38 from model J to model L. One the 2 picture above, one can see the beginning of the 4 branches



Far left, a valve of one of the engine of the P-38J-10-LO 42-67909. Left, the same valve being cleaned by electrolysis

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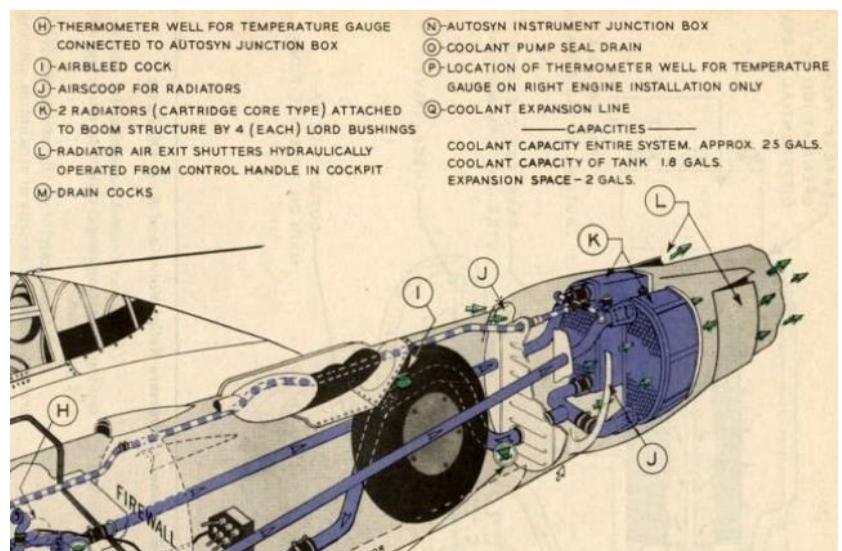


Cover of one of the 2 propeller relay box. This relay box was under the engine. One can see a big hole, certainly done by one of the numerous shell sent through the air by the bomb mistakenly launched by Lt Donald Erickson

Primer found in the crash site. Only the rubber part was missing. The primer was used to inject gas into the cylinders of the engines

When I phone called for the first time to the city hall of Sonzay, I spoke almost directly with Mr. Marc Roy who saw Lt. Erickson bailing out of his stricken P-38. We agreed to meet each other the following Saturday to hear his story and the story of Mr. Jean Cabal who found Don Erickson's body. The two men were very nice men and very eager to tell what they saw and what happened in this village during this fateful day of July 31st, 1944. After having heard their statement we headed, with the mayor, Michel Simier, to the forest where Don Erickson's body was found, close to the wreck of his Lightning. Jean Cabal showed us where he found Don Erickson's body. Next we walk toward the crash site really close. While we were talking we saw a large piece of burned metal against a big oak tree. It was clear that it was a part of the P-38. Behind this large tree we found additional parts of the ship, just below the leaves. We agreed that further investigation should be organized. So we met again at the crash site two or three additional Saturdays. One time, Marc Roy and Jean Cabal spent the day with our little team.

The wreck of Lt. Erickson's P38 was removed either by the German or a scrapper. So, the part we found were what was left at the time. A small metal detector and a few gardening hand tools were our only means of investigation. The second time we get to the crash site it was clear after we removed the leaves that were at the right spot. The surface on the ground had three very thin hollows almost invisible. The two external hollows were corresponding to the 2 engines and the one in the middle to the nose of the P-38. And effectively we found engines parts on the right and left and had the chance to find the 20 mm cannon in the middle of the spot and it took us a lot of work to remove it from the ground !



Bracket of one a radiator shutter. The shutter is shown as « L » on the drawing on the right

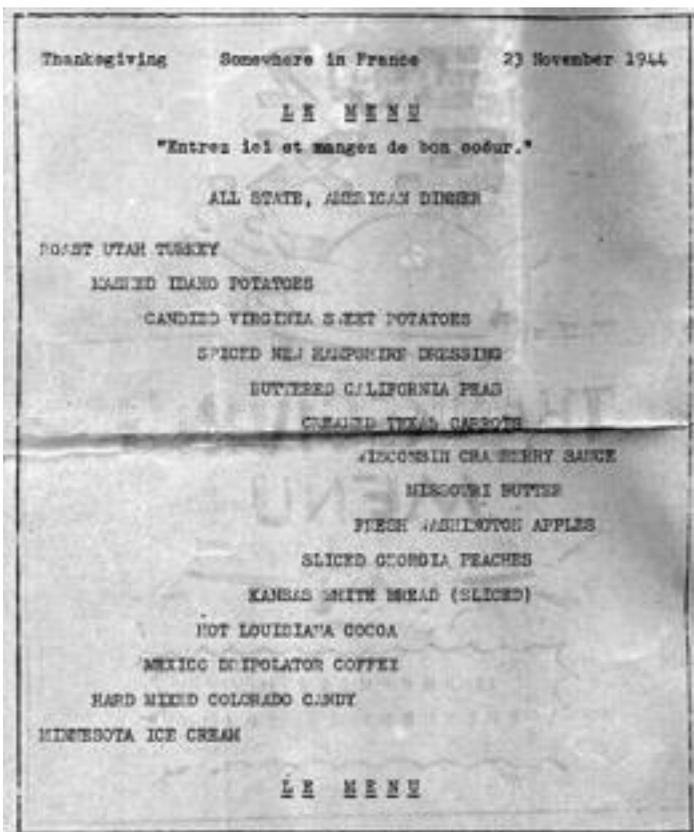
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THANKSGIVING 1944

A few years ago, Vern Truemper sent me a few DVDs containing materials on the 367th fighter group like diaries, videos and other documentation. Among those documentation, was the menu of Thanksgiving 1944. I wanted to share with you the menu and document issued to the end of the outfit. In November 1944, the 367th Fighter Group was stationed at the Advanced Landing Group A-68 in Juvincourt, France.



Certainly the top cover of the menu given to the men of the 392nd Fighter Squadron (Vernon Truemper/archives 367th FG)



The menu (Vernon Truemper/archives 367th FG)

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R O S T E R

Thanksgiving Day . . . 23 November 1944

Mess Officers: Captain Paul C. Glotzbach
Lt. Wilbur W. Scott

Mess Sergeant: S/Sgt Kenneth A. Ellars

Assistant Mess Sergeant: Sgt. Edwin C. Weibe

1st Cooks: Sgt. Ralph A. Bento Sgt. Gordon T. Jackson

2nd Cooks: Sgt. Michael Ujlaky Cpl. Henry C. Leo
Cpl. John A. Pouthier Cpl. Henry W. Woods
Cpl. Vernon R. Sax Cpl. Teodoro P. Wallis
Pfc. Clifford F. Whitfield

Cooks' Helpers: Pfc. Norman P. Knudsen Pfc. Travis Hodges

Commanding Officer: Lt. Chester A. Slingerland
Executive Officer: Major Grant Geo
Adjutant: Lt. Wilbur W. Scott

Men of the 392nd Fighter Squadron who prepared the lunch of Thanksgiving (Vernon Truemper/archives 367th FG)

392ND FIGHTER SQUADRON
167th Fighter Group
APO 395
U S Army

23 November 1944.

SUBJECT: A THANKSGIVING DAY MESSAGE.

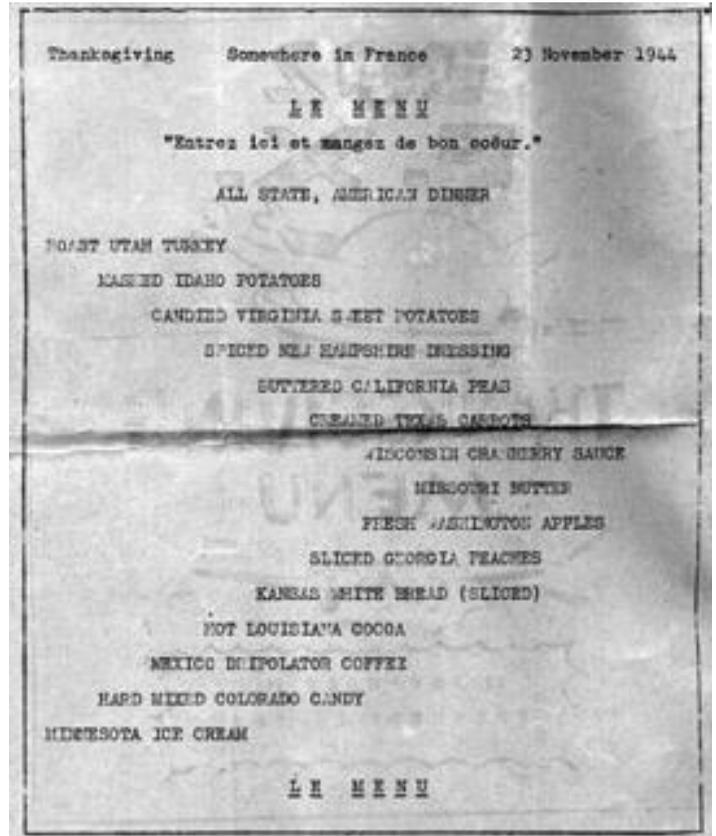
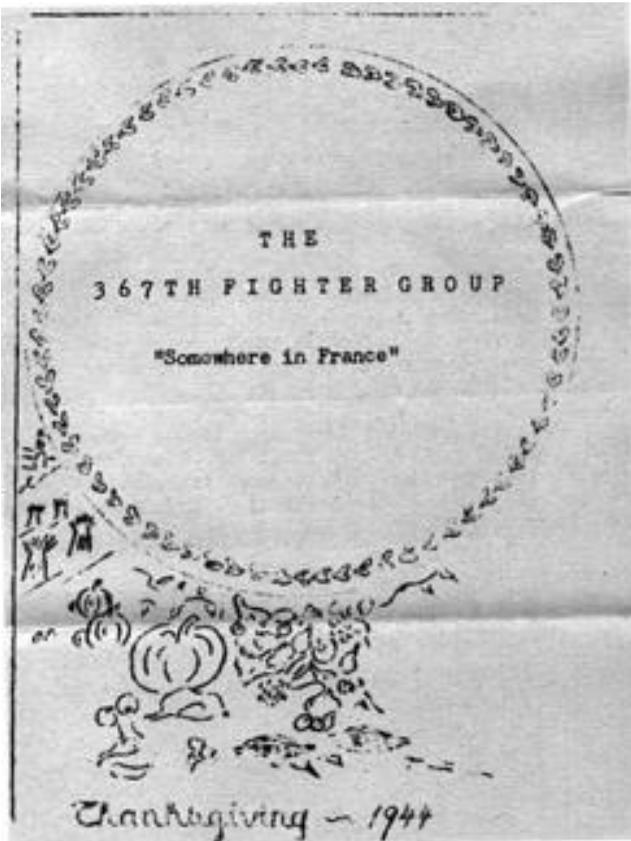
TO : ALL PERSONNEL IN THIS SQUADRON.

On the 15th day of July 1943 this squadron was organized. Slowly, sometimes painfully, we have seen it grow from a handful of recruits into a powerful fighting unit. Our airplanes have slashed their way across the flaming skies over Europe --- at St. Lo and Falaise, over Vire and Aachen, the Lightnings have again and again dipped their silver wings. And always on the ground, there have been the tireless efforts of the men behind the gun --- trucks shuttling back and forth in the rain --- mechanics and armorers and electricians working late into the night. Unforgettable are these exciting months we have spent together; dark winds whispering through the tent; strange, lonely airfields that sprang into life; the fascinating villages of England, Scotland, France, and those long convoys that carried us through the dusk down a thousand highways.

There have been disappointing times, too, back in the USA, in England, and now over here in France. Sometimes we had trouble getting rations, and the weather would turn bad, and then there was change after change in personnel. Yes, there have been days when we were tired, and the yearnings to go home were more persistent than before, and we were bitter or disgruntled. But, somehow, through the history of this squadron there has always been something bigger than the personal equation, greater by far than the petty grievance or the G. I. gripe, even bigger than you and I. Today, celebrating our second Thanksgiving as members of this squadron, let us stop and thank God for that intangible force that is welding us together, that is making each one of us a better soldier and a better man. LONG LIVE THE "FIGHTING 392ND"!

Thanksgiving day message for the men of the 392nd Fighter Squadron (Vernon Truemper/archives 367th FG)

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We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing;
 He chastens and hastens His will to make known;
 The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing,
 Sing praises to His Name: He forgets not His own.

Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining
 Ordaining, maintaining His kingdom divine;
 So from the beginning the fight we were winning:
 Thou, Lord, wast at our side, all glory be Thine!

We all do extol Thee, Thou Leader triumphant,
 And pray that Thou still our Defender wilt be.
 Let Thy congregation escape tribulation:
 Thy Name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free!

Amen

Netherland Folk Song

Le Menu

The All-State American Dinner

"Entrez ice, et mangez de bon coeur"

Roast Utah Turkey

avec

Spiced New Hampshire Dressing

et

Creamed Idaho Potatoes

Buttered California Peas

Creamed Texas Carrots

Candied Virginia yams

Delicious Washington Apples

Hot Louisiana Cocoa

or

Mexican Dripolator Coffee

Golden Missouri Butter Wisconsin Cranberry Sauce

Kansas white bread Sliced Georgia peaches

Hard mixed Colorado Candy

Top left : another top cover of the menu. The squadron is not known. Top right : another menu but the squadron is not known. Above : prayer for the men of the 393th or 394th FS (Vernon Truemper/archives 367th FG)

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HONORING THE PILOTS – 2nd Lt. James F. Parker, 394th Fighter Squadron

I tried in the previous issues of the newsletter to provide as much as possible information and pictures of a dedication or exhibit on the pilot honored in this paragraph.

But in this case, the video on youtube says it all. You will see the ceremony which took place in September 2016 in Belgium in honor of 2nd lieutenant James F. Parker who lost his life on September 16th, 1944.

I just can add that Lt. Parker earned his wings with class 44-B in Williams Field, AZ, and arrived to the 394th fighter squadron on August 14th, 1944. The reason of his loss is not known but the most probable explanation is that he and Lt. Charles F. Page collided while flying through a solid overcast. Lt. Page was also killed in action.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iG-iIJDAQ_w

Cap. Claude Cely of the 394th fighter squadron was a buddy of these 2 pilots and wrote the following comments (with the addition of the comment of his son, John Cely) in his diary:

August 14. Charles Page, Tommy Orrock, James Parker, and myself assigned to 394th Squadron of 367th Fighter Group (two of these four were killed in action within six weeks and one made a POW later in the war.

Sept. 16. I'm very fed up with this damn war and everything connected with it. Page and Parker were lost this morning on a mission due to weather. Some of these brass hats should be back jerking soda where they belong. I certainly am much wiser now than I was two months ago. Went on a mission this pm that weather said was no go but brass hats said go – that we did but it was a waste of time. It had not taken Dad long to develop the skepticism inherent among GIs, that, along with a touch of cynicism and death hovering at the door, removed any lingering notions of the romantic fighter pilot at war. Over the next six months Dad would see one after another of his squadron mates fail to return from a mission.



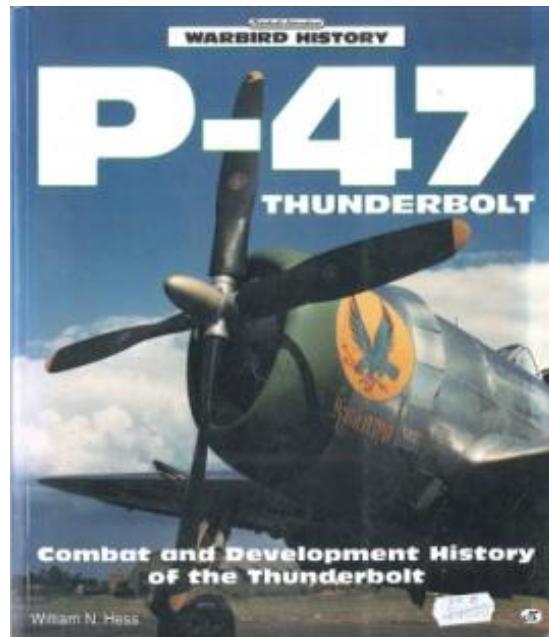
Picture of Lt. James Parker in the Yearbook of Class 44-B of Williams Field, AZ

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Books, DVDs and Links

P-47 THUNDERBOLT Combat and Development History of the Thunderbolt by William N. Hess.
Motorsbooks International

The author of this book tells the story of the Thunderbolt in all Theater of Operation. A lot of photos show the P-47s in Advanced Landing Ground in France.



Engineer Command

<http://www.ixengineercommand.com/index.php>

This site is dedicated to the men of the IX Engineer Command who built and maintained airfields in England and on the European continent in support of the Allied forces during World War II.

Coming in the next Newsletter



- The advanced landing grounds in Normandy, part 2
- Briefing in Normandy
- Honoring the pilots, part 7