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SECRET

**HEADQUARTERS 40th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
U. S. Army Air Field
Pratt, Kansas**

**RJP/wwb/C
30 August, 1943.**

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Group and Squadron Histories.

**TO : Commanding General, 58th Bomb Wing (H). Marietta Army Air
Field, Marietta, Georgia.**

1. Transmitted herewith are the histories of the Headquarters 40th Bombardment Group (H), 25th Bombardment Squadron, 44th Bombardment Squadron, 45th Bombardment Squadron, and 395th Bombardment Squadron, recording the activities of this organization prior to August 20, 1943. The report includes all periods covered by all records obtainable and present in the Squadron and Group files.

2. It is realized that his report does not conform to the monthly Historical report requested by Par. 1 e, letter, Headquarters, 58th Bomb Wing (H), 17 August 1943, subject, "Procedure for collecting and forwarding of Historical Material", but this report was written prior to receipt of subject letter.

3. The monthly Historical report will be submitted to cover period from August 20, 1943 to September 30, 1943 in conformity with the above mentioned letter.

4. As soon as new Squadron Historical Officers have been appointed, which is necessitated by movement of personnel which has taken place in the 40th Bombardment Group recently, the names of Officers appointed will be forwarded.

For the Commanding Officer:

**ROBERT J. PETERSON
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Historical Officer.**

FORTIETH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)

- HISTORY -

On April 1, 1941, the 40th Bombardment Group (Medium) was activated under General Orders No. 10, Headquarters, Puerto Rican Department, San Juan, Puerto Rico, dated April 1, 1941. First Commanding Officer was Lieutenant Colonel W. S. Sousa, who was transferred from the 25th Bombardment Group (Heavy) which he had commanded. The commissioned personnel were assigned by transfer from the 25th Bombardment Group; the enlisted personnel were transferred from the 24th Air Base Group, 25th Bombardment Group, 27th Reconnaissance Squadron (IM), and from Detachment, Air Corp unassigned (a casual detachment made of recruits which had been assembled at Barksdale Field, Louisiana, for embarkation to the Puerto Rican Department). The young Group was quartered in a temporary tent city.

The 40th Bombardment Group lost its first Commanding Officer on April 29, 1941, when Colonel Sousa was transferred to Base Headquarters and assigned to duty as Base Executive. Major George W. McGregor was assigned from the 27th Reconnaissance Squadron and assumed command. The strength at this time was 29 officers and 567 enlisted men.

A big party was given by Headquarters Squadron on July 25, 1941 for Master Sergeant Van Houten who left the organization July 31, to go on furlough prior to his retirement February 28, 1942.

August 27, 1941, was a day remembered by all for on that day the 40th Bombardment Group vacated its tent area to move into new barracks. All personnel readily admitted that the new barracks made absolutely the finest home possible.

On November 26, 1941, Major McGregor was transferred to Base Headquarters, Lomey Field, Puerto Rico, to assume command. Major Ivan M. Palmer who recently had been transferred from the 27th Reconnaissance Squadron assumed command. With the addition of quite a few Reserve Officers and also enlisted men from Detachment Air Corps Unassigned, the strength now totaled 72 officers and 739 Enlisted Men.

The Declaration of War on December 8, 1941 changed the activities of the 40th Bombardment Group. The organization went on alert status.

Hangar Number 2 was finally completed and the 40th Bombardment Group had occasion to rejoice again when it moved in on February 11, 1942. All technical offices and most administrative offices were moved to the new building.

Although the 5th Reconnaissance Squadron (M) had been attached to the 40th Bombardment Group for Administrative purposes only for the last few months, it was not until March 3, 1942, that orders arrived assigning the Squadron to the Group. (The 495th Ordnance Company (Avn) (Bomb) was attached also for administration only at this same time. The 5th Reconnaissance Squadron was the only one assigned later, however.) This brought the strength of the Group to 111 Officers and 895 Enlisted Men.

Organization Day, April 1, 1942, was celebrated with a gigantic Field Day in which races and contests of all kinds including bicycle and potato races were held. At the final tabulation, the 45th Squadron took the winner's cup closely pursued by Headquarters Squadron and 29th Squadron. The 45th Squadron also won the Rifle Match. Banquets in the Squadron mess halls finished the Organization Day activities.

One hundred eight enlisted men from Detachment, Air Corps Unassigned, were assigned on April 1, 1942, so the strength then was 112 officers and 1003 enlisted men.

The Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, 29th Bombardment Squadron, 445^h Replacement Squadron, 45th Bombardment Squadron and 395th Bombardment Squadron of the 40th Bombardment Group (H) were redesignated as heavy bombardment Squadrons by War Department Adjutant General's Office letter Subject: "Redesignation of Air Corps Units", dated May 7, 1942.

On May 11, 1942, the 5th Reconnaissance Squadron was re-designated as the 395th Bombardment Squadron and assigned to the 40th Bombardment Group pursuant to General Orders No. 18, Headquarters, Sixth Air Force, Albrook Field, Canal Zone, making a total of five (5) squadrons comprising the 40th Bombardment Group. The photographic section was also transferred from the new Squadron to the Headquarters Squadron of the Group at the same time.

Pursuant to instructions contained in Troop Movement Orders No. 15, Headquarters, Caribbean Defense Command, dated May 17, 1942, the 40th Bombardment Group (H) departed from San Juan, Puerto Rico June 7, 1942 and arrived in Panama June 16, 1942. The movement of the 40th Bombardment Group (H) consisted of Six (6) Squadrons (Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, 29th Bombardment Squadron, 44th Bombardment Squadron, 45th Bombardment Squadron, 395 Bombardment Squadron, and 485th Ordnance Company Aviation (Bomb) a total of 2223 enlisted men and 112 officers. Permanent stations were assigned the various Squadrons per instructions contained in General Orders No. 27, Headquarters, Sixth Air Force, dated June 20, 1942, as follows:

Headquarters & Headquarters Squadron – Howard Field
29th Bombardment Sq & 2nd Platoon 485th Ord – Aguadulce, R. de P.
44th Bombardment Sq – (perm station Guatemala City) (temp – Howard Fld)
45th Bombardment Sq & 3rd Platoon 485th Ord – France Field, C.Z.
395th Bombardment Sq – Rio Hato, Republic de Panama.

General Orders No. 32, Headquarters, Sixth Air Force, dated June 27, 1942, further assigned stations as follows:

1st Platoon 485th Ord – Guatemala City (perm station) (Howard Fld – tem)
45th Bomb Sq & 3rd Platoon 485th Ord – David, R. de P. (perm. Station) France Fld –
(temporary station)

On August 21, 1942, per General Orders No. 45, Headquarters, Sixth Air Force, dated same, the 395th Bombardment Squadron was relieved from assignment with the 40th Bombardment Group (H) and reassigned to the 6th Bombardment Group. The 74th Bombardment Squadron was relieved from assignment to the 6th Bombardment Group and reassigned to the 40th Bombardment Group on same General Orders.

Pursuant to instructions contained in General Orders No. 41, Headquarters Sixty Air Force, dated August 8, 1942, the Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron of the 40th Bombardment Group disbanded and the personnel were reassigned as follows:

Headquarters, 40 th Bomb Group	-	21 Officers, 34 Enl. Men.
29 th Bombardment Squadron	-	53 Enlisted Men.
44 th Bombardment Squadron	-	61 Enlisted Men.
45 th Bombardment Squadron	-	57 Enlisted Men.
74 th Bombardment Squadron	-	1 Officer, 37 Enl. Men.

The 485th Ordnance Company Aviation (Bomb) also disbanded per General Orders No. 41, Headquarters, Sixth Air Force, dated August 9, 1942 and personnel was reassigned as follows per paragraph 7, Special Orders No. 43, Headquarters, VI Bomber Command, dated August 10, 1942:

Headquarters Section	-	1 Officer, 28 Enlisted Men.
44 th Ordnance Section	-	28 Enlisted Men
29 th Ordnance Section	-	1 Officer, 30 Enl. Men.
45 th Ordnance Section	-	1 Officer, 28 Enl. Men.

5 Enlisted Men were transferred to the 6th Bomb Group

September 16, 1942, Headquarters 40th Bombardment Group changed permanent stations from Howard Field to Albrook Field per General Orders No. 50, Headquarters Sixty Air Force.

In October, 1942, the 5% replacement plan went into effect and on Special Orders No. 253, Headquarters Sixty Air Force, the 40th Bombardment Group sent 17 Enlisted men to the 18th Replacement Wing, Salt Lake City, Utah. 1 enlisted man was transferred to 18th Replacement Wing per Special Orders No. 254, Headquarters Sixth Air Force, dated October 6, 1942. Four officers were transferred to the 18th Replacement Wing per Special Orders No. 294, Headquarters Sixth Air Force, Dated November 6, 1942, Headquarters Sixth Air Force Special Orders No. 284 transferred 33 enlisted men from the 40th Bombardment Group to the 18th Replacement Wing. Special Orders No. 300, Headquarters Sixty Air Force dated November 23, 1942 further transferred 7 officers of the 40th Bombardment Group to the 18th Replacement Wing. Major BLACKWELL, Group Adjutant was transferred to MacDill Field, Florida on same Special Orders. Captain LEO KNOPY assigned duties of Group Adjutant per Par 1, Special Orders No. 177, dated November 24, 1942.

The 45th Bombardment Squadron moved from France Field (temporary station) to David, Republic de Panama (permanent station) per Paragraph 1, Special Orders 29th Bombardment Squadron was transferred to the 25th Bombardment Squadron per Special Orders No. 67 Headquarters VI Bomber Command, dated December 5, 1942, and the personnel of the 25th Bombardment Squadron was transferred to the 29th Bombardment Squadron per Special Orders No. 66, Headquarters VI Bomber Command dated December 1, 1942.

On Special Orders No. 1, Headquarters, Sixth Air Force dated January 1, 1943, 6 officers of the 40th Bombardment Group were transferred to the 18th Replacement Wing under 5% replacement plan. Colonel PALMER, Group Commanding Officer, was transferred to Headquarters, 2nd Air Force, Fort George Wright, Washington, per letter, W. D. A. C. O. letter dated January 9, 1943. A parade consisting of the personnel of Headquarters 40th Bombardment Group and a band from the Infantry of personnel of Headquarters.....departure from Albrook Field and Guatemala City for the United States on January 20, 1943.

Colonel Vernon D. Smith was assigned to the 40th Bombardment Group per Par 1, Special Orders No. 5 Headquarters, VI Bomber Command, dated January 18, 1941, and he assumed command of the 40th Bombardment Group per General Orders No. 1, Headquarters 40th Bombardment Group dated January 19, 1943.

A new Squadron arrived from the United State and was assigned to the 29th Bombardment Squadron per Special Orders No. 14, Headquarters Sixth Air Force, dated January 14, 1943. Captain CRAMER was the Commanding Officer of the new squadron.

The 74th Bombardment Squadron at Guatemala was transferred to the 29th Bombardment Squadron, Aguadulce, per Special Order No. 2, Headquarters, VI Bombard Command, dated January 4, 1943. In turn, the 29th Bombardment Squadron (Captain Cramer's outfit) was transferred to the 74th Bombardment Squadron to replace the Squadron that left Guatemala.

On Special Order #35, Headquarters Sixth Air Force, dated February 4, 1943, 2 enlisted men were transferred to the 18th Replacement Wing, Salt Lake City, Utah, and on Special Order #55 Headquarters Sixty Air Force dated February 24, 1943, 2 enlisted men were also transferred to the 18th Replacement Wing.

A new Squadron arrived from the United States and was assigned to the 29th Bombardment Squadron per Special Orders No. 56 Headquarters Sixth Air Force dated February 15, 1943. Captain Vickery was the Commanding Officer.

The 45th Bombardment Squadron changed stations per Special Orders #15, Headquarters VI Bomb Command, dated February 15, 1943, from David, Republic of Panama, to the Galapagos Islands.

The 25th Bombardment Squadron (old 74th Major Blasé's Squadron, transferred to Green Field, Boise, Idaho, per Troop Movement Order No. 1, Sixth Air Force, dated February 16, 1943.

The 3rd Bombardment Squadron stationed at David, Republic of Panama, was transferred to the 29th Bombardment Squadron at Anton per Special Orders No. 26 Headquarters VI Bomber Command, dated March 12, 1943. This Squadron was then transferred to David-Monthan Field, Tucson, Arizona per Troop Movement Order No. 2, Headquarters, Ninth Air Force, dated March 24, 1943.

A new Squadron arrived from the United States and was assigned to the 29th Bombardment Squadron per Special Orders No. 99 Headquarters Sixth Air Force dated April 9, 1943. Captain Kline was the Commanding Officer.

On Special Orders No. 139, Headquarters, Sixth Air Force, dated April 29, 1943, 2 enlisted men were transferred from Headquarters 40th Bombardment Group to the 18th Replacement Wing, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Colonel Smith, Group Commanding Officer, was relieved from assignment with the 40th Bombardment Group and reassigned to the 72nd Observation Group per Paragraph 2, Special Orders No. 135 Sixth Air Force, dated May 15, 1943. Colonel Mooney was assigned to the 40th Bombardment Group per Par 4, Special Orders No. 135, Headquarters 20th Air Force, dated May 25, 1943 and assumed command of the Group per General Orders No. 2 Headquarters 40th Bombardment Group dated May 16, 1943.

On General Orders No. 11, Headquarters Army Air Force dated May 12, 1943, the 29th Bombardment Squadron (H) and the 74th Bombardment Squadron (M) were assigned to the 6th Bombardment Group (H) and the 25th Bombardment Squadron and the 395th Bombardment Squadron(N) were assigned to the 40th Bombardment Group (H).

Headquarters 40th Bombardment Group (H) Movement Orders No. 1, dated May 31, 1943 provided for the movement of Headquarters from Allbrook Field to Howard Field, effective June 2, 1943. The 40th Bombardment Group Headquarters Command Post opened at Howard Field at 10:00 A.M., June 2, 1943. Total Strength of the 40th Bombardment Group (H) as of June 2, 1943:

	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Enlisted Men</u>
Headquarters	23	35
25 th Bomb Sq.	59	321
44 th Bomb Sq.	63	339
45 th Bomb Sq.	62	346
395 th Bomb Sq.	50	350

40th BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)

HISTORY

June 2 to August 20, 1943.

The 40th Bombardment Group Headquarters Command Post was established at Howard Field, Canal Zone, June 2, 1943.

The presentation ceremony was held June 5 at Howard Field for the purpose of presenting awards to members of the 40th Bombardment Group (H) as listed in General Orders 40, Headquarters Sixth Air Force, dated June 5, 1943. (Inclosure 1).

Pursuant to authority contained in Troop Movement Order 9, Headquarters, Panama Canal Department, Quarry Heights, Canal Zone, June 1, 1943 and amendment to Troop Movement Order 9, June 14 1943, the 40th Bombardment Group (H), Colonel H. K. Mooney in Command, departed from Howard Field and boarded the United States Army Transport "George Washington" at Pier #18, Balboa, Canal Zone, the afternoon of June 15, 1943. Total strength of the Group as of June 15, 1943:

	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Enlisted Men</u>
Headquarters	22	35
25 th Bombardment Squadron	55	319
44 th Bombardment Squadron	62	336
45 th Bombardment Squadron	60	344
395 th Bombardment Squadron	40	347

After an enjoyable voyage, the Group debarked at San Francisco, California Friday morning, June 25, 1943. The Group was stationed at Fort McDowell, California, from June 25 to June 28.

The Group departed by train from Fort McDowell June 28, per Par 4, 3C, #167, Headquarters Fort McDowell, June 26, 1943, and arrived at U. S. Army Air Base, Pratt, Kansas July 1, 1943.

Colonel Lewis R. Parker assumed command of the 40th Bombardment Group (H) per General Order No. 3, July 1, 1943.

Colonel Mooney was assigned as Deputy Commander.

The 40th Bombardment Group (H) was very proud of the distinction of being the first Group in the United States to be assigned the new B-29 heavy bombardment airplane.

During July all officers and enlisted men enjoyed a 15 day leave or furlough.

As of August 1, 1943, all Officers and enlisted men had returned for duty.

Colonel Mooney was transferred to Headquarters, Second Air Force per telegram from General Arnold, Washington, D.C. #121944Z, received at this Headquarters August 13.

Total strength of the group as of August 20, 1943:

	<u>Officers</u>	<u>Enlisted Men</u>
Headquarters	26	37
25 th Bomb Sq.	59	364
44 th Bomb Sq.	68	369
45 th Bomb Sq.	64	365
395 th Bomb Sq.	44	370

ROBERT J. PETERSON
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Gp. Historical Officer.

Incl:

HQ: Sixth AF AUG 43 (6-5-43)