

**(Retyped from microfilm by Mona Keehn)**

SQUADRON HISTORY  
1 November 1943 to 27 November 1943

November was stable for a period which started off slowly but gradually gained sufficient momentum so that activities at the end of the month were proceeding at a fairly rapid pace. This was due to several factors.

First, the Squadron finally got some ships to fly. The month was started with only two B-17s assigned to this organization, and one of these always needed too much coaxing to get into the air to be of much use for flying time. During the month the Squadron received two additional B-17Ys and three B-25s and one B-26C. As a result of these additions our flying training schedule rotations are of equal proportions, and the effect was noticeable in the improved morale of the personnel and the increased interest in the various training phases.

Due to the shortage of airplanes when they were needed for First Phase training the Squadron is not up to date in its Second Phase, and in some sense, even the First Phase Flying training is still incomplete. This condition was principally caused by a lack of B-29 airplanes. This lack of planes was not caused so much by slow production but, rather, was due to the fact that all B-29s were sent to a Modification Center for a considerable period of time, usually two months. The Squadron has not had, on this field, more than two B-29s at any one time, and usually not more than one even though four were assigned. Most of the flight training was accomplished with B-17Fs.

Notwithstanding the shortage of aircraft, "mock" missions for bombing, navigation and reconnaissance were scheduled and accomplished, and then discussed in detail to iron out "bugs" and individual problems. The Intelligence section participated here in briefing crews prior to their missions, and then interrogating them upon their return. This was always done in a realistic a manner as possible to simulate actual field conditions, and it was noted that this procedure created a great deal of additional interest and cooperation on the part of all crew members.

Toward the latter part of the month the Squadron flying personnel were organized into fifteen combat crews, and plans made to schedule regular training flights as directed by higher headquarters. Due to the general lack of flying equipment at this stage it was found that, in many instances, individual combat crew members are badly in need of training. This applies to both officers and men although officers are generally better trained than the enlisted men.

Second, all sections became more efficient in their teaching and training programs, evidently profiting from the experiences of the proceeding month. Classes attended by all personnel included those given by Armament, Engineering, Intelligence, Navigation, Ordnance, and Operations Officers, were well planned

even though a wide range of subjects were covered. The majority of personnel in the Squadron qualified during the month on either the .30 cal. Carbine or the Pistol .cal. 45, or both. Range results were considered good. Special mention should be made here of the classes in "Aero Medics" taught by the Group and Squadron Surgeons. These classes were extraordinarily well planned and conducted, and proved extremely informative as well as interesting to all flying personnel. Classes conducted by the Intelligence Section included Aircraft and Naval Recognition, Briefing and Interrogation, Tactics, Maps and Map Reading. Special emphasis was placed on Aircraft Recognition.

Third, the Squadron Table of Organization was strengthened considerably in November by the addition of both flying and ground personnel. Filling in these gaps on the T/O was considerably helpful in that various Squadron duties were more easily delegated, and thorough work and training was, thereby, accomplished. As of 2400, 27 November the Squadron strength stands at 110 officers assigned, 1 officer attached and 326 enlisted men.

A tragedy occurred in the Squadron on 18 November when a B-26C Airplane (541-35291) was lost on a routine cross-country flight with its entire crew, and at this writing has not yet been located. The ship took off the morning of the 18<sup>th</sup> from Ogden, Utah, on instrument clearance, enroute to the home base Pratt A.F. Twenty minutes later it reported its position by radio to the tower at PAAF, but, from that time on has not been heard from again. The crew of five included 1<sup>st</sup>. Lt. David R. Oakey, Pilot, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Lt. Robert D. Stockbower, Co-Pilot, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Lt. Selwin M. Mozzini, Navigator, T/Sgt. Edward Spolnick, Flight Engineer, Pfc. Ralph B. Lane Jr., Radio Operator. Search parties sent out by all Groups in the Wing and by the CAP unit in Salt Lake City were unsuccessful in their attempts to locate the ship or any member of the crew. No trace has yet been found. It appears that further search will have to be held in abeyance until Spring of next year when most of the snow will melt off the mountain sides.

Many improvements in Squadron equipment and facilities were made throughout the month. In connection with building facilities, lockers were built to permit all combat crew members to store their flying equipment easily when not in use and in such a manner that it would not receive unnecessary abuse. Additional furniture and decorations were purchased for the Pilots Room and Coffee shop. The Personnel Section was reorganized for greater efficiency and the Squadron administrative records and filing system were changed to conform to regulations, and brought up to date.

Immunization and booster shots were regularly scheduled for all personnel during November, as were physical examinations. Arrangements were made and, in most cases, completed, to correct minor physical deficiencies to prepare both officers and men for overseas duty. A physical training program was also religiously carried out during this period.

In general, November may be considered as a period during which all training activities were accelerated and better organized than previously. The Organization became smoother working as personnel became better acquainted with each other and got to know their individual jobs better. Much progress was made despite the shortage of airplanes, and it is felt that just as soon as this deficiency is overcome all training phases can be easily brought up to schedule.

(signed)  
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