111 ATTACK SQUADRON

MISSION

LINEAGE
111 Aero Squadron organized, 14 Aug 1917
Redesignated 632nd Aero Squadron, 1 Feb 1918
Demobilized, 19 Aug 1919

Constituted in the National Guard 111 Squadron (Observation), 1921
Redesignated 111 Observation Squadron, 29 Jun 1923

632 Aero Squadron reconstituted and consolidated with 111 Observation Squadron, 20 October 1936. Consolidated organization designated 111 Observation Squadron

Ordered to active service, 25 Nov 1940
Redesignated 111 Observation Squadron (Medium), 13 Jan 1942
Redesignated 111 Observation Squadron, 4 Jul 1942
Redesignated 111 Reconnaissance Squadron (Fighter), 31 May 1943
Redesignated 111 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, 13 Nov 1943
Inactivated, 15 Dec 1945
Redesignated 111 Fighter Squadron, and allotted to ANG, 24 May 1946
111 Fighter Squadron federally recognized, 9 Feb 1947
Redesignated 111 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 10 Jul 1952
Redesignated 111 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 1 Jan 1953
Redesignated 111 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 1 Jul 1955
Redesignated 111 Fighter Squadron 15 Mar 1992
Redesignated 111 Reconnaissance Squadron, 1 Jul 2008

Redesignated 111 Attack Squadron, 2017

STATIONS

Kelly Field, TX, 14 Aug 1917-19 Aug 1919
Houston Light Guard Armory, Texas and Fannin Streets, Houston, Texas
Houston Municipal Airport, TX
Houston, TX, 29 Jun 1923
Brownwood, TX, 12 Jan 1941
Camp Clark, TX, Dec 1941
Daniel Field, GA, 19 Feb 1942
Morris Field, NC, 9 Jul-22 Sep 1942
Wattisham, England, 3-21 Oct 1942
St Leu, Algeria, 10 Nov 1942
Tafaraoui, Algeria 16 Nov 1942
Oujda, French Morocco, 19 Dec 1942 (detachment operated from La Senia, Algeria 11-27 Feb 1943)
Guercif, French Morocco, 4 Apr 1943
Nouvion, Algeria, 27 May 1943 (air echelon at Bou Ficha, Tunisia, 20 Jun-2 Jul 1943)
Tunis, Tunisia, 3 Jul 1943 (air echelon at Korba, Tunisia, 2-14 Jul 1943, and at Ponte Olivo, Sicily, 14-16 Jul 1943)
Ponte Olivo, Sicily, 16 Jul 1943
Gela, Sicily, 19 Jul 1943
Termini, Sicily, 11 Aug 1943 (detachment operated from Gela, Sicily, to 2 Sep 1943)
San Antonio, Sicily, 1 Sep 1943
Sele, Italy, 16 Sep 1943 (detachment operated from San Antonio, Sicily, to 30 Sep 1943, and from Capaccio, Italy, 30 Sep-14 Oct 1943)
Pomigliano, Italy, 5 Oct 1943 (detachment at Santa Maria, Italy)
Santa Maria, Italy, 9 May 1944
Nettuno, Italy, 6 Jun 1944
Galera, Italy, 11 Jun 1944
Voltone, Italy, 18 Jun 1944
Follonica, Italy, 2 Jul 1944
Borgo, Corsica, 21 Jul 1944 (detachment at Santa Maria, Italy, 21 Jul-9 Aug 1944
St Maxime and Grimaud, France, 15-21 Aug 1944
St Raphael, France, 27 Aug 1944
Valence, France, 5 Sep 1944
Satolas-et-Bonce, France, 9 Sep 1944
Dijon, France, 23 Sep 1944
Azelot, France, 30 Oct 1944
Haguenau, France, 2 Apr 1945
Furth, Germany, 1 Jul 1945
Creil, France, 15 Oct-15 Dec 1945
Ellington AFB, TX, 24 Nov 1956
Ellington ANGB, Houston, TX, 1 July 1976

Ellington JRB, Houston, TX, 1991

ASSIGNMENTS
Unkn, 1917-1919
Texas NG (divisional aviation, 36th Division), 29 Jun 1923
Eighth Corps Area, 25 Nov 1940
Third Army, Dec 1940
VIII Army Corps, Mar 1941
Third Army, Jun 1941
III Air Support Command, 1 Sep 1941 Eighth Air Force, 16 Mar 1942
68 Observation (later Reconnaissance; Tactical Reconnaissance) Group, 29 Mar 1942
3 Air Defense [later 64 Fighter] Wing, Jun-Sep 1943)
XII Tactical Air Command, 26 May 1944
69 Tactical Reconnaissance (later Reconnaissance) Group, 20 Apr 1945
10 Reconnaissance Group, 2 Jul-15 Dec 1945
136 Fighter Group, 27 Jan 1947
136 Fighter-Interceptor Group, 20 Jul 1952
136 Fighter-Bomber Group, 1 Jan 1953
147 Fighter-Interceptor Group, 1 Jul 1957
147 Fighter Group, 10 Mar 1992
147 Operations Group, 1 Oct 1995

ATTACHMENTS
68 Observation Group
XII Air Support [later Tactical Air] Command, 12-31 Mar 1943, 20 Jun 1943-26 May 1944
Provisional Reconnaissance Group, 16 Oct 1944

WEAPON SYSTEMS
Mission Aircraft
JN4-H, 1923
JN6H
TW-3
PT-1
PT-3
BT-1
O-2H,
O-17
O-38, 1931
O-43, 1935
O-47, 1939
O-49, 1941
O-52
O-59, 1941
A-20, 1942

P-39, 1943
Spitfire
F-6D
F-6K
P-39L
P-38/F-4, 1943
P-51/F-6, 1943
A-36, 1943
UC-64, 1945
L-5, 1945
F-51, 1952
F-80, 1955
F-86, 1957
F-102, 1960
F-101, 1971 ***1975***
F-4, 1981
F-16, 1989
MQ-1

Support Aircraft
T-6, 1952
C-47, 1952
F-80
T-33

COMMANDERS
Lt Wycliffe C. Jackson
2LT E. H. House
Cpt S. H. Wheeler, J. M. A
1LT Walter I. Waite
1LT Norvell P. Chapman
1LT Roy L. LeBourgeois
1LT Wayne C. Pouchee
2LT Earl W. DeNio
1LT L. A. Felder
1LT Christian H. W. Lucke
2LT Edwin C. Kirker
1LT Fred G. Russ
Maj Bernard A. Law 29 Jun 23-1 Jan 26
Maj Walter H. Reid 1 Jan 26-Jun 31
Maj Thomas W. Blackburn Jun 31-Jun 35
Maj Harry W. Weddington Jun 35-24 Sep 39
Maj Christopher C. Scott 24 Sep 39-May 40
Maj Aubrey W. Schofield May 40-ao Dec 41

Cpt Charles C. Scott, Sep 1939
Maj Burton L. Austin
Maj T.E. Johnson
Cpt Robert E. Baugh
LTC James H. Deering, 14 Jan 1943
LTC Luther W. Randerson, 21 Oct 1944
Maj Dockery, 5 Jun 1945
LTC Bill Nottingham, Aug 1946
LTC Roland L. Burns, 9 Aug 1948
Maj Robert H. Taylor, 10 Jul 1952

HONORS
Service Streamers

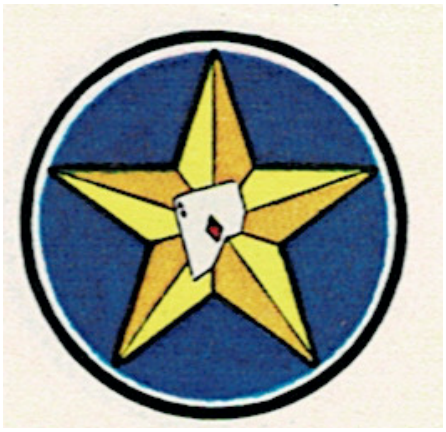
Campaign Streamers
Antisubmarine, EAME Theater
Algeria-French Morocco with Arrowhead
Sicily
Naples-Foggia
Anzio
Rome-Arno
Northern France
Southern France with Arrowhead
Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe
Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations
French Croix de Guerre with Palm
Dec 1942-Jul 1944

Distinguished Unit Citation
Germany 22-23 Feb 1945

EMBLEM



On a disc blue, within a ring white, edged black, a five-pointed star gold, pierced by an ace of diamonds playing card white with red markings. (Approved, 6 Jun 1933)

On a hurte within an annulet argent edged sable a mullet or pierced by an ace of diamonds playing card proper.

The star is representative of Texas, "The Lone Star State." The blue and orange are Air Corps colors. "The ace in the hole" is symbolic of the advantage over the enemy afforded by the squadron. The black and white border is symbolic of oil and cotton, the chief mineral and agricultural assets of the State of Texas.

The 111 Observation Squadron in the Second World War In 1933 the War Department authorized a livery for the 111 Observation Squadron. Lt. Earl Showalter designed a distinctive insignia, "the Ace in the Hole": A large lone star reflected the squadron's Texas heritage, while the colors white and black represented two items essential to the Texas economy cotton and oil. An ace in the hole signified the squadron's ability to always win in battle.

MOTTO
Ace in the Hole

OPERATIONS
632 Aero Squadron is composed of Special Duty Men on duty with the Kelly Field Post Exchange. It is one that will be long remembered in the hearts of those who have been fortunate enough to be one of its members.

Like all organizations it has had troubles, but through the efforts of M.S.E. Rufus Slaughter, supported by Sgt. 1st Class Sam, Wortzel and Joseph Lovchick they have been thrashed out as they appeared. The team work of these men, which represent the Administrative Department would remind one of the "Marines" at Chateau-Thierry, as they certainly killed the work.

In the Kitchen, which has been ruled by the Iron Hand of Sergeant "Dutch" Gilg we find Cooks McKee, Arkie Stewart and Adamopolis who have displayed talent never before witnessed in an Army Kitchen. The Slum-Gullion, Beans, Hot Dogs. Flap-Jacks, and numerous other Army fares

have been turned out in such condition that it has made the boys think often of "Mother's Cooking," and the boys have nothing but praise for old "Mother Dutch," tho at times we must admit when things weren't just so, "Dutch" was a terror with the K. Ps.

During the spring and summer of 1918 the Kelly Field Post Exchange Base Ball Club, which was composed of men from the 632nd Aero Squadron entered and won the Championship of the Kelly Field Base Ball League.

The members of the 632nd Aero Squadron did not get an opportunity to go to France they will be consoled by the fact that they did their duty on Kelly Field, and have been able to smile when things went wrong. so when the old 632nd is disbanded to allow the men to return to civil life again it will be represented in nearly every state in the Union, and it will be a source of pride to point back to the days that were spent on Kelly Field as a, member of the 632nd Aero Squadron.

In May 1923, the War Department had ordered the small caretaker force at Ellington Field to dismantle all remaining structures and to sell them as surplus. Orders to abandon Ellington Field were abruptly halted, when the War Department authorized the Texas National Guard to establish an aviation squadron. General John A. Hulen, commander of the U.S. 36th Division, announced the formation of the 111 Observation Squadron. General Hulen assured the citizens of Houston that the new air squadron was not a daredevil outfit. Hulen believed that the reactivation of Ellington Field as a reserve base would provide Houston an airfield and rekindle public interest in military aviation. With the news of the formation of the Air Squadron, one Houston Chronicle reporter christened the 111 Observation Squadron "Houston's Own," thus beginning a long relationship between Houston and the National Guard.

Major Bernard Law was responsible for the new 111 Observation Squadron locating in Houston. Competition for the site of the squadron's headquarters was fierce. Many cities throughout Texas, including Dallas and San Antonio, vied to be the home base for the fledgling aviation unit. The combination of Major Law's persistence, his aviation experience, and Ellington Field's aeronautical history led to the Texas National Guard selecting Houston.

The 111 Observation Squadron was officially activated on June 29, 1923, in the Houston Light Armory building. The Squadron was organized to provide mapping, photography, and reconnaissance support for the U.S. 36th Infantry Division. Major Law was tapped as commander of the 111 Observation Squadron. He recruited men with both aviation and combat experience from the Houston area to join the squadron. In 1923, the unit had an authorized strength of 130 officers and enlisted personnel. While the 111 Squadron awaited the arrival of aircraft, the Guardsmen drilled in the Houston Municipal Auditorium. At Ellington Field, the 111 Observation Squadron used several of the remaining structures and hangers from the war for weekend training. The buildings, , had to be refitted with new electrical, water, and telephone lines. Soon Ellington Field was alive with activity, though the renovation process could not compare to the original base construction. The 111 Observation Squadron received surplus Curtiss JN-6Hs and DH-4 DeHavilands from Kelly Field. The unit was also given surplus uniforms, shoes, and hats from Fort Sam Houston. Once aircraft were stationed at Ellington, Major Law hired several

mechanics to work full-time at Ellington Field.

In December 1923, the 111 Observation Squadron participated in its first training exercise. Aircraft from Ellington Field joined U.S. Army M3s and SE-5s from Kelly and Brooks Fields for bombing and gunnery practice. Gunnery practice took place about five miles off Galveston Island in the Gulf of Mexico. Aircraft towed giant 12-foot-by-3-foot targets while the JN-6H and DH-4 fighters attacked the moving targets.

In January 1924, the 111 Observation Squadron flew its first cross-country flights. During this exercise many of the first-time pilots received enough flight time to qualify for solo and dual ratings.

Though the 111 Observation Squadron had storage and maintenance facilities at Ellington Field, the squadron did not have a true headquarters building. Major Law requested funds from Texas and the U.S. National Guard, but unfortunately monies were not available for new buildings. Law, was able convince several local Houston businessmen to donate space in a downtown office building. In 1924, the 111 Observation Squadron headquarters was relocated to the Gas Company Building in downtown Houston.

The new downtown headquarters served a variety of roles for the 111 Observation Squadron: a central meeting point, administrative offices, and training classrooms. The new offices were adorned with mementos from the war and aeronautical memorabilia. An administrative building was also important on foul weather days. When rain showers turned dirt runways at Ellington Field to mud, the squadron needed a place to conduct weekend training.

The use of downtown facilities highlighted the two major inadequacies of Ellington Field: deteriorating facilities and the great distance of the field from Houston. Many of the officers in the 111 Observation Squadron believed that the Squadron and Houston needed a modern airport located near the city. Major Law was a prime mover behind the push to build a new airport. As the president of the Houston chapter of the National Aeronautics Association, Law was convinced that the construction of a municipal airport would benefit Houston's economy. Law also wanted the 111 Observation Squadron to have new training facilities located closer to most members of the squadron. Though the possibility of a new municipal airfield endangered the existence of Ellington Field, rumors circulated throughout the Texas National Guard that the War Department wanted to transfer the aviation schools at Kelly and Brooks Fields to Houston. During the early 1920s, neighborhoods near Brooks and Kelly Fields began to encroach on the military installations. Many in the War Department believed that the safety and efficiency of these training fields were compromised by these demographics shifts. The transfer of U.S. Army aviation schools to Ellington Field remained only a rumor.

The squadron was mustered to life as an active unit on 29 June 1923 in the old Houston Light Guard Armory together with the111 Photo Section and the 171st Air Intelligence Section.

The 171st Air Intelligence Section was mustered out of service on June 30, 1925.

On March 20, 1924, the Medical Department Detachment was mustered into service and attached to the 36th Division Aviation.

The table of organization called for a total of 17 Officers and 62 Enlisted men. During the ceremonies the 111 Photographic Section and the 171st Air Intelligence Section were formed into active units.

Headquarters for all units was established at 207 Gas Company Building, downtown Houston. Then the great day arrived, the receipt of that first airplane. A5 JN4B, Jenny, airplane was received in September of 1923 and the squadron was given quarters at Ellington Field. If you think Ellington is a long way out of Houston now, you should have made the trip in those days.

Before the move to Ellington, it was the same old routine since the days of the Roman Empire, classes and close order drill. A lot of this was done at the Houston City Auditorium with about the same enthusiasm as is shown today in such matters. The drills were scheduled for each Sunday afternoon for two hours. This has always been about enough time to call the roll and make the usual threats about attending the next drill. Well, in order to accomplish any effective training, it was always necessary to spend extra time to get the job done. The caretakers (technicians now) were always available to assist in every way possible. After World war I it was possible for anybody who wanted to, to order a JN4B, Jenny airplane, shipped direct from the factory, for a total fee of $250.00. This was in a crate, brand new, with engine and a handbook for instructions on how to put it together. When the squadron got its airplanes, they were free, but, Uncle Sam charged $2,000.00 to assemble each one.

Not too long after receiving its airplanes, the squadron suffered its first heartbreaking tragedy. It was on a Sunday afternoon on December 9, 1923. On that day a crash occurred resulting in the deaths of Captain Emil Wagner and Lieutenant Luke McLaughlin. The "Jenny" appeared to go into a stall at about 200 feet while in left turn.

Almost two years would pass before the next crash took the life of Captain Marvin Goodwin, on October 19 1925. This was a severe loss to the Squadron and to all of Houston as Lieutenant Goodwin was the manager of the Houston Buffalo Baseball Team. His "Jenny" stalled in a turn.

In 1925 General Mitchell conducted a "flying tour" of all National Guard Observation Squadrons throughout the United States. On a return trip from the West Coast, General Mitchell came to south Texas for an inspection of Ellington Field. As Mitchell's transport flew near Ellington Field, he was met by a formation of Curtiss JN-6s. Mitchell also watched the 111 Observation Squadron practice aerial gunnery. Once on the ground, Mitchell commented that the 111 Observation Squadron was one of the best units in the nation. Mitchell spoke to enthusiastic crowds at Ellington Field confirming his belief that a strong Air Force was vital to national defense. He commented that "the old centers of boundaries have been abolished since the airplane's use..." and also stressed the importance of

the development of nonsubsidized civil aviation.

The first fatalities for the 111 Observation Squadron occurred when Captain Emil Wagner and Lieutenant. L.T. McLaughlin were killed in a freak accident. While putting his Curtiss JN-6 into a steep dive, the left wing of their aircraft collapsed. Pilots flying in other aircraft and spectators on the ground watched in horror as the plane tumbled and then struck the ground. Miraculously both men survived the crash, but both later died in a Houston hospital.

The Squadron lost one of its best pilots when Captain John S. Ansley crashed at Ellington Field during a routine training flight. Captain Ansley was practicing the dangerous maneuver of recovering from a tailspin. Ansley began the maneuver at an insufficient altitude and was unable to recover from the tailspin. Captain Ansley's JN-6 slammed into a pile of stacked lumber and he died later from injuries sustained in the collision.

Throughout 1924, the 111 Observation Squadron participated in various training exercises. The Squadron flew to La Grange, Texas, to participate in a drill with the U.S. 36th Infantry Division. Pilots from the 111 Squadron dropped smoke bombs from treetop level, adding realism to the combat simulation. In July, the Squadron trained with the entire division on Galveston Island. At the Galveston maneuvers, U.S. Army aviators from Kelly and Brooks Fields taught the National Guard pilots new flying techniques. During the summer exercises 14 aircraft flew over 50,000 miles. Training was so intense that the 111 Squadron's Curtiss JN-6s were literally worn out. U.S. Army inspectors from Kelly Field grounded the squadron because the aircraft were deemed unsafe for flying.73 The aircraft were eventually replaced with newer aircraft from Kelly Field.

In 1924, cattle in Genoa, Texas, were inflicted with an outbreak of foot and mouth disease. Harris County officials feared that the disease would spread so they quarantined the southern portion of the county, and flights out of Ellington Field were temporarily suspended. During the quarantine period, men of the 111 Observation Squadron drilled at the Houston Municipal Auditorium.

23 February 1924 Lt. John S. Ansley of the 111 Observation Squadron, Texas National Guard, crashes in Curtiss JN-4H, 24-158, (one source gives the type as a Curtiss JN-6) at Ellington Field, Texas, when he enters a tailspin during practice, but at insufficient altitude to recover, the airframe smashing into a pile of stacked lumber. The pilot dies later in hospital.

9 December 1925 The 111 Observation Squadron, Texas National Guard, suffers its first casualties when Capt. Emil Wagner and Lt. Luke McLaughlin put a Curtiss JN-6H, 38105, into a steep dive whereupon the port wing collapses and the airframe plummets to the ground at Ellington Field, Texas. Both crew survive the impact but die later in a Houston hospital

By 1926, Houston was in the process of planning a modern municipal airfield so that Houston would remain a center of commerce and trade in south Texas. Rival cities San Antonio and Dallas had already constructed civil airfields. Even smaller cities such as Waco, Texas, were contemplating building an airport. By 1927 an airport was under construction near the Garden Villa area on Houston's Telephone Road. The completed facility was named the Houston Municipal Airport.

The enticement of new aviation facilities was too much for the Texas National Guard. By 1927 the facilities at Ellington Field were obsolete. Neither the Texas National Guard nor the War Department had the funds to renovate Ellington Field, so the 111 Observation Squadron signed a long-term lease with the Houston Municipal Airport and moved into new facilities in the southwestern corner of the airfield. New buildings included five cottages built for full-time aircraft mechanics and their families and two steel hangers complete with storage and locker rooms.

The Texas National Guard purchased the abandoned remaining usable structures at Ellington Field. The U.S. 36th Division bought buildings that once housed the library, hospital, and bachelors' quarters. Engineers disassembled the wooden buildings and transported them to the new Texas National Guard headquarters in Palacios, Texas. By 1928, Ellington Field was a sea of tall prairie grass. In February, a fire engulfed the entire airfield. Though the Houston Fire Department responded to the blaze, the remaining structures were consumed. All that remained from the fire were concrete foundations and a metal water tower. Throughout the next 12 years, the War Department leased out the vacant land to local ranchers for pasture.

For the first time airmen were to successfully complete an airplane tour around the world in only five months and 22 days. Of the original four airplanes and crews to start, only two were to complete the journey. These crews visited Houston; the turnout of people was quite small. You see, at that time Ellington Field was also used to graze cattle and there was on epidemic of foot and mouth disease in the area. The field was quarantined, limiting the number of visitors who could come and go from the field.

About this time, 1927, Houston was at least assured of having a municipal airport, which the Texas National Guard Air Service would occupy and regulate. The Houston airport is a twenty minute ride from the Post Office and embraces 400 acres, being a little over one-half a mile wide by a mile and two fifths long. The terrain is level, notwithstanding this it has been plowed, leveled and rolled as smooth as a floor. It is what is known as a zero hazard field, not a building, tree or wire line within a quarter of a mile of the field proper . . . It is completely surrounded by open prairie, which makes it ideal for emergency fields."

The City of Houston and the donor of the field, Mr. W. T. Carter, Jr., plan a triple A Class airport, completely equipped for both day and night flying. The field will be surrounded by a 4x4 cedar post fence, the posts set eight feet apart and wired to keep livestock off the field. The boundary lights will be set on the fence posts, and in addition hangar flood lights and field flood lights, with illuminated wind cone, semaphore and fifty foot steel beacon tower will be installed. A three inch water main is already on the field, supplied by a 175,000 gallon water tank, which insures ample pressure for modern fire fighting apparatus.

The City of Houston will at once build a wooden hangar, 60x100 feet, for the accommodation of civilian and air mail planes. A restroom and comfort station and the other necessary buildings for servicing visiting planes will be erected at once. The Texas National Guard Air Service will erect two fabricated steel hangars and the necessary warehouses, offices for operations and administration, barracks, mess hall and permanent living quarters. Already a gasoline filling station, combined with a restaurant, soft drink fountain and grocery store were erected adjacent to the field.

There is a telephone line close to the field and a high tension power line is within half a mile from the field. An hourly bus line furnishes transportation to and from the field.

The close location of the field to the city will afford opportunities for personnel of the National Guard Squadron to go out late afternoons and fly daily a great improvement over old conditions when flying was indulged in only on the weekly drill period because of the field being located so far away from the city.

Only Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, National Guard and commercial concerns whose planes have successfully passed the Federal inspection will be permitted the use of the field.

The 36th Division Air Service celebrated the announcement of the airport by a stag banquet in the Brazos Hotel Taproom. The banquet broke up at a late hour and a good time was had by all.

In February 1928 Grass fires originated north of Ellington Field, fanned by a high north wind, blew down on this wartime aviation field and burned eight buildings to the ground, including three hangars, bachelor quarters, warehouses and the Officer's club building. Immediately upon notification at Fort Crocket, Galveston, Texas, the Third Attack Group dispatched two airplanes; an 0-6 all metal plane (Lieutenant G. A. McHenry, Pilot) and a Douglas transport (Lieutenant H. W. Anderson, pilot) carrying a fire fighting detail. The Houston Fire Department was called and responded promptly from a distance of 17 miles. Practically all of the landing field, which had been covered with high grass, was burned over. There now remains at Ellington Field only two hangars, Numbers 18 and 19, one set of married officers' quarters, one partly salvaged warehouse and the old Commanding Officer's set of quarters.

In December, 1928, the unit moved to the Houston Municipal Airport, where it was quartered until August, 1939. A 99-year lease to 35 acres of ground located in the southwest corner of the

Municipal Airport was received from the city.

The first member of the 111 to be saved by a parachute "jump" was TSgt. Fritz H. Grifno. The thing about it was that he did not intentionally jump from the plane. He was up one afternoon with Lt. C. C. Scott at about 2,000 feet to drop test a parachute by the use of a dummy. The signal was given for Lt. Scott to bank the airplane, and bank he did. His bank was so sharp and sudden that Sgt. Grifno went out the same time the dummy did. When the ambulance reached him, Sgt. Grifno was folding his own parachute. Welcome to the Caterpillar Club.

The squadron, or elements thereof, called up to perform the following state duties: flights in support of experimental analysis of cosmic rays by scientists at Rice University 17-30 June 1932; numerous aerial photograph and mapping surveys of Texas in the 1930s to include reconnaissance photos of the Rio Grande River bridges with Mexico for border security operations; aerial support to martial law for operations to reduce the Borger, TX, criminal ring during September-October 1929; and aerial patrols of the oilfields in the East Texas martial law district during September 1931-December 1932.

Conducted summer training at Ellington Field and Camp Hulen, TX. Also flew spotter missions at Camp Bullis, TX, for the training of the units of the 61st Field Artillery Brigade.

In August, 1939, the unit moved to its own reservation, where a modern hangar, administration building and other improvements have been installed at a cost exceeding $250,000.

Inducted into active Federal service 25 November 1940 at Ellington Field, *1445 TX.*

Relieved from assignment to the 48th Observation Group on 30 December 1940 and assigned on to the Third Army.

Transferred to Stinson Field, Brownwood, TX, arriving there 12 January 1941.

Relieved from the Third Army in March 1941 and assigned to the VIII Corps.

Relieved from the VIII Corps in June 1941 and assigned to the Third Army.

You might also ask First Sgt. George Wehrung what it feels like to be riding along when the pilot decides that there is something wrong with the airplane. Lt. Showalter orders George to jump, so George jumps out and parachutes to safety. Well, Lt. Showalter decided that he could make it back to the field in the airplane, and to this day George doesn't know whether it was a trick or not. George made it back too, but he was really b On the 25th of November, 1940, one hundred and seventy-five men lined up soldier style to form the 111 Observation Squadron. A lot of the boys were fresh out of civilian life, some straight from the plow handles, offices, and factories. One could just imagine a General walking in about that time and gazing with amazement upon the fine array of zoot suits, red ties and green shirts, blended in with those in uniform who had been in the National Guard on inactive service. In no time, though, we had filed by the supply

department and were all fitted out in our new GI duds. We immediately learned the old "one, two, three, four" along with guard duty, military discipline, and just being a soldier in general.

In January of 1941 we made our first of many changes in stations to come. Our first move was to Brownwood, Texas, and there our first real period of basic training commenced. We also did air-ground support with the 36th Infantry Division with 0-47's and 0-43's, in those days really some "Hot Rock" airplanes. By this time we were coming along nicely with our training program and all were actually beginning to look like they would make top-notch soldiers.

We moved again to Houston, Texas, in March, 1941, for a period of practice in aerial gunnery. The main part of the unit was stationed at Houston, with a small echelon at Galveston, where the firing took place over Galveston Bay. This period of training completed, it was back to Brownwood to make preparations for the Abilene maneuvers.

In May we journeyed to Abilene, Texas, for a three-week maneuver with the 36th and 45th Divisions. This was our first real maneuver which was practically all simulated warfare. One can recall the airplanes flying over dropping small paper bags of flour representing bombs, and anyone within a certain radius of the strike immediately becoming a casualty. 'Course, in those days a casualty meant "dear old bunk fatigue," so we all did our best to become casualties.

The maneuvers over, we went back to Brownwood in June, this time for a rest period and the first furloughs to be handed out since induction.

In August, 1941, we departed for Mansfield, Louisiana for the big sixty-day maneuvers. In the course of this two- month period we had two additional stations at Marshall and Port Arthur, Texas. The maneuvers involved two major forces known as the "Blues" and the "Reds." As the Blue was the offensive army and defeated the Red, we being on the Red side also suffered defeat. It was back to Brownwood for another period of rest and furloughs.

In November, 1941, we went off to Greenville, South Carolina, on another maneuver, and this time the Reds, including the 111 Squadron, emerged the victors.

We were back in Brownwood at the end of November and plans were immediately drawn up for leaves during December to include Christmas and New Year's. Just think, fifteen days for everyone in the unit! The first group departed the first week in December, everyone having made plans for a grand old time at home.

As anticipated, we received movement orders immediately. The Squadron was split into two echelons, one sent to McAllen and later to Laredo, Texas, and the other to Fort Clark at Bracketville, Texas. Our primary duties at these stations were border patrol and sub patrol out of Brownsville, Texas, so we were at war only in a milder form than we expected. With 0-47's, 0-43's, and 0-52's we patrolled the border between Texas and Mexico along the Rio Grande River.

In February, 1942, the unit was reassembled and moved to Augusta, Georgia. Here we got a new

type aircraft. Our first A-20's and P-43's really looked nice. Now we knew we were getting somewhere with real hot airplanes that flew well over two hundred miles an hour and looked slick in the air.

While in Augusta all pilots got in their transition time and the unit received its first big shipment of replacements, having lost a great number of men to flying school and to limited service units.

In May, 1942, we moved to Macon, Georgia, for another short maneuver and then back to Augusta in June, where we had the last leaves before going overseas.

In July, immediately after arriving in Charlotte, North Carolina, we started our last extensive training program before leaving the States. As we had a very good idea that we would be leaving the good ol' U.S.A. at last, it was readily decided that we should have one more Squadron party before leaving. With the idea of "our last party" in mind, everyone had himself a grand time and it is certain that the affair will live long in the memories of those friends of ours operating the Charlotte Hotel.

On the 22nd of September, 1942, the ground echelon did go away — straight to Fort Dix for processing and shipment overseas. The air echelon remained at Charlotte awaiting the arrival of new airplanes and movement orders.

September 22 to November 28, 1942 The air echelon remained at Charlotte from the 22nd of September, 1942, to the latter part of October before moving to West Palm Beach, Florida, for processing and shipment.

The flight echelon for this unit was comprised of eighteen A-20's of the latest of that type ship. We were split into two flights of nine ships each with flight leaders for each element flying B-25's.

Our first leg of the flight across the Atlantic was to Puerto Rico on the 9th of November, 1942. Our first day out, Lady Luck threw us a very effective curve ball, as we lost the ships complete with crews of three men each. The commander of the flight, Major Thomas M. Johnson, was aboard one of the ships and his was certainly a heart-felt lass to the flight.

On the 10th of November we had a six-hour journey to Georgetown, British Guiana, and we all had our first peek at South America.

On the 11th of November we moved on to Belem, Brazil, en route having our look at the Amazon River. The 12th saw us arrive in Natal, our last stop in South America. Here we had a two-day rest period and a complete check-up on all ships In preparation for our over-water jaunt.
On the 14th of November we took off at dawn for the little speck of land in the middle of the Atlantic known as Ascension Island. It certainly turned out to be a little speck only five by seven miles, out there all by its lonesome in that big ocean.

Our next flight, on the 15th of November, put us in at Accraton on the Gold Coast of Africa. Here

we had a ten-day lay-over awaiting a change in orders as to our destination. During this period we made ourselves well acquainted with Africa and were quite surprised to see a comparatively civilized land and not one overrun by wild beasts.

On the 24th of November we took off for Kano, our shortest hop of the flight. Our longest hap (ten hours and forty-five minutes) was north to Tafaroui, Algeria, where we rejoined our ground echelon and the old one-one-one was back together again.

The fear that this latest overseas alert would prove to be false alarm was soon dispelled when we boarded a troop train on the morning of September 22, 1942. Upon arrival at Fort Dix, New Jersey, we were assigned to side-boarded tents and were ordered to remain within the camp area at all times. The four days spent here in processing for overseas duty were as hectic as any we had yet experienced. "Line up for a clothes issue at Supply." "Fall out for a practice run through the gas chamber." "Fall out to be issued rifles and tommy-guns." Passport photos were taken. Sleep came when you could stand still long enough. Telephone calls could be made only from carefully monitored pay stations. Day differed from night in no respect insofar as activity and wakefulness were concerned. "Fall out and have your dog tags rechecked." "Lay out all equipment for inspection." "Physical inspection in fifteen minutes." "Do you have ten thousand dollars insurance?" "Do you have all the shots-in-the-arm required?" "Have you made a will?" "Do you need glasses?" Everything you need but SLEEP!

Supper on September 26 was mindful of Thanksgiving Day at home roast turkey with dressing, cranberry sauce, celery, olives, pickles, apples, bananas, oranges, ice cream, with all the milk and coffee you could drink. At dusk we loaded our barracks bags aboard waiting trucks in a drizzling rain, shouldered our well-filled packs and rifles, and took places in ranks for another roll call.

The trek to the railway station was devoid of the usual wise-cracks and we hadn't carried our packs very far before we wished that we had left out such items as after-shave lotion, talc, and mouth wash. At the train yard we reclaimed our rain-soaked bags, answered another roll call, and listened with mingled thoughts as "I'll Be With You in Apple Blossom Time" blared forth from a public- address system.

The train ride from Fort Dix to New York City was uneventful and most fellows did a good job of catching up on much-needed sleep. After dismounting from the train we were faced with a half-mile hike to the ferry. The weight of our bags and equipment plus our benumbed physical state combined to make the longest half-mile we had ever walked. When arms and shoulders gave out the bags were dragged along the saturated ground, causing the supply sergeant no little dis-comfiture. After all, he would need a new bag himself! Once in the huge dock pavilion we were again able to rest in preparation for whatever other fiendish maneuvers might be in store for us. Finally, our turn came and we filed past a horde of checkers and answered with our first names and middle initials when our last names were called. By this time we knew that we were boarding the gigantic Queen Mary. Strangely enough, we went down the gang plank to get aboard. We'd have never made it if we'd had to go up as anticipated. Each man was handed a large enameled pin button to wear. The number and color of the pin determined the vicinity of the wearer's

quarters aboard ship and the hours at which he would be admitted to the mess hall.

Inside the Queen Mary we were shooed up staircases and through corridors .until everyone found the bunk reserved for him. The staterooms in which we were quartered had been stripped of all peacetime fittings and in their place had been built bunks from floor to ceiling, accommodating from six to eighteen men per 'corn. Few of us had the energy to even undress, but just plunked our bags, oacks, rifles and cartridge belts in a heap on the floor and hit the sack in earnest.

We woke in the morning conscious of a steady throbbing throughout the ship which had not existed the night before. The die-hards among us headed for the chow line and then the deck, just in time to see the Statue of Liberty slip by. Most of us stayed in the sack, , because reports on the chow were not heartening and we couldn't see much sense in getting out of bed to see Miss Liberty going in the wrong direction.

The six days spent aboard the Queen Mary were a hodge-podge of "Sweating out" super PK lines, being constantly lost in the maze of decks, corridors and stairs that are contained in the ocean-going behemoth, and active participation in the 24-hour crap games that could be found in operation in every other stateroom. Not even on the high-seas could we avoid the suspicious stare of the military police. No passage way was complete without one and they took delight in apprehending GI's wandering loose without a life preserver in their possession. One morning while reading the daily ship bulletin board we noted with interest that the German government had claimed to have sunk the Queen Mary again for the sixth time.

Early in the afternoon of October 2, 1942, the upper deck of the Queen Mary was jammed with troops enjoying an after-lunch promenade. The rails were lined with O.D. clad soldiers who were watching with interest the maneuvers of several British destroyers and cruisers which had joined the Queen that morning to serve as an escort. From time to time, one of the warships would scoot across the bow of the liner diagonally, and at the moment an anti-aircraft cruiser had started its run in that direction. As the cruiser neared the liner it became apparent to those that watched that the cruiser did not have enough speed to make a successful passage and we kept waiting for the smaller ship to year off and try again. An enemy submarine was suspected of being on the port side of the Queen Mary struck the cruiser directly amidships and severed the bow from the stern. We who watched were stunned and horrified at what we were witnessing. The after part of the stricken ship scraped the starboard side of the Queen Mary and we could see no life on the decks. Men were draped from cables strung around the cruiser deck and lay in crumpled heaps on the steel deck. Depth charges and torpedoes, which had broken loose from their mounts, scooted past with all sorts of nondescript wreckage. In a quarter of a minute, what had but a moment before been a fine man-o-war was now a fast disappearing hulk far in the wake of the Queen Mary. The grim realities of war had hit us suddenly.

The collision had torn a huge hole in the bow of the speedy liner and was slowed perceptibly while emergency repairs were made to enable her to reach port safely. Sickened by what we had seen, we made our way back to our berths.

On the morning of October 3 we woke to find the continuous pulsating under foot stopped once again. We were in the harbor at Gurock, Scotland, surrounded by lovely rolling hills of countless shades of green and canopied by scores of silver barrage balloons glistening in the early morning light. By mid-afternoon we nod been conveyed to shore in a tender and were greeted there by a kilted clan of pipers. Before boarding the train we were besieged by a host of apple-checked lassies and matrons who kept us well supplied with scones, tea cakes, cookies and piping hot tea.

Our all-night train ride was interrupted shortly after midnight when we dismounted to stretch, and give -to some more coffee and cakes provided by kindly ladies who took the stampede in their stride. Back we ..ent into our blacked-out compartments for a resumption of the reassuring click-a-clack, click-a-clank. Shortly after dawn the train pulled into Needham Market, where we were met by British Army lorries and conveyed to Wattisham Station, an RAF air base.

Wattisham Station is about fifteen miles from Ipswich in Sussex County, and approximately seventy miles northeast of London. The first thing that met our eyes upon unloading from the truck was a badly demolished building which, at one time, had been a barracks. U. S. Army personnel who were already stationed at this 'aid and were therefore qualified as veterans had gathered to exercise their indisputable right to give -s, the newcomers, the needle. They pointed to the demolished barracks and hastened to assure us that this damage had not been wrought by termites.

We were soon billeted in three barracks which faced a parade ground, and then were token to our first chow in a good many hours. The breakfast menu featured cabbage and beans. Dinners generally billing to boiled mutton, turnips and carrots. Granted, this was war, but the line should have been drawn somewhere. We soon looked forward to afternoon tea, at which time highly palatable cheese and toothsome cakes were generally available. The crafty operators soon found a way to get "seconds" by eating very quickly in the mess hall downstairs and then highballing it upstairs for another go-around. It was earned, too, that our regular rations could be ably supplemented by routine pilgrimages to the British NAAFI (Navy, Army, Air Forces Institute) and the Y.M.C.A. At these places cakes, tea, coffee or chocolate could be obtained at special hours during the day and every evening. The NAAFI also sold warm, dark English beer, and several flavors of sugarless soda pop.

The day after our arrival at Wattisham we attended an orientation lecture given by an RAF flight leader explained the necessity for strict black-out told us what to do in case of an air attack, and hastened to assure us that the airplane detection was so developed that spotters knew the instant that an enemy craft took off from a foreign field, and its exact whereabouts thereafter. The following morning we were startled ay the chatter of a Lewis machine gun, following which came the roar of a zooming aircraft. Men outside

he barracks hit the dirt and then looked up just in time to see the three dark objects hurtle from the opened comb-bay doors of a "black cross" marked aircraft. The bombs, we learned later, had been dropped into two of the hangars on the line and were 500 and 1,000 pounders. They did

not explode on contact, but ore large holes in the hangar roofs and concrete floors. The area around them was roped off and a guard ousted for three days to allow the bombs to "cook off." They never did explode, but all our faith in the aircraft warning system did.

The British monetary system was most confusing to us and because of the befuddlement brought about halfpence and half crowns they were ruled out of the poker and blackjack games that held sway during off-duty hours, in favor of ten shilling and pound notes. Ante of a pound, followed by calls of pot limit made some very potent pots. It was difficult for the players to reconcile themselves to the 'act that a pound had four times the value of a dollar.

The nearby town of Ipswich offered plenty of entertainment and the men spruced up at every opportunity o head in that direction. At first the combination of a woman bus driver driving on the wrong side of the road was almost too much for us, but soon we grew to admire her skill at maneuvering the cumbersome refugee from a scrap heap. Pub crawling in blacked-out streets became a new and fascinating sport for us. We learned fast to establish residence in a bar, down our share of double-shots before the drought set in, and waste no time in searching for more abundant oases when it did. We found the English girls quite friendly, but total black-out introduced romantic hazards that were new to us. You could never be sure of what you were getting. Of course, that worked both ways. In a black-out it was easy for even an officer to get a date.

We had no aircraft to operate at Wattisham and we were fully aware that our present status was merely temporary. But when we were told to prepare for a thirty to sixty-day overseas voyage and be ready to go ashore under fire, we were all surprised and somewhat perturbed. Our barracks bags were repainted with code letters; our clothes, equipment and personal belongings were divided into two categories: vital, and superfluous. The vital material would be carried with us, while the remainder would be placed in a "B" cog and sent on later. We have never seen the "B" bags again.

On October 22 we left Wattisham and returned to Gurock, Scotland, over the same route we hod traveled just three weeks before. On the morning of the 23rd we boarded the Canadian troop transport, the We remained on the Letitia a week while she lay in a harbor loading on more troops and supplies. Compared with the Queen Mary the Letitia was a rowboat and she boasted none of the conveniences we had enjoyed aboard ship a month earlier. Our quarters were one large compartment aft, and two levels below the top deck. The large room served as both living quarters and dining hall. We slept in hammocks which were suspended over the tables at night and taken down and rolled up during the day. Ten men were assigned to each table and they paired off to serve as table attendants and M.P.'s. Before chow time they grabbed an assortment of pots and pans and carried them to the galley where they were filled with food. The hot food was then carried back to the dining hall. They also fetched wash and rinse water for our mess gear. We found here what we had also discovered in England — some people have peculiar ideas about food. Items such as creamed herring, mutton stew and corned willie kept popping up on the menu, but found few admirers. There was plenty of good bread, though, which was baked daily, and we wolfed it down along with plenty of fresh New Zealand butter. Each day we took

part in boat and air raid drill and loosened up with calisthenics on the top deck. Some of our members were aerial gunners and they were assigned to anti-aircraft gun turrets for the remainder of the voyage.

About ten o'clock on the night of October 27, 1942, the Letitia weighed anchor, and it, with scores of other troop transports, destroyers, battleships, cruisers, and flat-tops, slithered down the Firth o' Clyde, past small craft which held open the submarine nets to allow us to pass. We could only guess as to our destination.

By morning we were well out to sea and some of us were experiencing the first discomforts of sea sickness. The Letitia was surrounded by scores of vessels, many carrying Dutch, French and Greek flags, while most flew the Union Jack. At regular intervals the entire convoy would change direction to the accompaniment of blinker lights and pennant signals. Destroyers and sub chasers patrolled the outer rim of the convoy and, in the days that were to follow, many times we would watch them converge on one spot and unloose their depth charges which would blow geysers of water fifty feet high upon exploding. After one such run all the ships in the convoy lowered their flags to half-mast momentarily, and then ran them back up again. From this we surmised that on enemy sub had been definitely sunk.

The days passed slowly. One night a fire broke out in one of the supply holds, but it was extinguished quickly. As the ship progressed southward it became uncomfortably warm below decks, and despite the danger of torpedoing we found it necessary to remove all of our clothes in order to sleep at all. We were given tablets as a precaution against malaria and they caused many men to become nauseated in addition to those who were already chronic sea-sick sufferers.

On the afternoon of November 6 our convoy broke into two elements for the purpose of passing through the Strait of Gibraltar. Shortly after ten o'clock that night we were able to make out the outline of the "Rock" on our port side and marveled at the display of lights emanating from the city of Tangiers on the Spanish Moroccan side. While we were passing Gibraltar in the darkness a low-flying seaplane cropped a flare directly over the Letitia, which lighted up the ship and everything else within a radius of a half-mile. For awhile we thought they had us, but apparently everything was O.K. because no shattering explosions followed.

From the time we passed into the Mediterranean Sea (Mussolini's Pond), all gun crews were constantly on the alert, and every man wearing dog tags sweated out the first attack from the much-vaunted Luftwaffe. It never came. All day long on November 7 we circled in the Mediterranean like a sitting duck as the convoy re-formed. By this time we had been thoroughly briefed on the purpose and scope of our mission. In addition, each man had been given a small, blue booklet describing the country we were invading and listing do's and don'ts in regard to our conduct with the natives. We were also given a small American flag which we were to wear on our upper left arm. Just the presence of that flag gave all of us a world of confidence in ourselves. Shortly after midnight on November 8 we gathered around the radio amplifier in our quarters to listen to President Roosevelt address the people of North Africa and explain to them what we were attempting to do. We listened without comment until the realization hit us as the President was

talking about us. We were the guys who were supposed to be doing all this Somewhere, not far from us, more dogfaces like ourselves were taking and holding enemy ground, getting shot at and getting hit. Our time would come soon.

By 5 a.m. on November 8 our ship had crept into position about one mile off shore from the harbor of Arzew, Algeria. In the thin dawn we could make out the ghost gray outlines of houses and buildings bespattering the hills. On our right the British battleship Rodney was plunking fourteen-inch shells into the fort at Oran, which is about twenty miles west of Arzew. In our sector sprays of 20-mm tracers and small-arms fire were visible, reaching from and to the shore. Outside of the periodic roar from the Rodney's big guns everything was ominously quiet. Shortly after 7 a.m. the combat engineers aboard our ship had started down the scramble nets into assault boats which reared and bobbed maddeningly in the heavy sea. By evening the first wave from our squadron had reached shore, where they spent the night in a wine warehouse listening to the zing of sniper's bullets. Drinks were on the house! The ever increasing choppiness of the water prevented any further disembarkation operations, so the remainder of the squadron turned in to await another try in the morning.

By morning the sea had subsided enough to allow the remainder of the squadron to unload from the Letitia. The landing craft were met at the beach by those members who had already spent the night ashore. As the newcomers stepped onto the beach, bottles of wine were pressed into their hands and also everyone availed himself a' the opportunity to wash the greasy mess-kit taste from his mouth.

We spread out in platoons beneath the palms that edged the beach and awaited further orders. Every few minutes a rifle would crack from the direction of the town and we didn't care for the sound at all. Suddenly a shot pinged from somewhere on the beach and we immediately crawled behind the nearest cover. The first shot was followed by more, and by this time we all had our rifles at the "ready" position. Soon a shot was fired from within our group and word was passed down that a snipe- was firing from the window of a two-story building fifty yards away. That did it! Men laid their rifles across the shoulder of the nearest man and let go. Pistol clips were emptied into the tops of palm trees where snipers were suspected of being. Those with Tommy-guns raked the entire building fore and aft. Some individuals, not sure as to who was firing at what, cut loose on a water tank parked on the street and took delight in watching the water spray forth from the punctured tank. Patrols were formed to surround the entire block in which the building lay. In the side streets the patrols ran into real sniper fire and they proceeded to riddle a church bell-tower from whence shots were suspected of coming. The entire action lasted little more than a minute, but the small window which had been the primary target had now been enlarged to a size through which a two-ton truck might be driven. The "cease-fire" order was given and immediately following a quick count was made to see how many of our me^ had been hit. No casualties were reported.

Runners were sent out to round up the patrols. As the men returned the platoons were re-formed and set out for the prearranged rendezvous ten miles away.

Our march along the dusty roads leading to St. Leu was made in single file with plenty of space between men and with files on both sides of the road. A sharp lookout was kept for aircraft. The day was growing hotter by the minute and the sweat oozed through our gas-impregnated woolen uniforms. Our steaming faces were plastered with chalky dust. The bivouac area outside of St. Leu was a flat plain covered with wheat stubble and dotted with strawstacks. Hungry, but too tired to worry about food, we spread ourselves out in the straw to rest. The little blue booklets we had been issued stated that Algeria had if any, rain during the month of November. That night we received Algeria's allotment for the next twenty-five years!

We stayed at St. Leu for one week, during which details were returned to the beach at Arzew to help unload the ships in the harbor and stand guard over the squadron equipment until transport was available. We divided into groups of twelve men with each group receiving a box of British field rations for one day. Certain components of the rations made excellent eating, although there seemed to be an overabundance of steak and kidney pudding, for which we had no liking. Each group did its own cooking and for a week we thrived on canned bacon, beans and pork, cheese, date and marmalade puddings, "boiled sweets," and topped off each repas' with a Players Navy Cut cigarette. The less said about the hardtack biscuits the better.

On November 16 we moved to the air field at Tafaroui, which is just a few miles from Oran. By this time we were firmly convinced that the man who had written the weather section of the little "blue book" was a practical joker of the lowest order. The flat plains were seas of gumbo and the continuous downpours kept them that way. We pitched four-man pup tents to give us protection against the wind in all directions, and made floors out of ration-box cardboard and planking. Every man had himself a fox-hole within spitting distance. The mess section was set up on the lee side of a shrapnel-packed show and we were now eating hot steak and kidney pudding. The area around the mess tent was ankle deep in mud and the man in the outfit who, at one time or another, did not take a header into that goo with his mess-kit contents pouring all over himself, is a fortunate character indeed.

On November 24 the per diem" boys flew in with our new A-20's, and the tales that were swapped between the air and ground echelons rivaled those of Paul Bunyan. The arrival of the planes meant that there was much work to be done and darned little to do it with, outside of a lot of willing hands. The tools and equipment we had crated and shipped from Charlotte had not caught up with us. Despite this handicap and the adverse weather conditions, the work was soon accomplished.

In North Africa there are Arabs, and the Arab is the undisputed world's champion business man. They soon learned we were a booming market for tangerines and eggs and were not too much worried about the price. The price of eggs shot up from two francs to fifteen francs apiece, and tangerines from one cigarette a dozen to one package per dozen. Times were getting hard.

By December 19 the entire squadron had moved to the air field near Oujda, French Morocco. Here we were joined by the remainder of the 68th Observation Group, who had landed near Wedala on the west African coast. The new air field provided excellent hangar facilities and also

buildings for our section shops. Here, too, we received P-39 pursuit-type planes, and these, as well as the light bombers, were rigged up with depth charges. We were soon flying submarine patrol missions over the Mediterranean.

Christmas Eve, 1942, brought the news of Admiral Darlan's assassination in Algiers and the entire base was alerted in anticipation of possible trouble. It might be added that the eggnog which the mess section had prepared for the occasion was not wasted. On New Year's Eve we were again alerted, this time against the possibility of enemy parachutist attack. We were grateful that nothing happened.

On January 14, 1943, our commanding officer, Captain Robert E. Baugh, was killed when his plane crashed not far from the base. First Lieutenant James H. Deering, became our new squadron commander.

The days spent at Oujda were busy and uncomfortable ones. Maintenance of the aircraft was hampered by our lack of equipment and the weather was either bad or worse. The men slept in fox-holes that had been dug through layers of rock, and with the continuous rain it was impossible to keep mud and water out of our sacks. We stuffed our mattress covers with straw and slept on them until after a long and especially hard rain, most of us woke to find our mattresses and blankets floating alongside of us. Neither we nor our blankets and clothes were ever dry again until spring. Another thing the "little blue book" writer failed to tell us — it snows - Africa. And even when it doesn't snow the winter days are sharp and brisk and the nights are downright frigid. A pair of warm, dry socks was our idea of paradise.

An African spring is comparable to a Mississippi heat wave. Within a week after the sun had made its first all-day appearance the brown and barren earth was covered with a fine, irritating dust. Then the sirocco put in an appearance the whirling dust blotted out the sun and we were forced to wear goggles and dust respirators as means of protection for our eyes and lungs. With the coming of warmer weather and dried-out blankets we began to sleep with our clothes off for the first time. Some a' the fellows took to washing regularly and even took sponge baths, using their helmets as bath tubs. A detachment from our photo section went to Tunisia to aid the '54th Squadron, and reports which returned from them convinced us that the war up that way was really rough. During our off-duty hours we played baseball basketball and volleyball. We had movies shown several times a week and reached a new high when Martha Raye staged a personnel appearance for our benefit. We felt highly indebted to Martha for her fine performance. In March we received our first Mustangs and on April 7, 1943, we took them and our P-39's to Guercif, French Morocco, where we were to engage in practice gunnery and further training.

Guercif's only claim to fame was the fact that it was a French Foreign Legion post and its location marked the northwestern end of the Sahara Desert. Uncle Sam added third and fourth feathers by furnishing two lovely young Red Cross ladies to maintain a club for us in this forsaken hole. The war in Tunisia came to its conclusion May 12, 1943, and on May 24, the 111 squadron moved eastward to Nouvion, Algeria.

The trip from Guercif to Nouvion was made in the infamous 40 and 8 railway box cars. We were assigned eighteen men to a car and even then couldn't roll over - shout disturbing at least four men. Trainloads of German prisoners passed us going west and each of their cars contained the full complement of 40 men. Even at that envied them because they were being shipped to the States. The trip lasted three days — long days.

Nouvion provided fine barracks and double-deck bunks. We were getting up in the world: pup tents in Oujda, pyramidal tents in Guercif, and now — barracks. The days were hot that between the hours of 12 and 3 in the afternoon eggs could be fried on the wings of the airplanes. During these hours no work was attempted, so we caught up on sleep lost through attendance at the previous night's show. First Sergeant Hunt and Sergeants Hubbard, Luke and Stidston were given direct commissions as 5havetails" and Sergeant Eddie Renken became our new Hook 'n Bill. While at Nouvion the squadron was redesignated as the 111 Reconnaissance Squadron, and we were to operate independently from the group. During our twenty-six-day stay we serviced completely upwards of fifty P-39's and P-51's.

From Nouvion one-half of the squadron was flown to Bou Fischa, Tunisia, by transport lane. Little work was done while at this station and we took advantage of the o-eak to visit Sousse, Tunis, Sfax, Enfidavillo, and other towns in which some of the Tunisian Campaign's bitterest battles were fought. This easy life was short-lived , and the echelon moved to Korba on Cape Bon while those of the squadron who had remained at Nouvion convoyed by truck to Tunis. In Tunis they camped - z staging area and readied themselves for the next invasion by waterproofing the vehicles and loading them on LST's to await the "Go" signal.

Those who were on Cape Bon were keeping the aircraft flying over Sicily on the now familiar "dawn-to-dusk" schedule, and were curbing the fates that had

On September 27 the anniversary of our first year overseas was celebrated informally. The sudden appearance of highly toxic liquors in public bars led to the establishment of our own bars within our barracks. The liquor obtained for our bar was a nonpoisonous, but still tasted like raw gasoline. A basketball court was laid out n one of the battered factory buildings on the field and a no-holds-barred inter-sectional tournament was staged with the Headquarters team copping their share of the on Jises and also the title. A squadron team was hastily organized and entered in the Naples basketball tournament, where it surprised everyone by advancing to the aJarter-finals before being eliminated. Arrangements were made for the hiring of a band and the lower "400" of Naples and Pomigliano were ably represented at our Christmas party. We attended regular movies at the GI-Operated local opera house and enjoyed the personal appearance of Humphrey Bogart and quite a few USO shows.

The harbor at Naples was bombed often by the Nazis, but no night raids were directed against our field. Early one morning, while we were sweating out the breakfast chow line, a half dozen ME-109's swept in low over the parked airplanes and dropped fragmentation bombs. Food and mess kits flew in one direction and men in another at the first detonation. Brockton's pride and

joy ran the command car, which he was driving, into a ditch in the excitement. Ack-Ack on the field opened up and downed one plane. Several of our ships had been hit, but none seriously. Men who had been on the line working at the time of the raid were unanimous in declaring that the whole business had been "too close for comfort."

Snow and rain affected, but did not halt, the ever-mounting number of missions and hours being flown by the squadron. In January of 1944 the beachhead at Anzio was established, which upped considerably the number of artillery missions being flown. In April a detachment of eighteen men and four airplanes was sent to the beachhead to operate from the Nettuno airfield. The nightly air raids and regular shelling made things rough, but, on the whole, those who represented the squadron at Anzio welcomed the change from routine which we had become accustomed to. The city of Naples had been declared off limits to Allied troops shortly after the beginning of the new year, because of a typhus epidemic. The Army's new rotation policy sent Sergeant Millard McWhorter on his way home as the first enlisted man in the squadron to benefit from it, and early in March enlisted men and ground officers began to receive three-day passes to the Air Forces' rest camp on the Isle of Capri.

On March 19 the volcano Vesuvius, which had been grumbling warningly for over a week, erupted, emitting billows of smoke thousands of feet in the air and spewing forth flames and ashes. We watched the spectacle from our barracks and were greatly impressed with the beauty of the scene at night when lightning flashed above the turbulent crater and huge chunks of molten rock could be seen arching through the air. Luckily for us, the prevailing wind continued to blow the volcanic ash and smoke away from our field. Areas to the south of Vesuvius were covered with a layer of ash several feet thick. The flow of lava down the volcano's side engulfed entire villages, burning and crumbling everything within the path of its thirty-foot-high bed. For over a week we made trips to the scenes of its latest destruction, but soon it became apparent that little more damage would be done, and Vesuvius, after a few feeble heaves of protest, settled back into its customary role as sentinel of Naples harbor.

On May 6, 1944, the squadron moved northward to Santa Maria, not far from the Italian king's palace at Caserta. We returned to living in pyramidal tents while here and laid out a ball diamond on which were played some mighty hot inter-sectional softball games. The stage show "This Is the Army" was seen by many of the squadron members at this time in the town of Santa Maria.

Shortly after the 1st of June the break-out from the beachhead at Anzio was achieved and on June 5 Rome fell to the Allies. This long-awaited triumph was dwarfed by the news of the Normandy invasion on June 6, but we all looked forward to seeing the Eternal City for the first time. We followed in the wake of the fast-moving ground troops who were close on the heels of the retreating Germans, and moved to Nettuno air field on June 6. From here we were given time off from our work to thumb rides into Rome, where we gathered blisters and bunions in an attempt to cover the entire city in one day. The Coliseum, the Vatican City, St. Peter's Cathedral, the Forum ruins, Vitterio Emanuel's impressive monument and the Roman signorina's admirable legs were all viewed with equal interest.

On June 11 we again struck our tents, loaded up the trucks, and moved to the air field at Ponte Galera a few miles northwest of Rome. While here the mess section was able to scrounge fresh milk for us — the first that most of us had had to drink in over eighteen months. Here, too, we first began to deliver plain and fancy cussing- outs to you all know who as he made his first public disassembly and assembly of our newly acquired movie projector. The Cajun was in hog heaven.

The move from Ponte Galera was made on June 18. Our bivouac area was on the windswept crest of high ground overlooking the sea and the airfield was a bulldozed vineyard which constantly swirled with dust. We had no regret leaving here on July 2 for Follonica. As was characteristic of all our trips northward up the Italian peninsula, the towns through which we passed had been devastated by artillery fire and dive-bombings. Every bridge was blown out, the roads were pockmarked by shell-hits and lined up with burned-out Nazi and Allied tanks. Here, for a change, the fighting was being done on comparatively flat ground and the enemy was unable to stop the onrushing Allies as long as there were no mountains and protective ridges behind which they could defend.

On July 19 "A" echelon, with one-half of the squadron personnel, equipment and transportation, left the port at Civitavecchia bound for Corsica. Aboard the LST we tore into the navy chow with a vengeance — steak, chocolate cake, corn flakes, toast with real butter. Navy man live mighty well. We took hot salt-water showers below decks and enjoyed the comforts of porcelain wash bowls, mirrors, and hot water for shaving. We bunked down atop our equipment-loaded vehicles for the night. The LST docked the following morning at an American engineer built pier in southern Corsica. We bivouaced that night in a cork grove and left the following morning in truck convoy for Borgo airfield on the northeast coast of Corsica. On the same day "B" echelon, still in Italy, arrived at the staging area near Santa Maria, where they were to enjoy plenty of swimming, sight-seeing and rest, before boarding the ship for the trip to France.

Those who operated from Corsica were not favorably impressed with the island made famous by the movies and "Little Nap." There was an abundance of stifling heat, dust, and mosquitoes, and an appalling lack of opportunity for elbow-bending and similar activities in off-duty hours. This was compensated for, some extent, by the issuance of American beer and cokes with our PX rations, good swimming holes, and the choice of several movies held nightly in nearby areas as well as our own. Joe Lewis staged an exhibition boxing match at a nearby sports stadium which a good many of our men attended.

There was plenty of work to be done in preparation for the big day ahead. Engine changes were made with assembly-line speed, armament was cleaned, checked and bore sighted, radio equipment was modified and tuned to new frequencies, and much new equipment was installed for over-water operations. Inasmuch as we were to work directly in co-ordination with the Navy on the next operation, our ranks were supplemented by Navy pilots, mechanics, ordnance specialists, and radio technicians who aided us in our preparation. These men had come from various ships: the battleship Arkansas, cruisers Brooklyn, Tuscaloosa, and Augusta, and several others who had established proud records in the Normandy landings. The sailors welcomed the change from shipboard living, but ...were not envious of our existence.

"D" Day in southern France came on August 15, 1944, and 111 men, ever mindful of the bloody beaches at Salerno and Gela, waded ashore with considerable misgivings. The combination of the Normandy beachhead break-out and concentrated aerial bombardment on enemy-held shore installations, made the southern France invasion a Sunday-School picnic in comparison with what had been expected. The first night on shore was spent on the beach near St. Maxime and was highlighted by an enemy air raid on the beach that night. The next few nights were spent in a church yard a few miles inland, where one night brought a severe electrical storm which knocked down more than a score of barrage balloons in flaming streamers, and drove the rain-soaked men to the shelter of the church. Move three was to Puget and billeting in kiln-shaped barracks of an Indo-Chinese labor corps camp. Off-the Record trips were made to Cannes and Toulon as soon as they fell to American troops, and we were warmed by the welcome accorded us by the French people. On D plus-thirteen the first air echelon arrived from Corsica and brought with it our Mustangs and the navy men. On September first the remainder of "A" echelon arrived by boat from Corsica, stopped at St. Raphael airfield long enough for chow, and moved on ahead to Montelimar. On September 5 the entire squadron was joined for operations at Valence.

The roads we traveled on our way northward were lined with miles and miles of burned and wrecked motor transport which had been bombed and strafed by our fighter-bombers. Dead horses, which had been dragged to one side and liberally covered with quick lime, lay bloated and smelling of death. Roadside graves, marked only with a German helmet on a stick, were a frequent sight. Our stay at Valence was short-lived, and on September 9 we moved to Satolas airfield, within ten miles of the sprawling city of Lyons.

Lyons offered all the excitement and attraction that a city of half a million population can. The city had been liberated by French Maquis and an American soldier was somewhat of a novelty to its inhabitants. Our position was a good one and we exploited it to the fullest. On Sundays whole families, from miles around, would make pilgrimages to the airfield, on foot and bicycle, to look the planes over and talk with the ground crews. Invitations to dinner and offers of eau de vie and good wine were always available. Plans were made to celebrate (???) our second anniversary overseas. Arrangements were made for the purchase of two bulls suitable for barbecuing, plenty of draught beer and ice were brought out from the city, and a large roller rink and bar were rented for the evening of September 27 in Lyons. The barbecue was cooked all night long over a charcoal pit, and eaten the following day at noon with plenty of weak, but cold, beer for a wash. The success of the party in the evening is best described by the words of a French employee at the hall as he watched the proceedings with mingled amazement and admiration. He said, "France, she is noted for her gaiety and parties, but France has never seen a party like zees!" Amen! Perhaps it is just as well that the following morning, in a drizzling rain, we pulled up stakes and moved closer to the battle line

The airfield at Dijon had suffered little damage at the hands of the Germans. It boasted two fine runways, hard-faced taxi strips, and many well-camouflaged, revetment-protected hardstands. We moved into the little village of Neuilly Dijon, which bordered the field, and lived with private families and in public buildings. A combination of mess hall, day room and theater was made out

of the local theater and all the townspeople attended our movies as regularly as we did. The squadron chipped in and bought a stained-glass window for the church which had suffered damage in an air raid. While here, we lost our status as an individual squadron and were placed in a Provisional Reconnaissance group under the First Tactical Air Force. The days grew colder and we hoped that we would be able to make this our winter home, but the Army had other plans and on October 29 we left for Azelot airfield.

Azelot airfield is located about ten miles from the Lorraine city of Nancy. The field itself is situated on a barren plain, so quarters were made in a former German garrison in the town of St. Nicolas, about five miles north of the field. The winter of 1944-45 in France was bitter but short-lived. Snow fell to knee depth and greatly hampered operations. The field was often unoperational due to a persistent ground-haze, but our planes were in the air at every possible opportunity in co-operation with the Seventh Army drive through the stubborn Siegfried Line and across the Rhineland. The Ardonnes Bulge, which the enemy created in December, 1944, was about eighty miles to our north, but caused us to double our guard and our pilots had to be especially watchful for possible enemy offensive activity in the sector assigned to us. In the pursuance of this task our pilots experienced many thrilling aerial combats with enemy aircraft which rose, for the first time since our early days in Africa, to challenge our air supremacy. Although the desperate Luftwaffe attacked our two-ship formations with from eight to twenty fighters, the quality of their ships and courage of their pilots was no match for what we had. Daily, our claims of enemy aircraft destroyed and damaged mounted until finally the Luftwaffe, fearful of the sock of the Mustang and skill of its pilots, threw in the towel and refused to do battle.

The 111 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron was reorganized in August 1946 as a unit of the 58th Fighter Wing (ANG). The unit was first designated as the 111 Bombardment Squadron (Light). Commander of the newly organized Wing was Brig. General Aubrey W. Schofield with Colonel George C. P. Gifford as Chief of Staff. Both officers were former members of the 111 Observation Squadron, TexNG.

Headquarters of the Wing was first located at 1603 Second National Bank Building, Houston, Texas and later moved to Ellington Field, Texas. The home for the 111 Observation Squadron was in the ANG Hangar built for the unit in 1938 and 1939 on state property at Hobby Airport, Houston, Texas. The unit could not return to this installation due to a lease on the facilities to Brown and Root Construction Co. and Pioneer Air Lines from the war years. The 58th Fighter Wing was soon redesignated to the 63rd Fighter Wing and the 111 Bombardment Squadron became the 111 Fighter Squadron under command of Lt. Col. Bill Nottingham, former member of the 111 Observation Squadron, TexNG.

The 111 Fighter Squadron was federally recognized 9 February 1947. Three air instructors were assigned to the Squadron; Lt. Col. Roy B. Caviness, M/Sgt. Womack and M/Sgt. James A. McCoubrey.

Ellington Field in the latter part of 1946 and 1947 was manned by about 75 to 100 regular Air Force personnel. Grass was not always cut and buildings were not maintained to AF standards. The ANG was assigned several buildings and one hangar at the south end of the base. Maintenance of facilities and grounds required a lot of hard work.

The Squadron soon started receiving aircraft. The unit was assigned type P-51 D, AT-6, A-26, L-5 and one C-47A The recruiting campaign was the number one project, because without personnel there would not be a Squadron or Wing. Several recruiting methods were put into effect. One method most effective was to take a P-51D on a trailer into the City of Houston for display. Some of the locations for display were at the University of Houston, Shrine Circus at the Coliseum, and a parking lot at Main Street. Several engine runups of the aircraft were made while parked on the parking lot. This brought a lot of spectators from various office buildings. The manning structure of a base detachment of air technicians for the maintenance of aircraft and equipment, and supply, administrative and operations sections was similar to that used by the Squadron prior to 25 November 1940. Two hour training periods were conducted on two Thursday nights each month and one eight hour Sunday period each month. Combat crew training was conducted in the P-51D. Type A-26 were used for gunnery tow target operation. AT-6 and one type L-5 were used for pilot training. Enlisted personnel trained in their AF specialty, OJT and classroom instruction. On 30 June 1947 another major change took place for the 111 Fighter Squadron upon disbandment of the 63rd Wing ANG. The Squadron was now placed under the command of the 136th Fighter Group TexANG located at Hensley Field, Dallas, Texas. The first post-war summer camp for the Squadron was held at Ellington AFB, Texas 15 August — 29 August 1948. The Squadron now had a new Commander, Lt. Col. Roland L. Burns, who took command 9 Aug. 1948. Col. Burns was also a former member of the old famous 111 Observation Squadron, TexANG.

The year 1949 brought a change again for the ANG on the base. Ellington was fast becoming a very active base receiving increase in personnel, aircraft and equipment. Due to increase of operations in the far east. This required more space, so the ANG was moved North on the base; the 111 Squadron into the small tin hangar, the last hangar at the North end of the base; offices and various sections into buildings near the hangar area.

Summer camp that year was held at San Marcos, Texas, 14 August-28 August 1949. Troop movement, aircraft and equipment always meant a lot of planning and work. Gunnery exercises were conducted at Matagorda Island, Texas. Gunnery exercises consisted of dive bombing, ground targets firing and air-to-air missions. This meant a detachment of personnel on the Island to support the operations. Rattlesnakes were the worst enemy on the Island.

1950 brought an increase in flying and training for the unit. The Korean Conflict, the increased military operations and Guard units being called to active duty were the news stories most talked about. Summer camp this year was held at Brooks AFB, Texas 13 August-27 August 1950. Gunnery exercises were again at Matagorda Island. While still on maneuvers, the Squadron received notice that on October 25 the Unit would again be called to active duty.

In August of 1950 the 111 Fighter Squadron, under the command of Lt. Col. Roland L. Burns, took

their F-51 Brooks AFB, San Antonio, for two weeks summer camp. The rumors were hot and heavy that we were to be federalized but during the ceremonies at the middle weekend parade we were all informed that we could relax, we weren't going to be mobilized! They were right we weren't until October 10th. The news hit the papers and radio on September 8th that "Houston's own" was being called to active duty effective 10 October 1950. A local newspaper wrote the following: "Houston's famed 111 Fighter Squadron of the Texas Air National Guard, one of the oldest guard aviation squadrons in the country, was one of the first to be alerted for federal service Friday. Brig. Gen. Chester P. Gifford, commanding officer of the 63rd Fighter Wing, said that six Houston guard units, including his wing headquarters, had been alerted for induction into federal service October 11th.

"The call will take most of the Houston area Air National Guard units with the exception of the 158th Aircraft Control and Warning Group and its subsidiary units, General Gifford said. "Besides the 111 Fighter Squadron and the Wing Headquarters, the Secretary of the Air Force called up the 531st Band, the 111 Utility Flight, the 111 Weather Section, and Detachment B of the 236th Air Service Group, General Gifford said."

Much preparation and packaging had to be completed before we could depart Ellington for Langley AFB, Virginia.

The old tin hangar was stacked high with crates of typewriters, aircraft parts and many other supplies. The entire unit, aircraft and supplies had to be in place at Langley by 21 October. Major James P. Hagerstrom assumed command in November at Langley.

Lt. Col. Ira M. Susky became commander of the 111 Fighter Squadron when Major Hagerstrom moved up to wing headquarters in March of 1951 and the units began receiving brand new F-84E. This was the first time the 111 had been assigned jet aircraft. Ground crews received training from a field training detachment at Langley and some were sent to factory school for engines at the Allison Plant in Indiana. Some of the pilots were checked out in the F-84 at Shaw AFB, S. C. before starting training. Gunnery and bomb training was received at Langley and several fire power deployments to Eglin AFB, Florida.

While at Langley, the rumors were that the 136th Fighter Bomber Wing along with its assigned squadrons were destined for Cannes, France; these rumors were put to rest approximately 1 May when we were informed that the 136th Fighter Bomber Wing was to be deployed to the Far East. The 111 Fighter Squadron was the last unit to leave Langley as the base band played "So Long It's Been Good to Know You." On July 4, 1951, the train pulled out for a 5 day trip across the United States. The route the train took was from Hampton, Virginia to Wheeling, West Virginia, Cincinnati, Ohio, Indianapolis, Ind., St. Louis, Missouri, Kansas City, Missouri, El Paso, Texas, Albuquerque, New Mexico, Tucson, Arizona, Los Angeles, Calif., and Camp Stoneman, Calif. At every one of these stops, we loaded up; many cans of beer were consumed across the USA. Three troops got off the train at a stop in Arizona to resupply themselves and missed the train. After hiring a taxi, hitch hiking some and catching another train, they finally caught the main body at Bakersfield, Calif. The train finally arrived at Camp Stoneman on 10 July without further incidents.

The time at Camp Stoneman was spent sitting and waiting for air transportation to Japan.

Most all flights were from Travis AFB, to Honolulu, to Wake Island, and to Tokyo. Three twelve hour flights were required to make the trip. Then a two hour plane flight to Fukuoka, Japan.

At Itazuke AFB, Japan, we took over operations from the 27th Fighter Bomber Wing on TDY from Austin, Texas. One 49th had a brother in the Army, stationed in Korea. On two different occasions, this pilot stole one of our aircraft and flew to Korea. The second time, the aircraft he took wasn't in commission and had many maintenance access panels removed. Luckily he made it back and was immediately shipped home. We operated from Itazuke until the latter part of September 1951. While there, we flew bombing and strafing missions above the 38th parallel. Most of the troops really enjoyed themselves while in Japan as the people liked for us to spend our money. Several popular hangouts and gathering places were found right away. One of these was the White Rose Cabaret where Nippon and Asahi beer was served with a smile.

Quite a few of the guys enjoyed walking down the main street, observing the Japanese culture.
Some of the missions flown in the early part of the unit's tour was escorting B-29's on bomb runs to North Korea. During these missions, our pilots tangled with North Korean MIG's and were successful in shooting down several of them. The 136th Wing was the first ANG Wing to down a Red MIG-15. This was accomplished on 26 June, just five weeks after the Wing's first echelon arrived in Japan. It brought this salute from Lt. Gen. 0. P. Weyland, CG, Far East Air Forces: "I hope this won't revive the North-South controversy, but I am compelled to observe that the commies from up north made a mistake in tangling with the 136th from down Texas-Arkansas way!

About the 20th of September, the 111 began moving to K-2 at Taegu, Korea. As we unloaded the aircraft at K-2, we had to place guards on the supplies to keep them from being stolen.

It didn't take long for us to get set up and continue the mission. We flew 7 days a week, the only way we knew when it was Sunday was the Chaplains placed a sign in front of the mess hall which read This is Sunday," courtesy of the Chaplains.

After arriving at K-2, there wasn't any time for anything except work; , on bad weather days some did go into see Taegu and some sightseeing tours in the immediate area. One trip into Taegu was sufficient for everyone. The missions at this time consisted of cutting the supply lines i.e., bombing the rail lines and strafing trucks and ox carts on the roads. An article that was printed in a local paper: Accomplishments of the Texas- Arkansas 136th Fighter Bomber Wing of which the 111 is a part: "The 136th . . . made more rail cuts than any other unit and destroyed more railroad tunnels, cars and locomotives than any other unit.

It led in number of successful road cuts and destroyed the greatest number of vehicles, tanks and bridges.

"It inflicted more casualties upon enemy troops, destroyed more gun positions, supply dumps

and boats than any other unit. "It did more damage to MIG-15's than any other fighter bomber outfit. 5. "As for flying safety . . . the 136th surpassed the all-time Far East flying safety record by going 130 days of all-out air operations without a single aircraft accident.

"This was accomplished while operating off pierced steel mats on short runways surrounded by heavily wooded and hilly terrain. The record of flight safety made by the 136th in Korea prompted Gen. 0. P. Weyland, Commander of the Far East Air Forces to say, "This is the longest period that any wing in Korea has gone without an aircraft accident since the beginning of the Korean conflict. This achievement is especially commendable because it was accomplished without any abatement in the continual destruction the unit dealt the enemy."

In May 1952, the units began rotating home. Most officers and top NCO's flew home but most enlisted men came back to the U.S. on the S.S. L.H.W. BUTNER, arriving in San Francisco on 19 Jun. 1952. After spending about a week at Yerba Bueno Island at San Francisco, the troops returned to Ellington for separation. Several decided to remain on active duty, since this was their second active duty tour, but most chose to be separated and revert to inactive status. The 111 had already started reforming at Houston Municipal Airport under the command of Robert H. Taylor.

Upon notification that the 111 Fighter Bomber Squadron was to be released from active duty and returned to State control, the National Guard Bureau activated the 8111 Air Base Squadron effective 1 February 1952 at the Municipal Airport, Houston, Texas. Due to lack of space, the temporary home for the new unit was located at La Porte, Texas until July 1952 when the move was made to Municipal Airport, Houston. Commander of the 8111 Air Base Squadron was 1st Lt. James K. Eaton, who transferred from the 181st Fighter Squadron, Hensley Field, Dallas, Texas. Purpose of this new unit was to get ready to receive members returning from the Korean War. Members started to return in April 1952 and by July 1952, seventy-two guardsmen who, after being called to active duty for 21 months, had returned to civilian status and reenlisted in the Air National Guard to carry out their military responsibility. Melton F. Pitman was first to reenlist.

Effective 10 July 1952, the 111 Fighter Bomber Squadron was redesignated the 111 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, with Major Robert H. Taylor commanding. The unit received its first aircraft during July 1952, a T-6 and C-47. During September 1952 the first F-51 H was received.

Effective 1 January 1953 the 111 Fighter Interceptor Squadron was redesignated the 111 Fighter Bomber Squadron. F-51's were still being flown. The 111 Fighter Bomber Squadron participated in its first field training encampment since returning from Korea, 7 June 1953 through 21 June 1953 at Travis Field, Savannah, Georgia. The 111 was part of the 136th Fighter Bomber Wing, along with the 182nd FIS at San Antonio and the 181st FIS at Dallas, Texas. From 1954 through 1957 the 111 performed field training at Gulfport, Mississippi, at the permanent field training site.

On 30 October 1954 the 111 Fighter Bomber Squadron donated an F-84 to the University of Houston, to be used in the aircraft technology school. The F-84 was officially accepted by General

Bruce, President, University of Houston from Major Robert H. Taylor, Commander, 111 Fighter Bomber Squadron.

Effective 17 February 1955 Federal Recognition was given to the 8111 Replacement Training Squadron, with 20 charter members with Capt. W. C. Moore, commander. The mission of the unit was to train assigned personnel as combat crews and as technical support for the 111 Fighter Bomber Squadron, recruit personnel, provide a unit for active military service if needed and organically perform organization maintenance on aircraft assigned to the 111 Fighter Bomber Squadron.

Effective 1 July 1955 the 111 Fighter Bomber Squadron was redesignated the 111 Fighter Interceptor Squadron.

Effective 1 July 1956 the 111 Fighter Interceptor Squadron was placed on alert with the F-80s. Alert was performed thirty minutes prior to sunrise and thirty minutes after sunset. The 111 remained on alert with the F-80s until the fall of 1957. The 111 then went on 24 hour alert with the F- 86s until receipt of the F-102.

On 24 November 1956, the 111 Fighter Interceptor Squadron moved to ultra-modern facilities at Ellington AFB, Texas. On 13-14 April 1957 dedication was made of the new Texas Air National Guard hangar at Ellington AFB, Texas. The dedication featured appearances by television personalities Bill Lundigan and Mary Costa. Congressman Albert Thomas was guest speaker. The hangar was dedicated in honor of Lt. Col. James P. Hagerstrom, former commander of the 111. Col. Hagerstrom was one of the few double jet aces from World War II and the Korean War.

The increasing need for proficient instrument flying and the lack of adequate Air Force training facilities to meet the needs of the Guard led to the formation of the Air National Guard Jet Instrument School in October 1957 at Ellington AFB, Texas. First Commandant of the ANG Jet Instrument School was Major James T. Crump. Major Jack M. Burden was Commandant from June 1960 until December 1961.

In August 1957 the 111 Fighter Interceptor Squadron received F-86D. These aircraft were flown until June 1959 when the F-86L were received.

Effective 17 May 1958 the 147th Fighter Group received Federal Recognition with six subordinate units and was formed from personnel of the 111 Fighter Interceptor Squadron. Major Robert H. Taylor, former commander of the 111, became commander of the 147th Fighter Group and Major James T. Crump became the new commander of the 111 Fighter Interceptor Squadron and Commandant of the ANG Jet Instrument School.

On 3 Oct. 58, this F-86D, piloted by 2nd Lt. Wenscell Ogden, ran out of fuel and crash landed in a field 13 miles east of Iola, Texas. Aircraft was undamaged. It was towed to the nearest road, refueled, taxied 13 miles to the nearest flat, straight stretch of road and parked for the night. Next day the farm access roads were blocked off and Major Jack Burden flew it off the farm-to-

market road to Ellington.

The 147th received "057" on August 24, 1960 from Hill Air Force Base, Utah, with just 383 hours and 40 minutes flying time. Since that time, 3,944 pilots of the 147th have accrued 2,519 hours of flying time. If she could talk, one can only wonder what she might say . . ."I've heard rumors that I'll be shipped to Texas. Boy, if that were only true. The hot August sun in this Utah desert feels like it's about to peel my skin off. Not just Texas, but beautiful, beautiful Texas — down where the sea breezes blow. What a pleasant change from this arid desert country. Not only will the weather be better, but I am going to an Air National Guard unit. Maybe I'll fly just on drill weekends once a month. The rest of the time I'll enjoy the cool Gulf Coast breeze.

"There are the airplanes I'm going to replace the old F-86Ls. I think we should make a couple of my fantastic maneuvers just for the sake of the old F-86s." In November, 1960, the last of the F-86s were transferred after three years of service with the 147th.

1961 12 January
Two Convair F-102 Delta Daggers of the 111 Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, Texas Air National Guard, Ellington AFB, Texas, are scrambled to intercept an unidentified aircraft approaching the Texas Gulf coast. For unknown reasons, F-102A-55-CO, *56-1015*, catches fire and crashes in a rice field near Alvin, Texas, killing the pilot.

15 March 1961
Capt. Gary L. Herod of the Texas Air National Guard was killed when his Lockheed T-33A Shooting Star trainer crashed in a vacant field in suburban Houston, Texas. He was posthumously award the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroism in not ejecting, but rather staying with his plane and guiding it to a vacant field saving the lives and homes of area residents.

The 147th stands ready in any type national emergency. After hurricane "Celia" struck her savage fury upon Corpus Christi, Texas in August, 1970, the 147th volunteered its services to the flood stricken as they did the people in Brownsville, Texas after hurricane "Beulah" in September 1967.

On the 5th of November 1969, the 147th went off alert duty and the missiles and rockets were downloaded from what now had grown to four aircraft on alert with one backup aircraft. After fourteen years of alert commitment, the 147th was free of the heavy responsibility; , the lack of responsibility was short-lived because on 1 January 1970, the F-102 Combat Crew Training School began operation. Now the mission of "057" was to train pilots to fly combat missions in F-102s.

On the 12th of May, 1971, the 147th received its first F-101s for another phase of combat crew training, the F-101 Combat Crew Training School to begin 1 January 1971. "Just look at that 'One¬0-Wonder' shake her tail as she taxies by. When she gets the hours on her that I've got,

she'll be lucky to have a tail."

As "057" rolled down Ellington's runway for the last time, an eye was turned toward the hangar where "057" had been repaired and where most of her friends were working, but no one was watching as the past years flew off into the morning sky. Maybe it was better that way for, as one of the Crew Chiefs put it — "It's like watching the death of a good animal."

The date was 7 October 1971, and now the story of "057" is closed. But there will be other "057s" in the future of the 147th/111 for, on October 6, 1972, the unit again went on alert duty in support of Southern Air Defense along with the Combat Training Schools in operation. Time is in favor of the 147th, as it seems to increase in size and strength and continues to be one of the finest units in the history of the Air National Guard.

A total of seven Air National Guard squadrons converted to the F-101B. In addition, a number of tactical reconnaissance squadrons flying the RF-101C also flew F-101F's for proficiency training. By the late 1970's, the number of ANG squadrons operating the F-101B had been cut to three. Throughout most of the time that the ANG operated the F-101B, the 147th FIG conducted courses to train ANG F-101B crews. This relieved the 2nd FIT of having to undertake similar duties. In addition to the training role, the 147th also provided an ale force in New Orleans on a permanent basis.

An MQ-1B of the Texas Air National Guard's 147th Reconnaissance Wing recently flew the first sortie from the unit's newly assigned operating location on Ft. Polk Army Airfield, La. Since the wing relinquished its F-16 flying mission in 2008, "we have been eagerly awaiting the day we flew our first local sortie in the MQ-1," said Col. Kurt Leslie, 147th Maintenance Group commander. According to wing officials, current FAA flight restrictions governing remotely piloted aircraft prevent the unit from operating from its home station at Ellington Field JRB, Tex., outside of Houston. Therefore, the wing set up shop in an Army hangar at Ft. Polk, moving ground control stations, antennas, and support infrastructure. This made the first sortie from there possible on Feb. 6. Ft. Polk is home to the Joint Readiness Training Center. Flying from there will allow the Air Guard to train directly with Army units rotating through pre-deployment training, said wing officials. 2012

On 22 September 2003, at 1300L (1800Z), an F-16C fighter aircraft, S/N 84-1303, call sign Rader 2, crashed near Rosepine, Louisiana, just southwest of Polk Army Airfield, Louisiana The Mishap Aircraft (MA) and Mishap Pilot (MP), assigned to the 147th Fighter Wing, Ellington Field, Texas, were participating in a six-ship, unopposed Surface Attack Tactics (SAT) training mission when the MA experienced an engine fire approximately 30 minutes after takeoff. The MP ejected safely and the MA impacted the ground in a sparsely populated wooded area approximately 12 nautical miles southwest of Fort Polk Army Airfield, Louisiana. There were no civilian injuries or damage to private property. As the Mishap Flight (MF) reached its assigned operating area and began a descent for a low altitude ingress to the target area, the MP heard a loud bang followed soon thereafter by an engine fire light and engine failure. The MP arrested his descent, made a distress call on the radio and attempted to ascertain the status of his aircraft. Upon confirmation of a

sustained fire as corroborated by other members of the MF and considering the loss of altitude due to engine failure, the MP assessed the trajectory of his aircraft to ensure its impact in an uninhabited area and ejected. The MP received very minor injuries (abrasions), was transported to a medical facility by an Army helicopter within 15 minutes of ejection, and was treated and released. Based upon post accident technical analysis, there was clear and convincing evidence that the cause of the mishap was catastrophic failure of the first stage of the engine high-pressure turbine (HPT) due to the fatigue fracture of at least one of its blades resulting in an engine failure and fire.

On 2 May 2008, at 0104 GMT, an MQ-1B aircraft, tail number 06-3165, impacted the ground approximately 45 NM east of Ali Air Base (AB), Iraq, while participating in a combat support mission in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. It was forward deployed from the 432d Wing, Creech AFB, Nevada. An aircrew from the 111 Reconnaissance Squadron based at Ellington Field, TX (Air National Guard), attached to the 15th Reconnaissance Squadron at Creech AFB, NV, was flying the Mishap Remotely Piloted Aircraft (MRPA) at the time of the mishap. Upon impact, the MRPA was damaged beyond economical repair. The estimated cost of aircraft damage is $3,828 Million. There were no injuries and there was no damage to government or private property. After normal maintenance and pre-flight checks, the MRPA taxied and departed for a twenty hour mission. The MRPA flew the mission without observed incident for over 18.7 hours.
During the MRPA's return to base, the MRPA experienced several cycles of the nose dipping. Consequently, the Mishap Pilot (MP) disengaged the auto-pilot function and began flying manually. Shortly after assuming control, the MP was alerted that the engine had failed. The crew initiated emergency procedures for engine failure. The engine would successfully restart for approximately 15 seconds, but then cease operations for 45 seconds. Because of the repeated failures, the MRPA was losing altitude necessary to successfully land at Ali Air Base. On approximately the third engine failure, the mishap crew experienced a "lost link" condition with the MRPA. By this time, altitude was now under 4,000 feet and the aircraft was still approximately 45 NM from Ali AB. The MRPA recovered link and lost link approximately two more times. The mishap crew determined that the aircraft was not recoverable and configured the aircraft for a controlled hard landing in accordance with applicable directives. The MRPA impacted the ground at 0104 GMT. The Accident Investigation Board President determined, by clear and convincing evidence that the cause of the mishap was a failure of the Ignition Module. The intermittent failure of the Ignition Module caused several significant uncommanded reductions in engine speed, resulting in reduced power production and several lost link conditions. These failures ultimately resulted in the aircraft impacting the ground.

On 20 April 2009, at 1131Z (Zulu time), the mishap remotely piloted aircraft (MRPA), an MQ-IB Predator, tail number 98-3047, crashed 90 nautical miles south of Kabul Air Base (AB), Afghanistan. The Predator was an asset of the 432 Air Expeditionary Wing and was flown by the 111 Reconnaissance Squadron (Texas Air National Guard), Ellington Field, Texas. After a six hour departure delay, the MRPA departed from Jalalabad Airfield, Afghanistan at 0214Z to fly a sortie in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. At 1131Z, the MRPA lost its return link (RL). RL refers to the data transmission capability from the aircraft to the Ground Control Station (GCS) via the Predator communication systems. Attempts to reestablish the RL were unsuccessful. In

addition, no further transponder signal was deceived. The transponder is a device on board the aircraft that sends out a transponder code, or “squawk code” which other aircraft and air traffic controllers can receive. This helps to both identify and locate the aircraft. The MRPA did not execute its pre-planned emergency mission (EM) nor did it return to its forward operating base and was presumed crashed. The wreckage of the MRPA was located on 21 April 2009 downwind of its last recorded position. The exact time of the crash is unknown. There are no known injuries, deaths, or reported property damage. The MRPA was carrying one AGM-114P Hellfire missile. The mishap loss is valued at approximately $4.7 million. The post-mishap investigation revealed no anomalies with regards to the MRPA at the time of the lost link. The preflight and launch was performed with no reported discrepancies. Flight crews, reported no anomalies with the operation of the MRPA in the hours of flight prior to the lost RL event. The Accident Investigation Board President determined by clear and convincing evidence that the cause of the mishap was a catastrophic electrical system failure. The failure was most likely caused by a short circuit somewhere along the 28 volt power lines. Because of the physical and fire damage to the aircraft, there is no way to pinpoint where the failure occurred. However, a catastrophic electrical failure is considered the only plausible failure mode because only such a failure could account for the lost RL to the GCS, the inability of the aircraft to perform its preprogrammed EM, and the loss of the transponder signal. The loss of electrical power resulted in loss of control of the MRPA and the subsequent crash.

Guard Predator Wing Reaches 100,000 Hours A Texas Air National Guard wing last month reached 100,000 flying hours on the MQ-1B Predator. The 147th Reconnaissance Wing, stationed at Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base in Houston, reached the milestone on Oct. 8, according to a wing release. The wing has been flying the Predator for seven years, after transitioning from F-16s in 2005 and beginning unmanned flights in July 2008. "To put 100,000 hours in context, that amount of time is equivalent to flying for 11.41 years non-stop, and we did it in just seven years," 111 Reconnaissance Squadron Commander Lt. Col. David Peck said. 2015

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