

## 434 OPERATIONS GROUP



### MISSION

#### LINEAGE

434 Troop Carrier Group established, 30 Jan 1943  
Activated, 9 Feb 1943  
Inactivated, 31 Jul 1946  
Activated in the Reserve, 15 Mar 1947  
Redesignated 434 Troop Carrier Group, Medium, 1 Jul 1949  
Ordered to Active Service, 1 May 1951  
Relieved from Active Duty and inactivated, 1 Feb 1953  
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Feb 1953  
Inactivated, 14 Apr 1959  
Redesignated 434 Tactical Fighter Group, 31 Jul 1985  
Redesignated 434 Operations Group, 1 Aug 1992  
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Aug 1992

#### STATIONS

Alliance AAFld, NE, 9 Feb 1943  
Baer Field, IN, 3 Sep-Oct 1943  
Fulbeck, England, 7 Oct 1943 (air echelon), 13 Nov 1943 (ground echelon)  
Welford Park, England, Nov 1943 (air echelon), 10 Dec 1943 (ground echelon)  
Fulbeck, England, 10 Jan 1944  
Aldermaston, England, 3 Mar 1944  
Mourmelon-le-Grand, France, Mar-24 Jul 1945  
Baer Field, IN, 5 Aug 1945  
Alliance AAFld, NE, 15 Sep 1945

George Field, IL, 11 Oct 1945  
Greenville AAB, SC, 2 Feb-31 Jul 1946  
Stout Field, IN, 15 Mar 1947  
Atterbury AFB, IN, 1 Jul 1949  
Lawson AFB, GA, 23 Jan 1952-1 Feb 1953  
Atterbury (later, Bakalar) AFB, IN, 1 Feb 1953-14 Apr 1959  
Grissom AFB (later ARB), IN, 1 Aug 1992

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

I Troop Carrier Command, 9 Feb 1943  
50 Troop Carrier Wing, Feb 1943  
53 Troop Carrier Wing, 15 Apr 1943  
IX Troop Carrier Command, 16 Oct 1943  
50 Troop Carrier Wing, 18 Oct 1943  
53 Troop Carrier Wing, 3 Mar 1944  
I Troop Carrier Command, Jul 1945  
52 Troop Carrier Wing, 4 Oct 1945  
50 Troop Carrier Wing, 5 Feb-31 Jul 1946  
Eleventh Air Force, 15 Mar 1947  
323 Troop Carrier Wing (later, 323 Air Division), 17 Oct 1947  
434 Troop Carrier Wing, 1 Jul 1949-1 Feb 1953  
434 Troop Carrier Wing, 1 Feb 1953-14 Apr 1959  
434 Wing (later, 434 Air Refueling Wing), 1 Aug 1992

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

C-47, 1943-1946  
Horsa gliders, 1944-1945  
CG-4 gliders, 1944-1945  
C-46, 1945-1946  
Unkn, 1947-1948  
T-7, 1949-1952  
T-11, 1949-1952  
C-47, 1949  
C-46, 1949-1953  
T-6, 1953  
T-11, 1953  
C-45, 1953-1957  
C-46, 1953-1957  
C-119, 1957-1959  
KC-135, 1992

### **COMMANDERS**

Maj Edward F. Cullerton, 9 Feb 1943  
Lt Col Fred D. Stevers, 18 Aug 1943

Col William B. Whitacre, 29 Nov 1943  
Lt Col Stephen R. Parkinson, 20 Jul 1944  
Col William B. Whitacre, 25 Aug 1944  
Lt Col Ben A. Garland, 17 Dec 1944  
Lt Col Frank W. Hansley, 15 Sep 1945  
Col Adriel N. Williams, 1 Oct 1945-31 Jul 1946  
Unkn, 15 Mar 1947-Jun 1949  
Col Wallace L. Linn, Jul 1949  
Lt Col Jack F. Linn, 20 Feb 1952-1 Feb 1953  
Unkn, 1 Feb 1953-1957  
Lt Col John W. Hoff, by Oct 1958-14 Apr 1959  
Col Walter L. Dell, 1 Aug 1992  
Lt Col Mark A. Pillar, 1 Apr 1995  
Col Gary E. Beebe, 30 Jun 1996  
Col James L. Melin, 8 Jun 1997  
Col Stephen Linsenmeyer  
Col William Mason, #2010  
Col Christopher Amend

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

World War II  
American Theater

### **Campaign Streamers**

World War II  
Normandy  
Northern France  
Rhineland  
Ardennes-Alsace  
Central Europe

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

### **Decorations**

Distinguished Unit Citation  
France, [6-7] Jun 1944

### **Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards**

1 Aug 1992-31 Aug 1993  
1 Sep 1994-31 Aug 1996  
1 Oct 1998-30 Sep 2000  
[1 Oct] 2000-11 Sep 2002

French Croix de Guerre with Palm  
6-7 Jun 1944  
20-28 Aug 1944

French Fourragere

#### **EMBLEM**



#### **MOTTO**

#### **OPERATIONS**

Trained in the U.S., moving to England, late Sep-Oct 1943, for operations with Ninth Air Force. Trained with 101st Airborne Division in preparation for the invasion of northern France. Towed gliders carrying troops to Normandy on 6 Jun 1944 and flew follow-up missions later on D-Day and on 7 Jun to provide reinforcements of troops, vehicles, and ammunition. Received a Distinguished Unit Citation (DUC) for action during the invasion. Dropped paratroops in the assault area and towed gliders with reinforcements during the airborne operation in Holland, 17-25 Sep 1944. Transported reinforcing ground troops in the St Lo area during the breakthrough in Jul 1944; provided supplies for Third Army during its drive across France in Aug; and resupplied troops at Bastogne in Dec in the effort to stop the German offensive in the Ardennes. Participated in the airborne assault across the Rhine, dropping paratroops over the east bank on 24 Mar 1945. Also engaged in numerous transport missions, hauling mail, food, clothing, and other supplies from England to bases in France and Germany, and evacuating Allied wounded. After V-E Day, transported gasoline to Allied forces in Germany and evacuated former Allied prisoners of war to relocation centers in France and Holland. Trained with airborne troops after moving to South Carolina in Feb 1946. Activated in the Reserve in Mar 1947, but possibly not manned from Mar 1947 until Jul 1949, after creation of the 434 Troop Carrier Wing. Called to active duty during the Korean War. Airlifted and exercised with Army paratroops, May 1951-Jan 1953. Also provided C-46 combat crew training in support of Far East requirements, Sep 1952-Jan 1953. Remanned in the Reserve in Feb 1953. Trained, using C-46s as primary training aircraft to Jan 1957 and C-119s until 1959. Performed air refueling missions worldwide since Aug 1992. Deployed personnel and aircraft

periodically since late 1993 to Italy and other western European locations in support of NATO operations in the Balkans.

From the date of its activation on 9 February 1943 until the invasion of France on 6 June 1944, the group's training pointed toward eventual participation in airborne operations. Yet in the European Theater of Operations, where the 434 was destined to serve in World War II, there were only three major airborne operations and these were widely spaced in time: OVERLORD, the invasion of northern France took place in June 1944; MARKET, the airborne drop in Holland, came in September 1944; VARSITY, the drop on the east bank of the Rhine, was executed in March 1945. These airborne operations figured prominently in the ultimate allied victory.

Participation in them marked the highlights of the 434 Group's World War II combat record. Nevertheless, these airborne operations served only as dramatic interludes in the Group's other activities; the missions flown in connection with the airborne operations accounted for only a small fraction of the 434's total effort. Sandwiched between these dramatic episodes were months of monotonous, routine, and laborious freight-haul operations, which, on more than one occasion in World War II, were a vitally important factor in helping to maintain offensive actions. For World War II proved, among other things, the necessity for aerial supply in highly complex, mechanized, fast moving modern warfare.

The 434 Group spent eight months in the United States before proceeding overseas. The Group, consisting of headquarters and the 71st, 72nd, 73rd, and 74th Squadrons, was activated at Alliance Army Air Base, Nebraska, where the unit received its training. Because of a shortage of aircraft (C-47s, which the unit was equipped throughout its World War II career), and because of frequent demands on the 434 for personnel to man new units, the unit devoted the bulk of its time for four months to assimilating new personnel and to ground training. By the first of June 1943 the personnel picture had stabilized, and aircraft had become more plentiful. From then until the first of September flying training was emphasized. Crews flew endless hours on practice missions. All aspects of flying were included, but stress was laid on formation flights (both by daylight and darkness) on the pick-up, tow, and release of gliders. The outstanding phases of training, however, was the work done with airborne troops. The Group took part in paratroop-drop and glider-tow exercises with airborne forces in July and August.

Late in August 1943 the Group was alerted for an overseas move. Early in September the unit left Alliance Field for Baer Field, Indiana, where it received its final overseas processing. The move was accomplished in a relatively short time. Between 19 and 26 September the air echelons of the 71st, 72nd, and 73rd Squadrons departed from Baer field and followed the northern ferry route, via Maine, Labrador, Greenland, Iceland, and Ireland, to England. The echelons of the three squadrons must have assembled at some point en route, for according to the Group's records, the planes arrived "en-masse" at Fulbeck, Lincolnshire, England on 7 October 1943. The air echelon of the remaining squadron, the 74th, left Baer Field on 28 September and, following the southern route (via Morrison field, Florida; Puerto Rico; Natal; Ascension island; and North Africa, arrived at Fulbeck some time after the arrival of the other squadrons. Meanwhile, on 1 October the ground

echelon had departed Baer Field. It staged through Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, and sailed from New York, aboard the Queen Mary on 9 October.

The ground echelon arrived at Gurroch, Scotland, on 17 October; but, because of facilities at Fulbeck were not adequate to care for the entire Group, the echelon proceeded to Cottesmore, some 25 miles from Fulbeck. Personnel of the ground echelon moved to Fulbeck as facilities were made available, and by 13 November the Group was reunited. Meanwhile, on 16 October 1943 the Group had been assigned to the Ninth Air Force and the IX Troop Carrier Command. Shortly thereafter the 50th Troop Carrier Wing arrived in England from the United States, and the Group was further assigned to the wing.

From November 1943 through May 1944 the 434 was engaged in an intense training program, which was designed to prepare troop carrier and airborne units for the airborne phase of the Normandy invasion. In November and through most of December, the 434 was the only American troop carrier group in the theater to train with airborne forces, and between mid-November and 24 December the unit flew a sizable number of practice missions, including paratroop drops and glider tows. Probably in order to permit newly arrived units opportunity to train with airborne forces, the 434 Group's training was limited chiefly to flying training in January and February. During the two months the Group emphasized formation-flying training.

On 3 March 1944 the 434 Group was assigned to the 53rd Troop Carrier Wing. The assignment necessitated a move for the Group. The 53rd Wing had been assigned the task of transporting the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne division during the assault and had set up headquarters at Greenham Common, close by division headquarters at Greenham Lodge. Consequently, early in March the 434 moved to Aldermaston, in Southern England, some eight miles from the 53rd Wing's headquarters.

Meanwhile plans for the airborne operation had been altered to include use of a greater number of gliders. The 53rd Wing had been selected to specialize in glider operations; in fact, its glider commitments accounted, in part, for the location of the wing's units in southern England, as close to the assault area as possible. The Wing would also have to be ready for possible paratroop commitments.

During March the 53rd Wing put its groups, including the 434, through a series of paratroop and glider-tow exercises. The 434 took part in a simulated paratroop drop on the night of 12/13 March and participated in a spectacularly good drop (which was witnessed by Generals Eisenhower and Brereton and Prime Minister Churchill) on 23 March. Emphasis was on glider-tow training. The Group flew practice missions, towing gliders, on 15, 17, 20, and 26 March.

The work with paratroops continued into April. By 18 April, however, the 101st Division decided that its troops had jumped enough. The 434, along with the 53rd Wing's other units, then turned its attention toward perfecting its flying. In March all groups of the 53rd Wing had done some training with gliders, but the 434 and 437th Groups, which had been picked to specialize in glider operations, flew the largest number of practice glider missions. Before the end of March the two groups had reached the point where they could fly glider formations at night. During April the 53rd Wing's units logged 6,965 hours of glider towing. For the first three weeks of May the 434 and the

437th continued to emphasize glider training. According to the 434 Group Historian, glider tows took place in the “morning, afternoon, and night.” On 11 and 12 May training for the airborne operation culminated in a full-scale command exercise, EAGLE. For the remainder of the month the 434 continued its glider-tow practice missions with special emphasis being placed on removing several weaknesses, which had become apparent during EAGLE.

Until the Normandy invasion, allied aircraft had never flown into combat a force larger than a reinforced regimental combat team. In the Normandy operation, however, American troop carrier units transported two reinforced airborne divisions. (British transports flew in another division.) In view of its enormity, importance, and difficulties of the task, it is not surprising that so much time was given over to plans, preparations, and training. The 434 Group, being the first of the IX Troop Carrier command units to reach the theater, trained for some seven months for an operation that was over in a matter of hours. The Group’s D-Day mission was to tow gliders, which carried reinforcements to the 101st division troops who had been dropped a few hours earlier. At 0119, 6 June 1944, 52 of the Group’s planes, each towing a Waco glider, began their take-off from Aldermaston. Cargo consisted of 155 troops, sixteen 57mm anti-tank guns, 25 vehicles, 2.5 tons of ammunition, and 11 tons of miscellaneous freight. Shortly after take-off, one glider broke loose and landed four miles from base.

In it was the radio by which the 101st division was to have communicated with higher headquarters. The remainder of the formation reached Cherbourg peninsula, where it encountered sporadic small arms fire, which shot down one plane and glider. One pilot dropped out of formation and released his glider some eight miles from the designated zone. The remaining 49 planes reached the release area, released their gliders at 0354, and turned back toward England. All landed shortly after 0530. The 434 Group had successfully performed the task for which it had been trained.

The airborne troops who were transported to France on the morning of D-Day depended, to a certain extent, on aerial resupply and reinforcement. The 434 Group participated in the follow-up missions. Late in the afternoon of D-Day the Group sent 32 of its planes, each towing a Horsa glider, back to the 101st division area; the payload consisted of 157 troops, 40 vehicles, 6 guns, and about 19 tons of other equipment and supplies. According to one authoritative source, the mission “proved to be an incredibly easy one”. The planes encountered no enemy aircraft and virtually no ground fire. Battle damage consisted of a few nicks on one plane. In the early morning hours of D plus one, the Group flew its last mission in conjunction with the Normandy landing; 50 of its planes, each towing a Waco glider, transported reinforcements to the 82nd Division.

For some six weeks after the invasion, the 434 Group had relatively little to do. In July a number of small airborne operations were contemplated, but were shelved before planning was far advanced. The primary mission of troop carriers, however, remained that of transporting airborne forces in operations, and a training program with airborne troops was initiated. According to the 434’s historian, during July the Group was “occupied with training – ground and air – at old familiar subjects: flying, but not on the desired type of mission.”

The undesired type of flying consisted of supply missions flown to France. In July, the Group began a regular mail run to the continent, and on 16 days of the month, it flew supply and evacuation missions, which ranged in size from two to 73 sorties. Supplies transported were, for the most part, critically needed items such as communications equipment and special ammunition. Because of the vast quantities of supplies being built up on the beaches and because of the relatively stable front, there was no need for large-scale aerial supply.

The supply situation on the continent changed abruptly, and all aerial supply to the forward divisions became emergency supply. In late July, American forces broke through at St. Lo, and the third Army covered 100 miles a week. Ground forces shortly were from 100 to 200 miles beyond depots. Because of the shattered condition of the French roads and railroads, surface transport was able to supply forward elements with only a minimum of daily requirements. Under the circumstances, troop carrier units were called upon to help supply the advancing ground forces. It was realized that air supply could not provide all of the supplies required, but it was felt that the supplies delivered by air as a supplement to those delivered by surface means might spell the difference between continuing the offensive and stalling. In early August, therefore, higher headquarters over-ruled senior troop carrier commanders, who had raised objections to the diversion of troop carrier units from their primary task (that of working with airborne forces), and gave air supply precedence over training for airborne operations.

Consequently, until mid-September, the 434 Troop Carrier Group was fully occupied with flying supply and evacuation missions. The Group flew supply missions on all but seven days in August. In one week (20th – 26th), “loading by night and with maintenance crews working at all hours,” the Group transported over 1,000 tons of supplies (chiefly diesel oil, gasoline, and ammunition) to France for the third Army. The Group continued its heavy schedule of supply operations until 13 September.

While the 434 Group (as well as virtually all of the IX Troop Carrier Command) was busily engaged in its transport activities, plans had been made for a large-scale airborne operation to support the British 21st Army Group’s push into Holland. Late in August, as a prelude to further airborne operations, airborne and troop carrier forces were consolidated into the First Allied Airborne Army (FAAA). On 26 August 1944, the IX Troop Carrier command was relieved of assignment to the Ninth Air force and became a part of the newly created FAAA. The 434 remained assigned to the IX Troop Carrier Command and the 53rd Troop Carrier Wing. The FAAA was created in the midst of planning for a major airborne operation, which was to take place in August, but was canceled because the Allied armies overran the objective. In the first week of September two more airborne operations were planned only to be rapidly discarded, one because the objective was overrun, and the other because of unexpectedly strong enemy forces in the proposed drop area. On 10 September, however, Allied leaders agreed upon an airborne operation (given the code name MARKET) in the vicinity of Arnhem, Holland.

Because of the heavy supply commitment, the 434 Group had no time to train for MARKET. Indeed, MARKET was the only large American airborne operation during World War II for which there was no training program, no rehearsal, almost no exercises, and very little tactical training activity.



Nevertheless, when airborne troops began to congregate on the airfield, personnel of the 434 realized that a mission was imminent. On the afternoon of 16 September the briefing of crews began for the operation that was to take place the next day. The main drop of airborne forces was to be accomplished on 17 and 18 September, followed by several resupply missions. Unlike the Normandy operation, MARKET was a daylight affair.

For MARKET, the 434 was again paired with elements of the 101st Airborne Division. Its assigned drop zone was near Eindhoven. On D-Day, 90 of the Group's C-47s dropped elements of the 501<sup>st</sup> parachute Regiment, scoring a generally excellent drop. Five of the Group's aircraft were knocked down by enemy ground fire. On the next day's follow-up mission, 80 of the Group's aircraft towed Waco gliders on which were loaded troops, vehicles, and supplies. Surface fire was again intense and the Group lost two aircraft. A glider-tow reinforcement mission on the 19th was plagued by wretched weather. The 434 dispatched 80 planes, each with a glider in tow; but available records do not state how many of those sent out completed the mission. The Group's historical report states, "several gliders aborted before reaching the LZ due to weather conditions." The 53rd Wing sent out a total of 385 plane-glider combinations, but only 213 of the gliders reached the landing zone. The weather was scarcely any better on the 20th. But the need for supplies was great, and a resupply mission to the airborne forces was flown.

The 101st Division had already made contact with Allied ground forces and was in a fairly comfortable condition. The 82nd Division, however, was being hard pressed, and the 53<sup>rd</sup> Wing (including 53 aircraft from the 434 Group) dropped supplies to the 82nd's troops. The weather remained bad for the next five days, and air supply was reduced to a trickle. The 434 flew its last mission in connection with MARKET on 25 September, when it provided 16 aircraft for a formation of 34 C-47s dispatched by the 53rd Wing to transport supplies to the 101st Division. Largely because of foul weather, which prevented the troop carriers from bringing in the scheduled supplies and reinforcements, the MARKET operation did not achieve its objective.

From the close of the MARKET operation until near the end of December, the 434 was engaged in supply and evacuation missions. Freight for the most part consisted of ammunition, gasoline, aircraft parts, rations, clothing, and almost every kind of air transportable item needed by both air and ground forces on the Continent. The most outstanding supply operations during the period came in late December, when the Group helped to halt the German Ardennes offensive. For about a week after the German drive opened on the 16th, bad weather prevented the allied air forces from offering any appreciable assistance to the ground forces. When the weather finally broke on the 23rd, however, fighters and bombers turned their attention to the battle area, and troop carrier units began to ferry in supplies and reinforcements. In three days, 23, 24, and 26 December, the 434 flew 161 sorties on supply operations to the beleaguered troops at Bastogne.

The German Ardennes offensive caused the Allies to postpone a planned airborne drop to facilitate a crossing of the Rhine River in the Wesel area. By mid-January, however, the Allies had again seized the initiative, and shortly thereafter planning for the airborne operation (code name VARSITY) was renewed. The 434 Group flew a few supply missions in the first half of January 1945, but beginning in mid-January the troop carrier units began an intense training program for the

forthcoming airborne operation. For more than a month the 434 devoted the bulk of its attention to formation flying training, though once during the month (on 8 February) it participated in a large scale supply mission to the Third Army, which had temporarily outrun its supplies.

Early in the planning for VARSITY, it was decided that troops from the American Airborne Division would be flown from bases on the continent and that British paratroops would be flown from bases in England. Since the 53rd wing was to assist in transporting American troops, the Wing and its five Groups were ordered to move to France. The 434 moved an advanced echelon during the last week of February, but because of delays in readying the Group's new field, at Mourmelon-le-Grand, the bulk of the Group did not begin to move until 10 March; on 18 March the Group was considered "combat operational" at its new base. Until the 17th, the unit's C-47s had kept up an almost constant shuttle, transporting personnel and equipment not only of the Group, but also of attending service organizations from the old to the new base.

The other four Groups of the 53rd Wing moved quickly and spent the first half of March training with the airborne forces. Until planes became fully occupied with moving the unit to France, the 434 had continued flying training; but because of the delay in the move, the Group had no opportunity to train with the forces it was to transport on D-Day. The lack of training did not seem to hurt the Group's performance. On D-Day, 24 March 1945, the 434 provided two formations of 45 aircraft each. The first formation, lead by the Group Commander in whose plane rode the 17th Division Commander, gave a "fairly accurate" drop to the 464th field Artillery Battalion. The second formation dropped the 466th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion, which was to support the 513th Parachute Infantry Regiment.

The 513th was dropped at some distance from the specified zone and it was mid-afternoon before troops had fought their way to their proper zone. Throughout the morning, leaders of the 513th were perplexed over the whereabouts of the regiment's supporting artillery. The reason for the lack of contact between the two was, as one authoritative source put it, "that the battalion had come down where it was supposed to, on DZ 'X'. The last parachute serial, a formation of 45 C-47s from the 434 Group, had flown accurately to the drop zone and dropped 376 artillerymen and 12 howitzers there at 1023." Within 30 minutes after its jump, the battalion had some howitzers in operation. All of the airborne forces were dropped on the morning of D-Day, and there were no follow-up missions, as had been the case in OVERLORD and MARKET. There were a few resupply missions flown during the day by Eighth Air Force bombers. By nightfall of D-Day, the airborne and ground forces had joined, and the troop carriers were not called upon for a resupply campaign.

Almost immediately after the VARSITY operation the 434 returned to supply and evacuation operations. A notable difference between the operations of late March and earlier supply efforts was that the missions were now flown to advanced airfields in Germany instead of French fields. In April, as Allied armies began to overrun Germany, ground troops again far outstripped their earthbound transport systems and had to look to air transport for the fuel, ammunition, and rations which could keep them moving. According to the Group Historian, "April 1945 was by far the busiest month in the history of this Group." In the first fourteen days of the month, the Group delivered over 1,000,000 gallons of gasoline to airstrips in Germany. The work continued

throughout the month. Some crews flew as many as three round trips a day, and before the end of the month many had accumulated as much as 115 hours flying time in a single month. By the end of the war, the strategic and tactical significance of air supply had been forcefully brought home to both air and ground forces. As one senior air commander in the theater wrote in May 1945, "Supply by air is a permanent adjunct of military operations."

The end of the war in Europe on 8 May 1945 did not bring troop carrier operations to an abrupt halt. Allied forces in Germany continued to depend to some extent on air supply, and throughout the month the 434 Group continued to fly supply missions to German airfields. Cargo consisted primarily of gasoline. Moreover, the fastest way to evacuate the thousands of freed prisoners of war was by air, and during May the Group transported 17, 540 ex-prisoners of war to relocation centers in France and Holland.

In mid-June 1945 the Group received the welcome news that it was to return to the United States. Preparations were quickly made, and the move was completed by early August. The air echelon returned by way of the south Atlantic ferry route and arrived at Charleston Army Air Base, South Carolina, during the first week of July. The ground echelon remained in the various staging areas in France until 23 July, when personnel boarded the E. B. Alexander for the voyage home. The ground echelon arrived at the New York Port of Embarkation on 2 August and proceeded directly to Baer Field, Fort Wayne, Indiana, where the air echelon joined them.

The 434 Group maintained a somewhat precarious existence for a little less than a year after returning to the United States. On 15 September the Group moved to Alliance Army Air Field, Nebraska. The separation personnel eligible for discharge characterized the brief stay at Alliance. Personnel shortages were made up to some extent by the transfer into the Group of personnel from the recently inactivated 436th group.

Around the first of October, the 434 Group moved to George Field, Lawrenceville, Illinois. Shortly after arriving at the new base, the Group became involved in an air evacuation project, coordinated with the School of Aviation Medicine. Between 15 October 1945 and mid-January 1946, the Group's planes transported many wounded veterans from ports of debarkation to general hospitals throughout the United States. Meanwhile, in November the Group had begun the transition from C-47 to C-46 types of aircraft, and a transition training program had been inaugurated.

From the time of its arrival in the United States, the 434 Group had been harassed by a shortage of personnel, particularly enlisted personnel in certain technical specialties. The situation had become so acute by late January 1946 that the 72nd, 73rd, and 74th Squadrons were reduced to a strength of one officer and one enlisted man, the remainder of the personnel of the three squadrons being transferred to the 71st Squadron.

On 2 February 1946 the Group moved to Greenville Army Air Base, South Carolina. After the move the unit began to train with airborne forces at Fort Banning, Georgia. The Group also hauled freight during the railroad strike in 1946, and participated in an eleven-day airborne demonstration at the United States Military Academy during June. Probably because of the Group's heavy commitments,

the 72nd Squadron had been remanned and reequipped in April, and it took part in the June demonstration. On 24 June the Group took part in an airborne landing demonstration at Fort Benning for Military Attaches of several governments.

In the early summer of 1946, the Group was selected to conduct for the Third Air Force a school designed to train airplane pilots in glider operations. By the end of June the 434 had made plans to begin the school the following month. However, in mid-July the Group received notice that it was scheduled for early inactivation, and the school plans were dropped. On 31 July 1946, the 434 Troop Carrier Group was inactivated.

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USAF Unit Histories  
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#### Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.  
The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.