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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
ATTACK SQUADRON TWENTY-TWO  
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601



IN REPLY REFER TO  
FF12/VA22/RTG:rew  
5750  
Ser 021  
31 August 1969

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From: Commanding Officer, Attack Squadron TWENTY-TWO  
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OPO5A5G)

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Subj: Command History; submission of

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12

- Encl: (1) Officer's Roster
- (2) Enlisted Muster Roll
- (3) Commanding Officer's Biography and Photograph
- (4) Copies of Squadron Newsletter

1. (U) In accordance with reference (a), this report is submitted for the period 1 January 1968 to 30 June 1969.

2. (U) Chronology:

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| 26 January 1968    | Ordered from Gulf of Tonkin to Sea of Japan in connection with USS PUEBLO incident. |
| 19 March 1968      | Return to "Yankee Station" operations.  |
| 24 May 1968        | Return to NAS Lemoore, California.  |
| June, July 1968    | Transition from A4C to A4F aircraft.  |
| 18 October 1968    | Change of Command   |
| 2-14 December 1968 | Weapons Training Deployment to NAAS Fallon, Nevada.                                 |
| 6-17 January 1969  | CARQUAL cruise aboard USS ORISKANY (CVA-34).  |
| 3-28 February 1969 | Predeployment cruise aboard USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31).                         |
| 18 March 1969      | Deployment aboard USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31) to Western Pacific                 |

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DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.  
DOD DIR 8200.10

Reg DR 061-69x

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18 April 1969

First combat sortie of the squadron's  
fourth combat cruise to the Gulf of Tonkin.

3. (C) Narrative: For the "Fighting Redcocks" of Attack Squadron TWENTY-TWO aboard USS RANGER (CVA-61), combat operations in North Vietnam and Laos continued through the first three weeks of January 1968 until the "Pueblo Incident" occurred off Wonsan, North Korea. At that time the RANGER was ordered north to bolster U. S. forces in the Sea of Japan. For the pilots and crew it was a radical change from the tropical temperatures in the Tonkin Gulf to the frigid climate of the waters off Korea. While awaiting further orders from higher authority training and proficiency flying became the order of the day, and the pilots soon grew accustomed to the bulkiness of the anti-exposure suits in the already cramped Skyhawk cockpit.

After sixty-three days sailing in the rough winter seas near Korea the carrier anchored off Sasebo, Japan for a welcomed rest for the crew. A week later in mid-March, the RANGER returned to "Yankee Station" via NAS Cubi Point, Republic of Philippines. A majority of the first week of combat operations was spent in support of the defenses at Khe Sanh, South Vietnam; then it was back to operations as usual in North Vietnam.

The monsoon weather over North Vietnam was beginning to improve in the spring when flights north of 20° Latitude were restricted. This order on 1 April rendered the lucrative, more heavily defended, target areas near Hanoi and Haiphong "off limits". A few days later the restriction was moved further south to 19° North Latitude, eliminating all targets from Thanh Hoa north. Now the U. S. Navy operations were restricted to approximately a

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60 mile strip of North Vietnamese territory from 18° to 19° North Latitude.

Daily operations during this period consisted largely of two or four plane reconnaissance flights armed with four MK82 (500 pound) bombs aboard each A4C aircraft. Few lucrative targets of opportunity were found during daylight hours and most of the ordnance was expended on bridges and other lines of communication. The squadron participated in Air Wing coordinated strikes against storage areas near Vinh and Vinh Son and against the Vinh airfield. These strikes encountered only light opposition. It was apparent, however, during the last few weeks of the cruise in late April and early May, that the enemy defenses in the area of 18°-19° north were becoming stronger. Flak sites which had been idle now offered regular opposition. It was most probable that the enemy was pulling the guns out of the northern part of the country and moving them to the small area of North Vietnam now under attack.

The squadron completed its third combat cruise in the Tonkin Gulf in May 1968 having flown over 1400 combat flights to deliver almost 3,000,000 pounds of ordnance without a single personnel or aircraft loss. On 15 May a majority of the squadron pilots arrived back at NAS Lemoore, California via a "Magic Carpet" flight for a welcome homecoming. The remainder of the squadron arrived ten days later aboard the RANGER when she docked at NAS Alameda, California.

During a 30 day post-cruise leave period the squadron relaxed and became situated in the AMD hangar at NAS Lemoore. Fifteen new pilots reported aboard, eleven of them from the training command via the replacement air group. During this period the maintenance department started exchanging the war-weary A4Cs for the newer more powerful A4F models, including six

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tandem seat TA4Fs for instrument work.

The initial few months of training flights at NAS Lemoore were devoted to navigation, road reconnaissance, tactics, and instrument training, as the combat veterans of two cruises transferred to shore duty.

On 18 October CDR Richard T. GASKILL, former squadron Executive Officer, assumed command of the Fighting Redcocks in ceremonies held at NAS Lemoore. The guest speaker for the occasion was Captain W. H. LIVINGSTON, Commanding Officer of the USS RANGER.

The pace of operations quickened rapidly as the squadron had now assumed the composition that it was to hold during the next deployment, with 23 pilots and 15 aircraft on board. As practice bomb racks became more readily available, weapons delivery training flights began in earnest. The CP-741 bombing computer system in the A4F was completely new to the "turn around" pilots and unfamiliar to the new pilots, but as a delivery platform the A4F was nearly identical to the A4C. Comprehensive weapons work continued on through the first two weeks of December which were spent at NAAS Fallon, Nevada on a deployment with CVW-5. CVW-5 at this time, in addition to VA-22, was composed of VA-144 and VA-94 flying A4Es, and VF-51 and VF-53 flying F8Js. While at NAAS Fallon the squadron enjoyed a very successful deployment as the pilots flew 426 consecutive sorties without missing or cancelling a single one. The maintenance effort was near perfect.

Efforts to ready the squadron for sea were continued in day and night landing qualifications aboard the USS ORISKANY (CVA-34) during early January. These operations were closely followed by additional coordinated exercises conducted off the coast of California aboard the USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31).

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These exercises ultimately culminated in an Operational Readiness Exercise during which the squadron attained the highest grade in the Air Wing. In the few remaining weeks prior to deployment, the Maintenance/Material Inspection was administered by Commander Fleet Air Alameda and a mark of excellent (93.72) was awarded the squadron, also the highest in the Air Wing.

On 18 March 1969, Attack Squadron TWENTY-TWO sailed from NAS North Island aboard the USS BON HOMME RICHARD for the fourth consecutive combat deployment to the Western Pacific. Enroute while operating in the Hawaiian area, the ship and air group underwent an Operational Readiness Inspection. The squadron's individual grade was excellent and was once more the highest among the Air Wing squadrons.

In April 1969 the USS BON HOMME RICHARD proceeded to the Gulf of Tonkin after short in-port periods in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; Yokosuka, Japan; and Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines. The latter stay was scheduled to be of several days duration, but this was before North Korean MIGS shot down an unarmed EC-121 aircraft over the Sea of Japan. On 16 April the USS BON HOMME RICHARD hurriedly departed Subic Bay after only one day in port and proceeded directly to Yankee Station. The first combat sortie for the cruise was flown to Laos on 18 April.

During the weeks from 18 April to the end of the reporting period, the "Fighting Redcocks" have flown over 1350 combat sorties against enemy targets in Laos and South Vietnam with no loss of pilots or aircraft. A few sorties were also flown over North Vietnam in support of the daily photo reconnaissance missions. Two of the squadron aircraft suffered very minor damage as a result of AAA fire in Laos.

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On 23 June Rear Admiral Malcolm CAGLE moved his flag and Staff aboard the USS BON HOMME RICHARD. The Admiral, now COMCARDIV ONE, was the first skipper of the Fighting Redcocks when the squadron was formed as VF-63 in 1948. He was present for cake-cutting ceremonies in the squadron Ready Room after LCDR Gene DANIELS recorded his 400th arrested landing aboard the "Bonnie Dick".

At the close of fiscal '69 the squadron's contribution to the strike arm of Attack Carrier Air Wing FIVE was 15 A4F Skyhawks and an officer complement of 28 men, consisting of 23 pilots and 5 ground officers. The crew numbered 195, excluding the squadron's mascot, Romeo, an authentic fighting cock now making his third combat cruise with the squadron.

*Richard T. Gaskill*  
Richard T. GASKILL

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CNO (OP-09B9)  
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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
ATTACK SQUADRON TWENTY-TWO  
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601

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IN REPLY REFER TO  
FF12/VA22/CEH:jdc  
5750  
Ser 022  
8 AUG 1970

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From: Commanding Officer, Attack Squadron TWENTY-TWO  
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP05D2)  
Subj: Command History; submission of (U)  
Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12A  
Encl: (1) Officer's Roster  
(2) Enlisted Master Roll  
(3) Commanding Officer's Biography & Photograph  
(4) Copies of Squadron Newsletter

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1. (U) In accordance with reference (a), this report is submitted for the period 1 July 1969 to 30 June 1970.

2. (U) Chronology

- 8 July 1969 SPECOPS in Sea of Japan
- 31 July 1969 Return to "Yankee Station" Operations
- 16 October 1969 Change of Command
- 29 October 1969 Return to NAS Lemoore, California
- 11-25 January 1970 Weapons Training Deployment to MAAS Fallon Nevada
- 14-24 February 1970 CARQUAL aboard USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31)
- 22-25 February 1970 COMPTUEX (WEPTRAEX) aboard USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31)
- 2-10 March 1970 ROPEVAL 1-70 (ORI) aboard USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31)
- 2 April 1970 Deployment aboard USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31) to Western Pacific
- 2 May 1970 First Combat Sortie of the Squadron's Fifth Combat Cruise to the Gulf of Tonkin

3. (C) Narrative: For the "Fighting Redcocks" of Attack Squadron TWENTY-TWO aboard USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31), the month of July 1969 was divided between SPECOPS in the Sea of Japan, Air Operations in the Okinawa area, and two weeks in port at Sasebo, Japan. On 31 July BON HOMME RICHARD returned to Yankee Station. During the weeks from 31 July to the end of the "Fighting Redcocks" fourth combat cruise on 8 October 1969, the squadron flew 1169 strike/combat support sorties against enemy targets in Laos and South Vietnam with no loss of pilots or aircraft. Some sorties were also flown over North Vietnam in support of the daily photo reconnaissance missions. On 16 October CDR Henry C. HOLT IV, former squadron Executive Officer, relieved CDR R. T. GASKILL as Commanding Officer of the Fighting Redcocks in ceremonies held aboard USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31) while in port Yokosuka, Japan. A majority of the squadron pilots arrived back at NAS Lemoore, California for

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a welcomed homecoming on 20 October via a "Magic Carpet" flight. The remainder of the squadron arrived nine days later aboard BON HOMME RICHARD when she docked at NAS North Island. The normal 30 day post-cruise leave period was not to be for the "Fighting Redcocks" due to a short 5 month turn around. The squadron became situated in a new hangar at NAS Lemoore, and welcomed aboard five new pilots. The initial few months of training flights at NAS Lemoore were devoted to navigation, road reconnaissance, tactics and instrument training. The pace of operations quickened rapidly during January, February, and March as the squadron had now assumed the composition that it was to hold during the next deployment, with 20 pilots and 13 A4F's on board. On 11 January the squadron went on a weapons deployment to NAAS Fallon, Nevada with CVW-5. CVW-5 at this time, in addition to VA-22, was composed of VA-144 and VA-94 flying A4F's and A4E's respectively, and VF-51 and VF-53 flying F8J's. On 22 January 1970, during the weapons deployment, VA-22 lost its first aircraft in three years when LT Robert LEONE successfully ejected from his aircraft after three unsuccessful relight attempts following a flameout. Efforts to ready the squadron for sea continued in day and night landing qualifications aboard USS BON HOMME RICHARD during mid-February. These operations were closely followed by additional coordinated exercises conducted off the coast of California. These exercises ultimately culminated in an operational readiness inspection during which the squadron received a grade of excellent. On 2 April 1970, Attack Squadron TWENTY-TWO sailed from NAS North Island aboard USS BON HOMME RICHARD for their fifth consecutive combat deployment to the Western Pacific. Enroute, while operating in the Hawaiian area, the ship and air group underwent an operational readiness exercise. The squadron's individual grade was excellent. In May 1970, BON HOMME RICHARD proceeded to the Gulf of Tonkin after short in port periods in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines. The first combat sortie for the cruise was flown to Laos on 2 May 1970. During the weeks from 2 May to the end of the reporting period, the "Fighting Redcocks" have flown 782 strike/combat support sorties against enemy targets in Laos and South Vietnam with no loss of pilots or aircraft. A few sorties were also flown over North Vietnam in support of the daily photo reconnaissance missions. On 14 May 1970, LCDR Gene Daniels achieved the very rare status of quintuple centurion on one ship when he made his 500th arrested landing aboard the "Bonnie Dick". A cake cutting ceremony was held in the ready room following this occurrence. At the close of this reporting period, the squadron's contribution to the strike arm of Attack Carrier Air Wing FIVE was 14 A4F Skyhawks and an officer complement of 22 men, consisting of 19 pilots and 3 ground officers. The crew numbered 185, excluding the squadron's mascot, Romeo II, an authentic fighting cock now making his first combat cruise with the squadron. Romeo Senior, who made three combat cruises, was retired during ceremonies at NAS Lemoore prior to the squadron's present deployment.

*Henry C. Holt IV*  
Henry C. HOLT IV

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*VA-22  
EX 1971*



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
ATTACK SQUADRON TWENTY-TWO  
FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96601



IN REPLY REFER TO  
FF12/VA22/KDC:vpr  
5700  
Ser 344

**DECLASSIFIED**

12 SEP 1972



From: Commanding Officer, Attack Squadron TWENTY-TWO

To: Chief of Naval Personnel (OP-502)  
*operat or 0582*

Subj: Command History; submission of (U)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12B

- Encl: (1) Officer's Roster  
 (2) Enlisted Muster Roll  
 (3) Commanding Officer's Biography

1. (U) In accordance with reference (a), this report is submitted for the period of 1 July 1970 to 30 June 1971.

2. (C) Chronology

- 3 July 1970 Conducting "Yankee Station" operations.
- 20 October 1970 Complete last line period of 1970 cruise.
- 22 October 1970 Change of Command.
- 12 November 1970 WESTPAC Cruise is finished.
- 13 November 1970 Return to NAS Lemoore.
- November 1970 - June 1971 Transition from A4F to A7E aircraft.

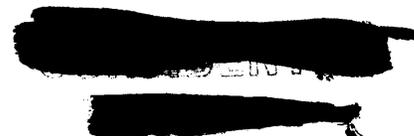
3. (C) Narrative.

On 1 July 1970 Attack Squadron TWENTY-TWO was embarked in USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31) anchored at Green Island, Hong Kong, BBC, with Commander Henry C. HOLT Commanding Officer. The next day the "Fighting Redcocks" departed Hong Kong enroute to the Gulf of Tonkin and "Yankee Station". By the third of July the squadron was conducting flight operations in the Gulf.

GROUP-4

Downgraded at 3-year intervals  
Declassified after 12 years

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5700

At this time VA-22 flying A-4F's was part of CVW-5. The Air Wing was composed of VA-114 and VA-94 flying A-4F's and A-4E's respectively, and VF-51 and VF-53 flying F8J's.

The squadron remained on the line from 2 July until 2 August when CVA-31 departed for Yokosuka, Japan and a well deserved break in the routine. The BON HOMME RICHARD remained in Yokosuka until 12 August when it departed for Cubi Point and a short ten hour stop.

By 13 August CVA-31 had arrived on Yankee Station and resumed its role in combat operations. During this line period the squadron conducted its usual operations into Laos and South Vietnam and also supported reconnaissance missions over the North.

The 3rd of September concluded this line period and the ship was enroute to Singapore arriving there on the 4th. The ship remained in port for 6 days, leaving on the 10th for a stop over in Subic Bay, R.P. After the three day transit period the squadron began conducting training operations off Subic Bay. For the next nine days the BON HOMME RICHARD remained moored in Subic Bay at Leyte Pier.

On 24 September the BON HOMME RICHARD was underway and enroute to "Yankee Station". Three days later the ship arrived on station and began flight operations. During this line period on 4 October Lt W. B. HAGGERTY in aircraft BUNO 154203 received minor battle damage over Steel Tiger operating area. On the 20th of October at 1900 LCDR Gene DANIELS in NF 310, made his 601st arrested landing aboard CVA-31 on the last day of the last line period of the 1970 cruise.

During the weeks from 2 July until 20 October the "Fighting Redcocks" flew a total of 596 strike sorties, 270 support sorties and 137 miscellaneous sorties with no loss of pilots or aircraft. Some of the support sorties were flown over North Vietnam in support of the daily photo reconnaissance missions.

On October 22, pursuant BUPERS Order #081690, CDR J.C. THOMPSON, USN, relieved CDR Henry C. HOLT as Commanding Officer of Attack Squadron TWENTY-TWO in ceremonies aboard the USS BON HOMME RICHARD. CDR HOLT departed the squadron to report to CNO, Washington, D. C.

From the 23rd until the 29th of October the BON HOMME RICHARD remained in Subic Bay. After this six day stay the ship left for Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, arriving there November 7 for refueling. On the 8th the ship was underway for homeport of San Diego. CVA-31 arrived at NAS North Island 4 days later, successfully completing the 1970 WESTPAC Cruise.

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FF12/VA22/KDC:vpr  
5700

By 13 November Attack Squadron TWENTY-TWO had moved its base of operations to NAS Lemoore and commenced training operations. Flight operations were begun on the 17th of November. Two months later, 8 January 1971, the squadron left CVW-5 and came under COMFAIRLEMOORE.

The Squadron began a period of transition from A-4F to A-7E aircraft. By 4 February the squadron was equipped with 9 A-4F's and 1 A-7E. A month later the squadron was one hundred percent A-7E equipped, having accepted 10 of these aircraft.

Since 2 June 1971 the "Fighting Redcocks" have been an integral part of CVW-15. The Air Wing is composed of other 5 squadrons: VA-94 also flying A-7E's, VF-51 and VF-111 with F-4's and VMA- 224 flying A-6's.

At the close of this reporting period the crew numbered 211 men excluding the squadron's mascot Romeo II, an authentic fighting cock. The officer compliment was composed of 21 officers, 17 pilots and 4 ground officers.

*R. G. Ehrman* for *R. G. Ehrman* COR USN  
R. G. EHRMAN

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