

ATTACK SQUADRON SIXTY-FIVE VA-65

CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

VA65/A9-2/COH/ap

SER: 03-51

1 July 1951

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From: Commanding Officer, Attack Squadron SIXTY-FIVE
To: Chief of Naval Operations (Aviation History Unit Op-5198)
Subj: Squadron History Supplement No 16
Ref: (a) ACL 18-49
Encl: (1) Squadron History Supplement no 16 for period 1 Jan
1951, to 30 June 1951

1. In accordance with reference (a) enclosure (1) is sub-
mitted herewith.

Richard W. Phillips
RICHARD W. PHILLIPS

DOWNGRADED TO UNCLASSIFIED
DECLASSIFIED UNDER 15 YEARS
EOP DIR 8100.10

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ATTACK SQUADRON SIXTY-FIVE (VA-65)
CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

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Part 1

Supplement no 16

Chronology

1. Physical movement of Unit:

- a. The squadron was based aboard the U.S.S. VALLEY FORGE (CV-45) until 29 March, 1951 for duty in Far Eastern Waters.
- b. From 29 March to 9 June, 1951 we were based aboard the U.S.S. PHILIPPINE SEA (CV-47) for continued duty in Far Eastern Waters.
- c. On 9 June, 1951 the squadron disembarked from the U.S.S. PHILIPPINE SEA (CV-47) to be based ashore at N.A.S. Alameda, California.

2. Important changes in type and number of aircraft on board:

- a. At the beginning of the period the squadron was composed of twenty (20) AD-2 and two (2) AD-4Q aircraft.
- b. On 20 January we transferred two (2) AD-2 aircraft.
- c. On 30 January we received two (2) AD-4 replacement aircraft.
- d. On 6 March we transferred one (1) AD-4Q due to battle damage.
- e. On 7 March we received one (1) replacement AD-4 aircraft.
- f. On 21 March we lost one (1) AD-4Q due to enemy action.
- g. On 28 March we transferred one (1) AD-2 due to deck accident.
- h. On 31 March we received one (1) replacement AD-4Q aircraft.
- i. On 1 April we received one (1) replacement AD-4 aircraft.
- j. On 16 April we lost one (1) AD-2 due to enemy action Class A.
- k. On 25 April we lost one (1) AD-2 due to combat accident Class A.
- l. On 5 May we transferred two (2) AD-2 due to battle damage Class B.
On 5 May we transferred one (1) AD-4 due to deck accident Class B.
- m. On 11 May we received two (2) replacement AD-3 aircraft.
On 11 May we received one (1) replacement AD-4 aircraft.
- n. On 14 May we received one (1) replacement AD-3 aircraft.
On 14 May we received one (1) replacement AD-4 aircraft.
- o. On 30 May we transferred two (2) AD-4 aircraft from U.S.S. BOXER to VA-702.
On 30 May we transferred two (2) AD-2 aircraft from U.S.S. BOXER to VA-702.
- p. On 1 June we transferred one (1) AD-4Q aircraft to ATSUGI FASRON 11.
On 1 June we transferred one (1) AD-4 aircraft to ATSUGI FASRON 11.
On 1 June we transferred three (3) AD-3 aircraft to ATSUGI FASRON 11.
On 1 June we transferred eleven (11) AD-2 aircraft to ATSUGI FASRON 11.
- q. On 9 June we transferred two (2) AD-4 aircraft to PHIL SEA for FASRON 7.
- r. On 16 June we received two (2) AD-2 aircraft.

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Part 11

Narrative

1 January 1951 to 1 February 1951

After the successful Hungnam evacuation in late December 1950, we stood by until the Communist Forces began the second phase of their Winter offensive on New Year's Day 1951. Then the squadron began flying a moderate schedule of close air support to cover our retreating forces. Upon landing after a combat mission on 3 January Ensign E.J. RICHTER, USN, bounced after a wheels landing, floated into the after gun mount and completely sheared the starboard wing. Although this was probably the worst and most spectacular deck crash of the entire cruise, it resulted in no injuries to the pilot. On the same day Ensign Clarke Nash was involved in a minor mid-air collision with an aircraft flown by Lieutenant Maurice Bealieu of VC-35, but both aircraft made safe landings with no injury to personnel.

On 7 January at a formal ceremony, RAdm. OFSTIE, Commander Carrier Division One, presented awards earned aboard the U.S.S. BOXER (CV-21) to pilots of the Air Group and associated units. At this same ceremony Cdr. Robert W. RYND, USN, relieved Cdr. Donald M. WHITE, USN, as Commander, Carrier Air Group TWO.

In addition to mission of close air support the squadron also made numerous strikes upon bridges and other key transportation targets and flew several sorties of armed reconnaissance in search of targets of opportunity.

On 19 January we departed the Task Force for Sasebo, Japan and a ten day period of recreation for all hands.

1 February 1951 to 1 March 1951

The VALLEY FORGE with VA-65 aboard returned to the operating area on 1 February and immediately resumed its schedule of close air support, bridge, and reconnaissance missions. Weather proved to be a detrimental factor in carrying out our scheduled missions during this period; but we overcame this problem on one occasion when the VALLEY FORGE proceeded to a clear area south of Pusan and launched missions destined for the front lines, which were then near Osan on the West Coast.

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Part 11
(continued)

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Narrative

On 15 February a squadron ordnanceman, J.L. PRICE, AN, USN, was injured in the foot by a 20 millimeter projectile fired from an AD-4N. The aircraft was making a wheels up landing on the flight deck due to a complete hydraulic failure. PRICE was engaged in working on an aircraft spotted forward at the time of the accident. As a result, the doctrine governing procedures to be followed in case of hydraulic troubles while carrying live ammunition was revised to help prevent the future reoccurrence of such an incident.

On February 2 Ensign C.O. HITCHCOCK neglected to drop his tail hook for a landing, an operation that most people consider essential for successful carrier flying. His mistake was also overlooked by the Landing Signal Officer. The result, of course, was a barrier.

On 26 February the ship departed the Task Force bound for Yokosuka and another period of recreation and replenishment of aircraft. On 27 February, RAdm. E.C. EWEN, Commander Carrier Division One, presented awards to the pilots and crew of Air Group Two for meritorious participation in combat operations against the enemy.

1 March 1951 to 1 April 1951

On 11 March we again departed Yokosuka for "Old Point Oboe", where, according to the most reliable scuttlebut, a huge airbase with six thousand foot runways will soon be built from used coffee grounds, ammunition boxes, and discarded rocket cases.

On 21 March Ensign John B. SHANK, USNR, made an emergency landing at Wonju airfield after his hydraulic pump caught fire in flight. On the same day Lt(jg) Rex R. BERGLUND, USN was hit by anti-aircraft fire near Munsan, causing the 20 millimeter ammunition remaining in his wings to catch fire and explode. Despite complete radio failure and over one hundred shrapnel holes in his wings, he executed a wheels up landing at Seoul airfield, which had been retaken from the enemy only a few days before. He was uninjured in the crash landing and returned to the VALLEY FORGE several days later.

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Part 11
(continued)

Narrative

As an interesting sidelight to the above incident, Lt(jg) BERGLUND had a crewman with him at the time, a Private PIERCE, USMC, who was attached to RAdm EWEN's staff. Pvt. PIERCE had recently been accepted for flight training, and because he had never before flown in an aircraft, RAdm EWEN requested that he be taken for a ride and "shown the ropes". On this flight, his first, he received a catapult shot, was shot up by anti-aircraft fire, and experienced a wheels-up landing. Upon return to the ship after his short stay in Korea, Pvt. PIERCE expressed an even greater desire than before to learn to fly.

On March 26 the U.S.S. BOXER (CV-21) arrived with Carrier Air Group 101 aboard to relieve the VALLEY FORGE and Carrier Air Group Eleven, which was at the time aboard the U.S.S. PHILIPPINE SEA (CV-47). Also on 26 March, RAdm E.C. EWEN, Commander Carrier Division One presented additional awards to the squadron pilots for participation in combat operation in Korea.

Carrier Air Group Eleven was scheduled to return to the United States aboard the VALLEY FORGE while Carrier Air Group TWO was to continue operations from the PHILIPPINE SEA. On 28 March during the attempted flyaway transfer of aircraft from one ship to another while running very heavy seas, an F9F from VF-111 rammed through the barriers and crashed into the aircraft spotted forward, causing "B" damage to one of our squadron's aircraft and a rudder change on another. An additional five of our squadron aircraft received minor damage when their mooring cables snapped due to the badly pitching deck. In light of these incidents the flyaway was promptly cancelled and the transfer was completed in port at Yokosuka.

On 29 March we completed our transfer of squadron equipment and personnel from the VALLEY FORGE to the PHILIPPINE SEA, and on 30 March we had the unhappy experience of watching the VALLEY FORGE sail for home. However all feelings of self-pity were soon overwhelmed by the task of getting settled aboard our new airbase and getting acquainted with our new shipmates-to-be.

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Part 11
(continued)

Narrative

1 April 1951 to 1 May 1951

We departed Yokosuka aboard the PHILIPPINE SEA on April 2nd for the operating area with the Flag of Commander Seventh Fleet aboard. We began operations anew on the fifth with the now familiar combination of close air support, bridge and armed reconnaissance missions being flown. On 8 April the entire fleet departed the Korean Area bound for Formosa in a move designed to give the Chinese Nationalist government confidence in our pledge of support. On 9 April the squadron and Air Group conducted an exercise to determine the effectiveness of napalm spread on water and to give the ship's gunnery department practice in the tracking of an erratic target.

On April 11th the squadron and Air Group flew a maximum effort parade along the China Coast from Foochow to Amoy for purposes of reconnaissance. On 13 April the squadron and Air Group participated in a parade over the island of Formosa. CDR. R.W. PHILLIPS, USN, commanding officer of the squadron, flew VAdm. MARTIN to Tai-pae, Formosa for a conference with high officials of the Chinese Nationalist Government.

April 16th found us again at Point Oboe off the East Coast of Korea. It was on this day that ENS. ELWOOD E. BREY, USN, was hit by anti-aircraft fire near Pa-up, west of Wonsan. The aircraft crashed with a full load of bombs and exploded on impact. No evidence of a successful bailout was observed by the accompanying pilots, and it is assumed that ENS. BREY was killed in the crash and explosion. However, pending further evidence, he is listed as Missing in Action.

On 18 April the Group and squadron conducted what was perhaps its most spectacular single operation. Intelligence had located and pinpointed in Hamhung the headquarters of a Chinese army, and we were out to bomb each headquarters building until total destruction was obtained. The strike was conducted on a semi-coordinated basis with a tactical air controller directing each incoming flight to the best available target and calling in a special group of aircraft for anti-aircraft suppression when needed. The Air Group flew more than 140 sorties that day with VA-65 flying 41 of them. Our squadron dropped and fired an estimated 184,000 pounds of ordnance in that single days operation.

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Narrative

On April 25 while flying near Ch'orwon on a close air support mission, ENS D.S. SAUNDERS and Lt(jg) C.E. PARKER were involved on a mid air collision that tore away 4 1/2 feet of ENS. SAUNDERS port wing tip and extensively damaged the starboard flap and wing on the aircraft flown by Lt(jg) PARKER. Both landed at Seoul Airfield. Lt(jg) PARKER made an uneventful landing and after emergency repairs was able to fly back to the PHILIPPINE SEA and land aboard. However, ENS. SAUNDERS overshot the short runway on a necessarily fast landing and was forced to retract his landing gear and complete the landing wheels up. He was uninjured in the crash-landing and returned to the ship several days later.

1 May 1951 to 1 June 1951

The ship departed the operating area for Yokosuka, Japan on 4 May for a much needed rest after the heavy flying of the previous month. On May 15 after replacing the aircraft losses of April, we departed Yokosuka for what we hoped would be our last operating period before being relieved by the U.S.S. BON HOMME RICHARD (CV-31). We continued our operations as before, concentrating this time on armed reconnaissance. On 19 May Lt(jg) REX R. BERGLUND hit the barriers after engaging a late wire on landing.

During a two day period, 28-29 May, a total of five separate missions of eight to ten aircraft each were directed to hit a particular ridge near Inje, two of these flights, led by LCDR, ROY P. GEE and Lt(jg) EUGENE J. CARROLL, being from our squadron. After our last flight hit the ridge on the afternoon of the 29th, our troops began moving up to occupy it from the south. We received a report on the 30th stating that over one thousand Communist dead were counted on the ridge by our troops after it was taken without firing a single shot.

On 29 May the BON HOMME RICHARD arrived at Point Oboe, and on the 30th we set course toward Yokosuka and San Francisco. Before leaving we transferred four of our best aircraft to VA-702 aboard the BOXER.

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Part 11
(continued)

Narrative

1 June 1951 to 1 July 1951

We flew sixteen of our remaining eighteen aircraft from the PHILIPPINE SEA to NAS Atsugi, Japan on 1 June for transfer to the FASRON 11 pool. We arrived in port at Yokosuka the afternoon of 1 June and departed the next afternoon for a non-stop speed run to San Francisco.

On 9 June exactly at high noon we emerged from the fog shrouding the Golden Gate into the bright sunshine of inner San Francisco Bay. Awaiting us was a tremendous welcome home reception, and when we docked at Alameda the pier was crowded with wives, relatives and friends who were almost as happy as we were. Air Group TWO and VA-65 was home again. This time we hoped to stay a little longer than before.

For the remainder of June we enjoyed the fruits of liberty and home with only a skeleton force of personnel not on leave. On 21 June we received two AD-2 aircraft for flight proficiency and also began preparations for our prospective move to AIF, Santa Rosa.

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VA65

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Part 111

Appendices

1. Number of accidents and classification:
 - a. Number of accidents - 9
 - b. Personal injuries - one A (fatal); eight D (no injury)
 - c. Material damage - 4A; 5B

2. Changes in Personnel:
 - a. January:
 - (1) Officers reported aboard - 0
 - (2) Officers detached - 0
 - (3) Enlisted reported aboard - 5
 - (4) Enlisted detached - 7
 - (5) Total complement - 29 officers, 147 enlisted men

 - b. February:
 - (1) Officers reported aboard - 0
 - (2) Officers detached - 1
 - (3) Enlisted men reported aboard - 1
 - (4) Enlisted men detached - 0
 - (5) Total complement - 28 officers, 148 enlisted men

 - c. March:
 - (1) Officers reported aboard - 0
 - (2) Officers detached - 1
 - (3) Enlisted reported aboard - 5
 - (4) Enlisted detached - 8
 - (5) Total complement - 27 officers, 145 enlisted men

 - d. April:
 - (1) Officers reported aboard - 0
 - (2) Officers detached - 1
 - (3) Enlisted men reported aboard - 0
 - (4) Enlisted men detached - 0
 - (5) Total complement - 26 officers, 145 enlisted men

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ATTACK SQUADRON SIXTY-FIVE (VA-65)
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SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

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(continued)

Appendices

e. May:

- (1) Officers reported aboard - 0
- (2) Officers detached - 0
- (3) Enlisted men reported aboard - 3
- (4) Enlisted men detached - 6
- (5) Total complement - 26 officers, 142 enlisted men

f. June:

- (1) Officers reported aboard - 0
- (2) Officers detached - 4
- (3) Enlisted men reported aboard - 3
- (4) Enlisted men detached - 5
- (5) Total complement - 22 officers, 140 enlisted men

3. Hours flown and carrier landings:

a. January:

- (1) Hours flown - 714.6
- (2) Carrier landings - 202

b. February:

- (1) Hours flown - 812.8
- (2) Carrier landings - 226

c. March:

- (1) Hours flown - 583.2
- (2) Carrier landings - 182

d. April:

- (1) Hours flown - 1346.7
- (2) Carrier landings - 420

e. May:

- (1) Hours flown - 1083.1
- (2) Carrier landings - 337

f. June:

- (1) Hours flown - 57.1
- (2) Carrier landings - 0

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CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

VA65

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Part 111
(continued)

Appendices

4. A Summary of our Korean Service:

This squadron, as a unit of Carrier Air Group TWO spent a total of seven months in a combat operational status, crossed the Pacific Ocean four times and served aboard three Essex class carriers between 24 August 1950 and 9 June 1951. Since 1 August 1950 the squadron received and transferred a total of 65 aircraft including AD models 2,3,4, and 4Q. Seventeen hundred and eighteen missions were flown between 15 September 1950 and 30 May, 1951 in our squadrons' aircraft, of which number 1645 were offensive combat missions totaling 5583 combat hours. Sixteen hundred of these combat missions were flown by squadron pilots.

Our total tonnage of ordnance expended, not including 20 mm. ammunition, was 3126.4 tons. This figure includes 1762 napalm bombs, 2816 aircraft rockets, 8740 fragmentation bombs, 295 one ton G.P. bombs, 807 half ton G.P. bombs and 1143 five hundred pound G.P. bombs.

As a result of our many migrations from ship to ship and air station to air station during the past year, we have affectionately dubbed ourselves "The Carpetbaggers". It is a nickname we will long remember.

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CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

VA65/A9-2/GAS/pn

Ser: 01-52

1 January 1952

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SECURITY INFORMATION

From: Commanding Officer
To: Chief of Naval Operations (Aviation History Unit Op-5198)
Subj: Squadron History Supplement No 17
Ref: (a) ACL 18-49
Encl: (1) Squadron History Supplement No 17 for period 1 July 1951,
to 31 December 1951
1. In accordance with reference (a) enclosure (1) is submitted herewith.

DECLASSIFIED - ON MAY 1981 5500.30
BY 91C DATE 8-20-63

Gordon A. Sherwood
GORDON A. SHERWOOD

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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Part 1

Supplement No 17

Chronology

1. Commanding Officers and dates of command:
 - a. Commander R. W. PHILLIPS - 3 February 1950 to 31 August 1951
 - b. Commander GORDON A. SHEERWOOD - 31 August to present

2. Physical movement of unit:
 - a. 1 July - temporarily based ashore at the U. S. Naval Air Station, Alameda, California
 - b. 11 July - temporarily based ashore at the Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Santa Rosa, California
 - c. 30 September - detachment deployed to the Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Fallon, Nevada for qualification exercises
 - d. 13 October - detachment returned to the Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Santa Rosa, California
 - e. 25 November - squadron deployed to Naval Air Station, San Diego, California for carrier qualification aboard USS BOXER (CV-21)
 - f. 15 December - squadron returned to the Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Santa Rosa, California, and resumed operations
 - g. 16 December - detachment of aircraft and pilots deployed to Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Fallon, Nevada, for further weapons qualifications
 - h. 22 December - detachment returned from the Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Fallon, Nevada.

3. Changes in type and number of aircraft on board:
 - a. 1 July - 4 AD-2 and 1 AD-3 attached
 - b. 13 July - received 2 AD-2
 - c. 17 July - received 1 AD-3
 - d. 9 August - received 1 AD-2
 - e. 5 September - received 5 AD-2
 - f. 6 September - transferred 10 AD-2 and 2 AD-3
 - g. 7 September - received 13 AD-1
 - h. 13 September - received 1 AD-4
 - i. 13 September - AD-1 Strike
 - j. 21 September - received 1 AD-4
 - k. 28 September - received 2 AD-4
 - l. 8 October - received 1 AD-4
 - m. 16 October - received 1 AD-4
 - n. 26 October - received 1 AD-4
 - o. 15 December - received first of new AD-4
 - p. 17 December - received 4 more new AD-4
 - q. 19 December - received 6th AD-4
 - r. 21 December - AD-1 Strike

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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Part II

Narrative

1 July - 31 July 1951:

After returning from a tour of duty in Korean waters the squadron was temporarily based ashore at the Naval Air Station, Alameda, California. Leave periods were immediately established with 50% of the officers and men on leave during each period. With only five aircraft assigned at the beginning of the period a minimum of flying was done. Due to the large turn-over of pilots, flying consisted primarily of familiarization flights. On 11 July, Air Group TWO was transferred to the Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Santa Rosa, California.

1 August - 31 August 1951:

With only nine aircraft aboard and personnel on leave, operations were still conducted at a minimum. Ground training hours increased for both men and officers. Fifteen men were sent TAD to the Ordnance School at the Naval Air Station, San Diego, California, and thirteen officers attended the Air Support School. A large percent of the officers completed the Instrument Flight Training Detachment Syllabus at the Naval Air Station, Alameda, California. Commander Gordon A. Sherwood reported aboard 17 August 1951 to assume duties as Commanding Officer, relieving Commander R. W. Phillips of command. Change of command ceremonies were conducted on 31 August 1951.

1 September - 30 September 1951:

With eighteen aircraft assigned during this period, flight operations increased greatly. A flight training syllabus was set up to expedite maximum squadron readiness. During this period, the squadron flew 434 hours, and our readiness jumped to 18 percent per pilot. This was a credit to our maintenance department as we experienced a marked increase in maintenance problems with the assignment of AD-1s. On 13 September Lieutenant (jg) R. C. Messerschmitt was killed in crash while participating in simulated dive bombing exercises.

1 October - 31 October 1951:

A detachment of aircraft and pilots were deployed to the Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Fallon, Nevada, for two weeks. Operations consisting of weapons qualification doubled our readiness over the last period. Upon the return of the Fallon detachment, night flying

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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Part II (Cont)

Narrative

1 October - 31 October 1951 (cont):

and field carrier landing practice became top priority on the flight schedule at the end of the period ten pilots were qualified in FCLP and 55 percent of the pilots were ready to begin night FCLP. We also had 80 percent of our pilots holding valid instrument ratings.

1 November - 30 November 1951:

Bad weather began to cut down operations. Over one hundred hours were lost due to adverse weather. We did, however, complete field carrier qualifications and on 25 November the squadron was deployed to the Naval Air Station North Island at San Diego, California, for a three week period of carrier qualifications while at San Diego, we continued night field carrier practice and refresher day field landings. Continued inclement weather hampered qualifications which were conducted aboard the USS BOXER (CV-21). We did qualify fifteen pilots during this first week; bringing our total squadron readiness to 39 percent.

1 December - 31 December 1951:

The squadron continued carrier qualifications for two weeks from North Island. Qualifications were hampered greatly because we were operating from North Island and were often grounded by weather. We were originally to have conducted night carrier qualifications, but barely completed day qualifications for all pilot during the three week period. This condition was brought about mainly by lack of winds and favorable seas in the ships operating areas. Upon return to the Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Santa Rosa, California, a second detachment was deployed to the Naval Auxiliary Landing Field, Fallon, Nevada, for further weapons qualifications. While at Fallon, Ensign E. J. Richter was killed in an AD-1 crash, while participating in practice bombing exercises. Personnel desiring leave over Holiday season were granted five to ten days. The end of this six month period found us 45 percent combat ready.

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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Part III (Cont)

Appendices

1. Number of accidents and classification.

- a. Number of accidents - 4 - P, K, B, B
- b. Personal injuries - 2 - A, A
- c. Material damage - 4 C, C, A, A

2. Change in Personnel

a. July:

- (1) Officers reported aboard - 11
- (2) Officers detached - 3
- (3) Enlisted men reported aboard - 4
- (4) Enlisted men detached - 5
- (5) Total Complement - 169

b. August:

- (1) Officers reported aboard - 3
- (2) Officers detached - 2
- (3) Enlisted men reported aboard - 3
- (4) Enlisted men detached - 5
- (5) Total Complement - 168

c. September:

- (1) Officers reported aboard - 3
- (2) Officers detached - 10
- (3) Enlisted men reported aboard - 0
- (4) Enlisted men detached - 3
- (5) Total Complement - 158

d. October:

- (1) Officers reported aboard - 11
- (2) Officers detached - 2
- (3) Enlisted men reported aboard - 6
- (4) Enlisted men detached - 6
- (5) Total Complement - 167

e. November:

- (1) Officers reported aboard - 0
- (2) Officers detached - 0
- (3) Enlisted men reported aboard - 14
- (4) Enlisted men detached - 6
- (5) Total Complement - 175

f. December:

- (1) Officers reported aboard - 0
- (2) Officers detached - 2
- (3) Enlisted men reported aboard - 27
- (4) Enlisted men detached - 29
- (5) Total Complement - 171

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