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THE FIGHTING FOUR NINETY-THIRD

The 13th Antisubmarine Squadron(H) was surrounded with history and tradition dating back to the first World War.¹ It has been often cited and its members decorated for an unusual record of all weather operation; its last fatal accident was November 5, 1933.² Only six months ago it was alerted for overseas movement only to be disappointed.

At last, however, it seemed that the time had come. On the 1st day of November, 1943, the 493rd Bombardment Group(H) was activated at McCook, Nebraska, and the 13th Antisubmarine Squadron constituted a large part of the original cadre.³ To command such a group, Lt. Col. ELBERT HILTON was chosen,⁴ and his army career as Squadron Commander in the famous 19th Bombardment Group indicated that a well-matched combination was in the making to accomplish the mission of the new organization: "the delivery of bombs on designated target and the safe return of all aircraft."⁵ The thousands of hours of flying and maintenance experience of the 13th Antisubmarine officers and men had only made them eager for a taste of war; and the cool judgment of a veteran of the hardest kind of air war was the perfect temper for their steel.

The other staff personnel were of equally high caliber. Lt. Col. EDWARD R. CASEY, Deputy Group Commander, brought to the Group the ex-

1. 119th Aero Squadron originally activated 25 September 1917, Bangle Field, Virginia; served within US; reactivated, 119th Ob'n Sq, N. J. Nat'l Guard, 30 Jan 1930; redesignated 518th Bomb Sq(H), Grenier Field, N. H., 1 March 1943; redesignated 13th AS Sq(H), Grenier Fld, N. H., 29 Nov 1942. (source--Squadron History, 13th AS Sq.)
2. Squadron History, 13th AS Sq.
3. Per GO 135, Sect III, par 1, Hq 2AF, dd 22 Sept 1943(Exh. #1)
4. TFX, 16 DOTW, Y123, dd 2 Nov 43(Exh. #2).
5. Group Policy, 493rd Bomb Gp(Exh. #3)

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perience of a former Squadron Commander and Wing Operations Officer. Lt. Col. LOUIS W. MARSHALL, Group Executive, received his military training at West Point and at the Command and General Staff School, and has held a number of important staff positions. Major GEORGE E. WHITLOCK, Group Operations Officer, holder of numerous decorations, was a member of one of the famous heavy bombardment groups that fought so courageously in England, Africa and Palestine in the earlier days of the war. Captain KENT SAGENDORPH, Group Intelligence Officer, well known lecturer and writer on aviation subjects, has had a rich civilian background and twelve months service as a combat intelligence officer with the 310th Bombardment Group in England and Africa. Mix with such key personnel the officers and men of the 13th Antisubmarine, and you have what the Commanding Officer called "the Fighting Four Ninety-third."

Chapter 1--"Where is the 493rd?"

On the 8th day of November Captain HILTON, Captain MCCOY and two other officers reported at McCook, Nebraska, for duty with the 493rd Bombardment Group. Logically enough (since no other personnel had arrived) a Morning Report was initiated, and they impatiently awaited the arrival of additional officers and men.⁶ To their amazement they discovered two weeks later that some 41 officers and 117 enlisted men had assembled at Davis-Monthan Field, Tucson, Arizona, and that this group also purported to be the 493rd.⁷ Rather than be left behind they joined the organization

6. Interview with officers listed.

7. Extract Morning Report, Hq 493rd Bomb Gp (see Exh. #4).