Reg. No. 830

R. S. No.

MARINE OBSERVATION SQUADRON TWO FIFTY ONE,
MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP FOURTEEN, FIRST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING, FMF,
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

COMBAT TOUR

OF

DUTY

OF

MARINE OBSERVATION SQUADRON TWO FIFTY ONE

From

1 October, 1944,

to

31 October, 1944.

DISTRIBUTION:

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War Diary for October, 1944. VMO-251.

Geographical Location of VMO-251:

PIVA NORTH AIRFIELD, BOUGAINVILLE

Name of The Commanding Officer:

WILLIAM C. HUMBERD, Major, USMC (NA).

Name of Next Higher Echelon:

MARINE AIR GROUP FOURTEEN.

Composition of Unit as of 1 October, 1944:

	Officers	Men
U.S. Marine Corps Pilots	52	
U.S. Marine Corps Ground	8	250
U.S. Navy	1	8
	61	258

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War Diary of VMO-251. October, 1944.

1 October, 1944.

NUMA NUMA strike weathered out. Dawn patrol likewise. BACHELER, CRUTCHER, PIRAGES and KENNICOTT flew the dusk patrol but saw nothing. TELLER and BACHELER flew test hops.

The squadron detached from MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP TWENTY-FOUR this date. Attached to MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP FOURTEEN.

1st Lt. David J. SCHOETZ, USMCR, this date received the award of "The Purple Heart" for injury received while in enemy combat.

1st Lt. John J. MC MASTERS, USMCR, awarded as of 25 September, 1944, "The Purple Heart" for injury received while in enemy combat.

2 October, 1944.

FURLOW led his and HART's divisions, minus GARRETT (who did not take off because of a flat tail wheel) in a bombing and strafing attack on the Jap bivouac and supply areas at NUMA NUMA PLANTATION, NE BOUGAINVILLE. Four thousand pounders and three five hundred pounders were put in the target, causing two 700-foot columns of black smoke and destroying at least one hut. JENNINGS' division attempted to get through the bad weather to make the PUT PUT to KERAVAT Sweep, but could not make it and were instructed to land at GREEN ISLAND, which they did, after first dropping their four quarter-tonners on a village in the center of BUKA ISLAND, and strafing huts on the same island with 3200 rounds of ammunition, all with unobserved results.

DAIGLE, TANNER, AND KAMMEYER flew the South BOUGAINVILLE patrol, strafed a bridge at the TAUTAUA RIVER and huts north of KAHILI, setting two ablaze.

The following officers detached: 1st Lt's. Glenn R. BOWERS, "J" Ned CORMAN, Robert A. ENDERS, Millard F. FOWLER, Alfred L. JOHNSON, Harry C. JOHNSON, Albert JOLINK, Earl W. MC CABE, Thornton F. SPINDLER, and Orville R. SWICK, detached to Forward Echelon MADepSq-1, for further transfer to the United States.

3 October, 1944.

BACHELER's division took off at 0800 on the PUT PUT to KERAVAT fighter sweep, dropped four 500 pounders on the Experimental Gardens at KERAVAT, three bombs cratering the gardens, and one a dud. Expended 2200 rounds of 50 caliber and 180 gallons of fuel per plane for two and half hours flying time. Observed a fire covering an acre of ground and putting up 200 feet of smoke half way between VUNAKANAU and the shore of ATALIKLIKUN BAY. Landed: 1025.

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3 October, 1944(Cont'd).

JONES' division took off at 0820, minus HARRIS, whose plane was grounded at the last minute, on the CAPE GAZELLE to LEMINGI fighter sweep. They deposited three quarter-tonners on a road intersection and huts at the WAT WAT PLANTATION, east coast of GAZELLE PENINSULA. Very little strafing was done for lack of targets. Landed: 1130.

HUMBERD's and HENLEY's divisions (minus HENLEY, whose plane had a flat tail wheel) left at 0920 to deliver seven thousand pound bombs to the Jap medical depot at WAITAVALO, NEW BRITAIN. Delivery was made at 1025 but there was no visible damage. No strafing done for lack of a target. Landed: 1135. DAIGLE and HARRIS flew test hops.

HUMBERD's, HART's, JENNINGS', SMITH's, BACHELER's and HENLEY's division each flew a two hour night hop, worked on squadron tactics.

4 October, 1944.

Flew three, two-hour, two-plane South BOUGAINVILLE patrols. BACHELER and PIRAGES smoked one hut at LULUAI POINT and another at a point one mile north of KIETA, they observed several brush fires one mile inland from CAPE MIBIRI and also north of KIETA, apparently the Japs are expanding their horticultural endeavors. CRUTCHER and FRANK strafed the good bridge at the mouth of the TAURAUA RIVER near LULUAI POINT; got a peek at two Japs near KAUKAUAI, east of MOILA POINT, but couldn't get their fifties to bear on them. Did fire on two nearby, however. The last patrol, HENLEY and HARRIS, took off at 1545 and landed at 1745. They strafed huts from KIETA down to KOROMIRA MISSION, saw fifteen fires in neighborhood of KIRIWINA PLANTATION. Close look at these fires disclosed what was already suspected, more gardens in the making for the Jap.

HART's division on the afternoon PUT PUT KERAVAT sweep (Take-off: 1200; Land: 1420) dropped four quarter-tonners on buildings at the NE end of the KERAVAT EXPERIMENTAL GARDENS. Two bombs hit within fifty feet, and the other two explosions were not seen by the pilots. Strafed various huts and villages at tree-top level all the way across the peninsula on the return trip, from KERAVAT to TOBERA to KABANGA BAY.

SMITH's and HUMBERD's divisions handled the CAPE GAZELLE-LEMINGI and the DUKE OF YORK-CAPE LAMBERT sweeps respectively, taking off at 1230 and 1300. SMITH's four planes placed their quarter-tonners on TAMALILI PLANTATION, and their strafing smoked a dozen huts. HUMBERD's planes bombed a native village on the DUKE OF YORK ISLAND, damaging an unknown number of huts. Their strafing set two huts ablaze.

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4 October, 1944(Cont'd).

CONROY and BARTON flew the radar tracking course for the benefit of the island radar operators.

5 October, 1944.

FURLOW's, JENNINGS', and CUNNINGHAM's divisions, FURLOW leading, took off at 0725 and one hour and ten minutes later attacked the Jap supply area at TALILI BAY with twelve thousand pounders. Ten bombs found the target but no visible damage could be seen except for one small fire among the coconut trees. One bomb was a miss because the pilot did not have his master gun switch on, and another fell off accidentally because of a short in the wiring system. Expended 2000 rounds of 50 caliber. No AA fire encountered. Landed: 0953.

Transferred one enlisted man.

6 October, 1944.

INGLEHART and STURGIS on the early morning SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE patrol found a rain squall covering the entire southern part of the island. STURGIS spotted and strafed a Jap wearing a white shirt at PUK PUK, but didn't get him. Took off: 0615. Landed: 0900.

TELLER and MOYNIHAN took off at 0800, also on the SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE sweep, saw a Jap in a garden north of KAHILI. He ran for the bush, and our planes strafed the spot. Observed a 15-foot tower in the middle of one garden area. Looked like a chair on stilts, with a little tin roof over it, similar to a life-guard's tower on a beach. Possibly a lookout or a station for an armed guard. From treetop level over the KARA AIRFIELD, these pilots saw no signs of activity. Saw at least three or four Japs working in various gardens north of KAHILI AIRFIELD. Landed: 1005.

CUNNINGHAM and DAIGLE took off at 1000 to continue the SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE Patrol. Saw a Jap washing his clothes on a rock by the sea, to the east of MOILA POINT. He hot-footed it up the beach, disappeared in the bushes. Both our planes made two strafing runs on the spot, and when they passed this spot one hour later on the way back to base, noticed that the Jap's clothes were still on the rock where he had so hastily left them. The bad weather was still over the Southern part of BOUGAINVILLE, and greatly hindered this patrol. Landed: 1200.

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6 October, 1944(Cont'd)

SMITH, NEILSON, ROSELLEN, and MAC LACHLAN departed at 0930. with one five-hundred pounder each for the PUT PUT KERAVAT fighter sweep, RABAUL area. Over target from 1030 to 1100. SMITH smoked two huts at KURRAJONG PLANTATION, plus a forty-foot wooden-roofed building in good condition at WAT WAT PLANTATION. Saw lots of track activity at this place. Observed no traffic on the coast road south of the WARANGOI RIVER. NEILSON in two strafing passes smoked a hut at MALABUNGA. At VUNABAL PLANTATION he saw what looked like gasoline drums or stock piles on the south side of the plain dirt road, with little spurs running off the road into the trees. He drew machine gun fire from a Jap standing just off the road at WAT WAT PLTN. Made another strafing run at him. The machine gun of the Jap ceased abruptly. Pilot believes the gun was an automatic shoulder weapon. ROSELLEN observed that there is no bridge on the KERAVAT RIVER near the Experimental Farms. Followed a road from MALABUNGA to the WARANGOI RIVER without seeing any signs of life, after having strafed MALABUNGA VILLAGE. MAC LACHLAN strafed hutsat all the aforementioned places, and observed new track activity in several open grassy spots north of the WARANGOI. MAC LACHLAN's plane received a two inch hole in the top of the starboard wing from a burst of medium AA fire at a point one mile inland from KABANGA PLANTATION. When hit the plane was at 1500 feet. The flight expended 4000 rounds of ammunition, landed at 1200.

HENLEY, HARRIS, HEISEL, and POEHLMAN took off at 1000 for the DUKE OF YORK to CAPE LAMBERT fighter sweep. Reaching the DUKE OF YORK ISLAND at 1115, they strafed villages there, then on WATOM ISLAND farther to the west. They dropped their quarter-tonners on a group of houses west of the NAMBUNG RIVER, east of CAPE LAMBERT. HEISEL scored the only hit, destroyed two red-painted buildings. Other observations negative. Landed: 1245.

BACHELER, PIRAGES, SCHOETZ, and CRUTCHER flew the CAPE GAZELLE LEMINGI fighter sweep; takeoff: 1030. Strafed a barge at KABANGA POINT, and huts and buildings at WAT WAT and PUT PUT PLANTATIONS, with unobserved results. Dropped three quarter-tonners on huts at MOKURAPAU PLANTATION, BACHELER scoring a damaging hit and the other two bombs were unobserved. BACHELER's plane received seven 25 caliber bullet holes in the port wing, from KALABANG PLANTATION. The pilot believes they must have been waiting for him, because he was at tree top level and doing 200 knots when hit. The plane returned safely to base. Flight landed: 1245.

FURLOW, SCOVILLE, and GARRETT left the deck at 0735 with one five-hundred pounder each to fly the PUT PUT-KERAVAT sweep. The fourth man in this division, FRANK, was late taking off because of a flat tire, so he flew with next flight which took off ten minutes later.

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6 October, 1944(Cont'd).

FURLOW and SCOVILLE dropped their bombs on huts at BALU PLANTATION, but missed. GARRETT dropped on gardens at EXPERIMENTAL FARMS, cratering one. The flight strafed huts at various spots, with unobserved results, landed 1005.

7 October, 1944.

HUMBERD, SIGAN, INGLEHART, and STURGIS were off at 0745 for the DUKE OF YORK to CAPE LAMBERT sweep, also with five-hundred pounders. This flight bombed URUKUK VILLAGE, WATERHOUSE COVE, DUKE OF YORK ISLAND. HUMBERD chalked up the only hit and destroyed an undetermined number of buildings in the village. The flight continued to CAPE LAMBERT, strafing huts and villages along the way. Reported that all the huts out that way are almost all beaten up and bombed out. Landed: 1105.

TELLER, MOYNIHAN, JONES and GORMAN flew the GAZELLE-LEMINGI sweep, taking off at 0800. Bomb load: 1x500 lb. inst. fuse. Bombs were dropped, two on a bridge at PUT PUT HARBOR, and two on the trench system north of the WARANGOI. Only results confirmed were the cratering of the road leading to the PUT PUT bridge. Again the pilots report that all houses they saw were all shot.

HART, WARREN, MUSSMAN and GRAY were turned back from the afternoon PUT PUT sweep by two parallel tropical fronts lying north to south across the route to the target. They dropped on a group of eight to ten buildings at BUTCHKOMBO, south of TINPUTS, on the northeast coast of BOUGAINVILLE. GRAY's bomb hit among the buildings, but no results were confirmed. Very little strafing done. Landed: 1410.

JENNINGS, ERDMANN, CONROY, and BARTON took off at 1230. The two sections became separated in the heavy weather which had turned back the preceding flight, but both reached the DUKE OF YORK ISLAND. JENNINGS and ERDMANN dropped on buildings on the NE coast of the island, reported damaging hits. CONROY and BARTON attacked uts on the south side of the island, BARTON scoring a damaging hit. All four planes strafed all the way around the DUKE OF YORK ISLAND. Once separated, the two sections never joined up again. The first section landed at PIVA NORTH. When the second section reached base, PIVA NORTH was closed. They were instructed to land at the TOROKINA strip. CONROY made it but by the time BARTON was ready to land, the field had closed in almost completely. After several passes, however he brought his plane down successfully. Flight landed:(1st section at 1530 and 2nd section at 1610).

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7 October, 1944(Cont'd).

CUNNINGHAM, DAIGLE, TANNER, and KAMMEYER took off at 1300 for the GAZELLE-LEMINGI sweep, bombed buildings at CAPE HATSIA, BUKA ISLAND, instead, inasmuch as CUNNINGHAM decided against trying to penetrate the weather between BUKA and ST. GEORGE CHANNEL. Visibility was extremely limited over BUKA, and hence no results could be seen of the bombing. Other observations negative. Landed: 1435.

8 October, 1944.

The squadron flew dummy gunnery runs today, twenty-three planes participating. STURGIS flew a test hop.

Joined Major Quinton R. JOHNS, USMC, from HqSq MAG-24.

9 October, 1944.

Continuous SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE patrol today, by two-plane sections. HEISEL and POEHLMAN took off at 0615, landed 0800. Reported the patrol was largely negative, as far as seeing any enemy is concerned. Did see some cooking fires near huts located between KARA AIRDROME and Mt. SENFFT. Strafed this area, as well as the KAIHO-KUPAI area, inland from KIETA AIRFIELD, with unobserved results.

HENLEY and HARRIS took off at 0800, landed 1000. Saw no fires or other evidence of activity on the east coast of the island. Did observe the Jap observation post reported by friendly natives, which is situated atop a hill west of KOROMIRA MISSION. It consists of a lean-to with thatched roof, on the side but almost to the top of the hill, also saw some good-looking buildings at the base of the cliffs 4 to 8 miles south of BUKA PASSAGE, on the eastern side of the island. Thoroughly strafed both areas.

MAC LACHLAN and SIGAN took off at 0950, landed 1200. Saw many native huts to the east and west of MT. LAWRENZ. There were numerous gardens and huts particularly on the west side in an area about five miles square. The ground appeared well-packed as if there are many people living in the area. Observed good-looking huts like barracks just inland from the first row of trees along the shore two to three miles west of KAHILI. Strafed three of the large derelict cargo vessels lying off-shore from the KAHILI area because on a previous hop MAC LACHLAN thought he saw washing hung out to dry on one of the vessels. The Japs in fact do have a machine gun position on the large hulk lying immediately off shore from KAHILI AIRFIELD. Expended 4200 rounds of 50 caliber ammunition strafing these and other targets such as huts at KUPAI and a long catwalk bridge at MORO. Received moderate light AA fire from KANGU HILL.

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9 October, 1944(Cont'd).

INGLEHART and STURGIS took off at 1200, landed 1410. Fired a hut at BOMAMU. Spent one hour strafing huts and villages in the vicinity of KUPAI to KIETA, clouds at 2000 feet among the mountains, (which rise to 5000 feet), restricted observation.

CUNNINGHAM and DAIGLE took off at 1400, landed 1530, saw six soldiers dressed in khaki and carrying rifles nex TOTAVI, south of MOTUPENA POINT. Did not strafe because it was near the restriction line. The soldiers were walking on the beach, in the direction of KAHILI. Saw at least a dozen other Japs along the beach between there and KAHILI, but were unable to get a shot at them.

JENNINGS, ERDMANN, CONROY, and BARTON flew the Dawn Patrol. HART and SCHOETZ flew the radar tracking course. HUMBERD flew to GREEN ISLAND and return, on business. PIRAGES flew a test hop.

10 October, 1944.

Takeoff: 0750. HUMBERD, SIGAN, INGLEHART, and STURGIS flew the morning PUT PUT-KERAVAT sweep. HUMBERD and SIGAN were given in addition, the special mission of making a low-level strafing run on revetments at the south west end of VUNAKANAU AIRFIELD, where a serviceable twin-engined bomber was reported by P.I.U. The flight first bombed the personnel area of the EXPERIMENTAL FARMS at KERAVAT, putting four quarter-tonners in the area, with unobserved results. HUMBERD's division then flew to VUNAKANAU AIRFIELD, where HUMBERD and SIGAN, his wingman, went in at tree-top level, from north to south, across the field and the revetments in question, strafing as they went. They saw no planes whatever, except the old wrecks which have been there for months. However, when they continued at low level to MALABUNGA JUNCTION and thence to TOMA, they saw and strafed seven trucks along the road between these two points. Observed one Jap sitting on one of the trucks; another got out and crouched down beside a rear wheel. None of the trucks burned but the pilots believe they severely damaged at least three of them. They also reported all kinds of activity in this particular area, such as good gardens and huts, and even washing hanging out to dry. Observed a fifty-foot column of smoke south of TOMAVATUN. While INGLEHART and STURGIS were strafing the village of MALABUNGA, the latter's plane was hit by maching gun fire in the fuel pump. STURGIS began losing fuel, and accompained by INGLEHART barely made it to GREEN ISLAND. Upon landing, the plane caught fire, and STURGIS jumped out while the plane was rolling at a speed of about thirty knots. He suffered a badly sprained right ankle and a lacerated right hand. Fortunately for him, he was wearing gloves at the time. The flames from the plane were extinguished, but the plane Bureau Number 56394 had to be stricken from the Navy List. STURGIS reported that he did not know his plane wasfire until the tower called him

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and told him to get out quickly. He also stated that the crash trucks at GREEN ISLAND were really on the job; that they were putting fire extinguisher on the plane almost before it stopped rolling. HUMBERD and SIGAN landed at base 1130.

0755. TELLER, MOYNIHAN, JONES, and GORMAN departed with five-hundred pounders to make the DUKE OF YORK-CAPE LAMBERT sweep, but with the special mission of sinking a 40-foot fishing sloop reported to have been seen entering the TORIU RIVER, on the west coast of N.B. The flight located the boat about one half to one mile from the mouth of the river, in a cove, on the right north side of the stream. Considerable searching was done however, before the boat was found, and during that time JONES and GORMAN dropped their bombs on a plantation house on the north side of the river. It was at this moment that the boat was located, in a cove just about one hundred yards from the house. TELLER and MOYNIHAN made 50-degree dives on the boat, one hitting within a hundred feet, the other overshooting by 300 feet. Several strafing passes were then made on the boat and also on the house nearby. No specific damage was observed, however. Flight returned to base, landing at 1110.

0810. HART, FLICKINGER, MUSSMAN, and GRAY took off with one quarter-tonner each to handle the CAPE GAZELLE-LEMINGI sweep. This sweep was negative as to observing any evidence of enemy activity. All four bombs were dropped on LEMINGI VILLAGE, where it is reported there are approximately thirty barracks housing Japanese infantry. Any damage that may have been caused by the bombing was obscured from view of the pilots. All four planes strafed huts at LEMINGE and gardens along the coast near PUT PUT PLANTATION. HART's plane on returning to base was found to have ten to fifteen 1/4 to 3/4 inch holes in the under side of the fuselage, at the rear bank of cylinders. The pilot did not know, at the time, that his plane was hit. He thought it must have happened either from a hill just to the south of the WARANGOI RIVER, or from the mouth of the river. Flight landed: 1020.

1215. BACHELER, PIRAGES, CRUTCHER, and WARREN left the deck with a five-hundred each for the PUT PUT-KERAVAT sweep. Most of the target area was covered with nine-tenths cumlus cloud from two to ten thousand feet. Hence, it was not possible to get much done. Bombs were dropped in a forty degree glide on the EXPERIMENTAL GARDENS, cratering several of them. Returned to base: 1440.

1220. HENLEY, NEILSON, ROSELLEN, and MAC LACHLAN took off on the DUKE OF YORK-CAPE LAMBERT sweep, but primarily to get the TORIU RIVER boat hit this morning by TELLER's division. Their four quarter-

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tonners all hit within thirty feet of the boat, MAC LACHLAN's bomb exploding with 15-20 feet of the target. The flight then strafed the boat until it sank to the bottom, with its bow sticking up at a slight angle. Strafing runs were also made on the plantation house nearby. Flying on up the coast toward CAPE LAMBERT this division set afire a tin-roofed building at PONDO PLANTATION of an estimated size of 20x40 feet. Landed: 1500.

FURLOW, SCOVILLE, GARRETT, and FRANK departed at 1255 for the CAPE GAZELLE-LEMINGI sweep, deposited four quarter tonners on the 7th day Mission building south of PUT PUT HARBOR. They also strafed this target and other huts from the WARANGOI RIVER to CAPE GAZELLE. No observed results from either bombing or strafing attacks. Landed: 1555.

11 October, 1944.

Twenty-five pilots had sleeve gunnery practice today, ROSELLEN towing for the first flight, and HANSON for the second. ERDMANN flew a test hop.

1st Lt. Max K. ROBINSON, (020898), USMCR, detached to (Prisoners of War and Missing Persons Det), Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps, Washington, D. C.

12 October, 1944.

FURLOW, SCOVILLE, GARRETT, and FRANK flew the dawn patrol. Observations negative. Stood scramble alert until noon. Relieved by TELLER, MOYNIHAN, JONES, and GORMAN, who stood scramble alert all afternoon, then flew the dusk patrol.

Continuous SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE PATROL today, led by CONROY and BARTON for the first hop, who left the deck at 0630, returned at 0830. They observed two Japs hiding behind a small tree in a garden near KUKUGAI. Strafed the spot. Noted that all the gardens are in very good condition, which further confirms reports that SOUTHERN BOUGAINVILLE, with the Japs for gardeners, had come to look like the English countryside.

JOHNS and ERDMANN flew the patrol from 0800 to 1000. Saw a total of ten Japs in various gardens northeast of KARA AIRFIELD, strafed many places, and claimed two probable Japs.

HUMBERD And SIGAN were down SOUTH-BOUGAINVILLE way from 1000 to 1215. Absolutely no enemy, nor enemy activity was visible.

INGLEHART and MAC LACHLAN took off at 1155, returned at 1355. They fired a hut at KUKUGAI, left it with the roof burning fiercely. Smoked one at TUGIU, and two inland from KOROMIRA. Observed that all

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12 October, 1944(Cont'd).

roads near KIETA HARBOR and the east coat appear good. Ran out of ammunition, so returned to base. Reported a 10/10 cloud layer with 2500 foot base covering the whole of Southern BOUGAINVILLE, with thunderstorms moving toward this field from the north.

HENLEY and HARRIS took off five minutes after the previous patrol landed, found Southern BOUGAINVILLE completely coverned with thunder showers, ceiling zero, and cloud to 12,000 feet. Returned to base, landing at 1510. Patrol negative.

HANSON and WARREN flew the radar tracking course.

13 October, 1944.

All flying secured because of bad weather.

Captain Joseph P. HART, USMCR, detached to Headquarters, First Marine Aircraft Wing.

14 October, 1944.

Nineteen pilots had sleeve gunnery practice today, NEILSON towing for the first flight, and ROSELLEN for the second.

Squadron notified of transfer of 1st Lt. John J. MC MASTERS to USNH nearest point of entry into the continental limits of the United States. (effective as of 29 September, 1944).

Transferred one enlisted man.

15 October, 1944.

BACHELER, PIRAGES, CRUTCHER, and KENNICOTT flew the dawn patrol and stood scrmble alert half the day. HEISEL, FLICKINGER, MUSSMAN, and GRAY stood the alert the balance of the day, flew the dusk patrol. POEHLMAN and GORMAN flew the radar tracking course.

Squadron handled the South BOUGAINVILLE patrol again today. CONROY and ERDMANN making the early morning hop. Took off at 0610, landed at 0810. CONROY put on a one-man blitz against TONOLEI HARBOR, caught, strafed and sank a canoe in the harbor with three Japs aboard, then finished off the Japs in three more strafing runs. Made six strafing runs on boxes and stores piled beneath camouflage netting along the west side of the harbor. Then he strafed a small boat farther north along shore, also pulled up under camouflage netting. No AA fire encountered. ERDMANN strafed huts and gardens in the KARA AIRFIELD area.

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15 October, 1944(Cont'd).

FURLOW and SCOVILLE took off at 0800, returned 1020. Completed the Able-Charlie search, which is a continuous circuit of the entire island of BOUGAINVILLE and BUKA. Strafed huts north of KIETA AIR-FIELD and at NUMA NUMA PLANTATION. Strafed one Jap on the beach, east shore of BUKA about half way up the island.

HUMBERD and SIGAN again saw no enemy activity on the 1000 to 1145 patrol.

JONES and HANSON flew the patrol from 1150 to 1345. Saw two fires, one at KIETA HARBOR, another from a hut four to five miles down the coast from KIETA. Strafed both of them. Strafed some good thatched huts around KIETA HARBOR. Strafed a tin-roofed hut in the hills five miles south and a mile and a half inland of KIETA HARBOR.

GARRETT and FRANK took off at 1400, returned 1550. Saw no Japs, no smoke, no enemy activity. Strafed gardens and bridges north of KAHILI. Strafed the barge hideout at the mouth of the river which empties into the sea due east of LAKE LAHALA. No observed damage from strafing.

INGLEHART and BARTON were scheduled for the last patrol, but it was cancelled by PIVA operations.

1st Lt. Francis C. JENNINGS and DAVID J. SCHOETZ left for SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA.

16 October, 1944.

Seventeen pilots excercised their trigger finger today, with INGLEHART and DAIGLE doing the towing. BACHELER and HUMBERD flew to GREEN ISLAND and return.

SMITH, NEILSON, ROSELLEN and MAC LACHLAN took off at 1300 for the PUT PUT-KERAVAT sweep, but were turned back by weather shortly after takeoff. Landed: 1340. The DUKE OF YORK and the CAPE GAZELLE sweeps, also scheduled for this afternoon, were then cancelled.

Major Robert W. TELLER, USMCR, detached to VMF-223, MAG-14.

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17 October, 1944.

Sixteen-plans strike took off at 0810, led by HUMBERD, with his own, SMITH's, HENLEY's, and GRAY's divisions, with the primary mission of bombing and strafing the Japanese bivouac at KAMAKDRAN, WAITAVOLO, WIDE BAY, NEW BRITAIN. The Attack was delivered at 0910, each plane carrying one half-tonner. On return, the pilots reported nine area hits, and two direct hits, by INGLEHART and CONROY; also, that there were two 100-foot columns of blackish smoke rising from the target during rendezvous. Subsequent stereo pairs revealed that the boys had called their shots correctly. The entire bivouac area was blasted, and only a few trees left standing. Flight landed at 1035.

18 October, 1944.

Another sixteen-plane strike this morning, led by FURLOW. His, JOHNS', CUNNINGHAM's, and JONES' divisions left the deck at 0825 with one half-tonner each, to again hit the WAITAVALO area, but this time three separate targets in the WAITAVALO PLANTATION: FURLOW's division reported on the bivouac area (not KANAKDRAN, which was hit yesterday) reported two hits in the area; JOHN's division on the reported Jap Headquarters scored three area hits; and CUNNINGHAM's and JONES' divisions on the medical depot in the center of the plantation reported all eight bombs in the general vicinity of the target. No evidence of damage was observable by the pilots during their retirement from the scene. Landed: 1050.

PIRAGES flew a test hop.

19 October, 1944.

Eighteen pilots of the squadron had sleeve gunnery practice today, with CONROY, JONES, and CRUTCHER doing the towing.

20 October, 1944.

0800. Twelve F4U's, led by BACHELER, and including also CUNNINGHAM's and GRAY's divisions, struck RURI BAY, on the north east coast of BOUGAINVILLE, forty-five minutes after take off. Because of the nature of the target made it extremely difficult to locate, seven bombs hit 200 to 400 yards north of it. One bomb hung and the pilot had to return to base with it. Four hit in the assigned target area, but any possible damage was obscured by heavy jungle and hills. The target was strafed thoroughly in two runs, with 7400 rounds of 50 caliber ammunition. Flight landed: 0930.

21 October, 1944.

Flying secured for maintenance of planes.

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22 October, 1944.

Flying secured because of weather.

23 October, 1944.

Twenty-two pilots of the squadron had sleeve gunnery practice today, with FLICKINGER, SMITH, WARD, and WARREN pulling the sleeve.

The following officers left for SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA: CRUTCHER, ERDMANN, MOYNIHAN, NEILSON, PIRAGES, and SMITH.

24 October, 1944.

0710. Twelve fighter-bombers carrying one half-tonner each and led by HUMBERD, hit the RUMBA BIVOUAC AREA thirty-five minutes after takeoff. HUMBERD's, GRAY's, and JONES' divisions made up the flight. The first two divisions attacked the Third Company Jap bivouac at the BOVO RIVER, RUMBA, but seven bombs fell 500 yards short. JONES' division all dropped to the west of the assigned target, but within the river fork, near the 12th Jap Company, and may have done some damage there. All planes made one strafing run on the target area after the bombing was completed. No damage observed. Flight landed at 0830.

Six pilots got sleeve gunnery practice, with HOLDEKER pulling the sleeve. FURLOW's and CUNNINGHAM's divisions had combat tactics, with emphasis on bracketing.

HUMBERD's, FURLOW's, HENLEY's and CUNNINGHAM's divisions flew a two and a half hour night flight, practicing squadron tactics.

Transferred one enlisted man.

25 October, 1944.

Six pilots practiced sleeve gunnery, with HANSON doing the tow.

JOINED 2nd Lt. Alexander D. BEATTIE, USMCR, FROM MARAirWest.

The following officers left for SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA: ROSELLEN, MAC LACHLAN, and TANNER.

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26 October, 1944.

1000. Sixteen-plane strike on the Jap regimental stores at RUMBA, ARAWA BAY, east coast of BOUGAINVILLE. BACHELER led, with FURLOW's, HENLEY's, and JONES' divisions in number two, three and four positions. The attack, with thousand pound bombs, occurred just twenty-five minutes after takeoff. The target again was hard to find. However, all bombs were believed to hit in the target area, except GARRETT's, which hung and was returned to base. No evidence of damage was seen. Landed: 1100.

27 October, 1944.

Twenty pilots had sleeve gunnery practice; STURGIS and BARTON towing.

Joined Captain Frank A. SCHROEDER and 2nd Lt. ARTHUR C. EVANS JR. from MARAirWest.

28 October, 1944.

0645. FURLOW led a sixteen-plane strike with thousand pounders against the Japanese ammunition dump at RUMBA, ARAWA BAY, thirty odd miles due east of our base. Nine bombs were reported in the target area at 0715 o'clock, four had to be called "unobserved" and three went onto the revetted storage dump which is located near the assigned target. Pilots then made a strafing run on the area and observed some white and brown smoke rising from the target. This smoke had dissipated, however, when our planes departed from the area. Landed: 0745.

Six pilots had sleeve gunnery, with BEATTIE doing the tow job.

29 October, 1944.

BACHELER, HARRIS, BARTON, and WARD took off at 0825 with one quarter-tonner each, fused for a 4-5 second delay, for the DUKE of YORK-PONDO PLANTATION Fighter Sweep. At a point just northwest of STOCKHOLM PLANTATION, BACHELER dropped his bomb in level flight and at treetop level on a thatched hut built on stilts. His wingman, HARRIS, flying a loose section and not knowing that BACHELER had dropped his bomb, made a strafing run on the same house. Just as he passed over at fifty feet altitude the bomb exploded, and HARRIS made a water landing five miles off shore, in PALANGUMAR BAY, which is located south of CAPE LAMBERT, on the NW Coast of New Britain.

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29 October, 1944(Cont'd).

Dumbo was actually within sight, and witnessed the landing. As a result, the pilot was rescued after less than ten minutes in the water. The landing was made with twenty degrees flaps and at an indicated air speed of seventy-five knots. Once in the water, HARRIS never got out of his parachute harness, and the chute gave him such bouyancy that he had to inflate only one side of his Mae West. Seeing the pilot was having difficulty getting to the Dumbo, a seaman aboard the plane jumped into the water wearing no life jacket and only a pair of trunks, swam approximately a hundred yards to the pilot, and assisted him to the plane. To prevent his wrist watch from being ruined by the salt water, HARRIS put it into his mouth and kept it there until he was aboard the Dumbo. HARRIS' plane, bureau number 56044, was of course lost.

BACHELER and BARTON bombed a house on STOCKHOLM PLANTATION but missed. WARD overshot in attempting to bomb a dock at LASSUL BAY. BACHELER fired a red-roofed plantation house on the STOCKHOLM PLANTATION, and the flight strafed many huts along the north shore, east of CAPE LAMBERT. Landed: 1145.

HUMBERD, SIGAN, INGLEHART, and STURGIS departed at 0905 for the PUT PUT-KERAVAT SWEEP. The four quarter-tonners, with delayed fuses were dropped on huts at the SE end of the EXPERIMENTAL GARDENS, for one area hit and three unobserved. Only one bomb explosion was seen, but this was probably due to the delayed action of the fuses. Very little strafing was done, and no damage observed. No enemy activity was seen, but the pilots reported that the gardens and roads in the vicinity of KERAVAT AIRFIELD were in very good condition. Landed: 1130.

JONES, GORMAN, HEISEL, and POEHLMAN flew the GAZELLE-LEMINGI sweep, taking off at 0920, landing at 1140. Bombed a road junction at KALABANG PLANTATION, and strafed gardens and huts between TOBERA and KABANGA BAY. No damage seen, nor enemy activity. Observed that several of the gardens in this area have slit trenches dug in and around them.

FURLOW, SCOVILLE, GARRETT and FRANK took off at 1255 to fly the DUKE OF YORK-PONDO sweep. Scored a damagin hit and an area hit on URUKUKUR VILLAGE, and one damaging hit on URI VILLAGE, DUKE OF YORK ISLAND. Strafed these spots; a red-roofed house at SERAGI; huts on WATOM ISLAND; and huts at LILINAKALA PLANTATION, CAPE LAMBERT. Total observed damage: Fired three and destroyed at least three huts on the DUKE OF YORK. Landed: 1605. SCOVILLE's bomb hung and was returned skidded off to the side without exploding. Flight landed: 1635.

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30 October, 1944.

Flying secured, in preparation for ferrying our planes to GUADALCANAL tomorrow. Night flying was scheduled but cancelled because of bad weather.

31 October, 1944.

All twenty planes in possession of this squadron, plus two more from another, were flown by our pilots to GUADALCANAL this morning, to exchange them for twenty-two brand new F4U-1D's. Nineteen of them took off from GUADALCANAL this afternoon, of which five reached our base, twelve landed at the RUSSEL ISLANDS, and two at MUNDA, the reason being very bad weather. The next day, 1 November, 1944 the twelve planes which landed at the RUSSELLS and the tree which were left at GUADALCANAL reached base. The two planes which had landed at MUNDA arrived here the following day.

(A) Strength as of 31 October, 1944:

	Officers	Men
U.S. Marine Corps Pilots	45	
U.S. Marine Corps Ground	8	249
U.S. Navy	1	7
	54	256

(B) AIRCRAFT

1. 22 F4U-1D's at the end of the month
2. Operational losses: 1 F4U-1 bureau no. 56044.
3. Combat losses: 1 F4U-1 bureau no. 56394.

(C) OPERATIONS

1. Total hours flown for month: 969.1
2. Total number of individual flights: 572.
3. Total number of individual flights on combat missions: 307.
4. Total number of flights where enemy opposition was encountered. (None).

(D) ENEMY PLANES DESTROYED

1. None.

(E) ENEMY SHIPPING DESTROYED

1. None.

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PREPARED BY:

HENRY B. WELCH,
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A. C. I. Officer.

APPROVED BY:

WILLIAM C. HUMBERD
Major, U. S. Marine Corps,
Commanding Officer.

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SQUADRON SUMMARY of MISSIONS, HOURS, and FRIENDLY and ENEMY LOSSES

--[redacted] (DATE), [redacted] (SQUADRON) -- 22 (NUMBER of PLANES AVAILABLE at END of MONTH) -- [redacted] (TYPE)--

NAME	COMBAT MISSIONS			ALL MISSIONS NUMBER						ENEMY PLANES DESTROYED THIS MONTH				ENEMY PLANES DESTROYED TOTAL			ENEMY SHIPPING		FRIENDLY LOSSES PLANES			
	STARTED	COMPLETED	TOTAL HOURS	STARTED	COMPLETED	ENGAGED ENEMY	DAY	NIGHT	TOTAL HOURS	NUMBER	TYPE	AIR OR GROUND	BROT FORWARD	NUMBER	TYPE	AIR OR GROUND	DESTROYED	DAMAGED	COMBAT	OPERAT'NL	BUREAU NUMBER	PILOT LOST?
[redacted]	9	9	168	16	16	0	15	1	253													
[redacted]	11	11	23.0	19	19	0	17	2	34.0													
[redacted]	0	0	0	2	2	0	2	0	3.0													
[redacted]	11	11	24.3	19	19	0	18	1	35.1													
[redacted]	6	6	6.8	11	11	0	10	1	18.6													
[redacted]	7	7	13.5	14	14	0	12	2	23.5													
[redacted]	8	8	15.7	18	18	0	16	2	30.5													
[redacted]	8	8	15.5	13	13	0	12	1	22.5													
[redacted]	8	8	14.5	12	11	0	11	1	17.6													
[redacted]	13	13	25.0	22	22	0	21	1	35.5													
[redacted]	11	11	22.1	19	19	0	18	1	31.6													
[redacted]	9	9	19.2	17	17	0	15	2	29.7													
[redacted]	10	10	19.9	15	15	0	15	0	24.4													
[redacted]	9	9	15.5	13	13	0	13	0	20.4													
[redacted]	8	8	14.9	18	18	0	17	1	26.6													
[redacted]	7	7	13.9	14	14	0	13	1	21.2										1	56044	NO	
SQUADRON TOTALS																						

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SQUADRON SUMMARY of MISSIONS, HOURS, and FRIENDLY and ENEMY LOSSES

(DATE) (SQUADRON) (NUMBER of PLANES AVAILABLE at END of MONTH) (TYPE)

NAME	COMBAT MISSIONS			ALL MISSIONS NUMBER						ENEMY PLANES DESTROYED THIS MONTH				ENEMY PLANES DESTROYED TOTAL			ENEMY SHIPPING		FRIENDLY LOSSES PLANES				
	STARTED	COMPLETED	TOTAL HOURS	STARTED	COMPLETED	ENGAGED ENEMY	DAY	NIGHT	TOTAL HOURS	NUMBER	TYPE	AIR OR GROUND	BROT FORWARD	NUMBER	TYPE	AIR OR GROUND	DESTROYED	DAMAGED	COMBAT	OPERAT'NL	BUREAU NUMBER	PILOT LOST?
BART	5	5	9.6	6	6	0	5	1	11.6														
BRISEL	9	9	20.5	19	19	0	17	2	31.0														
HENLEY	8	8	18.3	18	18	0	16	2	28.8														
HOLDERER	1	1	1.2	7	7	0	6	1	9.2														
HUMMEL	9	9	23.1	15	15	0	13	2	33.6														
INGLEHART	9	9	27.6	18	18	0	16	2	38.1														
JENNINGS	5	5	10.5	6	6	0	5	1	12.5														
JOHNS	3	3	7.5	8	8	0	8	0	12.0														
KAMMEYER	5	5	7.9	11	11	0	9	2	16.4														
JONES	11	11	21.9	18	18	0	17	1	30.7														
KENNICOTT	4	4	7.3	10	10	0	9	1	15.3														
MAC LACHLAN	9	9	18.7	17	17	0	16	1	27.7														
MOYNIHAN	6	6	13.2	11	11	0	10	1	19.2														
MUSSMAN	6	6	11.0	11	11	0	10	1	18.0														
NEILSON	7	6	14.0	13	12	0	12	1	21.0														
PIRAGES	6	6	11.3	13	13	0	12	1	20.3														
SQUADRON TOTALS																							

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SQUADRON SUMMARY of MISSIONS, HOURS, and FRIENDLY and ENEMY LOSSES

(DATE) (SQUADRON) (NUMBER of PLANES AVAILABLE at END of MONTH) (TYPE)

NAME	COMBAT MISSIONS			ALL MISSIONS NUMBER						ENEMY PLANES DESTROYED THIS MONTH				ENEMY PLANES DESTROYED TOTAL				ENEMY SHIPPING		FRIENDLY LOSSES PLANES				
	STARTED	COMPLETED	TOTAL HOURS	STARTED	COMPLETED	ENGAGED ENEMY	DAY	NIGHT	TOTAL HOURS	NUMBER	TYPE	AIR OR GROUND	BROT FORWARD	NUMBER	TYPE	AIR OR GROUND	DESTROYED	DAMAGED	COMBAT	OPERAT'NL	BUREAU NUMBER	PILOT LOST?
POEHLMAN	10	10	19.7	19	19	0	17	2	31.7														
ROSELLEN	6	5	13.4	12	12	0	11	1	20.4														
SCHOETZ	2	2	3.8	3	3	0	3	0	4.8														
SCOVILLE	12	12	23.6	19	19	0	18	1	31.6														
SIGAN	10	10	25.1	17	17	0	15	2	36.1														
SMITH	4	3	8.4	8	7	0	7	1	13.1														
STURGIS	8	8	21.3	14	14	0	12	2	24.8										1		56394	NO	
TANNER	5	5	10.8	9	9	0	8	1	15.8														
WARD	2	2	4.0	6	6	0	6	0	9.5														
WARREN	9	9	14.9	16	16	0	16	0	32.4														
WOLF	1	1	3.0	6	6	0	6	0	9.5														
SQUADRON TOTALS	307	304	632.2	572	569	0	525	47	962.6										1	1			

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