

# MEMORIAL AND ANNIVERSARY SERVICE

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Easter Sunday, April 25th, 1943

Athletic Field at 6:30 a.m.



TED'S TRAVELING CIRCUS

U.S. ARMY AIR FORCE

"Somewhere in England"

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Col. EDWARD J. TIMBERLAKE

Commanding Officer

# Order of Service

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## **SONG        .....        MY COUNTRY, 'TIS OF THEE**

My country, 'tis of thee  
Sweet land of liberty,  
Of thee I sing ;  
Land where my fathers died,  
Land of the Pilgrims' pride,  
From 'every mountain side,  
Let freedom ring.

Our Fathers' God, to Thee  
Author of liberty,  
To Thee we sing :  
Long may our land be bright  
With freedom's holy light ;  
Protect us by Thy might,  
Great God, our king.

## **PLEDGE TO THE FLAG        .....        UNISON**

(Led by 1st Lt. Donald M. Whited)

" I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands. One Nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

## **HISTORY        .....        COL. EDWARD J. TIMBERLAKE**

## **SCRIPTURE        .....        CHAPLAIN THOMAS B. MURPHY**

## **PRAYER        .....        CHAPLAIN THOMAS B. MURPHY**

## **VOCAL SOLO        1st LT. DONALD M. WHITED**

("Above the Hills of Time")

## **ADDRESS        .....        CHAPLAIN JAMES A. BURRIS**

## **STAR SPANGLED BANNER        .....        BAND**

## **THE BENEDICTION**

## THE GROUP HISTORY

(As presented by Col. Timberlake)

THIS Easter formation is also close to being an anniversary. A year ago the Group had just been formed. It began training on Monday morning, March 28th, 1942, and, you will remember, that by May 15th we were on our way to Florida, fully organized and ready for the final weeks of training. Two months of work there and the air echelon took off for New Hampshire. A bare two weeks later, the ground echelon moved to Fort Dix.

Then came the trip across. For the air echelon—brand new planes—the excitement of Gander Lake—the flight by night across the Atlantic—landing first in Scotland and then at our own field. For the ground echelon—the turmoil at Dix—the thrill of the largest and fastest ship in the world tearing across the Atlantic—Scotland—the long overnight ride down and the flak and bombs in the distance.

Then our first station in England—from the 6th of September, when the first plane landed, to the 31st of December when the last man left. From that field the Group took off on its first mission, went into action for the first time. You remember, that was the attack on October 9th on the great engineering works at Lille, in Occupied France.

From that day on we went out as often as the weather allowed. We turned our attention to the massive submarine harbors and pens at Brest, at Lorient, at St. Nazaire, and at La Pallice, all along the French coast. Squadron C moved down to the south of England and patrolled the ocean from dawn to dusk, from Ireland to Spain. For a time we did not know it, but we were all playing an important part in the invasion of Africa. We never saw a ship of the gigantic convoys that moved from Ireland to Algiers, but we were striking at their worst enemies, the submarines, and the convoys got through.

At our first station in England we were visited by His Majesty the King, by General Spaatz, and by General Eaker, and by the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Morgenthau. There we met the service squadron and the chemical company and we were joined by the weather squadron and the gas defense detachment and our old friends from Florida. At our first station we met the R.A.F. for the first time, and, off-duty, the W.A.A.F.s and the A.T.S. You will remember the tents on the hillside and under the long lane of English oak trees. And you will also remember the mud and the pea-soup fog.

On the morning of Saturday, December 5th, I was told that the entire air echelons of three squadrons would move the next morning

to southern England, ready to take off for Africa ; and, as you know, by Monday evening we were in Algeria.

There we waded up to our knees and flew two missions out of the mud, and then moved to the desert, where it rained and the dust blew, but there was American beer—and eggs, and the sun shone a lot of the time. We met new sights, smells, and sounds and bought Wog watches, German lugers, and Italian berrettas.

Missions came on schedule, every other day at the start, and every third day towards the end. We attacked the docks and shipping so vital to Rommel and Von Arnim. First we bombed the African ports—Tunis, Bizerta, Sousse, Sfax, and Tripoli—at Rommel's rear, and then the ports of Sicily and southern Italy, Naples, Messina, Cotrona, and Palermo all felt the weight of our bombs during those dusk attacks.

Losses we had and great successes, too. Merchant shipping sank in flames and cruisers fled to safer berths.

Baseball and " sack-time " took up the days between, so that though we grumbled, time flew by. The end of February came before anyone noticed it and we of the air echelon were on our way back to England.

Back in December, on the day the planes left for Africa, the ground echelon had begun the move from our first station to our present one. Here they were joined by the ordnance companies, the quartermaster detachment, and the infantry ; and for three months they all endured the inaction and the doubt for the future which are among a soldier's worst enemies. I am told that there was mud here too. The personnel of this great ground echelon made the returning air crews feel they were home again.

The first of the planes got back from Africa on February 26th, and the Group's recent history is so fresh in all our minds that I need merely mention it. We have bombed the enemy's greatest naval base—at Wilhelmshaven. We have bombed their most important submarine construction yards—at Vegesack—and have been praised by the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill ; and we have bombed enemy installations at Rotterdam, at Antwerp, and at Brest. We have been visited by the Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Lord Trenchard, father of the R.A.F.

We have now been in action for six months—and it is good for all of us to form here together and to recall what we have done since we were originally activated in Louisiana a very little over a year ago. We should do so not only for the sake of our own pride and our own satisfaction in a job well done, but also in memory of the men we have lost, and whose glory it is that they have gone for their country and for the greatest of all causes, the freedom of all men.