

Chapter 1 : 1st Bomb Group, H.Q. 14th Air Force,

The China Air Task Force (CATF) was a combat organization of the United States Army Air Forces created in July under the command of Brig. Gen. Claire Chennault, after the Flying Tigers of the 1st American Volunteer Group of the Chinese Air Force were disbanded on 4 July of that month.

The AVG had been formed to defend the Burma Road and Chinese cities from Japanese air attack, and its fliers had won spectacular victories over the Japanese since December. But in the nine months of its existence, between July and March, the group achieved a combat record that proved it to be a worthy successor to the AVG. Using tactics developed by Chennault, they shot down Japanese aircraft, plus probables, in only seven months of combat, from December to July. They lost only four pilots and 12 Tomahawks in combat. War Department in Washington, D. Chennault was opposed to inducting the Flying Tigers into the Army. Chennault lobbied against induction with the help of Nationalist Chinese leader Chiang Kai-shek. With the United States in the war, however, the U. Army had no intention of supporting a private air force that functioned outside of military channels. Chiang Kai-shek insisted that Chennault be appointed senior air officer in China and Chennault certainly wanted the job. Lieutenant General Henry H. Stilwell, commander of U. Army, its supplies would be cut off. Stilwell and Bissell accepted. He was promoted eight days later, on April 23, from colonel to brigadier general. The task force would operate as part of the Tenth Air Force, stationed in India, which would control supplies, personnel and operations. Bissell, also newly promoted to brigadier general and senior to Chennault by one day would command all American air units in China. Chennault had received little help from the U. Army in putting together the CATF. The Army supplied only a dozen green pilots, plus 20 clerks and mechanics. Only 29 were flyable. Both fighters were good medium-altitude day fighters, with their best performance between 15, and 18, feet, and they were excellent ground-strafting aircraft. Chennault also had seven BC Mitchell medium bombers, which came from India. A fourth fighter squadron for the 23rd Group was obtained by subterfuge. Before taking command of the 23rd Group, Scott had borrowed a PE from Chennault in April and had flown missions against the Japanese. With only a handful of fighters and bombers, the CATF faced a force of Japanese army aircraft, deployed along a 2,000-mile front from occupied China through Indochina to Burma. Those included the Nakajima Ki. While the summer monsoons kept Japanese planes in Northern Burma grounded, Chennault would take the offensive in eastern China. Chennault retaliated by launching Bs from Kunming and Ps from the eastern fields on strafing and bombing attacks against Japanese targets at Hankow, Nanchang and Canton. The 16 Flying Tiger pilots who remained in China flew in many of those attacks. The rest finished their voluntary extra combat tour on July 18, and then all but five left China for good. Some returned to the United States to work in civilian airlines, while others went to work for the Chinese national airlines. A few rejoined the U. In late July, the Japanese massed fighter and bomber squadrons, including a crack fighter group equipped with the Ki. They were preparing to mount a major effort to wipe out the CATF. The Japanese campaign began on the night of July 28, when night bombers attacked Hengyang field, damaging the 3,000-foot-long crushed-rock-and-mud runway. Chinese coolies had the bomb craters filled in by dawn. At 0800 hours on July 29, Alison and Baumler, alerted to the approach of Japanese bombers, took off from Hengyang in their PEs. Hill and Bright stood by on the ground near their Kittyhawks. Alison climbed to 13,000 feet, while Baumler circled at 8,000 feet. Alison sighted five Mitsubishi Ki. As the Sallys began their bomb run, Alison went after the lead bomber. The lead Sally burst into flames, rolled on its back and spun into the ground. Alison blew up the second bomber, damaged a third, then broke off his attack. The remaining aircraft turned back without dropping their bombs. Baumler finished off the third bomber and destroyed the fourth north of Hengyang. A short time later, Alison, having swum clear of his Kittyhawk after landing in the river, returned to Hengyang in a sedan chair carried by Chinese peasants. They broke up the attack and shot down 15 of the Japanese planes. The Japanese continued their efforts to destroy the CATF with more attacks on July 31, mixing night bombing with daylight fighter sweeps. The Japanese dispatched 30 Ki. They were intercepted by eight Ps led by Alison. Following the August 5 raid, the Japanese, stung by their losses, broke off the attacks. They destroyed Japanese supply

dumps, docks, airfields, ships and other vital targets. The Bs bombed the docks, setting fire to huge coal piles awaiting shipment to Japan. All aircraft returned safely to Kweilin. There, they would be closer to the supplies coming over the Hump and could rest and refit. Many Army pilots sent to the CATF had no experience in navigation, formation flying or air gunnery, and had not flown a P before coming to China. On October 3, Chennault radioed an urgent warning to Bissell in Delhi: Fighters from the 74th and 16th squadrons at Kunming, along with the 76th and 75th squadrons based at western Yunnan, began attacking the Japanese-held Burma Road and its network of mountain trails. Ps, operating in groups of two or six, dive-bombed supply dumps and strafed Japanese truck convoys. Meanwhile, B bombers from the 11th Squadron hit supply dumps, airfields and bridges as far south as Lashio, Burma. These missions were short in duration, which helped the CATF maintain the pressure despite increasing gasoline shortages at the Yunnan fields. Chennault and Colonel Merian Cooper, his chief of staff, planned a series of swift, sharp blows at Hong Kong, mixed with feints toward nearby Canton to keep the Japanese guessing. By October 15, the planning for the attack was completed, but the raid was delayed for nine days because of bad weather. There they would refuel before proceeding to their target. Five Ps turned back because of engine trouble; the rest reached Kweilin at hours. Chennault briefed the pilots while their planes were being refueled. The Hong Kong strike took off from Kweilin at for the mile flight to its target. Haynes led his 12 Bs to 18, feet, while Scott took his seven Ps to 20, feet, waiting for Japanese fighters. The Bs dropped their pound bombs onto the Hong Kong docks. Haynes led his Bs across Victoria Harbor, then turned on a course back to Kweilin. Fumbling for the throttle quadrant, shoving everything as far forward as I could, I marvelled at the steepness of the climb the enemy ships were making. Before he could fire, Hill cut in front of Scott and shot down the Oscar. Scott attacked a second plane. One B lagged behind and was attacked by six Oscars, which forced it to crash-land. The pilot and navigator were captured, but the rest of the crew escaped. They had bombed the docks and downed 19 Japanese fighters, for the loss of the one B that crash-landed. Chennault was happy, but it was only the beginning. That night, at , while Chennault monitored the progress of bombing raids against Hong Kong and Canton from Kweilin, an urgent message arrived from Bissell. For Chennault, the order could not have come at a worse time. Half of his bombers were in the air and the rest were fueled and ready for another attack on Hong Kong. But Chennault wanted to launch another attack on Hong Kong. On October 26, every P in Kweilin was loaded with a pound bomb and sent to attack Japanese ships in Victoria Harbor. Despite heavy flak and Japanese fighter attacks, they sank one tanker and damaged several freighters. One P, flown by Captain P. The futile attacks on Lashio and Myitkyina ended in late November. Despite its small size, the CATF was a highly mobile, hard-hitting airstrike force, able to attack any target in China within 48 hours. They destroyed a transport, strafed a barracks in Haiphong, and set fire to coal piles at Hongay, China. By shifting his tiny air force from one airfield to another, Chennault kept the Japanese guessing where he might strike next. The force feinted toward Hong Kong, then swung south toward Canton, catching the Japanese flat-footed. In six days, the unit had flown 11 missions, struck targets miles apart, destroyed 71 Japanese aircraft, sunk three ships, and damaged docks, coal piles, supply depots and airfields without losing a single man, P or B. The fighter squadrons were sent to airfields at Chanyi and Yunanyi to cover the supply line. December was a dismal month for the CATF. Items like soap, warm clothing and mail were in short supply; fighters and bombers were grounded for days because of bad weather and a lack of supplies. The Hump airlift failed to deliver all of the 1, tons of supplies Chennault had been promised each month. CATF fighters flew a few strafing missions into Burma during January, despite a fuel shortage so acute that Chennault forbade victory rolls. It had flown 65 bombing missions against Japanese targets in China, Burma and Indochina, dropping tons of bombs and losing only one B bomber. Its paperwork was poor, and salutes were scarce, but when the signals were called for combat, it never missed a play. Allmon and originally published in the March issue of Aviation History magazine.

Chapter 2 : The CATF's Other Enemies | HistoryNet

The China Air Task Force was a scrappy but beleaguered fill-in that fought both the Japanese and supply shortcomings until the Fourteenth Air Force was formed.

You burned up gas faster than all the Chinese can get it here to you. Look! That method can take seventy to seventy-five days. We have to wait a long time for a hundred thousand gallons to build up. Then we have barely enough for a full three-day mission for twenty-five fighter planes or a one day mission for a dozen medium bombers. Chennault explaining the Chinese sacrifice to his Fighter Group Commander, With the end state defined, Chennault analyzed his means. The rapid Japanese advances during his first month in China surprised him for he thought he would have far more time to train and prepare the China Air Force. His study had two parts and was continuous over his eight-year fight. First, he determined the resources available, dividing them into human and equipment, and he determined the characteristics of each. Second, he tailored his well-defined operational concepts and doctrine to the people, equipment, and the theater. He used his theories to maximize the effectiveness of the resources. The theater possessed the means for Chennault to establish protection and detection but the Chinese desperately needed outside resources to mount any serious interception and destruction. The numbers of Chinese volunteers were the backbone of the Chinese war effort. Without the help Chennault said: The schoolmaster found two challenges: Even with help from foreign missions and individuals, the progress was still slow. China lacked what plagued Chennault most – no mechanical or engineering background that gave western pilots and mechanics a grounding in fundamental skills. He embraced some traits while others appalled him. But he did not judge. During the early stages of the Sino-Japanese War, the Chinese had some success. The German trained and equipped units fought well but when flanked in late it became evident that the Japanese advance could only be slowed, not stopped. In July of 1937, the Japanese sent unescorted bombers over Nanking three times in five days and suffered the destruction of 54 planes and crews. Three days later they repeated the attack at night but Chennault coordinated the searchlights and air defense protection to bag seven of the thirteen raiders destruction. By October the Japanese were sending a hundred planes a day over Nanking and were escorting their bombers. In one mission they shot down 11 of 16 Chinese fighters. Chennault noted, with inferior planes and training and without replacements they were doomed to early extinction. Due to a lack of reserves, replacements, and ammunition, the Chinese exodus had begun. By late continuous fighting decimated the good Chinese pilots. Chennault had a high opinion of the ability of Chinese pilots when properly trained, equipped and led. Beginning in 1937, he could do little but plan for the future. He began a flight school at Kunming that fall to aid the rebuilding of an air force. He promoted air field construction at key points throughout the country – protection through mobility. He expanded the early warning net – detection. This net was invaluable in warning threatened bases and cities – protection. When the Flying Tigers were ready to fight late in 1941 it helped them to face an enemy who had overwhelming superiority in numbers. Given these resources, Chennault trained his American and Chinese early warning net volunteers and airmen. It was a chewing-gum and bailing-wire operation, a masterpiece of jerry rigged engineering. Telephones and radios were the mechanical parts of the net, the Chinese people were the eyes, ears, and the living heart of the net. The detection net eventually fanned out degrees from Kunming extending over most of China and the occupied provinces, an area greater than half of the United States. Occasionally, the observation posts even over watched Japanese airfields. Some posts used sundials to determine time and direction. Reports were often based upon sound alone and it was not unusual when the reports contained face saving modulation. The early warning net began in July of 1937 using the concentric circles Chennault envisioned in *Defensiv Pursuit*. The observers were initially stationed at , , and kilometer intervals. The reports were sent to a central command post and warning went out to the targeted cities and airfields. Chennault founded schools, teaching concepts such as: The schools sent the observers to their posts after they mastered the topics – anytime from two to 12 months after beginning their studies. From the angle of the photograph, it is indeed boulevard de Montigny, with the Great World in the background. The tracks at the intersection, however, point to a major thoroughfare, in this case Avenue

Edward VII. No other information available for this image. By hand and wicker basket they built and maintained the airdromes to nest airplanes not yet built in Los Angeles and Buffalo factories. Sometimes the airfields were bombed even when they did not hold planes. As Japanese planes cleared the skies after a raid, the peasants grabbed their shovels, crushed rock and pushed compacting stones weighing thousands of pounds across the runway to repair it. Four bomber fields were built by China had manpower but needed the implements of modern war for the offensive destruction of Japan. Chiang turned to the US for planes and other armaments. By Chiang, Chennault, and Roosevelt concluded that an American sponsored Chinese Air Force may be the best economy of force mode to strike at the Japanese. Its strength was 34 battered Ps, most of them inherited from the AVG, and seven B medium bombers. By , the CATF grew to four fighter squadrons and one medium bombardment squadron 98 airplanes operating along a 5. The Fourteenth had an assigned strength of airplanes and 2. By June of , the 14th had aircraft and The history of the China-Burma-India Theater is a history of supply. Chennault lamented, Supply problems remained my biggest headache until the end of the war. The Chinese had no supply or maintenance organizations so I found myself deeply entangled in the labyrinth of Chinese logistics. During the high water mark of the Axis, Chennault and the Chinese Army received the equivalent in supplies to outfit less than two US infantry divisions. This paltry supply tonnage kept fewer than planes and 3. During the eight months that CATF existed, they survived and fought with tons of supplies per month. The total amount of tonnage delivered to China throughout the war could have been transported in but seventy Liberty ships had a port been available. American lend-lease that China received was: Aid increased greatly in but half of the aid was received after the war. The discrepancy between what President Roosevelt and the army promised to deliver and what the army actually delivered was the largest of any theater. Distribution points in China terminated a The supply line consisted of a Dropping one ton of bombs required eighteen tons of supplies reaching an Indian port. Few other campaigners had a million-gallon a year gasoline supply line, run by a 1. This route through Russian Turkestan carried more war materials into China than the famous Burma Road. Thousands of Chinese volunteers distributed the supplies that arrived at Kunming and the dispersed airfields from the camel caravans by sampan, by wicker backpack, and gin pole. Again, he was forced to return to his theoretical The Will of the People to Resist which said that all classes of a population would directly contribute to the war. In China, millions literally carried on the war effort. Chennault knew that the Burma Road was inadequate for supporting the war in China and that only a port or a large air bridge could sustain the war. He was in China before the Burma Road was opened on December 2 , and when the British closed it for three months in due to Japanese political pressure. The project ambitiously begun to supply an army, became an additional burden and also diverted supplies from the Fourteenth Air Force. The gasoline back-haul requirement and the precarious road bed caused the Burma Road became a one-way viaduct. The success of the Hump route was central to any China strategy. Depending solely upon air transport for supply had no precedent. But a defeatist attitude permeated the command of the Tenth Air Force and later the Air Transport Command until late CNAC consistently out performed the military and events were to prove that the route was viable. Chennault tailored his operational concept, fighting doctrine, and tactical employment based upon his resources and Chinese traits. The operational concept flows from theory. Likewise, the operational concept begets tactical doctrine. Therefore, doctrine is the end product of the process the theorist begins. Chennault refined his operational concept based upon his advisory experience and the changing means acquiring US pilots and aircraft and his doctrine amplified his four elements of war. He determined that he needed to protect the force, his LOC, and his most valuable asset, the Chinese population from the Japanese bombers and attacks. Protection could best be provided by a three step process. First, the civilians and the military must have a passive defense to shield them from the Japanese bombing and attacks. This defense consisted of deception, warnings, revetments, and air raid shelters. While protecting the Burma Road, Chennault was forced to split his meager AVG, sending two squadrons with 34 aircraft to protect the Chinese bases of Chungking and Kunming.

Chapter 3 : Chinese Air Task Force Patch - ARMY AND USAAF - U.S. Militaria Forum

China Air Task Force topic. The China Air Task Force (CATF) was a combat organization of the United States Army Air Forces created in July under the command of Brig. Gen. Claire Chennault, after the Flying Tigers of the 1st American Volunteer Group of the Chinese Air Force were disbanded on 4 July of that month.

Established as Fourteenth AF 5 Mar Inactivated 6 Jan The mile route combined obstacles such as bad weather, forbidding terrain, and attacks by Japanese fighter planes, which made flying the Hump the most dangerous transport operation of the war. The CATF was assigned the primary mission of defending the southern and eastern approaches to the Hump and the transport terminals in China. Chennault employed rapid mobility, the element of surprise, and some subterfuge, such as repainting spinners and tailnumbers, to effectively keep the enemy guessing. The difficult became the nearly impossible, for the CATF. Much like its predecessor, the AVG, the guerilla-like CATF had to fight with what it had, while living up to its inherited tradition and reputation. In addition to the constant lack of parts and munitions, everything had to come across the Hump, sufficient numbers of personnel were lacking as well. Pilots working alongside mechanics and armorers to ready the aircraft for combat was almost a normal occurrence. The tools and ground transportation available, had all been inherited from the AVG, as had the "Flying Tigers" nom de plume. Being created in a war zone made the Fourteenth unique among number Air Forces. This uniqueness carried over in its being the first to be dependent on an airlifted supply line, and its being the only one to operate in an area of the longest continuous aerial combat by an American force against the Japanese. Effectively, the Fourteenth had been established for a particular leader - - Claire L. During the next fourteen months it would grow to four fighter groups, two bomb groups, a photo recon squadron and a troop carrier squadron. We believe that Kenn C. Theoretically, such a battle position gave tactical advantage to the Fourteenth and, given an appreciable quantity of planes, men and supplies, Chennault could have blasted the enemy out of China. Since such was not the case, however, Chennault had to rely on jabbing tactics to cause the Japanese as much damage and confusion as limited supplies would permit. Every item necessary to maintain and operate an air force had to be flown into China along the mile air ferry route from India over the towering Himalaya Mountains where bad weather and enemy action were a constant threat to success. The situation was such that the Fourteenth never received more than 15, tons of supplies a month and, up to mid, often less than half that amount. Therefore, its limited forces were never more than sustained at full operational strength and often they suffered telling shortages of equipment and personnel. Maj Gen Claire L.

Chapter 4 : Alternate Campaigns: China and Asia

In , the China Air Task Force was incorporated into the newly formed 14 th Air Force. The 14 th was headquartered in Kunming and commanded by Claire Lee Chennault of the original Flying Tigers. By the end of the war, the 14 th Air Force had more than 20, men and 1, planes in China.

This pitted its air force against the small and rather hodgepodge collection of French aerial units in this backwater colony. Permission to reinforce with a groupe of Hawk 75As had been approved by the Germans - but refused by the Japanese. At this point, IndoChina had been on its own for six months. Some of the French units were newly formed of aircraft that were impounded on their way to China; after the fall of France, Vichy received "requests" passed through Germany from Japan not to send arms through to China. Haiphong had been the port of choice for supplies bound for the Nationalist Chinese since the Japanese had occupied all the major ports on the Chinese mainland. The Royal Thai Air Force is described with the minor air forces. Missions Neither side had particularly large air forces to throw into the fight. Both sides flew defensive fighter patrols and reconnaissance. The Thais tried to use their more up-to-date aircraft the Hawk 75Ns and the Martin bombers for "strategic" offensive attacks. The French flew their larger aircraft bombing missions at night to reduce the risk to their few large aircraft. The original plan was to permanently base a strong squadron of battleships at Singapore. However, after the Naval Treaties of the 1920s, that was no longer practical, as that would represent most of the British battle fleet. Under a revised plan, Singapore would have to "merely" hold out 70 days for a fleet to arrive from London. Defenses were planned to hold southern Johore province, just north of Singapore to keep the naval base viable until relief could arrive. In 1941, with the rather naked aggression of Japan toward China, steps were taken to finish the base and upgrade its defenses. Someone realized that the rest of Malaya produced valuable materials, and should be defended - multiplying the area that needed to be defended. The air dimension was finally attended to - sort of. A new plan idea was drawn up, whereby air units would be expected to produce a large share of the defense, allowing the sparse ground units to cover a larger area. A few forward air bases were begun including Kota Bharu and Kuantan. The local commanders asked for some aircraft. But only a few were available in Malaya on 8-Dec, and they were mostly obsolete. A third major vessel, the aircraft carrier HMS Indomitable was delayed due to damage. These sortied to attack the transports of the invading Japanese, but were not provided with air cover. Force Z was sunk by G3M2 Nells armed with torpedos. Among the other British problems in defending Malaya were that the forward air bases were not completed. The field was available to be flown from, but the repair shops were not. This meant that minor damage, like a holed fuel tank, could ground an aircraft until either a replacement part was brought up from the depot in Singapore or the part in question could be sent down to Singapore, fixed, and returned. And in combat conditions, spare part transportation broke down. During the campaign, they were reinforced by: These were withdrawn the last week of January. They were flown out with a few days to Java. The Japanese attackers were initially IJN air units. Brits decide not to enter Thailand nor strike the invasion fleet. Force Z leaves after nightfall. Force Z spotted just before nightfall by Japanese aircraft, and changes course to head south. They later adjust this course to examine a reported landing at Kuantan. Japanese did not record the sighting. Attack units launched shortly afterward, so they would be airborne when the target was spotted. Both major warships sunk by torpedos. While helpful, these were quickly wiped out by air combat and accidents. Within a few days, the survivors fly to Java.

Chapter 5 : History of Taipei Air Station Page 1

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While protecting the Burma Road, Chennault was forced to split his meager AVG, sending two squadrons with 34 aircraft to protect the Chinese bases of Chungking and Kunming. The third tier of protection was mobility. Chennault saw his only chance for survival was using mobility to both attack the Japanese and frustrate their efforts to concentrate against him. He used every advantage of interior lines of communication to attack the Japanese while forcing the

numerically larger enemy to attack from exterior lines. Chennault wrote he used the principle of the Confederate cavalry leaders in the War between the States applied to modern air war.

Chapter 6 : China Operations > National Museum of the US Air Force > Display

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The other enemies were distance, disease and lack of supplies. Then they had to be taken 1, miles by rail to Assam, where they were loaded onto Douglas C Dakota transports for the mile flight over the Hump to Kunming, China. The CATF never had enough of anything. What it could not get over the Hump had to be obtained in China. There were not enough aluminum belly tanks for the Ps, so they improvised belly tanks out of bamboo and fish glue. The men wore any clothing they could find, including Chinese coolie coats, castoff British gear, American military issue and civilian clothes. They drank tea instead of coffee. Disease was a big problem, causing more casualties than Japanese bombs and bullets. Many pilots, mechanics and aircrewmembers suffered from malaria, jaundice, dysentery and other illnesses. None of the CATF bases had a flight surgeon. The sick and wounded were cared for by Catholic missionaries. Administrative equipment also was in short supply, and paper was as scarce as spare parts. For months, combat logs, notes and other information were kept on the backs of envelopes, letters, rice paper, even matchbook covers. They had no hangars, maintenance shops or revetments for the planes. CATF mechanics, often assisted by the pilots, were forced to work on the fighters and bombers in the open, exposed to the weather, from dawn to dusk. Spare parts and tools—even wrenches and pliers—were in short supply. Most spare parts came from wrecked aircraft. All parts of the fighter were cannibalized, and in a month were spread out over 18 Ps in the organization. The mechanics were forced to reuse old engine oil, and clean and reuse spark plugs. There was no Prestone coolant, new tires or carburetors. Early in September, when Chennault tried another strike into eastern China, only eight out of 15 Ps were available, because of inadequate maintenance. It was a make-do, can-do operation.

Chapter 7 : China Air Task Force - Wikimedia Commons

Later, on July 4 , the China Air Task Force (CATF) superseded the AVG. Its strength was 34 battered Ps, most of them inherited from the AVG, and seven B medium bombers.

Established as Fourteenth Air Force on 5 Mar Activated on 10 Mar Inactivated on 6 Jan Activated on 24 May Discontinued and inactivated on 1 Sep Activated on 20 Jan Organized on 1 Apr Redesignated as Fourteenth Aerospace Force on 1 Jul Inactivated on 1 Oct Redesignated as Fourteenth Air Force on 1 Dec Inactivated on 1 Jul Activated on 1 Jul Air Force Reserve, 8 Oct Jul Air Force Space Command, 1 Jul First Air Force Reserve: Second Air Force Reserve: Third Air Force Reserve: Chinese American Composite Provisional: Maj Gen Claire L. Doran, 1 Dec c. Maj Gen Leo A. McCarty, 16 Mar-1 Sep Maj Gen James B. Johnson, 1 Jul ; Col Russell G. Brown, 13 Aug ; Col Thomas M. Maj Gen Edwin R. Whaley, 31 Jan-1 Jul James, 9 Dec The new organization, conducted highly effective fighter and bomber operations over Japanese occupied Chinese territory, and the eastern third of mainland China and Formosa. By Aug , its components had achieved air superiority over the skies of China and established a ratio of 7. The United States Army Air Forces credited 14 AF units with the destruction of 2, Japanese aircraft, bridges, 1, locomotives and railroad cars. Following the war, it returned to the US and inactivated on 6 Jan Continental Air Command later expanded its mission to include the equipping and combat preparation of these units. After the war, its reserve wings continued to participate in various worldwide airlift operations until inactivation in Sep Later, it provided for Aerospace Defense Command training, testing and evaluation missions. It assumed responsibility for detecting foreign missile launches, tracking missiles and satellites in space, providing space vehicle launch services, maintaining a satellite data base of all man-made objects in space and performing anti-satellite actions. It also equipped, trained, administered and provided personnel to operate and maintain space surveillance, space defense and missile warning systems until 1 Oct when it again inactivated. Assigned to Air Force Space Command, its responsibilities involved space operations. Its overall mission included control and exploitation of space for global and theater operations, to ensure warfighters the best space capabilities available. China Defensive; China Offensive. Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers: Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards: Air Force Organizational Excellence Award: Azure, a winged Bengal tiger or with Sable and Argent markings, nose and langued gules armed White below and surmounting the lower points of a mullet of the fourth pierced of the fifth, all within an annulet and diminutive bordure Yellow. Approved on 6 Aug ; revised on 16 Aug Blue and yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, and the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The star pierced red symbolized the devotion and sacrifice by all previous personnel of the unit. Approved 16 August For nearly a decade before Pearl Harbor, Japanese military aircraft roamed at will over China, virtually unopposed in the air. Japanese bombers and fighters nestled in some Japanese airmies to strike the ill-armed, ill-supplied retreating forces of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. Chennault had first come to China in as an air advisor. They heard the Chinese call them tigers and learned that the Japanese inherently feared the Bengal Tiger as a symbol of evil. On the other hand, the Chinese looked upon the saber toothed tiger as their national symbol. So the AVG soon converted the noses of their drab Ps into grinning mouths of tiger sharks. A leering, bloody tongue was added and a single ominous eye just aft of the propeller completed the grim design which became world famous as the unofficial Flying Tiger trademark. Upon the organization of the 14th Air Force in March, , individual members of the AVG were either called to active duty under reserve commissions or commissioned in the Army of the United States and assigned duty with the 23rd Fighter Group, a unit of the 14th Air Force. The 14th Air Force insignia was approved Aug. The design was created by Sgt. Henry Porter, an artist at Walt Disney studios. The insignia is a blue disc with a winged Bengal Tiger partially covering a white star charged with a red disc. The Bengal Tiger reflects the good luck charm of the Chinese people. In , Claire L. In , President Roosevelt signed a secret executive order which permitted Chennault to organize assistance. Later, one hundred crated P aircraft, rejected by the British as obsolete, were shipped to China. To enhance esprit de corps, aircraft noses were painted to symbolize the grinning mouth, flashing teeth and the

evil eye of the tiger shark. Subsequently, journalists used the tagline "Flying Tigers" which rapidly caught on worldwide. Fighting against numerically superior forces, the AVG compiled one of the greatest records of the war before it was discontinued in . According to official Chinese statistics, confirmed losses to the enemy by the AVG were enemy aircraft destroyed and another 40 aircraft damaged against 12 losses for the AVG. In a separate report, Chennault credits the AVG with enemy aircraft shot down. Chennault was appointed the commander and promoted to Major General. The "Flying Tigers" of 14 AF who adopted the "Flying Tigers" designation from the AVG conducted highly effective fighter and bomber operations along a wide front that stretched from the bend of the Yellow River and Tsinan in the north to Indochina in the south, from Chengtu and the Salween River in the west to the China Sea and the island of Formosa in the east. They were also instrumental in supplying Chinese forces through the airlift of cargo across "The Hump" in the China-Burma-India theater. In addition, they estimated that air units in China destroyed 1, tons of shipping, 1, locomotives, 4, trucks and bridges. Continental Air Command later expanded the mission of 14 AF to include the equipping and combat preparation of units. Later, they provided for Aerospace Defense Command training, testing and evaluation missions. The 14th Aerospace Force was responsible for detecting foreign missile launches, tracking missiles and satellites in space, providing space vehicle launch services, maintaining a satellite data base of all man-made objects in space and performing anti-satellite actions. The 14th Aerospace Force also equipped, trained, administered and provided personnel to operate and maintain space surveillance, space defense and missile warning systems. In , 14 AF officially opened up its newly renovated operations center. The new command and control capabilities of the Joint Space Operations Center ensured unity of effort for all space capabilities supporting joint military operations around the globe. The overall mission is control and exploit space for global and theater operations, thereby ensuring warfighters are supported by the best space capabilities available. History of the CBI Theater:

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Find this Pin and more on Flying Tigers - AVG - China Air Task Force - 14th Air Force by Ran. Chinese Member Of The Flying Tigers - Lt. Yoh Kung Chen is seen in front of his Curtiss Warhawk. At the time this photograph was taken, Lt. Yoh was a member of the Squadron of the CACW's Fighter Group.

Origin[edit] Chennault in his Kunming office, May Chennault , a retired U. Army Air Corps officer who had worked in China since August , first as military aviation advisor to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek in the early months of the Sino-Japanese War , then as director of a Chinese Air Force flight school centered in Kunming. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union supplied fighter and bomber squadrons to China, but these units were mostly withdrawn by the summer of The resulting clandestine operation was organized in large part by Lauchlin Currie , a young economist in the White House, and by Roosevelt intimate Thomas G. Purchases were then made by the Chinese under the " Cash and Carry " provision of the Neutrality Act of Members were organized into the Yankee Squadron. Chennault spent the winter of " in Washington, supervising the purchase of Curtiss P fighters and the recruiting of pilots and some ground crew and administrative personnel that would constitute the 1st AVG. He also laid the groundwork for a follow-on bomber group and a second fighter group , though these would be aborted after the Pearl Harbor attack. One army pilot was refused a passport because he had earlier flown as a mercenary in Spain, so only 99 actually sailed for Asia. Although sometimes considered a mercenary unit, the AVG was closely associated with the U. Most histories of the Flying Tigers say that on 15 April , President Roosevelt signed a "secret executive order " authorizing servicemen on active duty to resign in order to join the AVG. Army chain of command. During the summer and fall , some men carrying civilian passports boarded ships destined for Burma. Chennault set up a schoolhouse that was made necessary because many pilots had "lied about their flying experience, claiming pursuit experience when they had flown only bombers and sometimes much less powerful aeroplanes. Most believed that he had flown as a fighter pilot in China, although stories that he was a combat ace are probably apocryphal. All 9 were trained at Allison Engineworks in Indianapolis, Indiana: Upon arrival in Kunming, 2 other Chinese-Americans were hired, a Ford Motor truck specialist and a doctor. Total original Chinese-Americans were Prior to July 4, , 3 of the P mechanics resigned. The official AVG roster lists the original 8. He did not speak English, however, and Chennault never learned to speak Chinese. The actual average strength of the AVG was never more than 62 combat-ready pilots and fighters. Chennault faced serious obstacles since many AVG pilots were inexperienced and a few quit at the first opportunity. However, he made a virtue out of these disadvantages, shifting unsuitable pilots to staff jobs and always ensuring that he had a squadron or two in reserve. The AVG had no ranks , so no division between officers and enlisted soldiers existed. He prohibited his pilots from entering into a turning fight with the nimble Japanese fighters, telling them to execute a diving or slashing attack and to dive away to set up for another attack. This "dive-and-zoom" technique was contrary to what the men had learned in U. The P aircraft were crated and sent to Burma on third country freighters during spring Many of those were destroyed in training accidents. Shortages in equipment with spare parts almost impossible to obtain in Burma along with the slow introduction of replacement fighter aircraft were continual impediments although the AVG did receive 50 replacement PE fighters from USAAF stocks toward the end of its combat tour. AVG fighter aircraft were painted with a large shark face on the front of the aircraft. This was done after pilots saw a photograph of a P of No. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. December Learn how and when to remove this template message The port of Rangoon in Burma and the Burma Road leading from there to China were of crucial importance. Eastern China was under Japanese occupation, so all military supplies for China arrived via the Burma route. By November , when the pilots were trained and most of the Ps had arrived in Asia, the Flying Tigers were divided into three squadrons: When the United States officially entered the war, the AVG had 82 pilots and 79 aircraft, although not all were combat-ready. Tiger Erik Shilling, part of the third squadron commented:. The bombers jettisoned their loads before reaching Kunming. Three of the Japanese bombers were shot down near

Kunming and a fourth was damaged so severely that it crashed before returning to its airfield at Hanoi. Later, Chinese intelligence intercepted Japanese communications indicating that only 1 out of the 10 bombers ultimately returned to base. One P crash-landed; it was salvaged for parts. This mission was one of the earliest American aerial victories in the Pacific War. The Chinese characters read, "This foreign person has come to China to help in the war effort. Soldiers and civilians, one and all, should rescue and protect him. Baldwin Collection The first squadron had flown up to Kunming to defend the terminus of the Burma Road and saw some combat action on 20 December while defending Rangoon from Japanese bombers, taking down four of them and disrupting their attack on Burma Road. The 3rd Squadron "18 aircraft strong" defended Rangoon from 23-25 December. On 23 December, Mitsubishi Ki "Sally" heavy bombers of the 60th, 62nd and 98th Sentai, along with single-engined Mitsubishi Ki "Ann" attack bombers of the 31st Sentai, sortied against Rangoon. They were escorted by Nakajima Ki "Nate" fighters of 77th Sentai. The 60th Sentai was particularly hard hit "it lost five out of the 15 bombers it had dispatched. Nevertheless, Rangoon and Mingaladon airfield were successfully bombed, with the city suffering more than 1, dead. Two Buffalos and two Ps were destroyed on the ground, and one P crashed when it attempted to land on a bomb-damaged runway. A total of 63 bombers escorted by 25 fighters were committed. In the two encounters, 35 Japanese bombers and fighters were shot down. The Allies lost two pilots and five Ps. The Japanese had moved aircraft to Malaya to finish off Singapore, and its remaining aircraft in the area the 77th, 31st and 62nd Sentai launched fighter sweeps and counter raids on the Allied airfield at Mingaladon. On 12 January, the Japanese launched their Burma Campaign. Significantly outnumbered, the AVG was gradually reduced through attrition, but often exacted a disproportionate toll of their attackers. Three "Nates" were shot down for the loss of two Ps. The next day, another sweep of 20 Kis of the 70th Sentai was met by 10 Allied fighters eight Ps and two Hawker Hurricanes. Four were shot down for the loss of no Allied aircraft. Commonwealth troops retreated before the Japanese onslaught, and the AVG was pressed into the ground attack role to support them. One unfortunate result of these missions was a prolonged air attack on a suspected Japanese column on 21 February that turned out to consist of Commonwealth troops. More than Allied lives were lost in this friendly fire incident. By 24 January, the Flying Tigers had destroyed 73 Japanese aircraft while losing only five themselves "a notable performance, considering the AVG was outnumbered and faced experienced and fully trained Japanese pilots. The main disadvantage of JAAF fighter pilots of this period was the near-obsolescence of their predominant fighter type in the theater, the Ki Though more maneuverable than the P, its armament and performance was inferior. Lightly constructed and armed, it could not withstand frontal attacks nor could it out-dive Allied fighters such as the P; if it attempted to, it often came apart in the air. In fact, its cruising speed was less than that of the Ki bombers it was intended to escort. Chennault started moving elements of the now reconstituted 3rd Squadron to Magwe as reinforcement to his worn down 1st and 2nd squadrons. Aircraft attrition became so high that at this point, individual squadron distinctions became meaningless, and all three squadrons had elements based there, along with a number of RAF aircraft. In total, the Allies had 38 aircraft, including eight Ps and 15 Hawker Hurricanes. Opposing them were Japanese aircraft, including fighters. The Tigers crossed into China on a rickety suspension bridge over a deep gorge. A few months later, they came back to destroy the bridge so no Japanese soldiers could come across that way into China. Despite the long retreats, their losses and incessant air combat, the AVG still retained their abilities. That day, 12 Oscars from the 64th Sentai raided the base. In the ensuing series of dogfights, four Kis were downed in exchange for one PE destroyed on the ground. During this period, Chinese and American commanders pressured Chennault to order his pilots to undertake so-called "morale missions". These were overflights and ground attacks intended to raise the morale of hard-pressed Chinese soldiers by showing they were getting air support. Chennault suppressed the "revolt" and ordered the ground attack missions to continue. But despite their efforts, the Allied situation in Burma continued to deteriorate. By 4 May, the successful Japanese Burma offensive was winding down, except for mopping up actions. One of these was an attempt by a regiment of the Japanese 56th Division to drive for Kunming, an effort that was stopped by the Chinese army operating with strong air support from the AVG. On 7 May the Japanese Army began building a pontoon bridge across the upper Salween River, which would allow them to move troops and supplies into

China and drive towards Kunming. During the next four days, the AVG pilots flew continuous missions into the gorge, effectively neutralizing the Japanese forces. This prevented a Japanese advance on Kunming and Chungking; the Japanese never advanced farther than the west bank of the upper Salween. With the Burma campaign over, Chennault redeployed his squadrons to provide air protection for China. The Doolittle Raid had prompted the Japanese to launch an offensive to seize AVG air bases that could be used for attacks on the Japanese homeland. Despite its location in areas with malaria and cholera, it had only "four doctors, three nurses and a bottle of iodine. A squadron had 45 maintenance personnel compared to the normal more than , and only one base could perform major repairs. He notes that its pilots were "triple volunteers" who had volunteered for service with the U. The result was a corps of experienced and skilled volunteer pilots who wanted to fight. Allen "Bert" Christman, who bailed out at Rangoon, was strafed and killed while parachuting to the ground in January, had earlier scripted and drawn the Scorchy Smith and Sandman comic strips. See also List of Flying Tigers pilots, which includes their victories and bonuses paid. Nineteen pilots were credited by the AVG with five or more air-to-air victories:

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The China Air Task Force performed brilliantly in action against the Japanese, yet it was unable to win the struggle for supplies and weapons. "The CATF had to fight, scream, and scrape for every man, plane, spark plug and gallon of gas," Brig. Gen. Claire L. Chennault wrote. The Japanese were.