12 RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON

MISSION

The 12 RS plans and executes worldwide high-altitude combat surveillance and reconnaissance missions including peacetime intelligence gathering, contingency operations and conventional warfare. Operating the RQ-4B, the 12 RS provides signals intelligence and near real-time imagery intelligence to fulfill operational requirements generated by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in support of the Secretary of Defense and unified commanders. Nearly 200 active duty and civilian members are assigned to the 12 RS. The unit consists of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Pilots, Sensor Operators and support personnel.

LINEAGE

12 Aero Squadron organized, 2 Jun 1917
Redesignated 12 Squadron (Observation), 14 Mar 1921
Redesignated 12 Observation Squadron, 25 Jan 1923
Redesignated 12 Observation Squadron (Medium), 13 Jan 1942
Redesignated 12 Observation Squadron, 4 Jul 1942
Redesignated 12 Reconnaissance Squadron (Fighter), 31 May 1943
Redesignated 12 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, 13 Nov 1943
Inactivated, 31 Mar 1946
Redesignated 12 Reconnaissance Squadron, Photographic (Jet-Propelled), 9 Jul 1946
Activated, 29 Jul 1946
Redesignated 12 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, Photographic-Jet, 14 Jun 1948
Inactivated, 28 Mar 1949
Redesignated 12 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, Night Photographic, 5 Feb 1951
Activated, 25 Feb 1951
Redesignated 12 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, Night Photographic-Jet, 23 Feb 1959
Discontinued, 8 Mar 1960

Redesignated 12 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, Photographic-Jet, and activated, 3 Nov 1965. Organized, 1 Jul 1966
Redesignated 12 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, 1 Oct 1966
Redesignated 12 Reconnaissance Squadron, 1 Nov 1991
Inactivated, 30 Sep 1992
Activated, 8 Nov 2001

STATIONS
San Antonio, TX, 2 Jun 1917
Wilbur Wright Field, OH, 8 Jul 1917
Garden City, NY, 2 Nov-3 Dec 1917
St Maixent, France, 1 Jan 1918
Chaumont, France, 16 Jan 1918
Amanty, France, 2 Feb 1918
Ourches, France, 3 May 1918
Flin, France, 13 Jun 1918
Saints, France, 29 Jun 1918
Francheville, France, 6 Jul 1918
Moras Ferme (near La Ferte-sous Jouarre), France, 22 Jul 1918
May-en-Multien, France, 3 Aug 1918
Coincy, France, 10 Aug 1918
Chailly-en-Brie, France, 12 Aug 1918
Toul, France, 22 Aug 1918
Remicourt, France, 20 Sep 1918
Julvecourt, France, 3 Nov 1918
Mercy-le-Haut, France, 21 Nov 1918
Trier, Germany, 6 Dec 1918
Coblenz, Germany, 30 Dec 1918
Colombey-les-Belles, France, 16 Apr 1919
Le Mans France, 5 May 1919
Brest, France, 20 May-2 Jun 1919
Mitchel Field, NY, 17 Jun 1919
Scott Field, IL, 6 Jul 1919
Kelly Field, TX, 13 Oct 1919
Ft Bliss, TX, 9 Jan 1920 (flight operated from Douglas, AZ, from 10 Jan 1920)
Nogales, AZ (flight operated from Douglas, AZ), 12 Apr 1920
Douglas, AZ (flight operated from Nogales, AZ), c. Feb 1921
Ft Bliss, TX, 28 Sep 1921 (detachment at Ft Sam Houston, TX, after 26 Jun 1924)
Ft Sam Houston, TX, 22 Jun 1926 (detachment at Post Field, OK, 1 Jul 1927-1 Jun 1928; detachment operated from Ft Huachuca, AZ, 6 Apr-10 May 1929)
Brooks Field, TX, 31 Oct 1931
Godman Field, KY, 20 Jun 1937 (flight at Post Field, OK, 1 Jun 1937-30 Nov 1940)
Esler Field, LA, 20 Mar-12 Aug 1942
Membury, England, 7 Sep 1942

Greenham Common, England, 16 Dec 1943
Aldermaston, England, 9 Jan 1944
Chilbolton, England, 1 Mar 1944
Middle Wallop, England, 14 Mar 1944
Le Molay, France, c. 5 Jul 1944
Rennes, France, 11 Aug 1944
Chateaudun, France, 24 Aug 1944
St Dizier, France, 12 Sep 1944
Giraumont, France, 30 Nov 1944
Euren, Germany, 29 May 1945
Ober Olm, Germany, 2 Apr 1945
Furth, Germany, 28 Apr 1945-15 Feb 1946
Bolling Field, DC, 15 Feb-31 Mar 1946
March Field (later, AFB), CA, 29 Jul 1946-28 Mar 1949
Komaki AB, Japan, 25 Feb 1951
Taegu AB, South Korea, 15 Mar 1951
Kimpo AB, South Korea, 21 Aug 1951
Itami AB, Japan, 8 Nov 1954
Yokota AB, Japan, 14 Aug 1956-8 Mar 1960
Mountain Home AFB, ID, 1 Jul-2 Sep 1966
Tan Son Nhut AB, South Vietnam, 9 Sep 1966-31 Aug 1971
Bergstrom AFB, TX, 31 Aug 1971-30 Sep 1992
Beale AFB, CA, 8 Nov 2001

DEPLOYED STATIONS
Ramstein AB and Zweibrucken AB, Germany, 5 May-4 Jun 1974
Zweibrucken AB, Germany, 7 Jul-7 Aug 1981, 15 May-11 Jun 1984, and 27 Aug-24 Sep 1987
Flight deployed at Shaikh Isa AB, Bahrain, 14 Jan-10 May 1991

ASSIGNMENTS
Unkn, 2 Jun 1917-May 1918
I Corps Observation Group, May-Nov 1918
Unkn, Nov 1918-1 Oct 1919
1 Army Observation Group, 1 Oct 1919
1 Surveillance Group, 24 Mar 1920
Eighth Corps Area, 27 Jun 1921 (divisional aviation for 1 Cavalry Division, Sep 1921-Jun 1926, and for 2 Division, Jun 1924-Oct 1931; detachment at Field Artillery School, 1 Jul 1927-1 Jun 1928)
12 Observation Group, 1 Oct 1930
Eighth Corps Area, 1 Jun 1937
Fifth Corps Area, 20 Jun 1937
Armored Force, 2 Oct 1940
73 Observation Group, 1 Sep 1941
V Air Support Command, 21 Jan 1942

67 Observation (later, 67 Reconnaissance; 67 Tactical Reconnaissance) Group, 29 Mar 1942
10 Photographic (later, 10 Reconnaissance) Group, 13 Jun 1944
Continental Air Forces (later, Strategic Air Command), 15 Feb-31 Mar 1946
363 Reconnaissance Group, 29 Jul 1946
67 Reconnaissance (later, 67 Tactical Reconnaissance) Group, 24 Jul 1947-28 Mar 1949
67 Tactical Reconnaissance Group, 25 Feb 1951
67 Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, 1 Oct 1957-8 Mar 1960
Tactical Air Command, 3 Nov 1965
67 Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, 1 Jul 1966
460 Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, 9 Sep 1966
67 Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, 31 Aug 1971-30 Sep 1992 (under operational control of 26 Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, 5 May-4 Jun 1974, 7 Jul-7 Aug 1981, 15 May-11 Jun 1984, and 27 Aug-24 Sep 1987; flight attached to Tactical Fighter Wing, Provisional 35, 14 Jan-10 May 1991)
9 Operations Group, 8 Nov 2001
69 Reconnaissance Group, 1 Mar 2013

ATTACHMENTS
1 Surveillance Group from 13 Oct 1919
7 Cavalry Brigade [later, 1 Armored Division]
67 Tactical Reconnaissance Group to c. 11 Aug 1944
Twelfth Air Force
67 Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, 1 Jun-24 Nov 1954 and 1 Jul-30 Sep 1957

WEAPON SYSTEMS
AR-2, 1918
A-20
A-20, 1943
B-7
C-1 1919-1930
C-7
C-8
DB-7
DH-4B, 1919
FP-80A, 1946-1949
FP-80L
JN-6H
JNS-1
L-4B, 1942-1943
O-11
O-19C
O-19E
O-19H, 1930
O-2G, 1926-1930

O-2H
O-27, 1933-1935
O-31A
O-38
O-40A
O-43A, 1935-1941
O-46
O-47A, 1938-1942
O-49
O-52
O-57, 1941-1942
O-59, 1942
P-51B
F-6, 1943
RB-26C, 1951-1956
RB-66, 1956-1960
RF-4, 1966-1992
RQ-4, 2001
Salmson 2, 1918-1919
Spitfire V
Y1O-35
YF-1
YG-1B
YO-51
YO-54, 1940-1942

COMMANDERS
Maj L. G. Heffernan, 2 Jun 1917
Lt George F. Hughes, 18 Oct 1917-23 Jan 1918
Maj Harry M. Brown, 28 Jan 1918
Maj Lewis H. Brereton, 29 Mar 1918
Capt S. N. Noyes, 1 Jul 1918
Lt R. C. Paradise, 25 Oct 1918
1LT Edward D. Jones Dec 1920
Capt Thomas W. Hastey May 1921
Maj Leo G. Heffernan 19 Nov 1922
Maj John N. Reynolds 20 Sep 1925
Capt Clearton H. Reynolds 6 Jan 1928
1LT Frederick D. Lynch 28 Jul 1931
Capt Benjamin F. Griffin 5 Sep 1931
1LT Joseph H. Hicks 3 Dec 1932
Maj Charles B. Oldfield 13 Jun 1933
1LT Joseph H. Hicks 21 May 1934
1LT Rueben Kyle, Jr. 30 Jun 1934

Maj Eugene L. Lohman 20 Aug 1928
1LT Milton J. Smith 1 Aug 1934
Maj Robert Kauch 1 Mar 1935
Maj John C. Kennedy 16 Apr 1936-1 Nov 1941
Capt Robert M. Lee, 1937
Capt H. L. Alnexs, 1 Jul 1941
Capt R. S. Morrison, Jan 1942
Maj James R. Haun, 10 Jul 1942
Maj Russell E. Berg, 24 Oct 1943
Capt Dickman R. French, 6 Dec 1943
Lt Col Gordon H. Woodrow, 1 Feb 1944
Maj John E. Florence, 2 Feb 1945
Maj Robert H. Holbury, 14 Jul 1945
Capt William M. Winberry, 22 Jul 1945
Capt Wilbur A. Tapscott, 25 Jul 1945-15 Feb 1946
Col Leon W. Gray, 31 Aug 1946
Lt Col Arvis L. Hilpert, 16 Aug 1947
Lt Col Clarence S. Towles Jr., Jul-3 Dec 1948
Lt Col Arvis L. Hilpert, unkn-28 Mar 1949
Lt Col Thomas J. Price, 25 Feb 1951
Maj Harry W. Trimble, 24 Apr 1951
Lt Col Eugene H. Mitchell, 8 Nov 1951
Maj Cicero J. Ellen, Apr 1952
Lt Col George T. Prior, Jul 1952
Maj James C. McIver, Jul 1952
Lt Col Eldon Davis, 25 Nov 1952
Lt Col Arthur J. Staveley, 1953
Lt Col George R. Root, 1 Sep 1953-unkn
Maj Thomas G. Tharp, c. Jun 1955
Lt Col Dale F. Benadom, 14 Aug 1956
Lt Col Earl A. Butts, 1959-1960
Lt Col Elmer Froman, 1 Jul 1966
Lt Col Bernard W. Watts, 25 Aug 1966
Lt Col Donald E. Orr, c. Mar 1967
Lt Col Roland D. Foley Jr., 27 Aug 1967
Lt Col William H. Laseter, 2 Oct 1967
Col Roland D. Foley Jr., 25 Mar 1968
Lt Col Vernon L. Allgood, 18 May 1968
Col Martin J. Barnard, 16 Jan 1969
Lt Col Donald F. Vanderkarr, 6 Sep 1969
Lt Col John D. Faulk, 15 Mar 1970
Lt Col William M. Carruthers, 1 Sep 1970
Lt Col John P. Anderson, 1 Oct 1970
Lt Col Raymond L. Norman, 31 Aug 1971

Lt Col Troy G. Ross, 24 Jan 1972
Lt Col Kenneth D. Waits, 23 Aug 1973
Lt Col B. J. Martin, 30 Nov 1974
Lt Col Col Dewey K. Hemphill, 22 Dec 1975
Lt Col Orin I. Knutson, 6 Jan 1978
Lt Col Kent W. Lattig, 2 Jan1980
Lt Col Charles E. Loflin, 29 Apr 1981
Lt Col Roger L. Grimsley, 10 Nov 1981
Lt Col Glen E. Crosby, 25 Nov 1983
Lt Col Herman W. Burns, 14 Dec 1984
Lt Col James F. Shambo, 21 Nov 1986
Lt Col Bruce D. Hacker, 15 Jul 1988
Lt Col James H. Mills, 6 Oct 1989
Unkn, Jun 1991-30 Sep 1992
Lt Col Guy R. Hooper, 8 Nov 2001
Lt Col Donald M. Corley, 13 Apr 2004
Lt Col J. Scott Winstead, 31 Mar 2006
Lt Col Kurt J. Carraway, 31 Mar 2008

HONORS
Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers
World War I
Lorraine, Ile-de-France
Champagne-Marne
Aisne-Marne
Champagne
St Mihiel
Meuse-Argonne

World War II
Air Offensive, Europe
Normandy
Northern France
Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe
Air Combat, EAME Theater

Korea
First UN Counteroffensive
CCF Spring Offensive
UN Summer-Fall Offensive

Second Korean Winter
Korea Summer-Fall, 1952
Third Korean Winter
Korea, Summer, 1953

Vietnam
Vietnam Air Offensive
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III
Vietnam Air/Ground
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV
TET 69/Counteroffensive
Vietnam Summer-Fall, 1969
Vietnam Winter-Spring, 1970
Sanctuary Counteroffensive
Southwest Monsoon
Commando Hunt V
Commando Hunt VI

Southwest Asia
Defense of Saudi Arabia
Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
LeHavre and Straits of Dover, [23-25] Feb 1944
Korea, 25 Feb-21 Apr 1951
Korea, 9 Jul-27 Nov 1951
Korea, 1 May-27 Jul 1953

Presidential Unit Citations (Southeast Asia)
[9 Sep] 1966-30 Jun 1967
1 Sep 1967-10 Jul 1968
11 Jul 1968-31 Aug 1969
1 Feb-31 Mar 1971

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V" Device
1 Jul 1966-30 Jun 1967
1 Jul 1967-30 Jun 1968
1 Jul 1969-30 Jun 1970
1 Jul 1970-30 Jun 1971

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards
1 Dec 1952-30 Apr 1953
1 Aug-2 Sep 1966
1 Sep 1971-15 May 1973
16 May 1974-15 May 1976
16 Dec 1976-1 Dec 1978
1 Jun 1982-31 May 1983
1 Jun 1983-31 May 1984
1 Jan 1985-1 Feb 1986
1 Jan 1990-1 May 1991
1 Jun 2002-31 May 2004
1 Jun 2005-31 May 2007
1 Jun 2007-31 May 2009

Cited in the Order of the Day, Belgian Army
6 Jun-[c. 11 Aug] 1944

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation
[25] Feb 1951-31 Mar 195

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm
6 Sep 1966-18 Aug 1971

EMBLEM

Approved, 2 Feb 1924 from World War I emblem

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

The squadron was formed from H Company in San Antonio. After two weeks of fatigue work at the field, the squadron moved to OH. The 12 and 13th Aero Squadrons were the first two at Wilbur Wright Field. Although none of the men of the squadron had received any mechanical training in the Army, the squadron was at once put to work assembling Standard and Curtiss airplanes shipped directly from the factory.

The squadron had a large share in the training of the cadets who began to flock to the flying field in the latter part of July

On 31 Oct 1917 all preparations for leaving were completed and the start was made.

From 2 Nov to 4 Dec the squadron at Field #1, Garden City, the squadron doing drill and fatigue work while waiting for sailing orders.

5 Dec 1917 the squadron packed with three other squadrons on board the S.S. Nortland began its transatlantic voyage from Phili harbor. After a week of waiting in Halifax harbor and a rather rough passage the squadron finally arrived without mishap in Liverpool on Christmas day. The squadron began another journey across England to south Hampton onto another boat and packed like crackers in a box and le Harve was reached on 27 Dec 1917 After a rest in a British rest camp on the bluff at Le Harve for several days, the squadron the squadron was shipped south in box cars to St Maxient. Here the men were quartered in a old stone monastery known as Conclaux Barracks. The arrived on 1 Jan 1918. They remained at the "concentration camp" until the 14th performing fatigue and guard duty.

On 14 Jan the move began to the direction of the front. Arriving on 16 Jan at Chaument Hill 402. Here the mechanics who in fact had no previous special training took charge of Nieuport and Spad aircraft.

During the first week of June the 12 Aero Squadron received notice that orders would shortly issue for its movement overland to Vathemenil, in the Baccarat sector, to the southeast of Luneville. Accordingly, an advance party of several officers and a considerable detachment of men were sent forward to prepare the airdrome and buildings for the arrival of the squadron. The fact that the location assigned for the airdrome possessed little else than some newly erected hangars necessitated a great amount of labor by this advance party in the preparation of the landing field, offices, and quarters for both enlisted and commissioned personnel. A construction squadron had not been available for this work; the utilization of squadron officers and men in the advance party and in addition the necessity for utilizing a large proportion of the squadron in this work after its arrival interfered with active operations for a period of four days. , the tactical situation in that sector at the time was not such that this delay could result

seriously, the observation work during this time being carried out by the French squadron which the 12 was to relieve. On the other hand, much benefit was derived by the squadron in its earnest and strenuous endeavors to complete the airdrome installation necessary to the conduct of active operations over the front; a unit spirit of teamwork was developed which proved invaluable in the months to come.

During its first week in this sector, the squadron gave up its equipment of A. R. airplanes and received 18 Salmson two-seater observation airplanes equipped with the radial Salmson engine of 260 horsepower. This airplane proved most satisfactory in every respect; no observation airplane used upon the western front up to the conclusion of the armistice gave greater all-around satisfaction.

The Baccarat sector was a typical "stabilized" or "quiet" sector. The enemy was strongly entrenched in positions which had been in existence for many months. Barbed-wire entanglements and machine-gun strong points reinforced the lines of trench work. To the rear he was supported by the usual complement of field and heavy artillery.

In the air his forces were considerably more numerous than was the case in the Toul sector. A rather active observation service was supplemented by a pursuit force which carried out daily patrols of the sector. The latter, although not equipped with the latest types of enemy pursuit airplanes, was active and aggressive. Bombardment squadrons operated on practically all clear nights against various posts of command in the sector, allied airdromes, and the towns and villages adjoining the lines. Farther to the rear the enemy had a considerable amount of pursuit aviation which devoted its energies to the attack of allied day bombardment squadrons which were then carrying out long-distance raids into Germany throughout that area.

The sector of the 42d Division, United States Army, to which the 12 Squadron was assigned, extended approximately from Badenviller to Blamont, some 12 kilometers. As in the Toul sector the positions of the infantry were strongly organized by means of trench systems, barbed-wire entanglements, and machine-gun emplacements. The infantry was reinforced by the divisional artillery which consisted of two regiments of field and one regiment of heavy artillery. The division operated under the command of the 6th Corps of the 8th French Army. The command of all aviation forces in the Baccarat sector operating for the 6th Corps, 8th French Army, was vested in the "commandant of the sector aeronautique," whose headquarters were located at Luneville. This officer corresponds to the present corps chief of Air Service in the American Air Service.

In addition to the 12 Aero Squadron, the aviation forces of the sector consisted for the most part of observation squadrons operating in conjunction with the divisions to the right and left of the 42d Division, United States Army. These squadrons carried out observation work for their divisions of the same nature as that to be performed for the 42d Division, United States Army. In addition there operated one observation squadron which did the work of the Army corps. There was no regularly assigned pursuit aviation patrolling that section of the front. As a consequence the observation airplanes there operating had to rely solely upon their own

armament as a means of defense against hostile aircraft.

Mission of the 12 Aero Squadron:
The mission devolving upon the 12 Aero Squadron in this sector was:
Reconnaissance and surveillance of the enemy; both visually and photographically.

Adjustment of artillery fire.
Cooperation with the infantry should a situation arise requiring the dispatch of an infantry contact patrol to locate the position of the front lines.

Training with the infantry and artillery.
Terrain exercises for practice in marking out the front lines.
Panel exercises, e.g., simulated adjustments of artillery fire.
Coordination and completion of training of flying and ground personnel under actual war conditions.

Communication and Liaison.
Interior communications.—Telephone lines were constructed connecting the various offices, barracks, and hangars.
Telephonic. — Long-distance telephone lines to tactical posts of command in the division and Higher Air Service headquarters were maintained through regional switchboards.
Radio—The squadron radio section insured, in this stabilized sector, the sending and receipt of radio messages between all points in the divisional area. In addition, it made possible the receipt and record of all messages sent by the squadron airplane in their work over the front.

In the actual fulfillment of the missions assigned to the pilots and observers of the squadron in this sector the same general methods were pursued as those described as being the routine methods for the execution of the various types of missions carried out by corps observation units in the chapter on operations in the Toul sector. For the most part, the missions performed were confined to those of artillery adjustment and visual and photographic reconnaissance. On only one occasion were infantry contact patrols attempted. That occurred during a raid the enemy carried out against the American troops at the time of the relief of the 42d Division by the 77th Division, United States Army. The raid took place during the night, and on the following morning the 12 Aero Squadron was requested to locate the friendly front line. In attempting to carry out the request, the observer in the first airplane dispatched returned with a serious wound caused by antiaircraft artillery fire. The second observer, when the infantry failed repeatedly to respond to his signals calling upon them to mark out the first line by means of panels or bengal flares, flew so low that he was able to distinguish the uniforms of such men as exposed themselves to view, and was thus able to give a rough idea as to the position of the friendly infantry. Unfortunately, he was wounded by machine-gun fire from the ground before he had fully satisfied himself as to the location of our first-line troops. The third airplane dispatched encountered no better fortune than the first two in receiving a response from the infantry, but he was finally able to report briefly upon the position of the latter by means of observations made at extremely low altitude.

For the most part, aside from the visual reconnaissance missions performed at dawn and twilight of each day, and a certain number of photographic missions requested by the division and the commandant of the sector aeronautique, practically all of the work undertaken was that solicited by the squadron commander and the observers. It being realized that the plan of operations in this sector was one of training, every effort was made to arrange and perform as many adjustments of artillery as were possible. The only limitation placed upon this type of work was that which resulted from a shortage of artillery ammunition, the artillery regiments being allotted only a fixed amount for their per diem allowance.

Great stress was laid upon the matter of exercises. Under the direction of the squadron commander, and with the advice of the commandant of the regional secteur aeronautique and that of a captain observer from one of the nearby French observation squadrons, a large number of exercises was carried out with the infantry and the artillery. The infantry exercises took the form of training the infantry in the proper use of their panels and bengal flares marking out the line at the call of the aerial observer. These exercises, for the most part, took place with reserve battalions in the second or third lines. With the artillery, exercises were arranged frequently for the practice of a method for rapid adjustment of specially designated batteries against fugitive targets located by the observer in the enemy lines and reported to the battery by means of dropped written messages. This method of adjustment was designed especially for use in a war of movement. It had been adopted by the French observation squadrons of that sector after a long and thorough study of enemy and allied methods in the major operations of the preceding spring. The "shoots" were conducted over the actual lines; the targets were chosen by the observer after taking the air. Usually they were points in enemy territory assumed to be fugitive targets. Too much value cannot be given to the results of this form of exercise to both the artillery and the observers of the squadron. Considerable success marked the efforts of both the artillery and the observers, and the experience gained later proved of value to both.

Considerable advance was made on the part of the observers of the squadron in gaining a knowledge of the importance of close personal liaison with the officers of the divisional artillery and infantry posts of command. Various incidents arose which taught the observers that few of the American troops entering the lines for the first time would have even a working knowledge of the elements which are so necessary to bring about some measure of success in the cooperation of the observation air service with the divisional ground troops. It was brought most forcibly home to all the squadron observers that great and prolonged effort would be necessary on their part to fit the ground troops to properly fulfill their part in working with the Air Service during the execution of artillery fire adjustments or infantry contact patrols. Questions connected with the execution of artillery fire adjustments were mainly those of proper operation of the artillery radio stations and the functioning of the crews assigned to them for the operation of panel strips used to signal the airplane observer.

During the three weeks operations by the 12 Aero Squadron in the Baccarat sector much valuable advice and aid were given by the corps observation air service commander—the

commandant secteur aeronautique, 6th Corps, 8th French Army—and by the experienced observer whom he placed at the disposal of the squadron commander.

As the result of attacks from hostile pursuit forces during the execution of the missions assigned to them, considerable experience was gained by some three or four tours of pilots and observers of the squadron in aerial combat.

In the main the actual operations conducted by the 12 Aero Squadron in the Baccarat sector were only a continuation and development of those carried out previously in the Toul sector. The conduct of visual and photographic reconnaissance missions, prearranged artillery fire adjustments, and infantry contact patrols was similar in every way to that of like operations in the Toul sector. In a few instances visual reconnaissance missions were dispatched under orders from the secteur aeronautique of the 6th French Corps to procure certain specific information in well-defined areas of the enemy positions, but on the whole reconnaissance missions covered the entire divisional sector under standing orders to observe and report upon all forms of enemy activity. In the course of the squadron's stay in the Baccarat sector it was learned that a general visual reconnaissance of the sector produced very little in the way of valuable results except when performed at dawn or just before darkness; reconnaissance missions performed during the daytime scarcely ever realized success sufficient to justify their dispatch and execution. This fact is easy of comprehension when it is remembered that the sector had long been stabilized and that no active operations were in course. Enemy and friendly activity was almost entirely confined to the hours of darkness.

Undoubtedly the most valuable lessons of the period at Baccarat were those learned concerning the scope of personal liaison in preparation of successful cooperation between the squadron and the divisional ground troops. In addition, the experience derived in the execution of the exercises with the artillery, which had as their purpose the rapid adjustment of fire of specially designated batteries upon fugitive targets in a war of movement, although not of great extent, was sufficient to acquaint the observers of the squadron with the general principles of this form of aerial work and to impress them with the importance of developing it in the future.

From the point of view of the squadron alone it had undoubtedly proved of great value for the unit to be thrown entirely upon its own resources during the period of its operations in this sector. A considerable training was acquired by the officers of the squadron while it thus operated as an isolated Air Service unit, which they would not have received operating as one squadron in a group during the same length of time. As a tactical matter, this fact proved of great value during the American Air Service operations on the Marne, for at that time the need immediately arose for a much larger number of observers trained in the principles of liaison with ground troops and the conduct of group and squadron operations than had been necessary or were available at any previous time.

The 1st Corps Observation Group, consisting of the 1st and 12 Aero Squadrons, reached the Marne sector during the first days of July, 1918, and occupied an airdrome about 55 kilometers

from the existing front line. It was assigned to duty with the 1st Army Corps, which at that time held the front extending from a short distance west of Chateau-Thierry to Cour-champs, with two divisions in the front line. Although the positions of the opposing forces had somewhat stabilized after the German offensive of May 27, 1918, conditions were quite different from those existing in the Toul area. There were a number of strong points hastily organized rather than a continuous line of trenches. The enemy had also powerful artillery and by this time had massed the heavy guns that were intended to support his formidable attack Of July 15. A very powerful enemy air force had also been assembled, and our squadrons, accustomed to the lesser and not so highly trained air forces of the Toul sector, now daily encountered enemy patrols of some 7 to 20 machines of the latest Fokker type and flown by the best of German pilots, who were vigorous and aggressive and who showed a teamwork and persistency new to our experience. On July 1, 1918, the American attack on Vaux gave an opportunity to employ contact patrols and advantage was taken of this to give all our available teams the experience which cannot be gained otherwise.

On 5 July, the squadron moved again to a neighboring field at Francheville in support of the 26th Division, but because of its distance from the front, what would later be known as a "forward operating location," or FOL, was established at Moras (or Morass) Farm. Two 12 Squadron aircraft and two from the 88th Aero Squadron were flown to it at daybreak each day and held ready for developing requirements. The Allied counteroffensive was launched on 18 July and the 12s support was vital in photographing targets ahead of the advance according to priorities set by corps intelligence. It was during this operation that oblique photography, sometimes from as low as 400 meters, began to be used; previously all photos had been vertical.

The Moras Farm location was upgraded to a full base on 22 July when the squadron occupied it to participate in the Chateau-Thierry offensive, during which it lost five officers. In the first half of August, the unit moved three times, finally being withdrawn from the sector on 12 August for a brief rest at Chailly-en-Brie. The 12 moved to Toul on 23 August and operated in support of the St. Mihiel drive. During that offensive, 12-13 September, the unit was equipped with 16 Salmsons and flew continuously to support the rapidly advancing 5th Division. Two aircraft, one piloted by Maj Lewis Brereton, commander of the Corps Observation Wing and former 12 C.O., were lost, but all four crewmembers survived after landing inside friendly lines. Immediately after the St. Mihiel salient was reduced, the squadron was assigned to support the 90th Division. On 20 September, the 12 was transferred to Remicourt to prepare for the Meuse-Argonne drive which began on 26 September.

During the Argonne operation the 12 Squadron was very much in demand. One morning after many assignments had been made, a call came in for a photographic mission. Five planes were ordered for the flight, but only four observers were available. Eddie Foy, a radio officer, volunteered to serve as an observer for the mission. The planes encountered a large formation of Germans near the target and three were shot down, one carrying Eddie Foy, who had been wounded. It is believed that he had the distinction of being the only non-flyer in the Air Service to be wounded and taken prisoner as a result of aerial combat. In the last few months of the

war, the 12 was called in many times to help locate Allied troops that had been cut off from their units. On one such occasion during the Argonne offensive, the 82nd Division reported that troops near Verpell, just east of Grand Pre were out of contact with division headquarters. Because of the foul weather and approaching darkness, Captain Steve N. Noyes, squadron commander of the 12 would not send any of his pilots on the mission, going himself instead. Flying in dense fog and rain, Captain Noyes located the troops and landed near the division HQ after dark. The information proved to be exact, and the squadron was highly commended for this as well as many other missions. The 12 completed its World War I operations from Julvecourt, where it moved on 5 November in order to operate closer to the front lines.

After the signing of the Armistice on 11 November 1918, the 12 Aero Squadron became a part of the Army of Occupation. The unit was located at several different places in France and Germany until 30 December, when it went to Fort Alexander at Koblenz, Germany, to take part in construction work. The squadron left Koblenz on 16 April 1919 and prepared for its movement back to the United States. Sailing from Brest aboard the USS Liberator on 3 June, the 12 arrived at Garden City, New York, on 17 June 1919.

During its long period of activity it engaged in numerous reconnaissance's, fought many combats and received confirmation for three victories. The Twelfth suffered heavy casualties, consisting of 8 killed, 9 wounded, and 4 prisoners.

3 September 1933 Fokker Y1O-27, 31-599, of the 12 Observation Squadron, Brooks Field, Texas, crashes 5 miles W of Danville, Louisiana after starboard engine loses power. Pilot Cadet Neil M. Caldwell and passenger Pvt. Betz Baker die in crash and fire, passenger Pvt. Virgil K. Martin, riding in rear cockpit, survives with minor injuries. This aircraft has previously ditched in San Diego Bay, California on 16 December 1932.

12 December 1933 Fokker YO-27, 31-588, of the 12 Observation Squadron, Brooks Field, Texas, belly-lands at Brooks this date. Airframe surveyed and dropped from inventory, 7 March 1935, total flight time 296 hours.

On the 8th of October, Lt Alexander Pearson in a Twelfth Squadron DH-4 took off from Roosevelt Field on Long Island in the first transcontinental air race, a round trip to San Francisco, which he won with a flying time of 48 hours, 37 minutes, and 16 seconds, or an average speed of 111.3 mph.

After a brief (three month) attachment to Scott Field, Illinois, the Twelfth was transferred to Kelly Field at San Antonio, where it immediately began preparations for border service. By February 1920, the squadron (less A Flight, which was detached to Douglas, Arizona) was settling in at Ft. Bliss, El Paso, equipped with DH-4s. Later that month, a terse telegram described one incident of this service: Lts G. L. Usher and L. M. Wolfe, "lost direction on patrol. Made forced landing near Nacozari Sonora Mexico. Plane reported broken. Commanding General Southern Department making arrangements for officers release from Mexico." Wolfe and Usher, on a flight from Columbus New Mexico to Nogales, Arizona on 2 February 1920, lost

their way due to a bad compass and poor visibility, mistakenly following a railway some 80 miles into Mexico. In landing near the village of La Noira, fifteen miles south of Nacozari, a wing was damaged. They were detained by Mexican authorities, although they were given the freedom of Nacozari and spent most of their time at the club of an American copper company. They were finally released on 24 February.

Between the 4th and 11th of April, the 12 moved to Nogales, where it operated for nearly a year until it joined the detached flight at Douglas. On 28 September the squadron, reduced in numbers, returned to Ft. Bliss.

In February 1921, the same Lt Pearson and the 12 were again involved in a record-setting attempt, this time a planned transcontinental flight with only two stops to be completed in less than 24 hours. The flight was to be from Pablo Beach, Florida, to San Diego, with enroute servicing at Ft. Worth and Ft. Bliss. Lt Pearson left Douglas for Florida on 7 February, but he was forced down in the desert with a broken crankshaft. Repairs were made the next day on the scene, and he flew on to Ft. Bliss on the 9th, departing the next day for San Antonio, but he didn't make it. For the next six days, aircraft from five Texas bases searched for him in vain. Then, on the 16th, he arrived at Sanderson Border Patrol station on horseback, having made his way across country from his crash site in Mexico.

In June, the Border Patrol operation ended, with all airfields except Ft. Bliss being closed and most units returning to their permanent stations. The Twelfth Squadron, less A Flight again, which returned to Kelly Field, remained in El Paso as part of the 1st Cavalry Division. On 30 September 1922, the unit was redesignated 12 Observation Squadron and in September 1923, it participated in maneuvers with the division at Marfa, Texas. It was during this period, from 1922 to 1923, that C apt Claire Chennault, of later "Flying Tiger" fame, served with the 12 as aviation engineer officer. In June of 1926, the squadron went to Charlotte, Texas, for maneuvers, and in August it moved to Bayside Beach, Texas, for gunnery and bomb practice. The 12 returned to Bayside Beach in May 1932 and April 1933 for practice in aerial gunnery. In 1934, the 12 took part when the Army was given responsibility for flying the mail after the President cancelled all civilian contracts because of alleged rate-fixing by the airlines. Twelfth pilots were assigned to the difficult and dangerous Route 18, from Salt Lake City to Oakland, California, via Elko, Nevada, and Sacramento. The aircraft they flew were primarily Douglas Y1B-7 bombers.

On 1 June 1937, the 12 Observation Squadron left Texas to operate with the Seventh Cavalry Brigade, mechanized forerunner of the First Armored Division, at Fort Knox, Kentucky. While stationed at Fort Knox, the squadron participated in field maneuvers with the mechanized cavalry near Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, and at Fort Riley, Kansa, in 1938; in the First Army maneuvers at Plattsburg, New York in 1939; and in the Third Army maneuvers in Louisiana in 1940.. In the summer of 1940, the squadron was the first to be attached to an armored division – the First – and on 2 December, a base detachment was formed at Ft. Knox to manage Goodman Field, a new and modern airfield still under construction. Captain Robert M. Lee, commanding officer of the 12, was also detachment commander. Along with the First Armored

Division, the 12 Squadron played an active role in the Carolina and Louisiana maneuvers from July to December 1941. After those maneuvers, the 12 returned to the recently completed Godman Field, where the unit supplied a cadre to organize the Headquarters Squadron of the 73rd Observation Group.
On 17 March the squadron left Godman Field to join the 67th Observation Group at Elser Field, Louisiana. There it received extensive training in combat aircraft. In late July the squadron was ordered overseas and split into a ground echelon and an air echelon. The ground echelon left Elser Field on 12 August 1942, and sailed for England on 28 August from Fort Dix, New Jersey aboard the Queen Elizabeth. It arrived at Gurock, Scotland, on 6 September 1942 and proceeded to its new station at Membury, Berkshire, England.

Meanwhile, the air echelon had remained at Elser Field, until 21 September. On that day it left by train for Fort Dix, where it sailed aboard the Marnix Von Sirt Aldegande on 26 September, arriving at Gurock on 7 October to join the rest of the squadron at Membury.

In England, the squadron went through an intensive training program. On 17 October 1942, it was assigned Spitfires, and late in January 1943, it received its first A-20 during those months the squadron participated in several maneuvers and became a very efficient organization. On 8 July, the unit was redesignated the 12 Reconnaissance Squadron (Fighter). A little later, on 13 July, a reorganization took place and the A-20s, gunners, liaison pilots, and most of the observers of the squadron were transferred to the 153rd Liaison Squadron. The Twelfth was then equipped with P-51s and F-6s. Late in October, the 12 Squadron was transferred from the VIII Air Support Command to the IX Fighter Command. The unit became highly mobile and proficient at changing fields on short notice. It would fly form eight English bases before moving to the Continent.

On 13 November, the squadron was redesignated again, to the 12 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron. Although the pilots of the 12 engaged in operations against the enemy while on detached service with the Royal Air Force, it was not until 2 January 1944 that the squadron began operations as a unit when Capt James L. Rose flew its first operational mission, a weather recce over France. On 4 January, the squadron, as part of the 67th Group, was assigned to the IX Air Support Command (redesignated IX Tactical Air Command in April 1944).

After its first operational mission on the 2nd, the 12 helped to photograph 160 miles of French coast and two inshore strips, each 120 miles long using the Merton Oblique camera. On 20 March, after 19 days of extremely hazardous operation, the task was completed. Eighty-three missions were flown; 18 were aborted, 14 due to weather. The maps and photographs were an important contribution to the success of Overlord, the invasion of the continent of Europe. The 12 shared a Presidential Unit Citation with the 67th group for the “most extensive low altitude oblique photographic assignment ever undertaken over enemy territory.”

Now the 12 TRS turned to photographing targets over Belgium and France – targets from Le Havre to Luxembourg, and from Leige to Lorient. One day it was marshalling yards in Belgium, another day bridges along the Seine River, then gun emplacements on the “Rocket Coast” plus

targets in the Pas-de-Calais area. In May, 66 out of 75 missions were successful. During that month Lieutenant Richard Weast, assistant operations officer of the 12, had an unusual experience. Beginning a run on a target deep in France, his plane was hit by anti-aircraft fire. It turned over twice, the engine cut out, and he began losing altitude. Just as he was preparing to bail out, the engine started again and he limped home at about 1,000 feet, protected by a friendly fighter which suddenly appeared and stayed protectively on his tail.

June came and the invasion of Europe was imminent. On D-Day (the 6th), and for days afterwards, the 12 performed area and route reconnaissance missions as well as artillery adjustment missions over and immediately behind the front lines. The squadron flew 250 missions during the month and operated around the clock. Reconnaissance was a major factor in allied strategy, and the 12 kept higher echelons informed of enemy convoy and troop movements, and the location of troop concentrations. For those missions the unit sent its planes in pairs; one for visual and photo reconnaissance, the other for fighter cover and flak observation. On 1 June 1944, Lieutenants William D. Lacey and Jacob I. Piatt shot down the squadron's first enemy planes. On a mission in the area of Laval, France, they spotted three Fw 190s circling for landing at the airdrome; each destroyed one plane.

Effective 13 June, the 12 was officially transferred to the 10 TRG. About 5 July 1944, the squadron moved with the 67th to Airstrip A-9, Le Molay – the first of five strips from which it would operate in France – and began supporting the U. S. First Army, which was massing for a breakthrough near St. Lo.

After the breakthrough, the 12 followed General Patton's Third Army in its drive across France and supported him for the rest of the war. Over 200 missions were flown in July-mostly visual and photo reconnaissance of troop movements, concentrations, and supply lines. During July, Staff Sergeant Edward E. Scott set a squadron record of keeping a plane flying for 62 consecutive missions without an abort. The string was broken on 30 July, when the plane was shot down. Lt William Lacey was killed when he was hit by flak while on his photo run over a target near Val D'Enhue.

On 1 August 1944, the squadron was assigned to the XIX Tactical Air Command. Since no French airfield was ready for the 10th Group, the 12 had to handle the reconnaissance load for the first several days, flying 26 missions in five days with a 100 percent success rate. Although bad weather hampered its operations during the rest of the year, several outstanding missions were flown. On the 11th, the squadron was the first from the 10th TRG to move onto the newly captured airfield at Rennes. On 27 August, the 12 lost three planes and one pilot, Lt Arthur Chinn, shot down by AAA over Brest. During September, in addition to its regular missions, the 12 flew 170 missions in nineteen days reconnoitering the area along and beyond the Siegfried Line where German armies were building up reserves. The pilots also spotted and photographed areas the Germans were strengthening and reconnoitered marshalling yards to see if reinforcements were being sent in from other parts of Germany.

On 19 October 1944, Lts Donald R. Lynch and Albert M. Burkhalter performed one of the most

outstanding missions of the squadron during the war. A German railroad gun, dubbed the "Phantom Cannon," had eluded and hampered the Third Army for several weeks. It was located in the marshalling yards at Metz, a heavily defended city in Lorraine. The two lieutenants set out in bad weather to pinpoint the gun so that it could be destroyed by artillery fire. They found the gun, but could not make radio contact with the artillery. Lt Lynch diverted his wingman, Burkhalter, to go back and remain over the artillery commander's car, where he could relay information to the guns. Lynch followed the first rounds to the target made corrections. Despite heavy flak, he stayed on to direct the fire. Not only was the gun destroyed, but the Metz railroad station demolished.

During November and December, missions were flown over the Ruhr and Rhine valleys and over such cities as Frankfurt, Mannheim, Wiesbaden, Koblenz, and Ludwigshafen, many of which were heavily defended. Because of the bad weather at that time of year, the pilots of the 12 had to lead the bombers and fighters all the way to targets they had spotted and then make the first pass.

On 21 December, during the German counter-attack in the Ardennes Forest, in a mission reminiscent of that flown in WWI by squadron commander Capt Noyes, Capt E. B. Travis was handed the job of locating some U. S. infantry who had been cut off. The weather was bad, with a ceiling of 00 feet and visibility of a hundred yards, but Capt Travis took off, alone since everyone else was grounded. After four attempts, he entered the target area at treetop level and, displaying outstanding flying skill and courage, obtained the desired intelligence and returned to base, earning the Silver Star for the mission.

The year 1945 came and the 12 supported forces engaged in the "Battle of the Bulge." A spectacular mission was flown by Capt Edward L. Bishop on 14 January 1945. It began as a routine artillery adjustment flight just north of Bastogne, Belgium. Spotting a convoy of approximately 60 vehicles, Bishop contacted a squadron of P-47s, but the flak was so thick that they were unable to get down to bomb and strafe. Bishop ordered artillery fire on the flak positions, after which the fighters went to work. Next, Bishop located another gun position and directed an artillery smoke pattern on it so the fighter-bombers could find the target. The mission was regarded as perfect, and Bishop was personally commended by Brig Gen Otto Weyland, commanding general of the XIX Tactical Air Command.

During the German retreat from the Bulge, the last great battle of the war in Europe, the 12 kept its planes in the air, spotting enemy vehicles, troops, and supplies. Medium bombers had knocked out so many roads and bridges that thousands of vehicles were trying to escape, but had no way to move. On 26 January, 12 TRS pilots spotted 4,000 vehicles and called fighter-bombers in to finish the job. The 12 Squadron was commended by Generals Carl Spaatz and Weyland for its work during the German withdrawal.

The 12 moved to Euren, Germany on 29 March 1945. During March, 320 missions were flown in support of the Third Army's breakthrough of the Siegfried Line. In April, a new squadron record was set when the 12 flew 410 missions. Also in April, the unit claimed credit for 16

enemy planes destroyed, four damaged, and one probably damaged. At this point, the squadron received an order stressing the fact that the 12 was a reconnaissance squadron and that engagements with the enemy should not be encouraged.

Reconnaissance areas changed rapidly in keeping pace with Patton. During the first part of April, targets included Frankfurt, Darmstadt, Wurzburg, and Kassel. Later they were farther east – Gotha, Erfurt, Leipzig, and Chemnitz. Then the 12 moved south to Munich, Regensburg, and Nurnberg, and it finished the month by making long flights (with wing tanks) into Austria and Czechoslovakia, reconnoitering Prague, Pilsen, Linz, and Vienna. On 29 April, the same Capt Bishop was flying a mission near Sedlitz, Czechoslovakia when he spotted a convoy of about 1,000 vehicles moving south and threatening the left flank of Patton's advancing spearheads. He called in fighter-bombers and very few of the vehicles reached their destination. Capt Bishop was awarded the Silver Star for his action.

The war was rapidly coming to a close, but it did not end before Lt Claude G. Franklin performed a unique feat late in April. His plane was hit by flak on a visual reconnaissance mission in the Kassal area. Franklin tried to get back to friendly territory, but gas fumes filled the cockpit, so he opened the canopy. Near Fritzlar, he found a large grass field; he contacted the spearhead of the 6th Armored Division and learned that the field was cleared of mines. His hydraulic system shot away, he executed a series of acrobatics to shake the wheels down. Then the propeller began throwing gas into the open cockpit, blinding him. Feeling his way in, he cut off all switches, pulled back on the stick, and pancaked onto the field. Jumping out of the plane, he was picked up by a jeep from the 27th Armored Infantry Division while the Germans were shelling the field. After medics treated his eyes, Franklin borrowed a helmet and returned to his plane in. He tied a rope around the tail wheel and towed it to a safe place. With the aid of a mechanic from the 6th Armored, he repaired the hydraulic system and the fuel lines. Several days later he obtained some gas and flew the plane back to base.

Although hostilities in general ceased in Europe on 7 May 1945, the 12 Squadron continued to fly photographic missions in support of Allied forces in Czechoslovakia, where the fighting did not stop until 10 May. On 8 May Lt Robert C. Little was on a long recce flight into Czechoslovakia when he was attacked by five Fw 190s. Little fought back and shot down one of the planes before the engagement was over. The kill was claimed to be the last German plane destroyed by the Allies during the war; the mission was reported as the last operational mission flown by Allied Air Forces in the European Theater.

The 12 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron made a very impressive record during World War II. The unit's historian reported that 2,732 missions were flown, 26 enemy planes destroyed, three probably destroyed, and ten damaged. The 12 Squadron lost nine planes.

After the war, the 12 became part of the occupation air force in Europe. It remained at Furth, Germany, assigned to the 10th Reconnaissance Group of the XII Tactical Air Command. The personnel of the unit changed rapidly as a result of the rotation system and the reassignment of men to other units, but the 12 continued its photographic missions and flight training. On 14

February 1946, the squadron's equipment was turned over to the 160th TRS, the 10th Group and the 737th Material Squadron; its men were transferred to the 10th. On 15 February, the 12, now a "paper squadron," was transferred to Bolling Field, Washington, D.C., and assigned to the Continental Air Force. It was inactivated on 31 March 1946.

A short time later, on 9 July 1946, the unit was redesignated the 12 Reconnaissance Squadron, Photo (Jet Propelled) and on 31 August 1946, it was activated at March Field, California. The squadron was assigned to the 363rd Reconnaissance Group, Ninth Air Force; because the rest of the group was stationed at Brooks Field, Texas, and later at Langley Field, Virginia, it was attached to Twelfth Air Force. Extensive aerial photography was performed by the 12, including maps and layouts for the United States Department of Agriculture, the Corps of Engineers, and many other agencies.

On 24 July 1947, the 12 was reassigned once again to the 67th Reconnaissance Group, which had been activated on 19 May and which had arrived at March on 18 July, less personnel and equipment. In the months that followed, the 12 participated in many exercises and maneuvers. Outstanding among these was Operation Seminole, a joint Army-Navy exercise carried out on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico in October and early November 1947. Five of the squadron's pilots and aircraft were assigned to the operation during the period 7 to 23 October, and eight pilots and seven FP-80s from 24 October to 6 November. Forty-seven photographic and twenty-eight visual recon missions were flown, and 4,633 photo negatives and 14,500 prints were processed. All of the 12 Squadron's aircraft assigned to Seminole were in commission for the entire operation, even though it was necessary to change the engine in one of the planes and test hop the ship between missions. This outstanding performance on the part of the maintenance crews brought a well-deserved commendation from Brig Gen Glenn O. Barcus, commanding general of the Twelfth Air Force.

The squadron filled many requests for aerial photographs. Many layouts of dams and waterways were made for the Army Corps of Engineers, Army Mapping Service, and the Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service. The latter wrote a letter of commendation to the 12 on 16 March 1948. Also in 1948, the squadron aided the 67th Group in completing the task of photographing national cemeteries at Alexandria, Baton Rouge, and Fort Hudson, Louisiana; Fort Gibson Oklahoma; Fayetteville, Fort Smith, and Little Rock, Arkansas; Santa Fe, New Mexico; and San Antonio and Fort Sam Houston, Texas. On 20 March 1949, the unit completed an aerial coverage of the Los Angeles Miracle Mile for Life magazine. Continuous strip photographs were taken at low altitudes and high speeds to complete the project – a type of photography not available through commercial channels at that time. Mon 28 March, the 12, which had become a tactical reconnaissance squadron (photographic) on 14 June 1948, was inactivated at March AFB.

On 5 February 1951, the unit was redesignated the 12 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, Night Photo; and on 25 February, eight months after the Korean War started, it was activated at Komaki Air Base, Japan, assigned to the 67th TRG once more, part of the 67th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, which had been formed in a reorganization of recce assets in Fifth Air

Force. Personnel and equipment (RB-26s) came from the inactivated 162nd TRS.

On 15 March 1951, the unit moved to Taegu Air Base, Korea, where the operations section had been located since the first part of the month. The primary mission of the squadron during the Korean conflict was to provide the night reconnaissance capability for the wing, both photographic and visual. During hours of darkness, the 12 Squadron was tasked to collect information on enemy activities, to make visual searches and perform route reconnaissance, to perform targeting, and bomb damage assessments, to determine the accuracy of SHORAN coordinates. In emergencies, the 12 was expected to assist the two day visual and photo recon squadrons.

In March, the squadron's first month in Korea, the 12 flew a total of 256 effective sorties. One of its early tasks was to provide photographs of all enemy airfields in Korea. It also flew sorties in conjunction with the preparation and execution of a parachute drop on 23 March. On 21 August, the squadron moved to Kimpo Air Base (K-14) at Seoul and remained there for the remainder of the war. The 12 participated in Operation Saturate, the interdiction of main enemy rail lines, from March to June 1952.

The equipment compliment of the 12 Squadron necessarily influenced its performance of mission. The squadron was authorized 27 RB-26s, but it seldom possessed so many planes and several of the authorized aircraft were B-26s modified for electronic reconnaissance. The RB-26 aircraft was admittedly obsolete, but its designated replacement – the RB-57 – was not expected to come off production lines before October 1953. For navigational assistance, the RB-26s carried short-range (SHORAN) and long-range (LORAN) navigation positioning systems; for photography, the standard RB-26 configuration was two 9- by 9-inch format, 12-inch focal length cameras mounted in a split vertical installation in a section aft of the bomb bay. Either K-19 or K-37 cameras were successfully used for night photography, but the RB-26s usually carried K-37 cameras. Night photography required artificial illumination, and the acquisition of satisfactory illuminants had complicated the work of the RB-26s from their first days in Korea.

In the summer of 1953, the RB-26s covered the three main supply routes of the enemy each night: one route on each coast and one in the center of the peninsula. Special night photo missions were also flown against prebriefed targets at which some particular enemy activity, was suspected on occasions the night photo planes photographed targets that for some reason could not be covered during daylight in August 1952, for example, the RB-26s photographed the Sui-ho dam and Simpungdong marshalling yard after enemy opposition had prevented RF-80s and Banshees from covering these targets. For the success of its mission, an RB-26, operating alone and at night, required precise navigation, and its crew comprised a pilot and two navigator. One navigator, who also acted as bombardier, rode in the nose; the other rode in the rear compartment and operated a LORAN set and, when practicable, the SHORAN equipment. Both navigators carefully plotted a prebriefed course prior to a mission, and they plotted course simultaneously while enroute to a target. During route reconnaissance missions, the nose navigator plotted visual sightings of enemy activity and flashed "hot" targets to predesignated DADCs or to night intruders in the area.

The squadron, necessarily hampered by weather, covered 65 percent of its assigned targets in February and 73 percent of them in March 1953. But it was nevertheless true that the aircraft-camera-illuminant capability of the 12 Squadron did not permit a wholly adequate accomplishment of the squadron's mission. The squadron's RB-26s were dependent upon the limited number of photoflash bombs which they could carry: at most 24 photographic exposures could be accomplished per mission whereas 80 to 120 photographs per mission would have been a desirable capability. Limited in illuminants, the RB-26s were unable to provide night mosaic photography of areas of suspected enemy activity; at best they could provide strip coverage of such areas. The 12 Squadron's equipment, moreover, did not permit it to accomplish one phase of its mission: the responsibility for determining the accuracy of SHORAN grid coordinates. The 12 Squadron used two AN/APA-54 SHORAN recorder equipped RB-26s in day flights on a SHORAN grid project covering the area between 38° 30' and 39° during the late summer and autumn of 1952, but finally, in December 1952, it was compelled to admit defeat. "A re-evaluation of this project," stated the 67th Wing, "indicates that the RB-26 aircraft is unsuitable for the project if flown at 20,000 feet due to the sluggish operation of the aircraft, difficulty aligning the cameras for crab and balance, and lack of sufficient oxygen to permit operation at the prescribed altitude for periods in excess of one and one-half hours."

Project Spotlight was a cooperative effort between the 12 Squadron RB-26s and B-26 night intruders to locate and destroy enemy railway movements at night, when they were most active. In this employment, an RB-26 made a visual recce until it located a train; the RB-26 then called in a night intruder and lighted the target with flares for the attacking aircraft. When the locomotive was destroyed, the RB- took bomb damage assessment photos. This project paid off almost immediately: on 30 December 1952, an RB-26 located five locomotives in one marshalling yard and two B-26s destroyed four of them and damaged the other.

During the period 1 January to 30 June 1953, the unit's pilots flew 1,117 missions and sighted 88,795 enemy vehicles. In July, the last months of the Korean conflict, the 12 flew 334 missions, including several daylight runs.

Aerial reconnaissance seems to have been of even greater importance in the Korean fighting than in any previous war. According to a survey made shortly after hostilities ceased, air reconnaissance accounted for a considerable part of all intelligence used by ground units and for a high percentage used by the United Nations air forces. It provided a means of determining the enemy's air order of battle; permitted timing of strikes against North Korean airfields whenever they were about to be put in service; permitted the plotting of hostile antiaircraft artillery movements; provided the basic information used in compiling air objective folders and target dossiers; and afforded air units a means for evaluating the successes and failures in their offensive air campaign.

Following the end of the Korean War, the 12 TRS continued to operate from Kimpo until 8 November 1954, when it moved to Itami Air Base, Japan. The 12 maintained at least one RB-26 and crew on temporary duty at Kimpo until 28 July 1956 to provide the U.S. Army and the

Republic of Korea Army with photo reconnaissance of South Korea and the demilitarized zone.

On 14 August 1956, the squadron moved from Itami to Yokota Air Base, which could accommodate the twin jet RB-66s with which the 12 was soon to be equipped. At Yokota, the squadron began transition training without delay, flying jet T-33As and using an RB-66 flight simulator and the services or a mobile training detachment. On 22 December the first of the 12s new planes arrived, and on 2 January, the first training flight in the RB-66B was made.

Missions for the 67th TRW and higher headquarters on occasion also provided weather reconnaissance and escort for aircraft ferrying to or from Japan. An example of this was the support of an F-86D formation proceeding two Iwo Jima late in 1957. Faker tracks to train and exercise the air defense forces in Japan and the Ryukyus, and "show of force" missions over various South Korean communities were also flown.

In April 1958, two of the 12s aircraft deployed to Bangkok, Thailand, to fly reconnaissance missions for a Southeast Asia Treaty Organization exercise, and in the following June its RB-66s took part in a joint Navy-Air Force exercise, providing navigational aid and escort for F-100Ds attacking the naval task force.

During January 1960, crews of the 12 ferried their planes to the United States, refueling from tankers over Wake Island and Hawaii. Not long after, on 8 March, the squadron was inactivated at Yokota.

On 3 November 1965, the outfit was redesignated the 12 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron (Photographic) and assigned to Tactical Air Command. It was reactivated at Mountain Home AFB, Idaho, on 1 July 1966, and organized there about 8 July, assigned again (temporarily) to the 67th TRW. At this time the unit was equipped with the RF-4C. On 2 September of that year, the unit deployed to Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Republic of Vietnam, where it became a part of the 460th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing on 9 September.

In the first four full months of operation in Southeast Asia, crews of the 12 TRS flew 2,014 combat sorties against pinpoint, strip, and area cover targets in North Vietnam, South Vietnam, and Laos. Approximately two-thirds of these were flown at night. Continuous information on enemy supply movements, troop concentrations, and fortifications was obtained from aerial photography taken by the 12. In addition, photography taken by the unit was used in bomb damage assessment, base defense planning, and enemy air defense site detection. The 12 flew more than 26,000 combat sorties and 53,000 hours over a 5 year period. This was more than in both World Wars and Korea combined.

The 12 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron moved to Barksdale AFB, Texas, on 20 August 1971, where it became – once again – a component of the 67th TRW. The unit made annual Salty Bee deployments to Europe, participated in exercises throughout North America, and was actively involved in the Peacetime Aerial Reconnaissance Program (PARPRO). Modifications to the RF-4C added the capability to designated targets for laser guided munitions. Crews and aircraft

from the Twelfth deployed to the Middle East to take part in the war against Iraq in 1991. On 28 August 1992, the 12 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron was inactivated at Bergstrom AFB, Texas.

Over the Great White North: The Air Force has conducted the first operational mission of an RQ-4 Global Hawk remotely piloted aircraft through Canadian airspace, paving the way for a new northern route that will enable the more rapid ferrying of RQ-4s in and out of Beale AFB, Calif., and forward operating locations worldwide. Previously Global Hawks have flown over Canada only during training sorties. Pilots and sensor operators from the 12 Reconnaissance Squadron at Beale controlled the RQ-4 during the April 8 flight. This northern route follows the curvature of the Earth, thereby significantly reducing the amount of time it takes to get from the US West Coast to East Coast and beyond. Capt. Kyle Blaikie of the 12 RS said the worldwide ferrying process has now been streamlined "into a single 26-hour flight." 2010

Global Hawk Arrives on Guam: An RQ-4 Global Hawk remotely piloted aircraft arrived at Andersen AFB, Guam, last week to support the standup of Global Hawk operations there. Airmen with the 12 Reconnaissance Squadron at Beale AFB, Calif., controlled the aircraft during its 18-hour flight from Beale to Andersen. Now, members of the 9th Operations Group's Detachment 3 at Andersen will use the Global Hawk to conduct procedural evaluations from Guam, including activities like taxi and pattern tests. Det. 3 will assume formal operations once initial test operational test and evaluation of the Global Hawk Block 20 and Block 30 configurations conclude, according to Beal officials. The Global Hawk is expected to be a valuable asset in the Pacific region, with its ability to patrol over vast ocean areas for extended periods with its powerful cameras and radar. Tuesday September 07, 2010

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION EQ-4B, T/N 04-2017, Afghanistan
On 20 August 2011, at approximately 1711 Zulu (Z) time, the mishap remotely piloted aircraft (MRPA), EQ-4B Global Hawk, tail number (T/N) 04-2017, crashed in Afghanistan, 9.4 hours after takeoff, while conducting a tasked communications relay mission. No injuries, damage to other government property, or damage to private property occurred as a result of the mishap. The aircraft was assigned to the 9th Reconnaissance Wing at Beale Air Force Base (AFB), California, and was forward deployed to the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. The pilot flying the aircraft at the time of the mishap (MP1) was from the 12 Reconnaissance Squadron, Beale AFB, CA. After normal pre-flight checks, the MRPA taxied and departed a Forward Operating Base (FOB) at 0745Z. Handover procedures from the Launch and Recovery Element pilot to the Mission Control Element (MCE) pilot were uneventful. At 1707Z, MP1 lost satellite link with the MRPA approximately 105 nautical miles (nm) northwest of Kandahar, Afghanistan with no other abnormal indications. The remote site operating the MRPA payload simultaneously lost all links with the payload. The MP1 ran appropriate lost link procedures, but was unable to reestablish communication with the MRPA. Off-board radar tracks showed that the MRPA departed controlled flight and started a high-speed descent approximately 25 seconds after losing satellite link with the MCE. 3 minutes later, the MRPA impacted remote, deserted terrain approximately 4 nm from its last reported position and was destroyed. The estimated loss is valued at Lt Col72.8M. The Accident Investigation Board

President could not find a cause supported by clear and convincing evidence; , the Board President determined by a preponderance of the evidence that a substantially contributing factor was the failure of a single Line Replaceable Unit (LRU). Specifically, a partial separation of the LRU-X-1 JX connector led to interruption of electrical power to aileron and spoiler flight control actuators, rendering the aircraft uncontrollable. To keep this report unclassified and releasable, the generic term LRU or LRU- X-1 is used throughout, in lieu of naming the specific failed component. The Board President was not able to determine the exact cause of the LRU failure since the MRPA's avionics were not recovered from the crash site. The Board President also found, by a preponderance of the evidence, that LRU installation methods were a contributing factor in the mishap.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources

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Unit history. *67 Tactical Reconnaissance Wing with the United Nations Forces, Korea. 1954.*
Unit history. *67 Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, With the United Nations Forces, Korea.* Nd.
Brief History of the 12 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, 1917–1992. Wayne Pittman.