

MARINE FIGHTER/ATTACK SQUADRON 115  
Marine Aircraft Group 13  
1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMF, Pacific  
FPO San Francisco 96602

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9 Sep 1968

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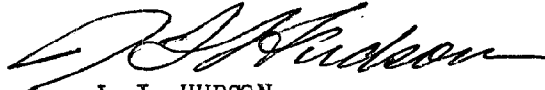
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From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 13 (S-3)  
Subj: Command Chronology

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.1A  
(b) WGO 5750.1C  
(c) GruO 5750.1D

Encl: ✓(1) VMFA-115 Command Chronology for the period 1-31 August 1968

1. In accordance with references (a), (b), and (c), enclosure (1) is herewith submitted for the period 1-31 August 1968.

  
J. I. HUDSON

VMFA-115 S&C  
CONTROL NO. 04204-68  
DATE REC'D 10 SEP 1968

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MARINE FIGHTER/ATTACK SQUADRON 115

CHU LAI, REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

1-31 AUGUST 1968

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9 Sep 1968Part I. Organization Data1. Commander and Staff

| <u>Name</u>        | <u>Billet</u>           | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Date</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Gerald W. VAUGHAN  | Commanding Officer      | LtCol       | 1-12        |
| John I. HUDSON     | Commanding Officer      | Maj         | 13-31       |
| John I. HUDSON     | Executive Officer       | Maj         | 1-12        |
| NONE               | Executive Officer       | Maj         | 13-31       |
| Jay N. BIBLER      | Operations Officer      | Maj         | 1-31        |
| William J. GRIFFIN | S-1 Officer             | Maj         | 1-8         |
| James R. DENTON    | S-1 Officer             | Capt        | 9-31        |
| William A. MCMAHON | S-2 Officer             | Capt        | 1-31        |
| Anthony A. YATSKO  | Logistics Officer       | Capt        | 1-31        |
| Everett H. CORSON  | Aviation Safety Officer | Capt        | 1-31        |
| Ronald G. KROPP    | Maintenance Officer     | Maj         | 1-31        |

2. Task Organization and Data

| <u>Organization</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Commanding Officer</u> | <u>Date of Office</u> |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| VMFA-115            | Chu Lai, RVN    | Maj John I. HUDSON        | 13-31 August          |

3. Average Strength

|                              |                |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| a. Marine Officers           | 40             |
| (1) Naval Aviators           | 18             |
| (2) Naval Flight Officers    | 18 (4 TAD FAC) |
| (3) Aviation Ground Officers | 4              |
| b. Naval Officers            | 1              |
| c. Marine Enlisted           | 251            |
| d. Naval Enlisted            | 1              |
| e. Total Average Strength    | 293            |

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Part II. Narrative Summary

In the month of August, the Silver Eagles of VMFA-115 flew 703 Combat missions in support of operations throughout the I Corps area, the DMZ, and in the southern Panhandle of North Vietnam.

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Operations supported by the officers and men of VMFA-115 included Allen Brook, Burlington Trail, Dragon Palace III, Dragon Victory, Houston, Jeb Stuart III, Lancaster II, Mameluke Thrust, Nevada Eagle, Pocahontas Forest, Scotland II, Scotland II East, Somerset Plain, and Wheeler/Wallowa. The versatility of the F4B was demonstrated by the diversity of missions flown by the Silver Eagle crews. These included Close Air Support, Direct Air Support, Visual Reconnaissance, and Air-to-Air Hot Pad launches.

Bomb damage assessment for the month of August included 215 meters of trenchline, 73 bunkers, 92 structures, 3 sampans, 2 bridges, 2 artillery pieces, and 2 trucks destroyed. Silver Eagles effected 4 road cuts, 16 secondary fires and 10 secondary explosions. In addition, a mortar position and a .50 cal site were destroyed and a supply cache was uncovered. 67 VC and NVA were killed by Silver Eagle air. 50 of these were reported by ground commanders to be the result of a single mission flown by Maj BIBLER/1stLt MARTIN and Capt GRAVES/Capt MCMAHON.

During the month of August, VMFA-115 dropped 1614.98 tons of ordnance on the insurgent enemy forces for an average daily tonnage of 52.1. Expended ordnance was: 4229 MK 82 GP bombs, 961 MK 81 GP bombs, 444 MK 77 Napalm, 251 MK 117 GP bombs, 7 CBU 24 clustered bomb units, 2372 2.75" rockets, and 218 5" Zuni rockets.

On 24 August 1968, Lovebug 511, a section composed of Maj HUDSON/Capt COONON and LtCol SCHULTZ/1stLt MARTIN launched in support of an element of 1/1 CAV which had been forced to the defensive by an estimated company of NVA. Working in the face of intense enemy fire, Lovebug 511 decimated the enemy positions with napalm and 250 lb. Snakeye bombs, destroying 4 enemy structures, a recoilless rifle, and numerous small arms. Six secondary explosions were noted, and seventeen NVA were killed by Marine Air.

On 25 August Capt CORSON and Capt MCMAHON launched with Capt GRAVES and Capt DAVIS with two F4B's in support of Army operations. Controlled by Helix 33, they pressed Snakeye and napalm attacks against an enemy fortified villed, destroying 8 structures, damaging 8 others and accounting for 4 VC/NVA killed by Marine Air.

### Part III. Significant Events

1. Personnel. The month of August brought many changes in the lair of the Silver Eagles. On 12 August 1968, Maj John I. HUDSON assumed command of Marine Fighter/Attack Squadron 115, receiving the Eagle Lead from LtCol Gerald W. VAUGHAN, who departed to Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps.

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Several new pilots reported aboard during the month. Capt's HUNTER, ACUFF, and MAGO, together with 1stLt KALIMER joined as replacement pilots from 2nd MAW. Capt WILLIAMS and 1stLt BARKER returned from FAC duty. In addition, Capt LIGHT and 1stLt ADAMS were evacuated for medical treatment. 1stLt's SHARBAUGH, HENRY, WRASSE, and Capt CONWAY spent the month in the field, serving TAD as FAC in support of Marine Ground units in the I Corps area. Other aircrews transferred were Capt PFALZGRAF and 1stLt BASSETT, both of whom left the Silver Eagles for a tour in Japan with VMFA-122.

2. Visitors. VMFA-115 was visited by two noteworthy Marines during the reporting period. LtGen P. J. FONTANA, Deputy CG FMFPac visited the squadron area and toured the line area on 21 August 1968. On 12 August 1968, BGen H. W. HISE, AWC 1st MAW, arrived at VMFA-115 as an honored guest and witnessed the squadron Change of Command between LtCol G. W. VAUGHAN and Maj J. I. HUDSON.

3. Casualties. WO-2 MILLER and Cpl CRADDOCK suffered minor wounds as a direct result of an enemy rocket attack on the night of 22 August 1968.

4. Awards. Recommendations to higher authority for the month of August included 1 DFC, 2 Purple Hearts, 3 Single Mission Air Medals and 62 Strike/Flight Air Medals. Received from higher authority were 3 Strike/Flight Air Medals. Also during the reporting period, Maj J. I. HUDSON awarded four meritorious masts to enlisted personnel who distinguished themselves by their exceptional performance, initiative, and devotion to duty. Sgt HINRICHS and Cpl's GONSALVES, KARBA and WEEKS were the proud recipients of the Eagle Leader's personal congratulations.

5. Promotions. During the reporting period there were two staff promotions. SgtMaj HOLZKAMP was promoted to his present rank in addition to extending his services to the Corps for 2 more years, and GySgt RUSH was advanced to his present rank. Cpl's WENZEL and LAIS picked up their second chevron.

6. Bonds and Voting. 1stLt WATSON has made a particularly fine effort in engineering the Savings Bonds and Voting programs within the squadron. To date, 95.1% of VMFA-115's personnel have initiated allotments for purchase of U. S. Savings Bonds. Approximately 25% of the squadron's eligible voters have submitted their FPCA forms for absentee ballots. A night and day effort is now underway by 1stLt WATSON to inform all squadron Marines about their voting privilege and to assist them in applying for their ballots. Another program has been initiated to contact TAD personnel by newsletter to provide them with necessary FPCAs and to assist them in the associated paperwork.

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7. Ground Defense. As a result of the increased alert condition for the period covered, VMFA-115 undertook several construction projects designed to strengthen the defenses of the immediate squadron area. Despite the difficulties encountered in acquiring necessary machinery and construction materials, the men of 115 built 13 strategically located fighting positions and 4 additional defensive bunkers during the reporting period.

8. Morale. Thirteen Marines of VMFA-115 continued to take advantage of numerous R & R locations available during the month, ranging from China Beach to Sydney, Australia and Honolulu, Hawaii. On 26 August the new MAG 13 PX opened with a sale of stereo equipment and appliances which were eagerly awaited by squadron Marines. Red Cross workers visited the Flight Line several times during the month serving coffee and donuts to the enlisted men.

9. Civic Action. 1stLt MINAHAN, the VMFA-115 Civic Action Officer continued to promote good will among the villagers of Long Phu II. Together with "Doc" GERMAN, the Marines' weekly appearances in the Med Cap program served to improve the hygienic standards of the Vietnamese in addition to fostering a better understanding and respect between Americans and Vietnamese civilians. Physical developments continued in the village, including the refurbished pump system at the hamlet dispensary, and the initiation of construction on the village schoolhouse.

10. Informational Services. 1stLt SINGLETON, squadron ISO, continued to prepare more hometown news releases. Engaging the Group Photo Lab on several occasions, VMFA-115 produced two squadron and many individual photos, with individual shots utilized to maintain the currency of both Command and Squadron Photo Boards.

11. Training. Advancing both their professional and technical skills, Marines of VMFA-115 were trained at many schools throughout the Far East. Capt HUEY, and 1stLt's CARROLL and MINAHAN attended the Jungle Escape and Survival Training (JEST) Course in the Philippines. Capt YATSKO and 1stLt KRALOVEC journeyed to Numazu, Japan for Sea Survival School, while Capt CONLEY and 1stLts HOOVER and MAJOR earned their coveted 6707's at Forward Air Controller School on Okinawa. Sgt DOLGE attended NCO Leadership School. Cpl LITTLE and LCpl BORDERS were trained in Corrosion Control while Cpl HARTFORD attended NBC Warfare School. In addition, LCpl's WHITE and WOOD attended KY 28 School and Cpl SMELTZER was trained in the Martin Baker H-7 Rocket Seat School.

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12. Operations. On 22 August, a briefing team from Vice-Squad visited Chu Lai with a presentation for squadron air crews regarding the capabilities, limitations, and procedures of GCI control available from MACS 4. Aircrews were particularly alerted to the inherent dangers involved in the IFR control of aircraft in the I Corps airspace by two separate controlling agencies (Vice-Squad and USAF's Panama). The briefing was concluded with a discussion period between aircrews and MACS representatives.

On 4 August, Maj LAWSON gave a presentation of the problems he encountered in an A-6 ejection north of the DMZ. Particular attention was paid to escape and evasion experiences and the rescue techniques employed.

Significant missions were flown in August by Maj HUDSON who passed the 200 mark and Capts CORSON and YATSKO who passed the 100 mission plateau.

13. Air Operations

|                              |       |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Total Flight Hours           | 785.7 |
| Total Sorties                | 703   |
| Combat Flight Hours          | 785.7 |
| Combat Sorties               | 703   |
| High Day Hours               | 35.4  |
| High Day Sorties             | 31    |
| Average Pilot Hours          | 34.5  |
| Average Pilot Combat Sorties | 30    |
| Average RIO Hours            | 44.8  |
| Average RIO Combat Sorties   | 39    |
| Non-Squadron Aircrew Hours   | 171.4 |
| Non-Squadron Aircrew Sorties | 163   |

Enclosure (1)

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