DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE (SAC)
MARCH AIR FORCE BASE, CALIFORNIA, 92508

30 Sep 1970

Mr. Ransom O'Burke
Hq AFFTC (CH)
Edwards AFB, CA 93523

Dear Mr. O'Burke

I am happy that the list of newspaper references sent earlier is of use to you in your base history project.

In answer to your questions, I have the following meager information. In September 1933, Muroc Bombing Range was opened as auxiliary installation for practice bombing and gunnery by March Field's crews. A base detachment serviced this mission. At that time the 1st Bombardment Wing ran the field. Its leader was Lt Col (later Brig Gen) Henry Harley Arnold, who took command in November 1933; his immediate predecessor is unknown. Major Carl A. Spaatz was the commander from October 1931 to June 1933, but I have no evidence of the interim leader from June to November 1933. Arnold had been base commander since November 1931, and he may have filled in until formally appointed wing commander. When Muroc Range was transferred to the Army Air Corps, the news articles indicate construction began in October 1940. Muroc was separated from March on 23 July 1942.

You can find evidence of unit assignments in Maurer Maurer's book on Air Force Combat Units of World War II. For example, the 22nd Bomb Group, which is now the host unit at March, was at Muroc from about 9 Dec 1941 - 31 Jan 1942. The 30th was there from 24 Dec 1941 - 7 Feb 1942. This is the method I used to track down every unit which had ever been stationed at March.

Hope you find the above useful. Good luck on your project; I know from experience how much work is involved.

Sincerely

R. Bruce Harley

R. BRUCE HARLEY
Command Historian
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