latter one S/Sgt Reynolds.

I think March Field's old records probably contain much info., particularly those of HQ & HQ Sq, 4th AB Gp; HQ, First Wing; HQ, Southwest Air District and HQ, Fourth AF. The Fourth AF is simply successor to SW Air District and, in turn, the old First Wing. At commencement of the war Fourth AF was h'qtd in the Virginia Bldg., Riverside and commanded by Maj Gen J.E. Fickel. Bomber Command of the Fourth had its HQ at Davis-Monthan Field, Tucson, undr Brig. General Frank Lackland; Interceptor Command h'qtd at both Riverside (*) and Hamilton, while Air Support Command was under Col Robert Candee at Hamilton. It all came under Combat Command, GHQ Air Force, AAC (created by Drum Act of 1935), which had its HQ at Bolling Field, D.C., under command of Lt Gen Delos C. Emmons.

Also, the Antelope Valley Ledger Gazette of Lancaster, CA may have info. of a more personal nature on personnel stationed at Muroc. I know they drove Lt LaSalle up a wall with constant requests for info. and stories. LaSalle made Sgt Vernon Klarman (Lancaster, Wis) base PR and Klarman always obliged with something, if only AC puffery. I still remember being listed as the corporal in charge of security in one article. Ordianarily Klarman was crew chief of the crash truck. I know the LG was sold or combined with another newspp but feel sure that they still have their old files or microfilm of same...

March published a book in 1941, A Pictorial and Historical Review of March Field Air Base (Army and Navy Publshg Co., LA). There must be copies of it somewhere, at March, at Chief Historian's Office, or in files of publisher. I feel that there should be a copy deposited in your archives because your office is certainly entitled to one. Actually the damned thing resembles a high school or college yearbook. There is a double-page spread on Muroc activities and toward the back of book is a picture (mug) of all officers and men with the B & GD. Of course, a lot of guys refused to participate (it was a subscriptn thing) and we had already lost a good many men to the cadre that opened Paine Field ("Agony Field"), Everett, Wash; had inherited a new levee of about a hundred--most of whom are depicted--any number of whom were then sent off as cadre to open Hammer Field, Fresno, CA, and were no longer with us when the book finally published. We had our mugs snapped in May or June of '41 but book not distributed until March 1942.

When General Yeager told me that he had turned letter to EX over to you, I checked it out. All jibes but my infallible recall proves too fallible anent Iceland. Whereas I wrote, "One medium bomb squadron, the 443d I believe, was intercepted at and recalled from Iceland, where they had refueled while on their way to Northern Ireland, and forwarded to Muroc...", actual events prove that writing off the top of one's head can be embarrassing. Conn and Fairchild, at least, write, "B-17s of the 49th Bomber Squadron, on the eve of their departure for Newfoundland, were diverted across country to California despite the fact that the squadron's ground echelon was already in

(*) BRIG. GENL THOMAS ORD RYAN COMMANDED INTERCEPTOR COMMAND IN EARLY 1941

Newfoundland. The bombers intended for Iceland likewise reached a destination far from that originally planned...."

As it were, we had been actually engaged in de facto naval warfare with Germany since July 1941 under Executive Order, FDR, the Reuben James already having been sunk, the Kearney severely damaged by U-boats, and Iceland already occupied (over their strenuous objctns) by Army and Marines in order to aid RAF flying patrol in North Atlantic to protect convoys from U-boat wolfpacks.

Ted, the American Historical Society is an honorable and impressive organization. The Company likewise, although a goodly portion of the membership seemingly preoccupied with the history of uniform and other milt minutiae. We are, howvr, moving toward a more far ranging historiography because some of the more influential members want it in order to retain the historians. Founded originally at end of WWII by the late Col Frederick Todd, curator at West Point Museum, the noted milt illustrator Frederick T. Chapman and others. General Matthew Ridgeway a member. And the Chief of Milt Hist, USA, often utilizes expertise of members in lineage, insigniae, uniforms, etc.

I will continue working on recollections and forward them to you as soon as I get them in some semblance of order. One recollection leads to another, you know, and then some correct the original recall. This total recall is great and all that, but sometimes it is a bit treacherous in that it does not differentiate between the pleasant and those one would rather forget altogether...

I hope this finds you well and in good spirits.

Sincerely,

James L. Ballance
715 Peru Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94112