

CHAPTER 9

41st Troop Carrier Squadron

The 41st TCS was the third of the four squadrons which comprised the 317th TCG that commenced leaving Hamilton Field, California, for the SWPA on 7 January 1943. Commanded by Captain Herbert Waldman, a 24-year-old statistician from Long Island, New York, its pilots were fresh out of training school each with around 500 hours flying time. The 41st TCS entered the Battle for Wau in late January 1943 shortly after arriving in New Guinea. After this the squadron was transferred to DAT, and by April 1943 it was operating nine C-47's.

The day after the Nadzab drop in which it participated, on 6 September 1943 a dozen of the squadron's C-47s hauled cargo to Tsili Tsili in connection with the air movement of the 7th Australian Division. Alongside many other transport units, the 41st TCS then flew continuous shuttles to help build Nadzab's new airfields until 19 September. On 20 September, all of the squadron's C-47s returned to Townsville in a single formation to transport the 317th TCG ground echelon to Ward's 'drome, Port Moresby.

The 41st TCS C-47s were assigned squadron numbers 51 to 75, and it adopted the logo of a walking mother cat carrying its kitten. The squadron lost three aircraft in the theatre, all to operational causes. Many of the squadron's transports adopted a train theme for their names, examples include *The Hiawatha* (a model of locomotive operated by the Pacific Railroad), *Silver Meteor* (1939 first streamliner diesel), *The Texas Special*, *The Pacemaker* (New York Central Railroad), *Fireball Mail*, *Golden State Flyer*, *The Rocket* (named after *Stephenson's Rocket*), *The Zephyr* (1934 diesel), *The Pathfinder* (New York Central Railways), *Honeymoon Express* and *The Pan American*. After the war, the former squadron commanding officer Herbert Waldman rose to the rank of Major-General and later became Chief of Staff for Military Airlift Command.



The 41st TCS flight line at Dobodura in early 1943, with Miss Ohio, the subject of Profile 36, at the front.