

were American pilots, flying for the service.

TO LIVE IN NOVATO

Gen. Burns To Take Over Command From McColpin

Major General Robert W. Burns will succeed Major General Carroll W. McColpin as Fourth Air Force commander in a change of command ceremony Friday afternoon at Hamilton Air Force Base.

Gen. Burns comes to Hamilton from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, North Carolina, where he headed the Tactical Air Command's 19th Air Force since April 1967.

Gen. McColpin, a World War II fighter ace and former member of Britain's famed American Eagle Squadrons, will retire during formal ceremonies after relinquishing his post with the Aerospace Defense Command's Fourth Air Force, headquartered at Hamilton.

FLIGHT LINE

The change of command and retirement ceremonies will be held on the Hamilton flight line and will feature a fly-by of the tactical aircraft assigned with the Fourth Air Force. Among the dignitaries scheduled to attend are General Raymond J. Reeves, commander-in-chief of the North American Air Defense Command, and Lieutenant General Arthur C. Agan Jr., commander of the Air Force's Aerospace Defense Command.

A native of Nettleton, Mississippi, Gen. Burns earned his wings and commission through the Army Air Corps' aviation cadet program at Kelly Field, Texas in 1939. During World War II, he flew 24 combat missions in B-17 Flying Fortresses over Europe.

The new commander has also served three previous tours with the Aerospace Defense Command — at McChord Air Force Base, Washington, 1954-57; Headquarters ADC, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1958-59; and Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, 1962-65.

28 YEARS

Gen. McColpin's military career has spanned 28 years, from propeller-driven Spitfires



MAJ. GEN. BURNS
New Commander

to today's supersonic jet interceptors.

A self-taught pilot, he volunteered for duty with the Royal Air Force in November 1940.

The American Eagle Squadrons — the World War II counterpart of the Great War's Lafayette Escadrille — were made up of Americans who fought Germany in the skies over the British Isles before the United States entered the war.

As their ranks grew, the Eagles were formed into three squadrons equipped with British Spitfires and Hurricanes. It was one of these, Squadron 133, that Gen. McColpin, then a squadron leader (equivalent of a U.S. Air Force major) in Royal Air Force blue, was to lead.

73 DESTROYED

During the crucial days of the Battle of Britain, the Eagles destroyed 73-1/2 enemy aircraft.

In September 1942, after the United States entered the war,

Gen. McColpin and most of his fellow Eagles exchanged their British-built fighters for U.S. P-47 Thunderbolts and P-51 Mustangs and donned the pink trousers and green tunics of the U.S. Army Air Force.

Gen. McColpin led his new unit, the U.S. 366th Fighter Squadron, into aerial engagements for three months and was then reassigned to the United States — ending two years of continuous combat duty.

Back in the States, the general trained fledgling fighter pilots.

Thirteen months later, as a lieutenant colonel commanding the 404th Fighter Group, he returned to combat in Europe. The group flew top cover during the Normandy D-Day landings, supported the St. Lo breakthrough and the Allied drive into Belgium and saw action in fighter support during the Battle of the Bulge.

With the war's end, Gen. McColpin had flown 280 missions in his 36 months of combat duty. He was credited with 11 aerial victories and three probabilities against the enemy, and with damaging 14 enemy aircraft on the ground.

Gen. McColpin came to Hamilton in October 1964, first as vice commander and then as commander of the 28th Air Division — the forerunner of the Fourth Air Force. In April 1966, when ADC's Fourth Air Force was reactivated at Hamilton, he was named its commander.

During his 28-year military career, Gen. McColpin has commanded 13 different organizations and has received a total of 21 decorations from four governments.

After his retirement, he will settle in Novato at 205 Country Club Drive with his wife, Joan, and two daughters, Carol W. and Mary Patricia. His future plans are undecided.

Gen. Burns, his wife, Ruth, and three children, Andrew, Susan and Rebecca, will reside at Hamilton.