

Deux Jumeaux Airfield, France – June 27, 1944

With the pocket in Northern France secured, the group quickly moved into the recently conquered territory. In June, the 48th moved its operations, along with the 492d and 493d Fighter Squadrons to Deux Jumeaux Airfield (A-4), France. The 494th Fighter Squadron followed in July. From Deux Jumeaux, the 48th began a mission it would continue throughout the war: providing support for the United States First Army.

Located just outside of the commune of Deux Jumeaux in the Basse-Normandie region of northern France, the United States Army Air Force established a temporary airfield shortly after D-Day on 14 June 1944, after the Allied landings in France. The airfield was one of the first established in the liberated area of Normandy, being constructed by the IX Engineering Command, 816th Engineer Aviation Battalion.

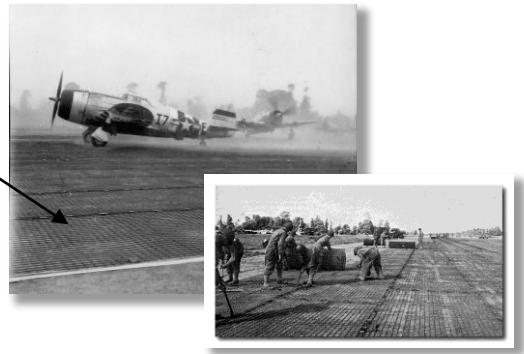


Construction of the airfield began on the morning of 14 June 1944 under the protection of 22 .50-calibre guns. The airfield was limited operational on 20 June, and was completed on the 30th. The first P-47s of the 48th Fighter Group arrived at Deux Jumeaux on 27 June. The group consisted of the 492FS (coded F4), 493FS (coded I7) and 494FS (coded 6M).

Deux Jumeaux Airfield	
Advanced Landing Ground (ALG) A-4	
Calvados, Basse-Normandie Region, France	
	
Remains of Deux Jumeaux Airfield after dismantling	
	
Coordinates	49°20′52″N 000°58′50″W﻿ / ﻿49.347778°N 0.980556°W﻿ / 49.347778; -0.980556
Type	Military Airfield
Site information	
Controlled by	 United States Army Air Forces
Site history	
Built by	IX Engineering Command
In use	June–September 1944
Materials	Square-Mesh Track (SMT)
Battles/wars	<div><div><div></div><div>World War II - EAME Theater</div></div><ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normandy Campaign Northern France Campaign</div>
Garrison information	
Garrison	 Ninth Air Force
Occupants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 48th Fighter Group
Airfield information	
Runways	
Direction	Length and surface
11/29	5,000 feet (1,520 m) SMT/PSP
One runway, 4 alert pads, 50 hardstands ^[1]	



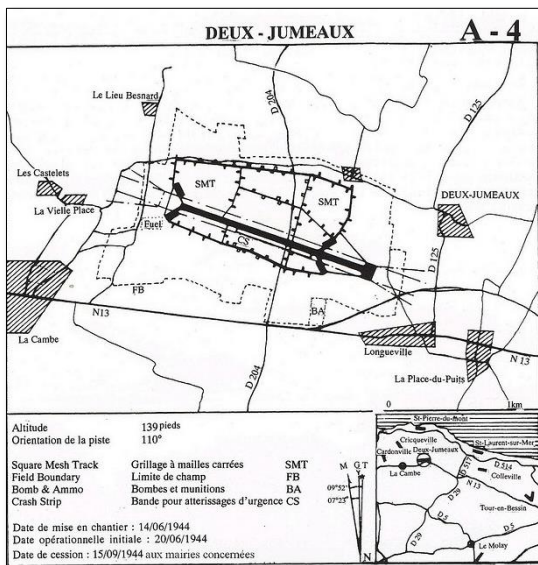
Known as Advanced Landing Ground "A-4", the airfield consisted of a single 5000' (1500m) Square-Mesh Track runway aligned 11/29. In addition, tents were used for billeting and also for support facilities; an access road was built to the existing road infrastructure; a dump for supplies, ammunition, and gasoline drums, along with a drinkable water and minimal electrical grid for communications and station lighting.



The fighter planes flew support missions during the Allied invasion of Normandy, patrolling roads in front of the beachhead; strafing German military vehicles and dropping bombs on gun emplacements, anti-aircraft artillery and concentrations of German troops in Normandy and Brittany when spotted.

The main unit using Deux Jummeaux airfield was the 48th Fighter Group, however, it was also used by the P-38 Lightnings of the 485th Squadron of the 370th Fighter Group from RAF Andover in Hampshire, England in late July 1944. The lack of airfields built in France led to a lack of space at the beginning of the Battle of Normandy. The staff of the 9th Air Force, under pressure from SHAEF to "explode" the sacred unity of the 48th Group was ordered to send squadrons to different fields already well established.

After the Americans moved east into Central France with the advancing Allied Armies, the airfield was left un-garrisoned and used for resupply and casualty evacuation. The airfield was abandoned on 15 September 1944. By 1947 the airfield had almost completely disappeared. Only the outlines of the runways and taxi tracks were still visible. Today is it almost indistinguishable from the surrounding fields.



The remains of A-4 Deux Jumeaux were still visible on 28 August 1947, nearly 3 years after the Allies had abandoned the airfield (IGN)



From this photo, taken in 2005, nothing of the former airfield could be made out (Google Earth)



Only a small monument reminds of the airfield and the men that flew from it.

In late July 1944, attacks from the air helped the First Army break through the German positions at Saint-Lô, France. In saturation attacks, the 48th struck tanks, convoys, gun positions, and ammunition dumps as the allied ground forces pushed the German army back.

Keeping up with the front lines, the 48th was constantly on the move. It arrived at Villacoublay Airfield (A-42), France, on 29 August, Cambrai/Niergnies Airfield (A-47), France, on 15 September, and Sint-Truiden Airfield (A-92), Belgium, on 30 September.



Saint-Lo – July 1944

Villacoublay Airfield, France – August 29, 1944

Location		Villacoublay, France	
Elevation AMSL		584 ft / 178 m	
Coordinates		48°46'23"N 002°11'59"E	
Map			
Location of Vélizy – Villacoublay Air Base			
Runways			
Direction	Length		Surface
	m	ft	
09/27	1,813	5,948	Asphalt
11/29	1,212	4,000	Closed

Villacoublay Air Base was built prior to World War II as a French Air Force facility. Seized by the Germans in June 1940 during the Battle of France, Villacoublay was used as a Luftwaffe military airfield during the occupation. Known units assigned (all from Luftflotte 3, Fliegerkorps IV):

- Kampfgeschwader 55 (KG 55) 21 June 1940 – 16 June 1941 Heinkel He 111P/H (Fusalage Code: G1+)
- Kampfgeschwader 27 (KG 27) Jun-July 1940 Heinkel He 111P (Fusalage Code: 1G+)
- Aufklärungsgruppe 14 (AFG 14) Nov 1940-May 1941 Junkers Ju 88
- Jagdfliegerschule 5 (JFS 5) Jun 1941-24 February 1943 Messerschmitt Bf 109
- Jagdgeschwader 105 (JG 105) 25 February-31 August 1943 Messerschmitt Bf 109
- Jagdgeschwader 54 (JG 54) 7 June-5 September 1944 Focke-Wulf Fw 190A

KG 55 and KG 27 took part in the Battle of Britain; AFG 14's was the photoreconnaissance organization; JFS 5 was a training unit for Bf 109 pilots; JG 105 and JG 54 were day interceptor units used against Eighth Air Force heavy bombers.

Villacoublay was attacked on several occasions by heavy bombers of both the United States Army Air Force Eighth and Fifteenth Air Forces during 1943 and early 1944. Largely due to its use as a base for Bf-109 and Fw-190 interceptors, when Eighth Air Force heavy bombers (B-17s, B-24s) were within interception range of the Luftwaffe aircraft assigned to the base, Villacoublay would also be attacked by USAAF Ninth Air Force B-26 Marauder medium bombers and P-47 Thunderbolts mostly with 500-pound General-Purpose bombs, unguided rockets and .50 caliber machine gun sweeps. The attacks were timed to have the maximum effect possible to keep the interceptors pinned down on the ground and be unable to attack the heavy bombers. Also the P-51 Mustang

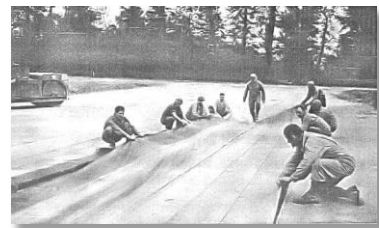


fighter-escort groups of Eighth Air Force would drop down on their return to England and attack the base with a fighter sweep attacking any target of opportunity to be found at the airfield. The aerial reconnaissance photograph on the previous page taken on May 30, 1944, shows numerous bomb craters including several direct hits to the runway.

Villacoublay was liberated by Allied ground forces about 27 August 1944 during the Northern France Campaign. Almost immediately, the USAAF IX Engineer Command 818th Engineer Aviation Battalion began clearing the base of mines and destroyed Luftwaffe aircraft; filling bomb craters in the runway with rubble and an asphalt patch along with repairing operational facilities for use by American aircraft. Subsequently, Villacoublay became a USAAF Ninth Air Force combat airfield, designated as "A-42" about 30 August, only a few days after its capture from German forces.

Almost immediately, the 48th Fighter Group moved into the repaired air base, flying P-47 Thunderbolts from 29 August until 15 September 1944. The combat unit moved east along with the advancing Allied forces and Villacoublay became a supply and maintenance base for combat aircraft, becoming the home of the 370th Air Service Group and several Air Materiel squadrons from Air Technical Service Command. It was also given the designation of AAF-180.

After the war ended, Villacoublay remained under American control, designated as AAF Station Villacoublay. It was assigned to the United States Air Forces in Europe as a transport base by the C-47 Skytrain-equipped 314th Troop Carrier Group. It remained under USAFE control until 31 August 1946 when it was returned to the French Air Force.



Cambrai-Niergnies Airport
Aerodrome de Cambrai-Niergnies
Advanced Landing Ground (ALG) A-74
IATA: none – ICAO: LFYG

Summary

Location Cambrai, France
Elevation AMSL 312 ft / 95 m
Coordinates 50°08′08″N 003°15′53″E

Map

Runways

Direction	Length		Surface
	ft	m	
09/27	2,953	900	Asphalt

Cambrai/Niergnies Airfield (A-47), France – September 15, 1944

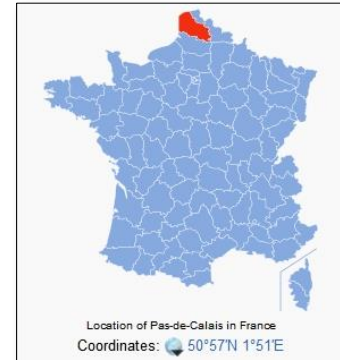
Air field Cambrai-Niergnies (Aèrodrome de Cambrai-Niergnies, also known as ALG A-74, ICAO: LFYG) is an airfield 3 miles southeast of Cambrai, in Nord-Pas de Calais, France. The airfield was built as a civilian airport before World War II, consisting of a terminal, hangar, some support buildings and a grass airfield.

It was seized by the Germans in late May of 1940 during the Battle of France, and used as a fighter airfield by Jagdgeschwader (JG) 3 in the Blitzkrieg against the French Army and the British Expeditionary Force. After the battle was over, the Germans did not use the airfield for several years.

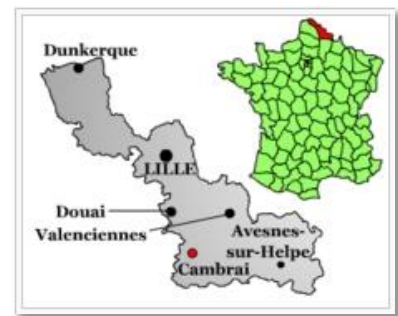


In this October 1, 1940 reconnaissance photo the unpaved air field is barely visible as seen in the development planning map on the right.

In 1943 the Germans began building up the airfield, giving it two 1600meter all-weather concrete runways, oriented 15/33 and 09/26, and a large number of dispersals, hangars and other facilities. Presumably this was due to the fortification of the Pas-de-Calais, being believed by the Germans that when the Americans and British tried to land in France to open a Second Front, the airfield would have a key role in the defense of France. Of course a target of this magnitude could not be ignored by the USAAF who sent the Ninth Air Force to attack the airfield on 1st and 2nd December 1943 with B-26 Marauder medium bombers (322d, 387th Bombardment Groups), severely damaging the facility. The damage was so extensive the Germans did not use the airfield again.



American Ninth Army units moved through the area in early September 1944, heading towards Cambrai. On 10 September the IX Engineer Command 862d Engineer Aviation Battalion moved in and began a quick rehabilitation of the base so it could be used by American aircraft. The engineers filled bomb craters and laid Pierced Steel Planking over the damaged areas of the 15/33 runway, and patched the 08/26 runway with asphalt and tarmac. In addition to the airfield, tents were used for billeting and also for support facilities; an access road was built to the existing road infrastructure; a dump for supplies, ammunition, and gasoline drums, along with a drinkable water and minimal electrical grid for communications and station lighting. It was



It was

declared operationally ready for Ninth Air Force combat units on 12 September, only a few days after its capture from German forces, being designated as Advanced Landing Ground "A-74 Cambrai/Niergnies.

The first two weeks it was used by P-47s of the 48th Fighter Group. From October until 2 May 1945 it was home to B-26 medium bombers of the 394th Bomb Group (Ninth Air Force).



Cambrai/Niergnies Air Field as it appears today.

Missions from France included close support for advancing ground troops. They were often directed by the lead tank in a battalion or a small reconnaissance plane. Among other targets they were often called on to take out enemy tanks hiding in hedgerows or machine gun installations in church towers allowing allied advances. With each P-47 capable of delivering 600 pounds of lead per minute the enemy didn't stand a chance.