

A HISTORY OF THE 306th BOMBARDMENT GROUP - EIGHTH AIR FORCE
Russell A. Strong, Rt. 1, Scotch Meadows Dr. Laurinburg, NC 28352

Name BENEDETTO J. BENIGNO
Address 1275 ROCK AVE, NORTH PLAINFIELD N.J. 07060 Apt. C 6
Telephone 201-754-8629 Date OCT 12, 1978
Occupation DISABLED - HEART TROUBLE Employer prior to this I worked as a Probation Officer in N.Y.C. & later as a Home builder & construction Superintendent
Address _____ Telephone _____
Service Record: Serial No(s) 32 22 25 39

Before joining the 306th:

Radio School - Scott Field - Then - to Kendrick Field
FLA - in 1st phase Combat training - then Boise Idaho 2nd Phase -
AINSWORTH Nebraska 3rd Phase - Biggs Field Texas for 4th phase.
After leaving the 306th: + then to Kansas to pick up new
plane & bring same plane to England via Southern route -
Puerto Rico - Tunndal - Brazil - Bathurst Africa, French Morocco
& then England

306th Record:

Arrival Date early March 1943 Squadron or other unit 368th
MOS _____ Combat Status Radio Oper. Gunner
Missions Completed 4 - shot down on 5th
Promotions Tech / Sgt.
Decorations ✓ AM olcs DFC olcs SS DSM DSC MH SM
PH Battle Stars Purple Heart - (minor wound) other _____

Other personal data: — 1st Lt. Reginald Wigglesworth a member of my crew resided in N.Y.C. - Manhattan area.

1st Sgt Donald Bevins - co-author of Stalag 17 - worked in Sardi's Restaurant Manhattan as a caricaturist. - I feel Don Bevins is your best bet for further information.

Description of Air Missions:

(What were the highlights of your combat career? What was your role? What heroics did you witness? What events were there of which you have special knowledge?)

On the mission over Bremen - despite severe damage to plane we did make our bomb run & released bombs successfully.

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MISSING AIRCRAFT REPORT

Pilot FIRST Lt JANKOWSKI - ^{Co-Pilot} Wm Scheil ^{1st Lt.} Plane # and Name can't recall name may have been the "BAD PENNIE"
Mission Date 4-17-43 Target BREMEN
Cause of loss: AA fire Fighter attack Other, explain _____

Describe conditions in the plane as completely as you can:

PLANE hit by ACK ACK + Fighter planes on way in to target. INTERCOM FINALLY out oxygen out - PLANE'S CONTROLS DAMAGED - tail gunner + waist gunner killed by ack ack + gun fire - ball turret gunner ^{Staff} Sgt Charles Bell badly wounded + in shock (came out of his turret) when plane was out of control. Waist gunner ~~turret~~ Staff Sgt Iselnett came to radio compartment + told me to leave plane (he had a bottle of oxygen). I was reacting very slowly because of lack of oxygen.

How and where did you leave plane?

I was thrown out of plane - came to in the air (blacked out while trying to get up after plane went into dive). Plane disintegrated. - Came down in Emden.

What happened when you got on the ground?

2 Soldiers with drawn guns + many townspeople surrounded me + took me prisoner seconds after I landed.

Did you meet any of your crew mates?

~~None~~ Of my crewmates 3 were killed - Sgt Chinkund, Staff Sgt. Charles Bell + waist gunner (Nick - last name not recalled - it was his 1st mission - met him just prior to take-off).

How were you treated, if captured?

Fairly well I first later never enough food - was in 3 P.O.W. Camps, after leaving Interrogation Camp in Frankfurt. - Camps were Stalag Luft 3, Stalag ~~III~~ VII A, Stalag Luft I + STALAG 17.

Any additional details, reminiscences, letters, or documents of these events would be appreciated. If you do send such materials, I will copy them and put them back in the mail to you within 24 hours.