

George Russell

*You may wish to place this
in your file - John H.W.*

Rt. 2 Chulio Road
Kingston, Ga, 30145
7 March 1983

Dear John;

Your friend "Hap" Chandler used the term "mission briefing" in suggesting that I drop you a line. A somewhat unique opening between a couple of unknowns. There is however a mutual framework for correspondence. To this end I'll set the scene and present my boni-fides.

I retired from the USAF in 1962. This 20 year stint included a tour of combat with the 306th Bomb Group, Thurleigh, England, as a Ball Turret Gunner during the period 10 July through 26 November 1943. Following the tour I was sent to Bovington, the 1st and/or 11th Combat Crew Replacement Center, where I instructed ball turret operation for 3 months before returning to the U.S. via the troopship George Washington out of Liverpool via Chorley Wood. Met my wife-to-be ^{while at} at Bovington. She was in the WRNS working with what is now known as the "Enigma" crypto machine, a part of the "Ultra" intelligence network.

My original left waist gunner, Oscar Krigbaum, was severely wounded and became the 1st. Sergeant of the 368th Squadron for the duration. He received the Silver Star by virtue of remaining at, and firing his waist gun, for several hours after being wounded. After the war he was discharged with 100% disability. In the motion picture "Memphis Belle" (it was shown locally several weeks ago) he is the gunner shown lying in the fuselage. He winked at the camera.

I've enclosed a copy of my "raid sheet". It shows the missions were all flown with the 423rd (@ Grim Reapers). it's not entirely correct since my first 6 raids were flown with the 368th Sqdn and we (the crew) were transferred to the 423 because it had been wiped out. I differentiated between me and the crew because the policy was to split up crews for the first five raids.. I've always understood that the crew of the Memphis Belle was the first to complete a tour intact. At any rate at that time I believe I became the most senior ball turret gunner in the 306th. Heady stuff for an 18 year old! "Snuffy" Smith had quit flying after his 5th raid, as I recall. I flew my first raids in the B-17E, Eager Beaver, the 368th namesake.

I do not believe my perception of the events has changed. I remember more warts than beauty spots.

On my first raid, 10 July, feeling I lacked the expertise, I asked the ground armorer to install my guns. (Barrels, barrel extensions. oil buffer assembly and bolts.) He accomplished the job-except he put the bolt switches in backwards and the charging cables came to a clanging halt after about 4 inches of travel! Pure terror that raid- in spite of the fact that I

believe it was the groups first raid during which NO fighters were encountered. I was later to learn, and believe, the Abbeyville Kids always got an engine or airplane. Snap rolling through a group and during a headon pass must have been a "gas" for those pilots! I did digress there didn't I. At any rate, all things being relative I have never since been really frightened and for the record my guns became ~~was~~ an object of great pride- and there were cartridges in the chambers at take-off. I still have the square, hard, Washita stone hone with which I polished my bolts-often. On the subject of guns rust was a major concern and as I recall we went to the "armourers" tent each morning and cleaned the guns of any rust. It would sometimes accumulate over night. The non-freezing, tripple seven oil had not been introduced and many guns (specifically the oil buffer assemblies) would freeze at altitude. As I recall the number of operational guns were routinely reported on during debrëäfing.

Was there ever any reports from the Germans on the actual numbers of flak shells shot during any specific raid? Although our crew did not call out flak the word recalls a most vivid memory of the first daylight raid to Happy Valley, 12 August. Shown on my sheet as the "Ruhr" I believe the briefed target was actually Gelsenkirchen. Even after 40 years I believe the numbers to be absolutely accurate and here's my perception of the event-

The flak overlay for the Ruhr Valley was kidney shaped and the target was located in the constricture, some $3\frac{1}{2}$ minutes across. The briefed plan was to bomb the target on an easterly course, get out of the flak after $3\frac{1}{2}$ minutes, skirt the flak area and return home. Instead we flew in the flak 3 minutes (including the redoubtable 55 second bomb run) and while still in the flak turned south for 9 minutes, did a 180 and flew north and finally exited at our original entry point! 27 (twenty seven) minutes of continous tracking flak in the ~~was~~ most heavily defended flak area in the world. Fighters attacked through the flak and I saw one disappear during a head-on attack-no debrëäis! The ground was nearly obscured with smoke when we exited! The bombs were strewn all over the place and it appeared to me that some seemed to roll off the bomb bay doors. Some evasive action! To this day, even now, the rumor that our objective was to destroy flak batteries by having them burn up their barrals retains a great deal of validity? Why not? I have often thought that there should be a contest to determine if a better excuse could be thought of! There surely should be some prize explanations for that 27 minutes! I have always felt they put Ruhr (instead of the real target name) to account for the bomb pattern, *all over!*

Miscellaneous thoughts: The 306th was the first group to complete one hundred raids. I guess it was prior to the establishment of the presidential unit citation but all crew members were given commendation letters for the raids of 8th, 9th, 10th and 14 October reflecting congratulations etc from Churchill, Marshal. Portal, Arnold, Anderson and Williams. T/Sgt. Roskovitch was the first man to complete 25 missions in the 8th AF. He was in the 306th. He was killed in an accident at Prestwick Scotland later on.

(3)

In reviewing an old set of orders awarding Air Medals (G.O. 112 Hq VIII Bomber Command 2 August 1943) and containing the names of some 80 individuals I was astonished to realize that only EM were assigned to Squadrons! The officer crew members were assigned to groups. I can't think of why that should have been.

I was even more astonished to read that losses are rounded out thousands. (e.g. 47000/26000) the implication has to be that ~~xxxxxxx~~ recorded losses are plus or minus 100 bombers! Incredible in light of the classified USAAF Strategic Bombing Survey that was compiled immediately following the war. Dates, targets, objectives, materials destroyed, enemy man-hours effected but not American fliers! Truly astonishing!

In preparing this letter I surely have exercised my recall process. Names and events have surfaced that I thought were lost forever. I mention this because my hobby for many years has been the "Lichfield" trials and their impact on the American military. I can now understand why events now historically highlighted were buried in everyday events and recall doesn't necessarily involve "important" events by today's standards or "desire to know." As a very humorous case in point. Specks on ball turret glass-pilot dumping on bomb-bay door (before the mission and the C.O. ordered him to clean it up afterwards). I remember that pilots first and last name but I couldn't recall the target of a mission on which we straggled all the way and had between 35 to 40 direct fighter attacks on our aircraft! I had recalled it as my 22nd raid but from the target sheet it must have been my 21st, to Coesfield.

Since this is just a friendly letter I shan't rewrite or edit but I shall take the liberty of sending a copy to the 306th contact and to "Hap". *hoping to meet you in May in Atlanta.*

Sincerely Yours

John T. Brinkman
John T. Brinkman

P.S. To Wm M. Collins

What was the name of the pub in the vicinity of Thurleigh at which Gerald Fitzgerald had translated the Rubiat of Omar Kyam?

JTB

P.P.S. I just found a handwritten letter that I wrote to my mother telling her of the names of my crew members and that the crew was formed that day - 7 Mar 1943, 40 years ago

JTB

C-O-L-D-B-A-T O-P-P-R-A-T-I-O-N-A-L M-I-S-S-I-O-N-S

NAME BRINKMAN, JOHN T. SQUADRON 423rd Bomb Sq (H)
 RANK S/Sgt. GROUP 306th Bomb Gp (H)
 DUTY Gunner SERIAL NUMBER _____

DATE	GROUP MISSION NUMBER	INDIVID MISSION NUMBER	REMARKS	TIME	TOTAL TIME
July 10	52	1	Caen-carpiquet	4:50	4:50
14	53	2	Villacoublay	5:15	10:05
17	54	3	Holland	4:35	14:40
24	55	4	Heroya <i>Norway</i>	9:00	23:40
26	56	5	Hanover	6:50	30:30
29	58	6	Kiel	6:35	37:05
Aug. 12	59	7	Ruhr	5:30	42:35
15	60	8	Flushing	3:50	46:25
16	61	9	Paris	4:45	51:10
17	62	10	Schweinfurt	6:30	57:40
19	63	11	Flushing	4:00	61:40
31	66	12	Romilly	5:00	66:40
Sept. 3	67	13	Romilly	5:45	72:25
6	68	14	Stuttgart	7:45	80:10
7	69	15	Brussels	4:30	84:40
9	70	16	Lille	4:45	89:25
15	71	17	Romilly	6:00	95:25
16	72	18	Nantes	7:50	103:15
Oct. 8	77	19	Bremen	6:00	109:15
9	78	20	Gdynia <i>Poland</i>	10:00	119:55
10	79	21	Coesfeld	5:30	125:25
14	80	22	Schweinfurt	4:35	130:00
Nov. 3	82	23	Wilhelmshaven	5:45	135:45
5	83	24	Gelsenkirchen	5:20	141:05
26	86	25	Bremen	6:45	147:50

Rt. 2 Chulio Road
Kingston, Ga. 30145
8 April 1983

My Dear Mr. Strong;

I received my copy of "First Over Germany". It brought back memories of my tour as a Ball Turret gunner during the period July thru November 1943. Thoroughly enjoyable despite the fact that my pilot Charles E. Munger is identified as "Clarence". Undoubtedly an error as confirmed by the presence of Barton and Parks on the crew. If the "Eager Beaver" ser. no. 124454 is not a B-17E I'll bet I'm not the only one who is truly astonished! Its picture appeared as the backdrop for a picture of the group officers ~~xxxx~~ in the July 82 Echoes. I have the same picture showing the 368th Sqdn personnel and the serial number is clearly visible. Using a carbine as a negotiating sweetener I traded the old ball turret receivers for new ones because the extractor switches were nearly rusted through. I hadn't cleared the action through the Sqdn maintenance people before I removed them and they were quite upset until I told them the name of the officer involved and fortunately it turned out to be the Group Armament Officer!

I can empathize with your effort as regards the 306th history. My hobby for many years has been Lichfield #6000 plus American Army deserters-the very public post-war trials and the attendant influence on military justice. It gives me a feeling for the type of information that fits into your research, along with a full recognition of the shadows that 40 years casts over recollections! When I reach those loose ends of research in mine I'd like to make some contributions to yours by way of relieving frustrations! ha ha

(It took me 5 years to sort out the confusion associated with Lt. General Henry Vaughan!)

Heroya, Norway 24 July 1943 Page 142 & 143

They still held specialized gunnery briefings and on this occasion we were told that there was a German fighter pilot's rest home on the "southern tip of Norway" but there were no further details as to the type or number of fighters that could be expected. (note: I think its worth while to expound the generally accepted "rules" of that era. The primary objective of a gunner was to turn a fighter "off" before he committed himself to a pursuit curve, the condition that assured that his projectiles were striking your aircraft. Tracers provided that deterrent. To my knowledge the shooting down of fighters, was never an objective except that you failed to turn them, in which case the ballistics geometry of the "pursuit curve" were well understood. The skeet practice enhanced tracking skills, the feature that put dynamics in the ballistics geometry.)

(2)

At the main or general briefing we were told that the target was a fertilizer (nitrate) factory whose output was being used for munitions. As peculiar as it may sound I believe we were alerted to look for an experimental (or training) German aircraft carrier when overflying water. I seem to have the notion that we were told that it was being used to transport heavy water, from the Knaben mines. We didn't see it. (Having written it , it looks unbelievable!)

The bombing was done during the lunch hour while the Norwegian workers were away from their work locations. At a later date we were advised that very few (3 if I remember correctly) were killed. We were also told that fact made a great impression with the locals, as much as did the accuracy of the bombing. I do recall this information was passed out by a briefing officer. Obviously it would have come out through the underground.

We dropped out of formation and escorted the aircraft described in your book, back. We had a number of attacks by FW-190's. Because we were flying in scud the attacks were from low. We had a number of them from the rear. They'd duck down in the scud as soon as the tail gunner fired and "pop-up" closer in. We also had two firing passes from 11 O'clock that broke off at 7. The first was reported to have blown up and the second went into a flat spin. I watched the other crew dump stuff out the left waist window. Even now I can visualize the ammunition belts.

I heard, as a rumor, that my pilot (Charles E. Munger) got some form of reprimand for leaving the formation. His address was noted in an issue of 306th Echoes and I'll send him a copy of this letter. Perhaps he'll comment.

Following my tour I instructed ball turret for 3 months at Bovington. One day while there I overheard an officer talking about that mission. ~~xxxxxxx~~ I said something like "I flew ball on the airplane that brought you back." He turned and walked away. An enigmatic response I've often pondered.

I'm enclosing a set of commendations from Churchill, Marshal, Arnold and Eaker that was forwarded to crew members by endorsement by Anderson, Williams and Robinson.

Sincerely
John Brinkman
John Brinkman

P.S. I was disappointed ~~xxx~~ that you only propounded the "Pollard" system of gunnery e.g Pursuit curve sans tracers. As far as I know, and rethinking the situation in retrospect, it was and is exactly analogous to the situation in which increased ~~xxxxxx~~ bombing accuracy was attempted by bombing at 7000 feet. That is to say poorly thought out wizardry!

JTB
They took out the tracers ^{of word.} Consider, had they removed the oxygen system the aircraft would have flown faster, gunners less encumbered with equipment and therefore more accurate. ka ka ka ka etc etc etc. Decreased fire hazard, increased bomb load, . . . - yeh!

2nd Ind.

A-1/G-3

HQ, 1ST BOMB. DIVISION, APO 634, 16 October 1943.

TO: All Personnel, Air and Ground, of the 1st Bombardment Division.

My hearty congratulations on these well earned commendations.

/s/
/t/

ROBERT B. WILLIAMS
ROBERT B. WILLIAMS,
Brigadier General, U.S.A.,
Commanding.

4 Incls;
n/c

3rd Ind.

HQ, 306TH BOMB GP (H), APO 634, 21 Oct 1943.

TO: JOHN T. BRINKMAN, S/Sgt, 13073081, 423rd Bomb Sq (H), 306th Bomb Gp (H), APO 634, Aerial Gunner, B-17, No. 42-30841, on mission to Bremen, Germany, 8 Oct 1943; No. 42-30199, on mission to Gdynia, Poland, 9 Oct 1943; No. 42-3515, on mission to Coesfeld, Germany, 10 Oct 1943; No. 42-30812, on mission to Schweinfurt, Germany, 14 Oct 1943.

1. Attached herete are commendations from Prime Minister Winston Churchill; Air Chief Marshal Portal, Chief of Air Staff, RAF; General Marshall, Chief of Staff, US Army; General Arnold, Commanding General, Army Air Forces; Lt General Eaker, Commanding General, Eighth Air Force; Brigadier General Andersen, Commanding General, VIII Bomber Command; and Brigadier General Williams, Commanding General, 1st Bombardment Division.

2. I am proud to give you these commendations as I realize more than anyone else what you went through to earn them and that they were honestly earned and earned the hard way.

George L. Robinson
GEORGE L. ROBINSON,
Colonel, AC,
Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS
EIGHTH AIR FORCE
APO 633

12 October 1943.

SUBJECT: Commendations

TO : Commanding General, VIII Bomber Command,
" " VIII Fighter Command,
" " VIII Air Support Command.

1. Inclosed herewith are copies of commendations received from the Prime Minister; Air Chief Marshal Portal, Chief of Air Staff, R/A; from the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, General Marshal; and from the Commanding General, Army Air Forces, General Arnold. In my opinion, every officer and man of the Eighth Air Force who participated in the great air offensive which has been waged during the past ten (10) days should be fully advised of those estimates which the highest Government and Military leaders place on their work. If it is administratively possible, I think that every participating combat crew member should receive a letter from his Commander stating that he participated in these great air battles and that, therefore, he is entitled to a personal copy of these commendations.

2. Last Sunday, October 10th, after seeing the pictures of the effort of the preceding Saturday and particularly the destructive effects on the German fighter factories at Anklam and Marienburg, I sent a cable to General Arnold, from which the following is a quotation:

"Marienburg undoubtedly destroyed. It will be a better example of pinpoint bombing, better concentration even than Regensburg. It looks like a perfect job. Believe you will find October 9th a day to remember in the air war. The Prime Minister is sending message to crews."

Subsequent examination of photographs supports this estimate.

3. Convey to all your officers and men my unbounded admiration for the courage and boldness with which they pushed their attacks into enemy territory and the accuracy and skill with which they disposed of their targets. They have, by their effort, won the respect and admiration of the Air leaders of Britain and that great band of fighting men, the Royal Air Force. They have outfought a tough, experienced and battle-trying enemy. Their success has altered the course of the war and hastened its favorable conclusion.

/s/ IRA C. EAKER
Lieut. General, U.S.A.,
Commanding.

4 Incls.

1st Incl.

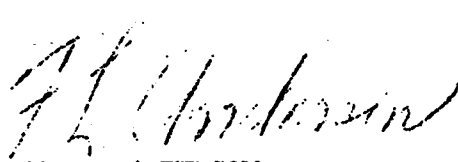
(B)

HEADQUARTERS VIII BOMBER COMMAND, APO 634, 13 October 1943.

TO: Combat Personnel of the VIII Bomber Command.

1. It is my privilege to be the instrument of bringing directly to you as individuals the comments and commendations from these distinguished sources.

2. Such expressions of appreciation of your efforts are extremely gratifying.


F. L. ANDERSON
Brigadier General, U. S. Army
Commanding

4 Incls.
n/c

COPY

COPY

10 Downing Street
Whitehall.

PRIME MINISTER TO GENERAL EAKER:

I shall be obliged if you will convey to General Eaker and his Command the thanks of the British War Cabinet for the magnificent achievements of the 8th Air Force in the Battle of Germany in recent days culminating in their remarkable successes of last week.

In broad daylight the crews of your bombers have fought their way through the strongest defence which the enemy could bring against them and have ranged over the length and breadth of Germany, striking with deadly accuracy many of the most important hostile industrial installations and ports.

Your bombers and the fighters which support them in these fierce engagements have inflicted serious losses on the German Air Force, and by forcing the enemy to weaken other fronts have contributed notably to the successes of the Allied arms everywhere.

The War Cabinet extend their congratulations also to the ground crews of the 8th Air Force without whose technical skill and faithful labor these feats of arms would not be possible.

I am confident that with the ever-growing power of the 8th Air Force, striking alternate blows with the Royal Air Force Bomber Command, we shall together inexorably beat the life out of the industrial Germany and thus hasten the day of final victory.

Initials - W.C.

INCOMING MESSAGE
HEADQUARTERS EIGHTH AIR FORCE

IN REPLY CITE: A 105

DATED: 11 OCTOBER 1943

FROM: AIR MINISTRY WHITEHALL

TO: AIR

Personal for General Eaker from C A S

I should be grateful if you would pass to your squadrons an expression of my deep admiration for their splendid achievements over Germany during the last few days.

I know I am speaking for the whole of The Royal Air Force in offering you our heartiest congratulations and expressing our full confidence in evergrowing success for your command in the future.

PORTAL

COPY

COPY

COPY

COPY

INCOMING MESSAGE
ETOUSA

FROM: AGWAR
TO : ETOUSA FOR ACTION

REF NO. R-4219
DATED: OCT 111545Z

Interior Addresses: To : DEVERS
For : EAKER
From : MARSHALL

During the past few days the series of brilliant punishing blows which the crews of the Eighth Air Force have been delivering far into the interior of Germany are producing a devastating effect on German military power and the morale of the German people. Please give my congratulations and personal thanks to your gallant flight crews.

INCOMING MESSAGE
HEADQUARTERS EIGHTH AIR FORCE

IN REPLY CITE: R 4218

DATED: 11 OCT

FROM: AGWAR
TO : ANW

Internal Address: From: ARNOLD
For: EAKER

Long mission into Baltic and attacks on distant German objectives in Poland shows the world your growing ability to hit the enemy wherever you choose.

Well done.

The employment of larger bombing forces on successive days is encouraging proof that you are putting an increasing proportion of your bombers where they will hurt the enemy.

Good work.

As you turn your effort away from ship building cities and toward crippling the sources of the still growing German fighter forces the air war is clearly moving toward our supremacy in the air.

Carry on.

COPY

COPY

23 August 1983

Mr. John Brinkman
Rt. 32, Chulio Road
Kingston, GA 30145

Dear John:

I have been receiving your materials and reading through them, and then the thought occurred that you are certainly able and might be willing to do a piece for 306th Echoes.

I think that what I am looking for is a story about the life of the aerial gunner/

This might well include life in the barracks, food, caring for the guns, missions, trainer time, skeet shooting, and some of the free time.

Length is not a serious consideration. I would like the subject covered rather thoroughly, and if it were too long for issue, could be carried into a second.

If you do wish to undertake such a writing chore, please double space the copy, as it is easier for both the editor and the type setter to work with it.

Also, I have no deadline to offer you. Just, when it is ready, I'll use it.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

Rt. 2 Chulio Road
Kingston Ga 30145
27 June 1983

My Dear Mr. Strong;

This is a follow-up to my letter of 8 April 83 recounting recollection of the raid to Herøya, Norway. Added detail to your account on pages 142 and 143 of "First over Europe."

Concerning our escorting that cripple back. I wrote to my pilot, Charles B. Munger and here is what he said; " I was flying co-pilot for George Reese and I didn't hear of him getting any static for staying with that cripple." I had thought Charlie was the pilot! I'll have more to say about George when I cover the 12 August raid to the Ruhr-It also was a first! As I recall the Herøya raid was only at about 12,000 feet and we were even lower on the return to base. We flew off the left wing of the cripple and had at least 5 fighter attacks from 6 and 11 o'clock. Doubtless they would have hit the cripple had we not been there. One can only speculate as to the outcome had we not been there. I was credited with destruction of 1 FW 190 ~~and~~ (it was reported to have blown up but I didn't see it) and 1 probable of damaged (I don't recall which). As regards the latter I did see him go into a flat spin and disappear in the scud.

I reread my last letter and see I forgot the punch line about those fighters. As I mentioned we had been told at the gunners briefing that there was a fighter pilots rest home in southern Norway and so we feared the worst. The worst being that they would be of the calibre of the Abbeyville Kids or the Checkerboards from up around Hanover and Bremen. Perhaps because we were flying by ourselves (escorting the cripple) the fighter attacks were made in a very amateurish fashion. That is to say at a very slow closing rate without evasive action during the firing pass (eg snap rolls a la yellowosers). They were more accurately marked as beginners because they didn't tip their wings and present their belly. The belly and wing armour would cause the tracers to bounce off quite frequently. Certainly that attitude provided greater protection for the fighter pilot and the experienced ones took it as soon as they quit firing.

I found a Stars and Stripes article about that raid and it reports the target was an aluminum plant. The reporters were very young too and now I'm sure it was a nitrate plant- ammonium nitrate! The plant had been or was being converted to produce explosives of which nitrate is a principal ingredient. I've enclosed a copy.

Page 220, the Gdynia Poland raid. The target was the German pocket cruiser the "Prinz Eugene" at least we dropped our bombs toward it. It was underway at flank speed going in a circle so we missed it, naturally. Although my target sheet says 10 hours the raid was 10½ hours long. I recall saying many times that I spent 10 consecutive hours in the ball turret- (good kidneys) and the pilot, who was Charlie Munger, said he flew formation for 10½ hours. We took off and climbed on course. Roy Ranck, the pilot of the crew that went down over Bournehalm Island had been Mungers original co-pilot from the states.

I've no doubt that the fact that I am of Norwegian extraction and my father was named Eugene made a contribution to my ability to recollect these two raids.

Some vignettes aside;

- It was reputed that a ~~gunner~~ by the name of McCellan was shot down in early 43- age 15. (368^{??})
- The fuel selector valve in the bomb bay could be positioned to vent fuel into the bombay(or overboard). It happened to us on one occasion in training. The flight engineer reached into the bombay and invertantly pumped 100 octane into the bombay for several minutes! Needless to say the ball turret opening acted like a big carbuerator! Fortunately we didn't blow! The radio was shut off, immediately!(Page 25)
- Subsequent to the departure from Wendover of the 306th, they started a Gunnery school there. 4½ miles north of the base. I attended it-October thru December 42. The dinkey engine pulling the cars with flexible 30 Caliber guns demonstrated the fact of so called "negative" lead, as opposed to shooting at, a moving targets from a stationary mount. Pollack didn't discover it! (page 20)
- In the summer of 43 a bombardier (name unknown) discharged a Thompson sub-machine gun in the 423rd living site and ppt a projectile into somebodys bed pillow. Subsequently he got shot with a 50 caliber bullet. After he got out of hospital, his preachments about careless gunnery were greeted with snide remarks! ha ha

I'm anxious to hear if you had ever seen copies of these individual commendation letters I sent you. They paint a much different picture than that reflected on page 173 of your book. They belong there if you ever rewrite.

Sincerely

John Brinkman
John Brinkman

NAME BRINKMAN, JOHN T. SQUADRON 423rd Bomb Sq (H)
 RANK S/Sgt. GROUP 306th Bomb Gp (H)
 DUTY Gunner SERIAL NUMBER _____

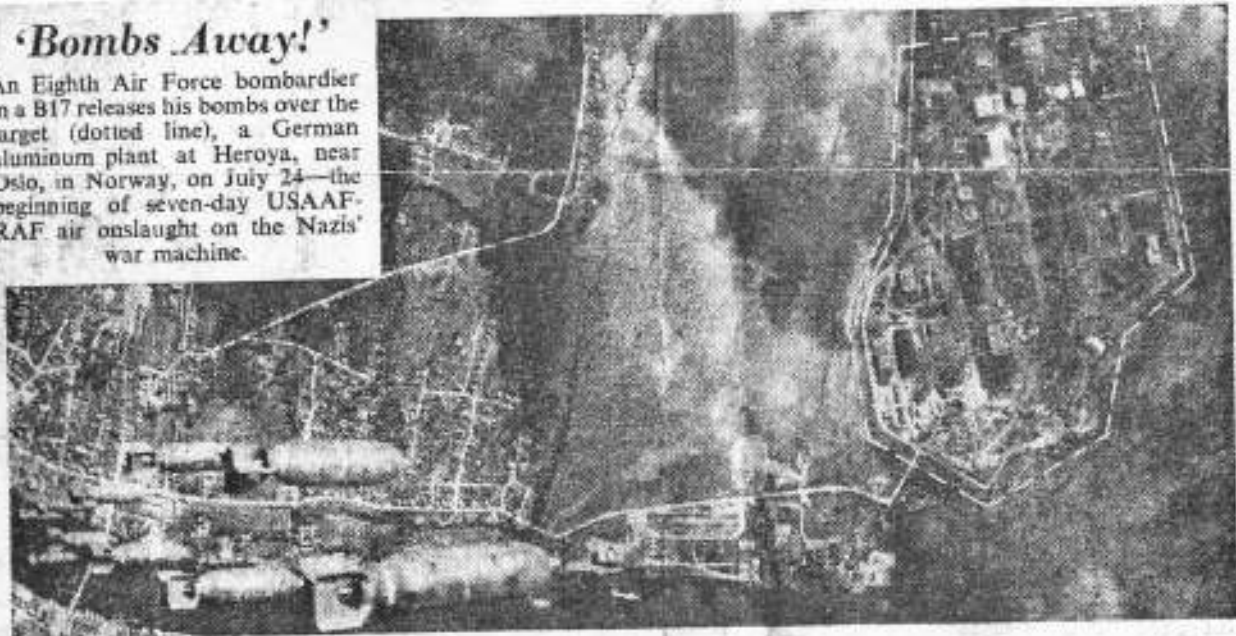
DATE	GROUP MISSION NUMBER	INDIVID MISSION NUMBER	REMARKS	TIME	TOTAL TIME
July 10	52	1	* Caen-Carpignat	4:50	4:50
14	53	2	Villacoublay	5:15	10:05
17	54	3	Holland	4:35	14:40
24	55	4	Heroya <i>NECKAR</i>	9:00	23:40
26	56	5	Hanover	6:50	30:30
29	58	6	Kiel	6:35	37:05
Aug. 12	59	7	★ Ruhr	5:30	42:35
15	60	8	Flushing	3:50	46:25
16	61	9	Paris	4:45	51:10
17	62	10	Schweinfurt	6:30	57:40
19	63	11	Flushing	4:00	61:40
31	66	12	Romilly	5:00	66:40
Sept. 3	67	13	Romilly	5:45	72:25
6	68	14	Stuttgart	7:45	80:10
7	69	15	Brussels	4:30	84:40
9	70	16	Lille	4:45	89:25
15	71	17	Romilly	6:00	95:25
16	72	18	Nantes	7:50	103:15
Oct. 8	77	19	Bremen	6:00	109:15
9	78	20	Gdynia <i>Poland</i>	10:00	119:55
10	79	21	Coesfeld	5:30	125:25
14	80	22	Schweinfurt	4:35	130:00
Nov. 3	82	23	Wilhelmshaven	5:45	135:45
5	83	24	Gelsenkirchen	5:20	141:05
26	86	25	Bremen	6:45	147:50

I think the 1st 7 raids were flown with the B68

** That's where the bombs dropped, approximately! he he*

'Bombs Away!'

An Eighth Air Force bombardier in a B17 releases his bombs over the target (dotted line), a German aluminum plant at Heroya, near Oslo, in Norway, on July 24—the beginning of seven-day USAAF-RAF air onslaught on the Nazis' war machine.



'Target Hit!'

A few seconds later and even before the bombs dropping in the picture above had hit the target, the aluminum factory was obscured in smoke from perfect hits by other Forts, as this picture shows. Note all bombs have landed inside the target area at this stage of the raid.



RT 2 Chulio Road
Kingston, Ga. 30145
Exactly 40 years after Hanover

My Dear Mr. Strong;

This letter is by way of advising you that S/Sgt Jay L. Bramen, left waist gunner, Mungers crew, 368th and 423rd Squadrons, passed away some four years ago. His tour, completed about 1 December 1943, included both Schweinfurt raids.

An appropriate requiescat would include the hope that he's wearing pink and green. Following his tour of combat he applied for a direct commission and when the board in London ask why, he replied; "I want to wear a pink and green uniform." What better answer?

The ball turret had a small glass viewing port, about four inches in diameter, that permitted observation of the waist area gun positions when the turret was pointed at six o'clock low- about 45 degrees. It had an independant oxygen supply. This is my most vivid recollection of J.L. George Reese was probably the pilot with Charlie Munger flying co-pilot. The bombardier was 1st. Lt. Leon (NMI) Feldman. I flew ball turret. The raid to Hanover on 26 July 1943 is described on pages 143, 144 and 145 of your book.

Our crew maintained superlative interphone discipline under all circumstances. We did not call out flak and there was never any discernable panic heard, or voiced, on it. Following hits and when enemy action permitted, we would have an "interphone" check". On this day the waist did not respond. I turned the turret and looked up through the port and saw that the right waist gunner was down with a bloody face. (T/Sgt. Oscar W. Krigbaum) Jay was leaning on the left waist gun mount in a very casual, relaxed manner. The gun muzzle was pointed straight up and he was obviously chewing gum in a nonchalant manner. His equally studied indifference to Krigbaum being down and a single engined fighter completing a firing pass from 7 o'clock high forms an indelible picture in my mind, even today. His head and eyes followed the fighter in an totally unconcerned manner. His eyebrows were frosted with ice-nearly the color of the turkish towel he wore as a muffler and to keep his rebreathing bag from freezing up. I could see an icy white frozen spot about the size of a nickle on his cheek bone-highlighted by the green of his mask. I checked in with the comment "right waist is down and Bramens' oxygen is out." I believe Charlie directed the bombardier to go back and check out the situation. Jay was unharmed and fully recovered.

I do not recall how much time had elapsed however the bombardier was ministering to Krigbaum when I climbed out of the ball. I didn't need oxygen so we must have been letting down over the channel(or England). I removed my "bunny" suit, placed it over Krigbaum and plugged it in. He had been hit in the chin which accounted for the blood on his face and it turned out he had also been hit in the chest. A piece of " low velocity" flak , about the size of your thumbnail, had hit him-over the target. It passed through his lung, nicked a heart artery and lodged against his shoulder blade. I believe his citation for the Silver Star states he remained at his station, firing his guns, for several hours after being wounded. In retrospect he was slumped to his knees the first time I saw he was hurt.

Ancillary information:

The raid was 6 hours 50 minutes long.

I wrote to his sister and told her he had been recommended for the DSC. When the citation was downgraded to the Silver Star it created some embarrassment.

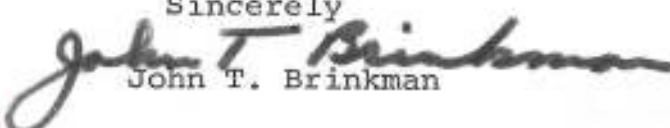
In the motion picture "Memphis Belle" he is shown lying in the waist and he grins at the camera. Incidentally I recently saw a model aircraft kit that said it was a B-17E. The "Eager Beaver" serial number 124454 was only a few numbers different from it-like 10 or so. I presume we were flying it that day.

Krigbaum remained with the 368th for the duration of the war as the "Gunners First Sergeant" or some such functionary. After the war he was discharged with 100% disability.

The bunny suits were lined with grey flannel and I got a lot of blood on mine that day. Subsequently, when suiting up in the drying room, I would strike a pose of studied indifference to the query "Whats that" and give some very blaise answer. Humor is humor, macabre or not! I may have been trying to angle for a new suit. While gloves and boots didn't cause serious problems,when they burned out,the suits did. They could and did cause terrible burns that took weeks to heal.

I believe the 306th was the first group to complete 100 missions- it was so advertised. I was then instructing ball turret at Bovington with the 11th CCRC (formerly 1st CCRC) Combat Crew Replacement Center that is.

Sincerely


John T. Brinkman

P.S. Page 20. Can't stand it!Your book reveals the sad truth that officers had no gunnery training and EM make no written contributions to officially recorded military history. The cumputing gunsights were more complex than the bombsight. The ballistic cams were not made by witchdoctors!

Rt. 2 Chulio Road
Kingston, Ga. 30145
22 September 1983

My Dear Mr. Strong:

Your suggestion to write an article about gunners is an excellent one. I'll work on it- or them.

Your book, page 165, 14 October 1943, Schweinfurt. ODDITY- We aborted but were credited with that raid. There was in fact a B-17 that aborted an hour or more earlier than us! Ironically it was jumped by a bunch -(30, a sqdn., or something)- of the old ME-109E's, the ones that still had the external empennage braces. As I recall it got shot up pretty badly. I seem to recollect that someones chest 'chute, laying in the waist, picked up an armour piercing 20MM-notable because it demonstrated the stopping power of the "chute! The appearance of this aged fighter type, so early in the raid, caused considerable comment and led to speculation as to wether or not "Jerry" was waiting.

In the quirky way fate operates, the misfortune that befell that crew was a piece of luck for us since it removed any question as to whether or not we would get credited with the mission. I believe the cut off criteria was to have crossed the coast, had flack shot at you, or been exposed to fighter attacks- there was a criteria.

The following vignette goes a long way in illustrating the subtle way in which inaccuracies can creep into a story for indeed there was never any "oil shooting over the ball turret", MY ball turret.

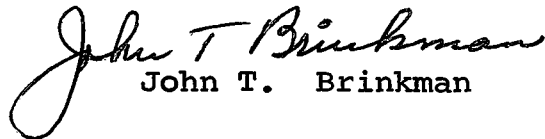
We were at altitude approaching the French coast when the pilot called for a crew check, as was our standard procedure. I reported that gobs of something were falling out of the engine. In the discussion that followed I explained that I could see that something was oozing from the engine onto the engine cowl flap, forming into balls, (larger than gold balls) and falling off. Left Waist, S/Sgt. Jay L. Bramen, was asked if he could see any oil on, or coming off, the wing to which he replied, "No." I don't believe it entered anyones mind at that point that it could be hot engine oil that was actually freezing up, forming solid balls and then dropping off! The pilot feathered the engine shortly thereafter. I presume he

(2)

did so because he lost oil pressure. It was not until after we landed and parked that more oil started draining out of the engine. The parked attitude of the aircraft apparently released oil that had accumulated around skin stiffeners and etc. When we were stopped this oil flowed toward the fuselage and onto the ball turret. Except for myself, nobody saw any oil until after we climbed out of the aircraft.

Watching from the waist window, it was apparent that the group of officers, that drove up in the jeep as we parked, were infuriated at our return. "Smiling Jack" Lambert is the only face I recall but the jeep was full. By the time we got out of the aircraft our "reception committee" had seen the oil draining out of the engine and were mollified. We got out and saw it and were very happy! Our abortion was justified! ha ha As an afterthought perhaps there was a big "anti-abortion" push on.

Sincerely


John T. Brinkman

P.S. On one raid, and I think it was this one, we carried 1,100⁺ navy bombs. I do not recall but such a bomb was used one time on my tour. They fit on the 1000⁺ bomb rack stations but were slightly longer.

Rt 2 Chulio Road
Kingston, Ga, 30145
1 January 1983

My Dear My. Strong;

Reference the book, page 151, 16 August 1943.
"...Colonel George L. Robinson took 20 to LeBourget airdrome outside Paris...." How innocuous! Perhaps in comparison to the next days raid on Schweinfurt it was insignificant. In retrospect however it quite possibly was as important to the strategic development of the bomber force as was the Schweinfurt raid. Certainly an event occurred that was on the minds of every general officer involved in evaluating strategic bombing. Far fetched perhaps? You decide-after careful thought! It appears to be a very well kept secret.

To set the stage you should be aware that at this time all aircraft encountered over Europe were enemy. Even B-17 were known to have been flown by German crews. There were rumors about them infiltrating the formations. Aircraft recognition was of no consideration. They, the fighters, could obviously be there only if they were from German bases. Of course I'm referring to fighters at high altitude.

This was the first time we had real escort. Not a diversion or a sweep but high cover by 30 P-47's that were to accompany us to a point 20 miles west of Paris at which point they were to leave us. At that point a fighter dove out of the sun from seven o'clock high and was shot down by a top turret gunner, T/Sgt Herman. (This is probably the Jack K. mentioned on page 162.) We continued on to the target which was on the eastern outskirts of Paris. You note in your book that an ME-109 was shot down, at some time during the raid, by a Sergeant DePietro.

It was a short raid, 4 hours 35 minutes, and following debriefing and our EGG we returned to the living site. In an unprecedented fashion we were recalled to some kind of an assembly room- probably the briefing room. There an obviously agitated Colonel Robinson advised us that we had shot down 4 P-47's and that the remaining 26 had ran out of fuel and ditched!

In my recollections I cannot recall the source of the following tale: It seems that a "Colonel from the Pacific" was doing the navigation for all the fighters and at the turning back point decided to take a close look at the bombers.

(2)

In doing so he came out of the sun from 7 o'clock high. This was the fighter that Herman shot down. Then, instead of turning back, as they were supposed to do, the P-47's continued on to the target with the result 3 more were shot down and of course the rest of them lacked fuel to return to England.

I specifically recall that in subsequent discussions about it we gunners debated whether or not Herman should get credit for the "fighter". His actions in pointing his nose at the formation and coming out of the sun provided the core of the discussion. I flew the raid as ball turret and none of my crew was aware that the P-47's had been shot down until Colonel Robertson told us. The navigator did tell us when we were to lose our escort. It was a memorable occasion to have any at all! I don't believe Herman was aware that he had shot down a P-47. I have never met the man so some of this tale is not first hand.

If I were to judge by my recollections (which are not outstanding) I have often surmised that "gunnery" per se never recovered from that day. I base that on the fact that fighter attacks fell into four categories, or rather fighters that were called out over the interphone fell into four categories: 1 Those that didn't attack, 2 those that attacked and broke off when out over 600 yards (their 20mm shells indicated the TRUE range), 3 those that broke off under 600 yards (explosive 20mm's hit) and 4 those that came in close! The tracers permitted the #1 condition to be achieved and that was directly related to losses in the pre-escort days. The #2 condition was also attributable to the presence of tracers. The claiming of fighters was discouraged while I was flying for it was equated to poor gunnery! Certainly had there been a reporting system that evaluated gunnery (other than destroyed, probable or damaged) the tracers would never have been removed and I told that later they were. I believe the black-eye received by gunners that day never healed.

I also surmise that the days activities in regards to the P-47's is or was the reason the 306th never got a Presidential Unit Citation.

Perhaps Herman or Robertson are still alive and can expand on this tale. The official records does not show any P-47's lost that day! I'm sending several extra copies. Perhaps you'll want to get some confirmation of this story!

Sincerely
John T. Brinkman
John T. Brinkman

P.S. I'm sending a copy to my pilot - Charlie Munger

No extra copies. I put the carbon in backwards!

1049 Powers Ferry Rd
apt 500-2
Marietta Ga 30067
10 March 1988

Dear Russ,

This letter in 3 parts:

1. Would you please append my ^{ap}apartment number to my mailing address. (ie apt 500-2)
2. Would you please send me a set of the "Echo" microfiche for which I enclose a check in the amount of \$5⁰⁰.
3. I'm trying to put a little story together about the "Wendover Aerial Gunnery School" that was started apparently just after the 306th departed (date uncertain - I arrived in Oct 42 departed, graduated, 1 Jan 43) it was started on a shoe string and maintained by robbing boxcars/trains (loka) Buildings were old "CCC barracks" salvaged from up in Idaho along the Snake River. The school was located about 8 or 10 miles north of the base in a "draw" about 2 miles wide. The pre-clock system of calling out fighters was taught (low-red-noon, high-green-front and etc!!) ~~at~~ a number of graduates joined the 306th (Linden K. Voight was one). I hope to have something presentable to send to you in 3 or 4 months - about 12 or 14 manuscript pages probably.

Many thanks.

John T Brinkman

P.S. I think my pilot, Charles Munger is a little put out at being referred to as Clarence!!!

Ha Ha

JTB

JOHN T. BRINKMAN
12 RIVERSIDE COURT
CARTERSVILLE, GA 30120-6434
(706) 387-0708
423rd/368th

BARBARA

24 February 1925

217-18-4101

AUG, 1962, SELFRIDGE ^{16F}~~AFB~~ AFB.

USAF MICHIGAN

(NOTE: THE TELEPHONE AREA CODE 706
BECOMES EFFECTIVE 1 MAY * is currently
404.

Dear Russell,

Reference 2nd from top, 423rd Sqdn. crew picture on page 10, October 92 ECHOES. Don't recall date or target. Best recollections. 25th, last raid, of "John (?) Jessup"- Right Waist gunner seated 1st row left. On his left is Jay L. Braman Left Waist (deceased some years ago), Edwin Borlic, Radio Operator (#85 on Mae West) and on his left Lester B. Parks, Tail Gunner.

2nd row left to right. Ground Armourer(?), Me- John Brinkman, Ball Turret (with helmet on), Herbert Hawkes, Top Turret-engineer, Aircraft Crew Chief (?) extreme right.

Top Row standing left to Right Charles (NOT CLARENCE) Munger, Pilot, Rodger Barton, Navigator, Leon Feldman, Bombardier, and Co-Pilot whose name I don't recall.

I'm enclosing a "25th, last raid" 368th Sqdn. crew picture of Clyde Christian, Waist Gunner 10 July 1943. Clyde is center standing. Kneeling are Wm. Katz, Co-Pilot; W.D. Peterson, Pilot; M.D. Dix, Navigator and Leon Feldman, Bombardier (He has 55 on Mae West.) I'm positive of names - not sure whose who on faces! Top standing left to right are Mark Arrieta, Tail, Unknown, Clyde Christian, Waist Gunner, Me- John Brinkman, Ball turret, and two "unknowns" on my left. The unknowns whose faces I cant place are; Charles Nichols, Radio,- George Monser, Waist, and William Utley, Top Turret.

I surely want the photo returned, as you say pronto! Ha

COMMENT: As shown on various "decorations" special orders, Officers were assigned to the Group but enlisted crews were assigned to Squadrons. What was the reason and is the reason recorded someplace for historical purposes?

REQUEST: I belong to Air Forces Flyers Club, an Amateur Radio Group; Ex-AF, WWII personnel of all types - flying or non-flying. One of our objectives is to collect vintage aircraft radio equipment for distribution (at no fee) to activities restoring WWII acft. LeMay and Griswold belonged. Looking for members. Would you put the following in paper?

Looking for ex- AF, Amateur Radio Operators. Send request for application to: Col. N.E. Friedman USAF Ret

Amateur Radio W6ORD

POB 19055, Encino CA. 91416-9055

or

join us on the air 14.308 MHz each Sunday 11:00 AM EST.

THANKS,
John T. Brinkman
12 Riverside Court
Cartersville, Ga. 30120

55 on
mae west

12 Riverside Court
Cartersville, Ga. 30120
21 March 1992

Dear Rus,

Would you please send following 21 mission reports for which I enclose a check for \$35.00. I flew ball turret.

Group Mission Numbers:

368 Sqdn

52 July 10 '43
53 July 14
54 July 17
56 July 26
58 July 29

423rd Sqdn

60 Aug 15
62 Aug 17
63 Aug 19
66 Aug 31
67 Sept 3
69 Sept 7
70 Sept 9
71 Sept 15
72 Sept 16
77 Oct 8
78 Oct 9
79 Oct 10
80 Oct 14
82 Nov 3
83 Nov 5
86 Nov 26

I previously received documents for the other raids I went on.

~~I was astonished to see that there's no entries to confirm the fact that on the raid to Heroya Norway (July 24, Gp Mission 55) I was credited with destruction of a FW190 (for which a separate Air Medal was awarded) and also a probable.~~

Records for group raid 79, October 10th, Coesfeld were even more astonishing! Only the Ball turret could watch bombs from release to contact. Contrary to the report, I watched our string of bombs land in a field many miles from the target! That is noted in the narrative but not in the individual report which says they were dropped on target!

It says no fighter attacks. 5 or 6 groups of 4/5 twin engined fighters lined up abreast on our tail and fired rockets, some came on in and also fired 20MM's. I recall the briefing officer (Lt. Cunningham) questioned the report of those attacks by the tail gunner and myself. I reminded him that that was my 22nd raid! The Navigator commented on the accuracy of the "flak" and I looked at Parks (the tail gunner) and he looked at me and we laughed and stated that the "flak" seen by the navigator were in reality the rockets fired by those fighters!

The report states that the total 36 group ball turret guns fired only 510 rounds and 36 tail guns 630 rounds! We straggled. I emptied my ball turret (1175 rounds), got out and dumped in an addition box of 50 rounds! Im sure the tail gunner fired an equally great amount for he would have always had first shot on that kind of attact. We landed at a British station to get fuel (Not mentioned in the report.) I cleaned out the links from my turret while there. That may account for the inaccurate ammo accounting.

The report says a/c #515 received no damage. An RAF ground ground crew commented on the 4 or 5 20MM fragament holes close to my turret. One small piece came in my turret and hit my elbow. I still have that undershirt with the hole in the elbow! The little fragament has gotten lost. I presume we arrived back at Thurleigh an hour or so after the rest of the group.

I flew with a number of crews. This crew had outstanding interphone discipline, no excessive chatter. We did not call out flak. In retrospect I see that quite possibly no one else in our aircraft was in a position know or see what happened except the Top Turret. I see by the report that his name was W.G. Caldwell who I have no recollection of ever meeting. His name is in our directory and I'll send him a copy of this letter and hope he will comment! I'll bet he'll recall the rocket that burst by the left waist window. Lots of fire, it looked like a barrel of tar exploding!

John T. Brinkman
John T. Brinkman

CC W.G Caldwell

Just chit chat at this time !!

12 Riverside Court
Cartersville, Ga 30120
10 December 1994

Dear Russ,

Thank you for your call and concern regarding missing documents. I reviewed my 25 mission reports and noted the following missions: I certainly am looking forward to completing my "raids".

(GP#)	No route maps for (368th):		
(55)	24 July 1943, Heroya Norway	AC487	
(56)	26 July 1943, Hanover	"	Also no crew list
(58)	29 July 1943, Kiel	"	- Also no crew list, <i>award</i> <i>(Worst gunner wounded, award</i> <i>scored 320)</i>
	No route maps for (423rd):		
(59)	12 Aug. 1943, Gelsenkirchen	AC221	- we were in the "valley" 26 min? "
(61)	16 Aug. 1943, Le Bourget	603	
(63)	19 Aug. 1943, Flushing	971	
(66)	31 Aug. 1943, Amiens	606	
(68)	6 Sept. 1943, Stuttgart	804	- a crew did go to Switzerland - ?
(69)	7 Sept. 1943, Brussels	804	- We did bomb the center of town?
	No crew list (423rd)		
(78)	9 Oct. 1943, Gdynia	199	No Crew list - The Battle cruiser "Prinz Eugen" was in the harbor?

Trivia:

I'm enclosing a copy of the commendation(s) that General Eaker directed to be sent to the individual crew members. I expect you have a copy already. I've always been curious as to why they were never publicized. The signatories couldn't have been of greater import. Eaker also sent individual "Certificates of Valor" that appear to have been personally signed by him. Mine contains laudatory remarks about completing 25 missions. Late in November 1943, Mungers crew was selected to ferry Gen Eaker to Gibraltar where I presume his transfer to the Mediterrean Theatre was arranged.

Thanks again.

John Brinkman
John Brinkman

P.S. I belong to an Amateur Radio Club - "Air Force Flyers Club"
400 members, mostly WWII crewmen. Our Inmate Officer
is a retired Chaplain *Walt Edwards*
2726 Dunlavin Way *704 535-1273*
Charlotte NC 28205

I noted the Zip code was the same as yours. We invite
all "Flyer Hams" to join us.

Lt Henry J Engle



This was John Jessup's last (25th) raid

Top: Charles Munger, Rodger Barton N, Leon Feldman, B, M44410: Gr Armorer, John Brinkman bt, Herbert Hawkes eng, crew chief
Front: John Jessup wg, Jay Braman wg, Edwin Borlik ro, Lester Parks tg.

Haven't any idea of his name
Perhaps "Moose" or "Monk"
as a nick name.
That's the best I can do.

John

John: Have any idea who the crew chief was?

10/F

Keyed to relevant pages in 1st over Germany, some years ago I sent in recollections of my role whilst on specific raids. They were not acknowledged in "the books" re-issue. Is there a collection of such correspondence and/or do you think it would be practical to solicit such tales from the membership?
I've long thought that such tales, totally unedited, would make interesting reading.
Just a thought.

John

5/7/97

Dear Russ,

This letter in ⁵ 3 parts

Part 1. Please send me the the following:

- 367 th Combat Diary --\$ 17.00 ✓
- 369 th Combat Diary --\$ 17.00 ✓
- 306th Echoes Microfich (75/94) --\$.15.00 ✓
- Total \$49.00 — Check enclosed

Part 2. I received the "packages" for my 25 raids quite a while ago. I understand your files had "gaps" that have recently been filled. Could you see if the tracks (course) for the following missions have turned up? Would appreciate it muchly *for reasons noted.*

- | | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|----------|-----------------|---|
| <u>368th</u> | 1943 July 24 | A/C# 487 | ✓ Heroya Norway | - Relatives from Norway + I shot down 2 FW190's! |
| | 26 | 487 | ✓ Hanover | |
| | 29 | 487 | ✓ Kiel | |
| <u>423rd</u> | August 12 | 221 | ✓ Gelsenkirchen | - a 360° turn kept us in the Ruhr valley for 27 minutes |
| | 16 | 603 | ✓ LeBourget | T/Sgt Harman shot down - P47 that "wanted to take a look" |
| | 19 | 971 | ✓ Flushing | |
| | 31 | 606 | ✓ Glisy (?) | |
| | Sept 06 | ✓ 804 | ✓ Stuttgart | - an aircraft headed out for Switzerland |
| | 07 | 804 | ✓ Brussels | - we put the bombs in the town square instead of an airfield. |

Part 3

I saw that the company that put out the Game disk "First over Germany" has a home page on the Internet. (Strategic Simulations, Inc) The 306th game disk (1988 and I have a copy) is not listed nor is it available. Other organizations are listed on the "net" along with a number of photos and miscellaneous information relating to them. Obviously the 2 - 6 1/2 disc game, as well as the Commander 64 is quite outdated. If the company could update your game it may very well be quite marketable as an adjunct to the Heritage Museum at Savannah. You certainly have lists and photos that could be readily incorporated which would enhance its value as a very desirable and collectable item. *I'd sure be interested in a new copy on 3 1/2" disk or C.D.*

Ta Ta for now old bean
John T. Brinkman
12 Riverside Court
CARTERSVILLE, GA 30120

- Part 4. Lt Reese's first name was "George"; you called about him some years ago.
- Part 5. The crew on page 5, Lt Menger, is misidentified as to organization, we were in the 423rd Squadron not 369th. *(April 97)* It was Jesse's last raid.

Note Had to shift into "antique gear" to complete this letter. Ha Ha John

Dear Russell,

etc tough when the printer runs out of ink?

A curious thought crossed my mind. I have never seen any "movie" of a fighter plane being tracked and shot down from a gunner's position. (Except perhaps from the tail gunner position, and I certainly understand why!)

(quote)

However I ran across a written comment that stopped me in its tracks. Surely there is a way to verify or amend the following statement. "2/3 ^{nds} of all fighters (sic German fighter aircraft) were shot down by aerial gunners".

I know that American records are horribly and ~~were~~ were inaccurate.

I presumed some German records exist that may or may not validate that comment. Alternately do you know of a source from which I may make an inquiry?

John T Brinkman
12 Riverside Court S.E.
Cartersville Georgia 30120

P.S. I will put in a ribbon and ^{only} type hereafter!
MY EMAIL IS JBRINKM@BellSouth.NET

Dear Russell.

its tough when the printer runs out of ink?

A curious thought crossed my mind. I have never seen any "movie" of a fighter plane being tracked and shot down from a gunner's position. (Except perhaps from the tail gunner position, and I certainly understand why!)

(quote)

However I ran across a written comment that stopped me in its tracks. Surely there is a way to verify or amend the following statement. "2/3 ^{1/3} of all fighters (sic German fighter aircraft) were shot down by aerial gunners".

I know that American records are horribly ~~and~~ ~~was~~ were inaccurate.

I presume some German records exist that may or may not validate that comment. Alternately do you know of a source from which I may make an inquiry?

John T Brinkman
12 Riverside Court S.E.
Cartersville Georgia 30120

P.S. I will put in a ribbon and type hereafter!
MY EMAIL IS JBRINKM@BellSouth.NET

I mailed him 27 Feb 04

Russell Strong

From: <jbrinkm@bellsouth.net>
 To: "Bill Manderville" <m3946@comcast.net>
 Cc: <russell.a.strong306@worldnet.att.net>
 Sent: Thursday, April 22, 2004 11:32 PM
 Subject: Re: Re: ball turret

fyig. Russ is editor of our 306 news letter.

Because I type so slowly I(my hunt takes longer than my peck') I tend to write short and I suppose somewhat cryptic questions. Even though I taught the ballturret at Bovington I never once set eyes on a ball turret publication. It was said it was too complicated for gerry to figure out and was threfore never classified. There never existed a "ball turret computer" as such. Only as complete installation could it possibly provide the computing function to enable accurate gun laying. I do not believe anyone in the 8th AF knew we had this capability! Ill continue this letter later. All the best John

> From: "Bill Manderville" <m3946@comcast.net>
 > Date: 2004/04/21 Wed AM 12:49:19 EDT
 > To: <jbrinkm@bellsouth.net>
 > Subject: Re: ball turret

>

> Hi John,

> I can't say I recall any such pub., but there surely had to be some sort
 > of "T.O" covering the ball turret. That was a "Sperry" turret, wasn't it ? I
 > had a manual on the Browning cal.50 machine gun. There was a very
 > comprehensive Tech.Order covering the "GE" Remote Control Turret System in
 > the B-29s and B-50s I flew in for about 7 years.

> ----- Original Message -----

> From: <jbrinkm@bellsouth.net>
 > To: <m3946@comcast.net>
 > Sent: Tuesday, April 20, 2004 8:57 PM
 > Subject: ball turret

>

>

>> have an essential question to which i have long sought an answer.

>> Did you ever see any military publication relating to ball turret

> operation?

>> This is a very serious question' I served at thurleigh 306BG,

>>

>>

>

>

>

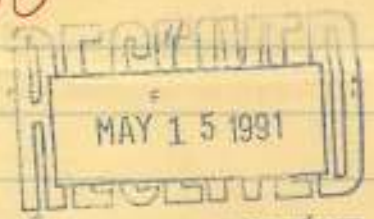
*Sent GIF material, about 20 pages
 22 May 2004*

Please send micro film (20) and 4 (target) \$10
check for \$30 enclosed.

JOHN BRINKMAN
12 RIVERSIDE CT SE
CARTERSVILLE GA 30120
Cartersville Georgia 30120
13 May 1991

Dear Russell

- ~~check for \$10~~ Please send me the mission reports on following raids
- #55 25 July 43 Bergen Norway *no crew report* 315 Sqn Pilot Reese
 - #59 12 Aug 43 Ruhr (Duisburg) 423 Sqn Pilot Mungen
 - #61 16 August 43 Paris (Le Bourget) " " " "
 - #68 6 Sept 43 Stuttgart *no crew report* 21 July 91
 - #79 10 Oct 43 Coesfeld (Munster) " " " "
 - #86 26 Nov 43 Bremen " " " "



refuse 91

Re: your book

Am attributing the "great gunnery discovery" to St Pollock ~~your script~~
expose one of the best held secrets of WWII. Both the top and
ball turrets had sperry computing sights. Had he ever shot air
to ground with either a flexible and/or ^{other} P47 turret he would have
known about shooting behind an attacking aircraft!!! I can
assure you that every gunnery school graduate knew that. They were
taught that at "Wendover Berial Gunnery School" from which I graduated
in 1943. Even shooting from the moving "duchy train" to a fixed
target required "negative" leads. The sheet shooting was simply
to enhance smooth tracking, under any shooting situation.
it keep on moving ^{during and after} ~~after~~ squeezing the trigger. Take the test-throw a beer can
from your car at a target. ha ha

Am interested in the Le Bourget (16 Aug 43) raid because I'd like to see if history
records the 3 P47s that were shot down. (One by T/Sgt ^{He came out of the sun.} Herman) The balance
of the P47 Sqn ditched as a result. Col Robinson recalled all the crews
immediately following briefing and chewed ass about it.

I'm interested in the 10 Oct 43 raid because we went to Coesfeld. We
straggled there and back and had many many fighter attacks.

Thanks John Brinkman

WEEKLY STATUS AND OPERATIONS REPORT

(REPORT FOR PERIOD 22 APR 54 TO 28 APR 54 INCLUSIVE)

SECRET

3242
A

TABLE I - STATUS OF AIRCRAFT

Aircraft	Status						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B-17F	25	21	14	0	0	10	10
B-17G	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
B-24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B-24E	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oxford	1						

TABLE II - STATUS OF PERSONNEL

Category	Status											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Active	21	71	7									
2. Inactive	97	97	4									
3. On leave	57	37	3									
4. Total	175	175	14									

TABLE III - WEEKLY OPERATIONS

Date	Operations		Status	
	1	2	3	4
22 APR 54	1	1	1	1
23 APR 54	1	1	1	1
24 APR 54	1	1	1	1
25 APR 54	1	1	1	1
26 APR 54	1	1	1	1
27 APR 54	1	1	1	1
28 APR 54	1	1	1	1

TABLE IV - TOTAL WEEKLY CONSUMPTION

1. Fuel: 4,937.15
 2. Oil: 113.00
 3. Lubricants: 113.00
 4. Miscellaneous: 113.00

TABLE V - REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Remarks	Recommendations
See attached sheet for remarks Table II	

SECRET

Supertek

SECRET
WEEKLY STATUS AND OPERATIONS REPORT
 (REPORT FOR PERIOD *10/10/53* TO *10/16/53* INCLUSIVE)
SECRET

8722
 10/10/53
 10/16/53

TABLE III - WEEKLY OPERATIONS

Date	Type of Mission	Remarks	Status of Aircraft							Status of Personnel							Status of Equipment								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
10/10/53
10/11/53
10/12/53
10/13/53
10/14/53
10/15/53
10/16/53

TABLE I - STATUS OF AIRCRAFT

Aircraft	10/10	10/11	10/12	10/13	10/14	10/15	10/16
B-17F	35	2	31	9	0	0	10
B-17G	7	0	6	11	0	0	0
B-17E	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Oxford	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

TABLE II - STATUS OF PERSONNEL

Category	10/10	10/11	10/12	10/13	10/14	10/15	10/16
1. Active	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
2. On Leave	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
3. On Sick Leave	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
4. On Detachment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. On Transfer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. On Detail	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7. On Other Duty	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. On Unavailable	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. On Unaccounted For	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10. On Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	22	22	22	22	22	22	22

TABLE IV - TOTAL WEEKLY CONSUMPTION

1. Fuel	4,932.15
2. Oil	1,123.00
3. Lubricants	1,123.00
4. Miscellaneous	1,123.00

TABLE V - REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Remarks	2. Recommendations	3. Remarks	4. Recommendations

B-17F (58A), B-17E (77), Oxford
 Trainer - non-operational A/C
 B-17F in column C assigned but not
 carried as on hand as they are in
 hands of MU but still at this station
 See attached sheet for remarks
 Table II

SECRET

Superior