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RUSSELL A. STRONG
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JAN 3, 1989

DEAR MR. STRONG,

I AM THE SON OF ~~THE~~ 306TH GROUP. MY DAD WAS IN THE 369TH, AND UNTIL RECENTLY HE RESIDED IN PONCE INLET, FLORIDA FOR 13 YEARS.

THIS LAST AUGUST DAD PAST ON DUE TO A 2 YEAR BATTLE WITH CANCER. THERE ARE MANY QUESTIONS THAT ARE UNANSWERED REGARDING HIS LIFE & TIMES WITH THE 369TH, AND I'M TOLD YOU HAVE MANY RECORDS, PHOTOS AND THE PERTINENT INFORMATION IN WHICH I AM IN SEARCH OF. SPECIFICS SUCH AS THE SERIAL#, NAME OF HIS BOMBER, WHO WAS HIS CAPT.? ARE ANY MEMBERS OF HIS CREW STILL AROUND OR IN MY VICINITY? I FOUND OUT TOO LATE ABOUT THE REUNION IN VEGAS, THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR ME. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO BE ON YOUR MAILING LIST FOR ECHOES IF POSSIBLE; TO BE UP TO DATE ON YOUR NEWS.

PLEASE ASSIST ME IF YOU HAVE THE TIME. ANY HELP YOU MAY OFFER WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED!

AFTER I GET A FEW MORE PIECES OF INFO. I WOULD LIKE TO PREPARE THE PROPER NOTICE TO SEND ~~TO~~ FOR THE OBITUARY SECTION OF YOUR PUBLICATION.

FEEL FREE TO CALL ME COLLECT AT THE ABOVE NUMBER IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS MY INTERESTS IN MORE DETAIL.

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(2.)

I THINK YOU KNOW HOW I FEEL, NOT BEING
ABLE TO SHARE STORIES ABOUT THESE DAYS WITH
MY DAD ANY LONGER. I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND
ME COMING TO YOU FOR A FEW ANSWERS.

I ANXIOUSLY AWAIT YOUR RESPONSE
AND WELCOME YOUR ASSISTANCE IN THIS MATTER!

SINCERELY,

William Holdson



9 January 1989

Mr. William Holdson
15925A E. Radcliff Place
Aurora, CO 80015

Dear Bill:

In answer to your letter of 3 January, I am afraid that I can not give you much information.

Because of the time your father flew, and the fact that he was not shot down, etc., means that his name did not appear in all kinds of records.

Now, his name did appear on the interrogation reports made after each mission, but I do not have them for any of the missions he likely flew on. They do exist but are very difficult to get to and most of the time tell you little or nothing.

I have enclosed a copy of my file card. This shows name, serial #, his squadron assignment and the fact that he was a gunner. Also, the date he and his crew were on orders and the pilot's name. I have found he received one Air Medal and that he was a qualified gunner (612). When he arrived at Thurligh he was a corporal, and the one sheet I have with his name as a crew member shows he had been promoted to sergeant.

I have included some of the 369th Squadron diary entries which show his pilot's name as flying on a mission, and I would assume that your father probably flew most of these missions. But this is the only trace I find.

It would appear he flew his first mission 21 November 44, but he may have flown earlier with another pilot. I cannot tell.

The one plane I can attach him to was 42-102896, known as "The Cap'n and his Kidds," referring to a popular comic strip of the day. The plane joined the group in September 1944 and crashed in March '45 in Belgium returning from a mission. Most crews in the later 306th did not have planes assigned for a long period of time.

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I have a film record of the orders when your father report-ed to the 306th, but do not have a hard copy t-hat I can copy.

I did check out the other members of his crew, and none of them appear on our current mailing list.

I will add your name to the mailing list for Echoes.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong
Secretary