

GENERAL ORDERS )  
NUMBER 475 )

RESTRICTED

E T R A C T

Hq 1st Bombardment Division,  
APO 557, 30 October 1944,

I. Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1943, as amended, and pursuant to authority contained in letter, Hq Eighth Air Force, File 200.6, 23 September 1944, subject, "Awards and Decorations", the DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS is awarded to the following-named Officers and Listed Men.

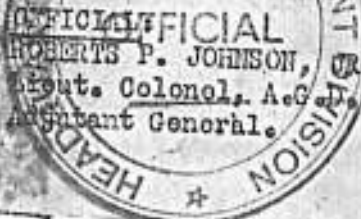
\* \* \* \* \*

THEODORE C. HOOD, 16157070, Technical Sergeant, 423rd Bombardment Squadron, 308th Bombardment Group (H), Army Air Forces, United States Army. For extraordinary achievement while serving as Top Turret Gunner of a B-17 airplane on a number of combat bombardment missions over Germany and German occupied countries from 20 June 1944 to 27 October 1944.  
Home address: 615 Dallas, San Antonio, Texas.

\* \* \* \* \*

By command of Brigadier General TURNER:

BARTLETT BEAMAN,  
Brigadier General, U. S. Army,  
Chief of Staff.



RESTRICTED

GENERAL ORDERS )  
NUMBER 397 )

RESTRICTED

Hq 1st Bombardment Division,  
APO 557, 5 October 1944.

EXTRACT

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1943, as amended, and pursuant to authority contained in letter, Hq Eighth Air Force, File 200-6, 23 September 1944, subject, "Awards and Decorations", an OAK LEAF CLUSTER is awarded for wear with the AIR MEDAL previously awarded to the following-named Officers and Enlisted Men, organizations as indicated, Army Air Forces, United States Army.

Citation: For meritorious achievement while participating in sustained bomber combat operations over Germany and German occupied countries. The courage, boldness and skill displayed by these Officers and Enlisted Men upon these occasions reflect great credit upon themselves and the Armed Forces of the United States.

(27) 306th Bombardment Group (H).

THEODORE C. HOOD, 18157070, T/Sgt. San Antonio, Texas.

By command of Major General WILLIAMS:

BARTLETT BEAMAN,  
Brigadier General, U. S. Army,  
Chief of Staff.

ROBERTS P. JOHNSON, JR.,  
Lieut. Colonel, A.G.D.,  
Assistant General.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

EXTRACT

Hq 1st Bombardment Division,  
APO 557, 22 August 1944.

GENERAL ORDERS )  
NUMBER 268 )/

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1943, as amended, and pursuant to authority contained in letter, Hq Eighth Air Force, File 200.6, 4 August 1944, subject, "Awards and Decorations", an OAK LEAF CLUSTER is awarded, for wear with the AIR MEDAL previously awarded, to the following-named Officers and Enlisted Men, organizations as indicated, Army Air Forces, United States Army.

Citation: For meritorious achievement while participating in sustained bomber combat operations over Germany and German occupied countries. The courage, coolness and skill displayed by these Officers and Enlisted Men upon these occasions reflect great credit upon themselves and the Armed Forces of the United States.

\* \* \*  
47 306th Bombardment Group (H)  
\* \* \*  
THEODORE WOOD, 18157070, T/Sgt. San Antonio, Texas.  
\* \* \*

By command of Major General WILLIAMS:

\* \* \*  
BARTLETT BEAMAN,  
Brigadier General, U. S. Army,  
Chief of Staff.  
\* \* \*

WAR DEPARTMENT  
OFFICIAL  
OFFICIAL: \_\_\_\_\_  
ROBERTS P. JOHNSON, JR.,  
Lieut. Colonel, A.G.D.,  
Adjutant General.

RESTRICTED

GENERAL ORDERS )  
NUMBER 234 )/

RESTRICTED

EXTRACT

Hq 1st Bombardment Division,  
APO 557, 11 August 1944.

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1943, as amended, and pursuant to authority contained in letter, Hq Eighth Air Force, File 200.6, 4 August 1944, subject, "Awards and Decorations", an OAK LEAF CLUSTER is awarded, for wear with the AIR MEDAL previously awarded, to the following-named Officers and Enlisted Men, organizations as indicated, Army Air Forces, United States Army.

Citation: For meritorious achievement while participating in sustained bomber combat operations over Germany and German occupied countries. The courage, coolness and skill displayed by these Officers and Enlisted Men upon these occasions reflect great credit upon themselves and the Armed Forces of the United States.

\* \* \*  
423  
THEODORE C. HOOD, 18157070, 8/SGT. 306th Bombardment Group (H), Antonio, Texas.

\* \* \*  
By command of Major General WILLIAMS:



\* \* \*  
BARTLETT BEAMAN,  
Brigadier General, U. S. Army,  
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:

ROBERTS P. JOHNSON, JR.,  
Lieut. Colonel, A.G.D.,  
Adjutant General.

RESTRICTED

GENERAL ORDERS }  
NUMBER 163 }

RESTRICTED

Hq 1st Bombardment Division,  
APO 557, 10 July 1944.

EXTRACT

Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1943, as amended, and pursuant to authority contained in letter, Hq Eighth Air Force, File 200.6, 1 June 1944, subject, "Awards and Decorations", the AIR MEDAL is awarded to the following-named Officers and Enlisted Men, organizations as indicated, Army Air Forces, United States Army.

Citation: For exceptionally meritorious achievement while participating in sustained bomber combat operations over enemy occupied Continental Europe. The courage, coolness and skill displayed by these Officers and Enlisted Men upon these occasions reflect great credit upon themselves and the Armed Forces of the United States.

+ + +  
(17) 306th Bombardment Group (H) +  
+ GEORGE C. HOOD, 18157070, S/Sgt. San Antonio, Texas. +

+ By command of Major General WILLIAMS: +

OFFICIAL:  
ROBERTS P. JOHNSON, JR.,  
Lieut Colonel, A.C.D.,  
Adjutant General.

BARTLETT BEAMAN,  
Brigadier General, U. S. Army,  
Chief of Staff.

84062  
RESTRICTED

# BOSS of the BOMBER

Stepping into the important boots of the flight engineer and top gunner of a B-17 for an air battle over Germany

by SIGMUND SAMETH

• ARTICLE •

Durable Dora came off the target area looking like a commuter's last month's train ticket. She had stopped a lot of flak—all the Japs could throw—and machine-gun slugs had *pock-pock-pocked* their way up and down the deep-bellied length of her fuselage. Yet she flew steadily for 2½ hours back to her base for a perfect landing!

That episode was not unusual. Our planes have been hurt even more badly by enemy fire yet they have managed to come in, as the pilots say, "on a wing and a prayer." Last month a Liberator returned with 2,100 bullet holes. Another bomber in a subsequent raid lost square yards of wing covering and had its landing gear blasted away, yet it bellywhopped to safety in an English cabbage patch. Then there was that B-17 in the African campaign which got in the way of a flaming Messerschmitt. The Nazi plane was destroyed on impact, but the crash ripped open the fuselage of the American bomber the way a clumsy angler might gut a fish. Nevertheless, she completed her mission and hedged home under reduced speed.

Instances like these might be cited endlessly from official sources. Frequently our ships have

had control surfaces shot away and rudder cables sheared by gunfire, yet they lived to fly again. One Fortress wheezed home with only ounces of oil in her lubricating system. Another had a jagged hole in the fin big enough for a man dressed in flying togs to crawl through. As for the multi-motored ship which sidles to a landing with only a single engine revving—that's no longer novelty enough to rate newspaper mention.

How do they do it? What magic keeps our bombers in the air long after their crews, by every rule in the book, should have signalled "Mayday! Mayday!" and hit the silk?

The answer lies partly in a thousand refinements of design. Even more important is a personage known as Mr. Fixit—the flight engineer who is a combat crew member of every medium and heavy bomber in the A.A.F.

He is the one who nurses the last precious flying minutes out of a crippled ship. He decides how much strain the wings of a stricken bomber can and cannot stand. When something goes wrong it is his job to make repairs during flight and if, for any reason, that is impossible, he has to know how to limp along anyway "on shoe-string and spit." Pilots may fly

our big ships but it is Mr. Fixit who keeps their engines purring like tiger kittens.

Although he wears the silver wings which are the badge of all flying personnel, the flight engineer is an enlisted man, generally a technical sergeant. His chevrons are outranked by an officer's bars yet at certain times he can *and does* tell his superiors what to do. Nor does he mince words over military etiquette when his ship—to which ten men have yoked their lives—is jeopardized. Fellow crew members from lieutenant colonels down follow his recommendations willingly.

( Mechanical aptitude tests which are given to every new recruit help to locate prospective flight engineers. These men the Army drills for solid months in practical Aerial Mechanical Engineering. Merely to list the topics covered would take more pages than this article. It is the finest training of its kind in the world. )

For one thing Mr. Fixit has to understand 200-odd aircraft instruments inside and out. Nor does this mean that he can trust them implicitly all of the time, for even they sometimes go awry. Therefore he must be ready to cope with every quirk of the grem-lins as did the anonymous hero of an apochryphal Hangar Tale who smashed the glass of a faulty oil gauge and with his fingers pulled the pointer up from "Zero" to "Full."

The flight engineer must know inch by inch the miles of electrical, hydraulic, oxygen, fuel, and oil systems. He must be familiar with the complex web of control cables . . . pneumatic equipment . . . flaps . . . landing gear . . . de-icers and anti-icers. He must understand the ticking of the engines better than the beating of his own heart. He is responsible for every fixture of the ship from wing-tip lights to the last locknut on the bomb shackles in her belly. Ten cats couldn't catch a rat in the vitals of a heavy bomber, but a misplaced cotter pin wouldn't escape the flight engineer.

ORIGIN UNKNOWN

Member # 8012  
8<sup>TH</sup> AF HS.

...arming up has caused them to expand. During the process they "throw" a fine mist of lubricating oil which settles in every nook and cranny and on the most inaccessible engine and fuselage surfaces. For the flight engineer-to-be this means wiping . . . and

wiping . . . and wiping . . . and more wiping. No mother ever knew her baby the way a grease monkey knows a B-17.

In time an apprentice mechanic wipes his way up to be a ground crew chief, but before he can become a flight engineer he has further hurdles to pass. Not only must he be in tiptop physical shape but he must be immune to that unfortunate malady, known as airsickness. With his large share of responsibility it would be disastrous if he should fold up and turn pale green whenever things bounce around a bit.

Mr. Fixit must also be a Dead-eye Dick with the calibre 50's for he acts as top gunner during battle. Against enemy fighters our most effective action is to dive our heavies into the attack force. This increases the rate of closure and throws off the fighter's line of sight. It also gives the top gunner—alias flight engineer—a chance to get a crack at the opposition both coming and going. Behind a machine gun as well as a monkey wrench Mr. Fixit does a man-sized job.

If you doubt it, step into his fleeced-lined flying boots. The date is today. The place, a dispersal point at a British airbase where a flight of B-17's squat on their fat tires awaiting taxi time. (Engine Three has been worrying you so you've been up for two hours in the pre-dawn darkness sweating it out with the ground crew.) Now the big Cyclone is roaring to suit your practiced ear. The Skipper and co-pilot have just left Briefing and your fuel man is topping off the wing tanks with the last pint of high octane they can carry.

Scared, pal? So are we all, but this is the wrong day to think about it. On a bombing mission from England, every man works every mile of the way.

You are flying in the second element of the high squadron of the high group in a three-group combat wing. The Fortresses have formed and ascended without trouble. There are no fighters and little flak as you cross the coast heading deep into Germany. From your Sperry turret in the roof of the ship you sweep a continuous arc of 180 degrees.

Things tick along until forty minutes from target when the manifold pressure on Number Four engine drops to twelve and stays there. The radioman hops upstairs to swing your guns. You clip on

## The Bomber

your walk-around oxygen and confer with the Skipper.

Turbo control—try jiggling. Now manipulate throttle control . . . fuel mixture . . . R.P.M. . . . cowl flaps. Still no rise. Either the turbo regulator or the turbo itself is gone.

"Keep her revving anyway," you advise the Skipper. "She won't hold us back much."

Grimly you reflect that a feathered prop is an invitation to enemy fighters. This is no Sunday ride. You must stay in formation, for stragglers go down fighting.

Twelve minutes off the target the belly gunner sees yellow-nosed Focke-Wulfs swarming up from their base at Abbeville. They're manned by the toughest surviving flyers of the Luftwaffe.

"Three o'clock," calls the belly gunner, "a gillion of them."

"Pilot to combat crew. Pilot to combat crew. Hold your hats, girls, and give 'em hell."

Two FW-190's are boring in, their Oerlikon 20 mm. fixed cannon coughing. You bracket the leader in your ring sights and, as he clears you, get a long squirt into his belly. Another fighter peels off. You hemstitch him. Here comes yet another from the quarter you've been assigned to protect. In this tight formation Forts can give better than they get. Already you've chalked up three probables.

You are on the receiving end too, mainly from their 7.9's which rattle through the fuselage like gravel in a tin dishpan. Three engines are still putting out but it looks as though the No. Two prop governor has been damaged. Inwardly you bless the self sealers and make a mental note to set the fuel transfer valves from the now feathered engine. The platform under your feet is inch deep with empty cartridge cases.

Now the FW's fall away and—whether you live to do it a hundred times, this is the one sickening minute of the mission—the final seconds of target approach during which the bombardier flies the ship straight and level, giving the ack-ack a dead shot chance at you. There is nothing to do but wait for the one with your name—if it comes. You peer overside for a view of the German landscape which Baedeker never recom-

mended. The sky is alive with ugly brown mushrooms of smoke and steel creeping closer as the ground gunners try to get your range. At 20,000 feet the flak is thick enough to walk on!

Above the battle din you hear the dull metallic scrape made by your block busters as they leave their cradles. They hang suspended for an instant in the open bays before nosing down and plummeting towards the target. The ship goes into violent evasive action and you clear your guns for the FW's which have probably reformed and are waiting for you as you come off the target.

Almost at the same moment something big hits the ship a dull blow in the left wing. You see a hole blossom as the slip stream tears at the metal covering. The ship sags appreciably. The pilots wrestle with the controls to keep the vibrating B-17 out of a spin. Number Two engine is running wild and the dash controls are so shot up that it can't be stopped immediately. This means fire. You are out of formation now and dropping fast through two strata of clouds to 6,500 feet. In the richer, lower air the flames fan out but Number Two extinguisher seems to be functioning. If only you can stick it out for ten minutes longer you can raise the English coast instead of ditching at sea.

And you do!  
You cross the coast at 3,000 feet with Sparks sending QDM's. Two miles inland another piece of wing flies off and the ship starts to lie down. The Skipper circles a stretch of flat agricultural land. The wheels are down and checked as an approach is made. Immediately on contact the right tire begins to flatten, but the ship is kept upright with left brake and Number Four engine—the only one now unfeathered. You grind to a stop and pile out through the escape hatch, wriggling free of your parachute. Five words which you've read a hundred times on the bulletin board outside of Operations now have a new and wondrous significance for you. Five more beautiful words have never existed in the English language than:

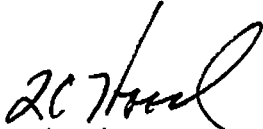
"All our planes returned safely." #

3-23-81

Russell A. Strong,

This is about all I have to send. Pulling out 9 months, 39 years ago is hard to do. Had we known then what we know now think of the records we could have maintained.

Best of luck,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'TC Hood', written in dark ink.

Theodore C. Hood  
6107 Ridgecrest Drive  
Little Rock, AR. 72205

8th AF HS Membership # 8012



listed as missing, prisoners of war. At its peak in Spring 1944, the 8th lost in one fateful week in February 170 bombers, downed 548 German fighters, broke the back of the vaunted Luftwaffe.



In a year of hard, persistent fighting, the 8th battered the German war machine and its industries, shriveled Nazi nerves. When D Day came, American armies never met the full strength of the mighty Wehrmacht, but an enemy weakened by

**S**INCE last summer they have been trickling back . . . with rows of ribbons under their wings, foreign service stripes, and the shoulder patch with the "8" between the spread wings of the Air Forces emblem. Too few of us know either the marking or its meaning.

The 8th Air Force began with the first few Flying Forts sent to England in early 1942 . . . proved that precision bombing by day was practical—and deadly . . . fought with the R.A.F. 500 miles deep in Fortress Europe despite 40,000 anti-aircraft guns, Focke-Wulf fighters . . . and sickening losses to the original group.

With 1943 came reinforcements; but the Ploesti oilfields cost 54 bombers, the two Schweinfurt raids 96. Before the year's end, 60% of the flying personnel were dead, wounded,

disorganized communications and supply lines.

*What most Americans fail to realize is that the 8th Air Force saved the lives of hundreds of thousands of doughboys, shortened the European war by perhaps a year . . . earned more decorations and citations than any other military unit in history, as well as our undying gratitude. Watch for the 8th shoulder patch and honor the men who so proudly wear it!*

ORGIN UNK NOE  
Morton Hood  
# 8012



HEADQUARTERS 306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)  
Office of the Commanding Officer  
United States Forces

A-1

AFPO 557,  
23 November, 1944.

To Whom it may Concern:

1. Technical Sergeant THEODORE C. HOOD, 18157070 has completed 283.05 hours of Combat Flying as an Aerial Engineer. He has completed a total of thirty-five (35) combat missions and is credited with no additional missions. During the course of his missions he destroyed no Enemy Aircraft and has been decorated or is eligible for the following decorations:

Air Medal  
Oak Leaf Cluster  
Oak Leaf Cluster  
Oak Leaf Cluster  
Distinguished Flying Cross

Six Missions  
Twelve Missions  
Eighteen Missions  
Twenty-four Missions  
Thirty Missions

2. Sergeant Hood's performance of duty is rated by his Commanding Officer as Excellent.

*James S. Sutton*  
*by [Signature]*  
JAMES S. SUTTON,  
Colonel, Air Corps,  
Commanding.

HEADQUARTERS  
AAF STATION 111  
APO 557

(C-26)

SPECIAL ORDERS )  
NUMBER 288 )

E X T R A C T

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2. UF of AR 35-1480, and in accordance with instructions contained in AAF Reg 35-29, dd 20 July, 1943, the fol named EM, orgns indicated, are hereby required to participate in regular and frequent aerial flights, off this date, and will remain on said status until rel'd by competent auth:

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368th Bomb Sq (H) - 306th Bomb Gp (H)

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T/Sgt Seymour (mai) Shusky	12156112	Radio Operator
<u>423rd Bomb Sq (H) - 306th Bomb Gp (H)</u>		
T/Sgt Theodore C. Hood	18157070	Serial Engineer
S/Sgt Charles J. Brunsteter	3542478	Serial Gunner
<u>367th Bomb Sq (H) - 306th Bomb Gp (H)</u>		
S/Sgt Ralph E. Story	37415505	Serial Gunner

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By order of Colonel BUTTON:

PAUL J. BAILEY  
Captain, Air Corps  
Adjutant.

OFFICIAL:

/s/ Paul J. Baillie  
/t/ PAUL J. BAILEY  
Captain, Air Corps  
Adjutant.

A TRUE EXTRACT COPY

Harold G. Taylor  
THOMAS G. TAYLOR  
1st Lt., Air Corps  
Asst Personnel Officer.

# Heavies Open Siegfried Battle

## Key Points in Line Blitzed in Advance Of Bradley Troops

4-5-44

SHAEF, Sept. 5 (Reuter)—The battle of the Siegfried line is on. First announced blows were struck today by powerful formations of Allied bombers ranging ahead of Lt. Gen. Omar N. Bradley's "black-out" armies.

As unofficial reports that Germany has been invaded, that Germany has been shelled, that Luxembourg has been entered, poured in from many quarters, Flying Fortresses were raining high explosives on Karlsruhe and Ludwigshafen, key towns in the chain of defenses to which Hitler is pinning his last hope.

### Forts and Libs Hit Three Rhine Cities

Up to 750 Fortresses and Liberators, escorted by medium forces of Eighth Fighter Command Mustangs, yesterday attacked targets at Karlsruhe, Stuttgart and Ludwigshafen in the Rhineland.

The Siegfried Line crosses the Rhine River a few miles west of Karlsruhe, which has one of the principal railroad yards in that area. A few hours before the American heavies attacked, Mosquitoes dropped many 4,000-pound bombs there.

The British Air Ministry said that Karlsruhe "cannot now be far from the battlefield and will undoubtedly be used by the Germans to bring up supplies and any reinforcements which may be scraped together for the coming battle of Germany."

Between 200 and 250 Ninth Air Force Marauders and Havocs pounded Brest harbor for the third time in 72 hours. The attacking force continued to drop "surrender" leaflets on the German garrison which has been holding out for several weeks.

Fortresses, too, were over Brest, bombing gun emplacements, fortified areas and strongpoints. Eighth PSIs escorted the heavies. All formations bombed visually and good results were reported.

Eighth fighters shot down 25 enemy aircraft and knocked out 76 on the ground. Thirteen bombers and ten fighters are missing.

The heavies bombed the railroad yards and repair shops at Karlsruhe and the Daimler-Benz aero-engine and motor-transport factory at Stuttgart visually, while at Ludwigshafen industrial targets were bombed through heavy cloud by use of instruments.

# Weather, Not Luftwaffe, Halts Rail Blitz on Reich

9-30-44

Up to 1,000 Fortresses and Liberators of the Eighth Air Force Saturday resumed the aerial onslaught against the Reich by blasting railway yards at Hamm, Munster and Bielefeld in western Germany, but yesterday's bad weather halted temporarily the mounting strategic air offensive.

The Luftwaffe, whose defensive tactics in recent days have featured

"ganging-up" on single groups of bombers, was conspicuously scarce on the latest raids. Although a few enemy fighters were seen in the distance, none attacked the bombers. Ten of the U.S. heavies were lost by anti-aircraft action. The B17s and B24s were escorted by more than 500 Mustangs, Lightnings and Thunderbolts, all of which had no combat with the Luftwaffe and returned safely.

Germany's largest railroad yard is located at Hamm, where bombing was done through almost solid cloud.

Munster, the capital of Westphalia, is an important rail center with extensive locomotive repair facilities, and Bielefeld, about 40 miles to the east, is another vital link in communications between north-central Germany and the enemy defense lines in the west.

# 1,250 U.S. Heavies Blast Reich Factories and Airfields

10-6-44

Industrial objectives and airdromes over a wide area in the Reich were plastered yesterday by more than 1,250 Fortresses and Liberators of the Eighth Air Force. Almost 1,000 Thunderbolt and Mustang fighters escorted the heavies, which reported "good to excellent" bombing results in favorable weather.

The B17s and B24s blasted for the first time the Tegel tank plant, the Spandau ordnance and tank depots and an aero engine plant in the Berlin area. The Klockner aero-engine plant and Glinde ordnance depot in the vicinity of Hamburg also were pounded for the first time by the Eighth heavies.

In addition to airdromes at Stargard, Neu Brandenburg and Wenzendorf, other targets included the Rhenania and Ebano oil refineries at Harburg.

RAF Lancasters and Halifaxes yesterday heavily attacked synthetic oil plants in the Ruhr at Scholven-Duer and Sterkrade, both in the vicinity of Essen.

Early reports said 19 bombers and ten fighters were lost. Eighth fighters shot down 17 enemy craft, while the heavies' gunners bagged three.

A Thunderbolt pilot shot down an Me262 jet-propelled plane over Hamburg.

Returning bomber crews reported heavy Luftwaffe opposition in the Berlin sector.

S/Sgt. Jerry Weinstein, of the Bronx, N.Y., waist gunner on the Fortress Uninvited, said: "There were 80 to 100 fighters up there waiting for us. When

they jumped us, I saw two P51s go right into the swarm and taken them all on. Several Forts went down."

"It was easy enough for us, but the boys in the group behind really caught it," said 1/Lt. Henry I. Jones of Valentine, Neb., pilot of the B17 Little Audrey.

Besides their escort work Mustang pilots, led by Lt. Col. John P. Randolph, of Schertz, Tex., strafed two seaplane bases and a coastal airfield near the Baltic, destroying 36 seaplanes and three land-based aircraft.

## Heavies Attack Plants in Reich

9-2-44  
Ludwigshafen, Karlsruhe,  
Kassel Among Targets  
Of 1,000 B17s, B24s

More than 1,000 Eighth Air Force Liberators and Fortresses, escorted by nearly 500 Mustang fighters, yesterday attacked chemical and synthetic oil plants in Ludwigshafen, marshalling yards in Karlsruhe, an ordnance depot at Kassel, near Mainz, and a tank armored vehicle plant at Gustavsberg, southwest of Frankfurt, in Germany.

Approximately 300 Eighth Thunderbolts, Lightnings and Mustangs strafed rail and road targets in western Germany.

Twenty bombers are missing from the day's operations. All escorting fighters returned safely.

Ninth P47 fighter-bombers attacked Brest yesterday morning, destroying 16 fortified buildings and damaging 21 others. In addition, four gun positions were bombed and strafed. Two fighter-bombers were lost.

Unfavorable weather was encountered at all targets, crews reporting temperatures as low as 50 degrees below zero.

The B17s braved intense flak at Ludwigshafen, while only moderate ack-ack was encountered at Karlsruhe, an important rail center for traffic supplying the Siegfried Line.

was his favorite horse. 7-22-44

THE Fortress group commanded by Col. George L. Robinson, of Los Angeles, recently marked its second anniversary in the ETO.

In 230 operational missions, the group has unloaded 11,735 tons of bombs on targets in Germany and enemy-occupied territory. The gunners have destroyed 337 enemy planes, probably destroyed 113 and damaged 134.

## Nearly 2,000 U.S. Planes Blast Reich Through Clouds

9-25-44

After a weekend lull because of bad weather, more than 1,200 Fortress and Liberators of the Eighth Air Force yesterday swarmed over western Germany to blast railroad yards and other military and industrial objectives. Bombing was done with the aid of special instruments through solid cloud.

For the first time since D-Day, both Eighth and Ninth fighters

numbering nearly 750 Mustangs, Thunderbolts and Lightnings, escorted the heavies. Part of the escorting force also strafed enemy supplies and reinforcement facilities in the Ruhr—north of Marburg and in the vicinity of Paderborn.

Although no enemy pursuits were encountered and anti-aircraft fire was comparatively light, nine bombers and three Eighth fighters were lost.

The B17s and B24s pounded two railroad yards at Frankfurt, two at Coblenz and one at Ludwigshafen, as well as the Oopau chemical and synthetic oil plant. The railroad yards are important distribution points for German troops and supplies sent to the western front.

## 500 Heavies Hit Nazi Plants

9-27-44

Bombing with the aid of instruments through overcast, more than 500 Eighth Air Force Fortresses and Liberators, escorted by Mustang fighters, yesterday attacked industrial targets in the Kassel area of central Germany, while Ninth Air Force fighter-bombers swept the western

## Heavies Bomb Reich 4th Day; 9th Blasts Panzers for Patton

9-28-44

While more than 1,000 Eighth Air Force Fortresses and Liberators yesterday plastered the Reich for the fourth day in a row, nearly 200 French-based Ninth Air Force Marducers and Havocs attacked a German concentration of troops, tanks and supply installations hidden in the Foret de Parroy, 50

## 2-Day Blow Hammers 14 Nazi Cities

11-5-44

In a weekend non-stop air assault, nearly 5,000 Allied heavy bombers hammered targets in 14 cities in Germany, as well as in Austria and Jugoslavia.

More than 1,200 Fortresses and Liberators of the Eighth Air Force, escorted by about 650 P47s and P51s, yesterday pounded rail yards and synthetic oil plants in Frankfurt, Ludwigshafen and Karlsruhe, following a day in which more than 1,100 B17s and B24s, shepherded by over 800 P47s and P51s, blasted similar objectives in the Hamburg-Harburg area, Gelsenkirchen, Misburg and Saarbrücken.

### RAF Hits Steel Center

RAF heavies carried out two attacks Saturday. In daylight, Lancasters bombed the industrial town of Solingen. At night, more than 1,000 RAF heavies made their heaviest assault on Bochum, one of the main steel centers in the Ruhr. Hanover and other objectives in western Germany also were hit.

Over 900 Italy-based heavy bombers of the 15th Air Force yesterday hammered targets in the Vienna area and in Jugoslavia, and also attacked troop concentrations in Italy.

On Saturday about 600 heavies of the 15th Air Force went to southern Germany, blasting Regensburg, Augsburg, Munich and Lenz.

### 55 Locomotives Blasted

In strafing attacks on the way home, Eighth fighters destroyed or damaged 55 locomotives, 260 freight and oil cars and 11 highway trucks in the Stuttgart, Darmstadt, Ludwigshafen and Hanover areas.

Total Eighth losses for the weekend were 38 bombers and 29 fighters, presumably on account of intense flak. Thirty of the bombers and 23 fighters were missing from yesterday's operations, but some of them were believed to have landed in friendly territory. There was no enemy fighter opposition, although several Nazi jet-propelled planes were sighted both days.

Ninth Air Force Marauders, Havocs, Thunderbolts and Lightnings Saturday carried out a series of operations against German communications and defensive positions in the Rhineland, mainly in the area west of Cologne.

Approximately 200 medium and light bombers bombed Nazi strongpoints at Eschweiler, ten miles east of Aachen, and ordnance supply depots near Trier.

## 1,300 Heavies Pound Metz

11-9-44

Halting temporarily the strategic bombing of industrial objectives in Germany, more than 1,300 Eighth Air Force Fortresses and Liberators, escorted by over 500 Mustang fighters, yesterday turned the crushing weight of their bombardment against targets in the Metz area in France in tactical support of Gen. Patton's new drive.

The rail yards at Saarbrücken, Germany, also were hit by the heavies.

Not since the Normandy breakthroughs at St. Lo and Caen has tactical air support been used in such great strength.

About 200 other Eighth P51s and P47s strafed and dive-bombed transportation and ground targets around Saarbrücken and in the area between Stuttgart and Giessen, reporting the destruction of 61 locomotives and 227 railway cars, 65 motor vehicles, two flak emplacements and two barges. A hydro-electric plant, railway station and radio tower also were destroyed.

An additional 50-odd P51s patrolled regions under attack.

Fourteen U.S. bombers and 19 fighters were lost, but some of these were believed to have landed in friendly territory. Of the 42 Eighth fighters reported lost in Wednesday's operation, 19 have been reported safe.

## Entire West Front Aflame After Giant Blow by Bombers

11-16-44

Rumblings of the long-expected "big push" to crush Germany shook the Western Front yesterday as both the U.S. First and Ninth Armies opened strong offensives in Germany and Holland, going over to the attack in the wake of a 1,200-heavy-bomber assault.

More than 1,200 U.S. heavy bombers went all-out in the support of American ground attacks north of Aachen yesterday.

And also during the day over 1,150 RAF heavies, escorted by upward of 250 fighters, pounded three towns east and northeast of Aachen.

The heavily-fortified towns of Duren, Julich, and Heinsberg, east and northeast of Aachen, were pounded by the RAF heavies.

Over 450 P47s and P51s escorted the American Fortresses and Liberators. At a late hour last night losses had not been announced.

Yesterday's blow was the Eighth's second large-scale tactical assault in a week, comparable to the crushing bombardment which preceded the Normandy breakthrough at St. Lo and Caen, as well as the Metz offensive of Sept. 9.

Many thousands of 260-pound fragmentation bombs were spread over an area north of Eschweiler and south of the village of Langerwehe, west of Duren. German defense included flak and barrages from field-gun batteries, as well as "anti-aircraft" fire from troops in foxholes, and from strongpoints. There was no fighter opposition.

On the way home, two Mustang groups, led by Capt. Henry S. Ville, of Paradise, Calif., and Dale E. Shafer, of Dayton, Ohio, strafed rail targets in the vicinity of Frankfurt and Giessen, shooting up 20 locomotives, 92 freight cars and three trucks.



11-21-44  
**Armada Tears  
At Oil Vitals**

The now-you-see-it, now-you-don't Luftwaffe came up in strength yesterday for the first time in three weeks, and preliminary reports last night indicated that Eighth Air Force fighter-pilots shot down more than 60 enemy fighters and destroyed six more on the ground.

Not since Nov. 2, when Eighth pilots racked up their record one-day bag of 130 Nazi craft in the air, has the Luftwaffe shown itself in any strength.

More than 1,100 Eighth and Ninth Air Force Mustangs, Thunderbolts and Lightnings flew with more than 1,250 Fortresses and Liberators of the Eighth.

This was one of the largest combined U.S. bomber-escort forces ever dispatched in a single day.

The heavies plastered oil industry objectives at Hamburg, Harburg and Merseburg, as well as other targets in Germany. Forts bombed the Leuna synthetic-oil plant at Merseburg, while Libs pounded the Deutsche and Rhenania oil refineries at Hamburg and Harburg.

**250 Nazis  
up: 74  
down in  
oil blitz**

11-21-44  
**T**HE offensive against Germany's battered oil sources was continued yesterday by up to 3,000 planes

The Americans sent out more than 1,250 Fortresses and Liberators, escorted by over 1,100 Mustangs, Thunderbolts and Lightnings.

Their targets were the oil plants at Merseburg, Hamburg and Harburg, while Lancasters, escorted by more than 250 fighters, attacked the oil factory at Homburg, in the Ruhr.

**Air battles**

American fighter pilots shot down 73 of more than 250 interceptors, most of them near Merseburg. Six enemy aircraft were destroyed on the ground.

Only one bomber formation was attacked by fighters, and it claimed one destroyed. Seven jet-propelled Messerschmitts were seen near Hamburg. Anti-aircraft fire was intense around the oil targets. Forty bombers and 17 fighters were missing.



11-21-44 U.S. Army Air Force Photo  
U.S. heavies which hit Nazi oil

terrible barrage of flak which accounted for 56 bombers and 30 escorting fighters. Top photo shows the intensity of the ack-ack fire, with Forts, contrails streaming behind, surrounded by smoky flak bursts. One bomber goes up in a cloud of white smoke. Below, another Fort goes down with fuel tanks blazing.

**The Sky Was Filled With Flak—and Death**



6-20-44  
**1,000 Bombers Hit  
Nazi Oil Plants**

OF more than 1,000 American heavy bombers which went out yesterday at least 1,000 hammered targets in Germany.

In addition to attacks on oil refineries and plants at Hamburg, Hanover, Magdeburg and Politz, a tank depot at Konigsborn and an aircraft factory in the Brunswick area were bombed.

Pilots of Mustangs and Thunderbolts escorting the bombers reported shooting down 85 enemy fighters over Germany and destroying 12 on the ground.

6-21-44  
**Berlin Raided; Nazis  
Offer Bombing 'Deal'**

**2,000 U.S. Planes  
Strike Record Blow**

More than 2,000 American warplanes, the mightiest air armada ever to hit Berlin, slashed through European skies yesterday to give the German capital its first heavy attack since the Continental landings.

The raid also was sharp proof that savage assaults on the heart of Hitlerdom would continue hand-in-hand with blows against the Nazi robot-plane coast and overwhelming cover for advancing ground troops.

Shepherded by an estimated force of more than 1,000 P47s, P51s and P38s of both Eighth and Ninth Air Forces, more than 1,000 Fortresses and Liberators showered explosives on targets in Berlin and outlying Basdorf.

The record raid—the first by heavy bombers since D-Day and the 12th of the war for the USAAF—marked the first time P47s had taken part in a mission. Berlin, Eighth Air Force announced, the longest trip the Thunderbolts

**Blow at Berlin  
Biggest by Day**

Photographic reconnaissance has shown that the attack on Berlin June 21 by Liberators and Fortresses was the most devastating blow ever struck against the German capital by daylight bombers, USSTAF headquarters announced yesterday.

Photos made during the raid show more than 30 concentrations of bomb bursts over a widespread area in the heart of Berlin, it was reported. Many important government buildings, four rail stations, five rail marshalling yards and more than 35 separate industrial plants were damaged.

In the Mitte and Kreuzberg districts in the center of the city, the Reich-chancellery was hit and the Gestapo headquarters, the war office and propaganda buildings were within the area of a large concentration of bomb hits, it was said.

The government printing office, telegraph and post office buildings, several factories and three of Berlin's most important railway stations—Potsdamer, Anhalter and Friedrichstrasse—also were damaged, USSTAF claimed.

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6-28-44  
--Thundering out from Britain yesterday, an armada of at least 750 B17s and B24s, escorted by P47s, P38s and P51s, hit the rail center of Saarbrücken, in Germany, French airfields at Couvron, Athies and Juvin-court, all in the vicinity of Laon, 70 miles northeast of Paris, as well as other unspecified military targets in the Paris and Laon region.

The American assault came shortly after escorted RAF Halifaxes attacked without loss a target described only as a military installation in northern France. Presumably a base for pilotless planes, which continued to fall in southern England yesterday, was bombed.

## 1,000 Heavies Batter Calais

7-6-44  
American heavies yesterday gave the Pas de Calais its heaviest battering of the war, 1,000 Fortresses and Liberators bombing 18 German flying-bomb sites.

In the mounting campaign against the robot installations, which Prime Minister Churchill yesterday credited having destroyed 100 ramps and retarding the Nazi terror campaign for perhaps six months, the heavies flew out in good weather on their 14th sharp assault on Pas de Calais since D-Day. It was the sixth Allied blow against the buzz-bomb nests in less than 48 hours.

## Munich Area Pounded Again

7-16-44  
More than 1,000 Fortresses and Liberators, on the fourth America heavy-bomber attack on the Reich in 31 days, yesterday struck communication targets around Munich and Saarbrücken and other objectives in southern Germany. U.S. medium bombers, rounding out the first year of operations in the ETO pounded enemy infantry strongpoint opposing the Yank drive toward St. Lo. Convoys by nearly 500 fighters, the B17s and B24s met only two Nazi interceptors as they raided Germany. Flak however, was intense and 12 heavies and three pursuits were lost.

## Heavies Pound French Targets

7-17-44  
In one of the most widespread attacks ever launched against the Nazis in France, close to 750 Fortresses and Liberators yesterday struck flyingbomb supply dumps, five rail centers stretching from the Pas de Calais to the Swiss border, and more than a dozen rail bridges in a wide circle around Paris.

Joining the British-based heavies in the offensive against enemy communications, which was called most significant at SHAEP, 15th Air Force Liberators pounded three bridges spanning the Rhone River in southeast France and Ninth P38 fighterbombers slashed rail lines west of Paris and almost due south of the American fighting zone in Normandy.

At the same time, Marauders set ablaze a fuel dump at Rennes—one of the largest in the battle area—while Havocs blasted a smaller one at Bruz, seven miles southwest of Rennes.

No enemy fighter opposition was encountered by the Eighth Air Force

## 2 Air Armadas Hit Reich Again

7-20-44  
1,200 Heavies From U.K.,  
Force From Italy Strike  
In Widespread Blows

The Eighth Air Force attacked at least ten targets in Germany yesterday as a 15th Air Force armada swept into the Reich from Italy.

In the eighth big American assault on the Reich in ten days more than 1,200 Eighth Air Force Fortresses and Liberators, shepherded by 750 fighters, pounded aircraft and oil plants, a ball-bearing factory and other strategic targets in the Leipzig area of central Germany.

Most of the bomber formations met no enemy opposition. Two Fortress wings, however, were attacked sharply by a large

## Aerial Armada Blasts Path for U.S. Advance

7-24-44  
1,500 Heavies, Plus Fleets  
Of Other Planes, Strike  
At Nazis in France

More than 3,000 American bombers and fighters, including the largest contingent of heavies ever dispatched on a single mission, battered German front-line positions for 24 hours yesterday morning in support of the U.S. First Army's thrust against the enemy's line at the western end of the Normandy front.

In an overwhelming display of both tactical support and Allied air supremacy, the Eighth and Ninth Air Force armadas dropped thousands of fragmentation

## Twin Blow At Reich's Oil Struck

7-28-44

### Germany Is Hit by 8th AF Heavies; Ploesti Raided By Force From Italy

The Wehrmacht's seriously-depleted oil stocks were battered anew yesterday by more than 2,000 American warplanes in simultaneous thrusts from Britain and Italy.

Returning to Germany for the first time in a week, Eighth Air Force bombers and fighters raided the synthetic oil plant at Merseburg and other objectives in central Germany.

Sergeant [Name] [Rank]

Only moderate Luftwaffe opposition was encountered over Germany by a force of up to 1,000 Fortresses and an equal number of escorting fighters. Four interceptors were shot down by the fighters and one by the B17s. Eighth losses were seven heavies and two pursuits.

On Thursday Ninth fighter-bombers flew more than 1,000 sorties, many of them in support of tank thrusts.

Each tank column heading toward the

## Berlin Bombed By U.S. Heavies

8-6-44

Allied bombs now can do 50 per cent more damage—without the addition of a single plane or pilot—through use of a new explosive called RDX, it was announced yesterday as American heavy bombers raided Berlin and targets in the Hamburg and Kiel regions of Germany.

Now in use in Europe, RDX is much more powerful than TNT and detonates with such tremendous force that the fragments produced can cut through reinforced concrete fortifications and the blast effect can be almost as fatal to enemy troops as the bomb fragments, Col. I. A. Inke, of the Ordnance Department, announced in Washington.

Fighters escorting the heavies to Germany met strong Luftwaffe opposition and 33 interceptors were shot down.

Objectives hit by the Eighth heavies yesterday included a Diesel motor plant at Berlin, an aircraft engine plant at Genshagen, an armament works and bomber assembly plant at Brandenburg and an aircraft engine plant at Marienfelde, all in the Berlin area, four oil refineries at Hamburg, the Salzwedel air-drome near Marienburg and the port of Kiel.

There was no immediate announcement of American losses.

## Munich Again Battered In Daylight

7-31-44

TARGETS in the Munich area were yesterday battered for the sixth time in a month by United States heavy bombers.

The force that attacked these and objectives in the Ludwigs-haven area as well as airfields in France, consisted of more than 1,200 Flying Fortresses and Liberators.

They were escorted by between 750 and 1,000 fighters.

The American fighters destroyed 18 enemy planes on the ground and shot up railway transport.

Sixteen bombers and four of their escort are missing.

## Aircraft a Key To a Nazi Rout

8-9-44

### Mallory Describes Havoc Wrought by Planes; Heavies Hit Reich

The likelihood of a German retreat in France being turned into "a complete rout" by Allied sky fleets was emphasized yesterday by Allied Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory in a review of the aerial role in the invasion of Normandy.

Expressing doubt that the Luftwaffe would stage a comeback, Mallory said that "we have in the Allied air force an instrument which, when the German break comes in France, will turn the retreat into a complete rout and will, I hope, result in the complete destruction of the German Army."

Mallory stressed the use of heavy bombers in direct ground support and told of the destruction wrought upon the enemy.

"We have compelled him to detrain far from the battle; to expend his petrol and shorten the life of his tanks by traveling long distances by road; to throw his divisions into battle piecemeal, short of tanks, ammunition, guns, and all kinds of supplies," Mallory said.

Fighter-bombers in the eight weeks of battle have limited the Germans to such an extent that they "have been unable to mount any large-scale counter-attack, still less any counter-offensive," he asserted.

In July alone, low-level attacks have resulted in over 400 tanks and heavy armored vehicles being knocked out, not counting probables, he added.

In raids on southern Germany yesterday Eighth Air Force Fortresses and Liberators attacked railway marshalling yards at Saarbrücken and other military

## Peenemunde Hit By Forts, Libs

8-4-44  
1,200 Attack Experimental  
Station, Targets at Kiel,  
Hamburg and Bremen

In the first full day of aerial activity in a week, more than 1,200 Flying Fortresses and Liberators of the Eighth Air Force ranged Germany yesterday in heavy assaults upon a variety of military targets, including the Peenemunde experimental stations and oil refineries at Hamburg and Bremen.

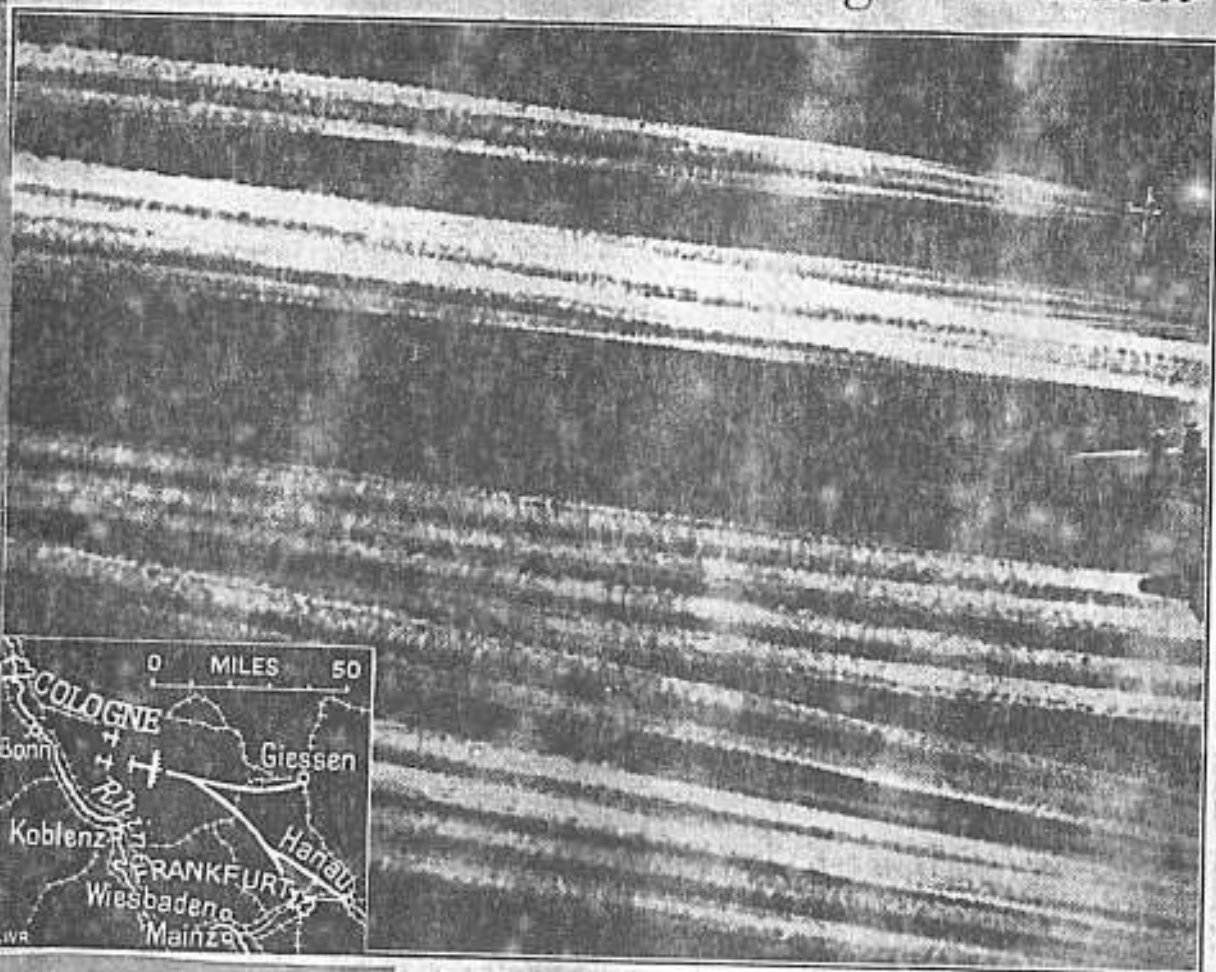
The bombers and their fighter escorts encountered little enemy opposition, except over Hamburg, where swarms of enemy craft, including Me109s, were intercepted.

targets in the Stuttgart region. Thirty-three Nazi interceptors were shot down in battles over Ulm and Munich, and in assaults upon enemy airfields and railway targets 30 more planes were shot up on the ground and 50 locomotives and 137 freight cars destroyed. Eighteen of our bombers and two fighters were missing.

Marauders and Havocs of the Ninth Air Force hammered six bridges in France, at Chauny, Pontois, Beaumont-sur-Oise, Verberie, Compeigne and Chartres, and a radiolocation plant at Argentan.

Fighter-bombers over the battlelines between Vire and Le Mans flew more than 1,000 individual attacks Tuesday in support of ground columns.

## Record Bomber Force Flies Against Reich



Contrails crisscrossing German skies emphasize the force of heavy bombers dispatched by the Eighth Air Force Monday in a smashing attack upon rail centers in the Reich. It was the largest single-mission force in daylight, and comprised the bulk of approximately 3,200 warplanes of USSTAF—which embraces the 15th Air Force as well—flung against Germany. Map inset shows the area attacked, including Hanau, whose railyards were again pounded Monday.

U.S. Army Air Force Photo

## Allied Planes Batter Airfields; Blitz on France Continues

8-15-44  
In a closely co-ordinated joint operation—in which Eighth Air Force fighters or the first time escorted RAF bombers as well as their own Fortresses and Liberators—Allied planes struck at enemy airdromes in the Lowlands and Germany yesterday, while fighter-bombers maintained their campaign against enemy communications in France.

Halibaxes and Lancasters concentrated one of the heaviest attacks of the war upon nine airfields in Holland and Belgium, and Eighth bombers plastered Luftwaffe bases and airfields from the Rhine to northwest Germany.

More than 5,000 tons of bombs were dropped by the RAF, the average of 550 tons on each airfield amounting to more than dropped on the whole of London in any single night during the blitz. In its end of the operation, the Eighth hit targets at Cologne, Wiesbaden, Frankfurt, Wittmund, Bad Zwischenahn, Vechta and Hausdorf, as well as airdromes in Holland and Belgium.

Enemy aircraft intercepted the Fortresses near Wiesbaden and Liberators near Vechta in the Reich. Sixteen bombers and five fighters were missing from the raid. The bombers shot down 13 enemy craft while the fighters accounted for 14 in the air and eight on the ground.

## Aircraft Leave Trail of Havoc In Enemy Lines

8-12-44

### Railways, Roads Ravaged In Record Sweeps Over France by U.S. Craft

Pressing their offensive to isolate Germany's battered armies, American warplanes yesterday, in the heaviest 24 hours of assaults on enemy communications since D-Day, turned Nazi mobile equipment into masses of burning steel and laid waste mile after mile of roads, bridges, tunnels and Wehrmacht ground installations.

More than 1,250 U.S. heavies battered main and secondary highways on both sides of the Seine from Paris northwest to the mouth of the river and hit a rail bridge over the Seine and enemy front-line gun positions. Fighters and fighter-bombers, attacking after the most successful day in the history of Eighth Fighter Command, flew at almost ground level over France to pound everything German.

Marauders and Havocs, meanwhile, providing full-scale support for the great pincer threatening the Germans between Caen and Alencon, made a series of coordinated attacks on highways and road junctions in an area extending from Lisieux southeast to Rugeles.

#### Operated in Relays

Reports up to 4 PM revealed that the pursuits, which dive-bombed and strafed in relays, had destroyed or damaged 1,067 railway cars, 51 oil cars, 42 ammunition cars, 220 locomotives, 182 trucks, and 65 other military vehicles.

On Saturday, in the most severe blow ever struck against the enemy by fighters, the Eighth craft destroyed or damaged more than 3,000 railroad cars, including 112 ammunition cars, which exploded; 362 tank cars carrying oil and gasoline; 365 locomotives; 464 trucks and 35 other military vehicles.

Joining in the fray, Ninth P47 and P38 fighter-bombers were active yesterday after the previous day's Ninth raids on French rail targets, gun positions and

## Aerial Armadas Ravage Foe in France and Reich

8-14-44

Mindful of Gen. Eisenhower's Order of the Day to blast the Nazis from the air unceasingly by day and night and deny them safety either in flight or flight, Allied airmen yesterday pounded the enemy escape corridor in France's

Falaise sector, struck inland against Germany's weakened communication lines and carried the war to the Reich itself.

At the same time, nearly 750 heavy bombers of the 15th Air Force flew from Italy to hit the coast of southern France for the third straight day.

As aircraft of the U.S. Eighth and Ninth Air Forces and the British Second Tactical Air Force bombed defense positions of the fleeing Wehrmacht and blew its rail lines, bridges and vehicles sky high, four contingents of Eighth B17s, numbering between 500 and 750 heavies in all, thundered to southern Germany.

Escorted by P51s and P47s, the Forts bombed the I.G. Farben chemical plant at Ludwigsfelde, an electrical equipment factory at Mannheim and Luftwaffe stations at Sandhofen, near Mannheim, and Echterdingen, near Stuttgart. Bombing was visual. Three Forts and one fighter were lost.

## Planes Again Smash at France; Forts Hit In Central Germany

8-16-44

Allied airmen yesterday took another devastating toll of Nazi armor and communications in France and at the same time penetrated deep into the Reich to pound aircraft factories, engine plants, synthetic oil refineries and an airdrome.

Reuter estimated the damage wrought by Allied air forces in a 48-hour period ended Tuesday night included 1,000 German tanks and vehicles. Ninth Air Force fighter-bombers during the period destroyed 38 enemy tanks and 147 motor transports, apart from preliminary returns which showed eight tanks probably destroyed, 16 damaged; 62 transports probably destroyed, 62 damaged, and 30 guns silenced.

Eighth Air Force heavies, striking into central Germany, encountered four of the Luftwaffe's rocket-propelled fighters southeast of Leipzig. Two of them were reported shot down by Mustang pilots, Lt. Col. John B. Murphy, of Darlington, S.C., and Lt. Cyril W. Jones Jr., of Glen Springs, Tenn., a third was damaged.

The Forts and Libs hit the Deltitzsch air equipment depot, one of the most important in the Reich; the Schkuditz and Halle bomber assembly plants; aircraft engine plants at Magdeburg, Dessau and Kothen; synthetic oil plants at Zeitz, Hohen and Magdeburg; a carbonization and oil refinery plant at Rositz, and the Luftwaffe station at Halberstadt.

It was second attack upon the engine plant at Magdeburg and the airdrome at Halberstadt, both heavily damaged in earlier attacks this month. The synthetic oil plants were raided two months ago but resumed production on a reduced scale. Yesterday's losses were 23 bombers and three fighters. Eighth fighters destroyed 32 German planes in the air.

In a 20-minute battle south of Hanover, which sprawled from 17,000 feet to tree-top level, Mustangs of the Eighth Fighter Command group of Col. William J. Cummings Jr. bagged 11 Me109s.

## LUFTWAFFE TRY TO STOP 1,000-FORT BLOW

GERMAN anti-aircraft defenses and fighters put up the most determined resistance of recent weeks when aircraft factories and engine plants, oil refineries and an aerodrome in Germany were attacked by more than 1,000 Flying Fortresses and Liberators of the U.S. Eighth Air Force yesterday.

Anti-aircraft fire was intense. Interceptors in large numbers sought to break up the bomber formations, particularly in the Hanover and Eisenbach areas.

The bombing was carried out visually, with good to excellent results.

The targets, all in Central Germany in the Magdeburg-Leipzig area, were:

Aircraft engine plants at Magdeburg, Dessau and Kothen.

Synthetic oil plants at Zeitz, Hohen and Magdeburg.

Bomber assembly plants at Schkuditz and Halle.

The air equipment depot, one of the most important in Germany, at Deltitzsch.

A carbonization and oil refinery plant at Rositz.

The Luftwaffe station at Halberstadt.

The strong forces of escorting fighters reported destroying 32 enemy planes in combat.

On the way home the escorting fighters shot up 23 locomotives and more than 100 rail cars. Twenty-three bombers and three fighters are missing.



## Reich Hit By 5,000 Aircraft

10-7-44

Germany underwent its greatest aerial assault of the war Saturday when more than 5,000 Allied bombers, mostly Fortresses and Liberators of the U.S. Strategic Air Forces, and fighters struck from Britain, France and Italy at key industrial and communications points from east to west and north to south.

The combined strength of more than 1,400 British-based bombers and upwards of 800 Italy-based B17s and B24s comprised the largest U.S. bomber force ever dispatched on a single operation.

### Third Day in Row

This was the third successive day of large-scale operations by the Eighth Air Force and the biggest attacking force since June 20 when over 1,500 Eighth heavies went out.

The Eighth's losses were 51 bombers and 15 fighters against the destruction of 49 enemy craft in the air and on the ground, including four jet-propelled Nazi fighters.

Two Me262s were shot down by 1/Lt. Urban L. Drew, P51 pilot from Detroit, who became the first Eighth Fighter Command pilot to score a double kill over the Nazis' new type of interceptor in one day.

Maj. Richard E. Conner, P47 pilot from Vicksburg, Miss., also bagged an Me262, while three P51 pilots—1/Lt. Elmer A. Taylor, of Green Forest, Ark., Everett N. Farrell, of Superior, Ariz., and 2/Lt. Willard G. Erkamp, of Eagle Rock, Cal.—shared in destroying an Me163 jet-propelled fighter.

### Oil Plants Hit

Escorted by more than 900 Thunderbolts, Mustangs and Lightnings of the Eighth and Ninth Air Forces, the Eighth heavies ranged over central, eastern and northeastern Germany, hammering synthetic oil plants at Politz, near the Baltic Sea; Ruhland, Magdeburg, Bohlen, Merseburg and Lutzendorf. The latter three are in the Leipzig area, and Ruhland is northeast of Dresden.

Other targets included a Krupp tank works at Magdeburg; tank plants, aero-engine plant and locomotive works at Kassel; a chemical and explosive works at Clausthal-Zellerfeld, south of Brunswick; a Focke-Wulf 190 repair depot, air-drome and a motor transport plant at Zwickau, south of Leipzig, and an airfield at Nordhausen.

Striking simultaneously from the south, the 15th Air Force heavies, shepherded by nearly 400 fighters, pounded two oil refineries and an oil storage depot in the Vienna area.

Meantime, over 800 Lancasters and Halifaxes of the RAF Bomber Command, with fighter escort, smashed at the Nazi reinforcement centers of Emmerich and Kleve in western Germany, while other Lancasters carried out a low-level attack on the dykes guarding Walcheren Island.

### Ninth Supports Armies

More than 300 Marauders and Havocs of the Ninth Air Force Saturday plastered bridges and supply points servicing enemy troops battling the U.S. First and Third Armies.

Ninth fighter-bombers in great strength ranged through the Rhine Valley and behind the German armies from Saarbrücken to Düsseldorf, bombing and strafing airfields, canals laden with supply barges, railroads and numerous artillery positions. About 200 enemy fighters were encountered.

Bad weather curtailed activity yesterday by British-based U.S. heavies.

## 2,200 Heavies 10-25-44 Batter Reich

After a two-day lull, more than 1,200 Fortresses and Liberators yesterday hammered the Reich's largest railroad yards, located at Hamm, and hit important oil-refining centers in the Hamburg-Harburg area, as well as other military targets in northwestern Germany.

The synthetic oil plants at Gelsenkirchen also were pounded.

Escorted by more than 500 Thunderbolt and Mustang fighters, the Eighth heavies bombed through cloud by means of instruments. Two bombers and one fighter were lost.

Also yesterday in daylight more than a thousand RAF bombers, escorted by Spitfires and Mustangs, attacked objectives in the Ruhr, with their main target the much-pounded armament and railway center of Essen. Another part of the force attacked a synthetic-oil plant at Homburg, 45 miles north of Frankfurt.

RAF bombers early Wednesday attacked objectives in Hanover and western Germany.

## Big Day Blow At Reich Again

10-26-44  
For the second straight day more than 1,200 U.S. heavy bombers swarmed over Germany yesterday, battering rail and industrial targets in the Hanover, Münster and Bielefeld areas. They were followed up by RAF heavies in their second successive daylight attack on the Reich.

Upward of 600 Thunderbolt and Mustang fighters escorted the Fortresses and Liberators, which bombed through solid cloud. One bomber and one fighter were lost.

The RAF Lancasters, shepherded by Mustangs, attacked the I. G. Farben Industrie chemical works at Leverkusen.

# 10 Forts Downed 60 Nazi Fighters

AN EIGHTH AIR FORCE BOMBER STATION, Oct. 10—Veteran airmen of the 390th Bomb Group, commanded by Col. Joseph A. Moller, of Chicago, looked back one year today to a comparatively minor bombing attack on railroad yards at Munster, Germany, where ten of the group's Fortresses threw a jolting "Sunday punch" into the Luftwaffe to score the greatest aerial victory of the war by a lone group in a single engagement.

There were no headlines for the 100 heroes who came back from the fiery hell over the ancient German terminal in the Ruhr, nor for the crews of eight Forts which didn't come back.

Few of the men realized the greatness and the importance of their victory. That they had fought a nightmarish battle, accomplished their assignment, and got back with their skins was all that seemed to

matter then. They were too tired, too scared, too thankful, and too depressed over the loss of 80 of their comrades to care much about anything.

That, and military censorship, are the principal reasons why the story is told now for the first time.

Here's what the crews of those ten returning bombers had done: Destroyed 60 front-line German fighters; probably destroyed six more, and damaged eight, to complete the destruction of six full-strength German fighter squadrons. Impressive as it is, the final score failed to include the unknown, but substantial, number of attackers destroyed by the bombers which never returned.

Never before—nor since that Sunday afternoon, Oct. 10, 1943—had one isolated group of less than 20 Fortresses more decisively defeated a concentrated

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)  
Luftwaffe horde of more than 350 fighters.

The only remaining fliers at Moller's station who participated in the battle are: Lt. Col. Louis W. Dolan, of Denver, Colo., air executive officer; Maj. Gene C. Wilms, of Millard, Neb., staff bombardier; Capt. Robert D. Brown, of Houston, Tex., a combat leader, and Capt. Douglas I. Gordon-Forbes, of Hollywood, Cal., another staff bombardier.

Alone, Brown's bomber, Cabin In The Sky, which also carried Forbes, knocked down 11 German planes during the melee, after all bombers in its squadron formation had been shot down during the 35-minute holocaust.

Among the crews lost at Munster was the one commanded by Lt. John G. Winant Jr., son of the U.S. ambassador to Great Britain.

The story of the battle was told by Forbes, who saw the grim spectacle unfold. "Even De Mille could never reproduce that one," he declared.

## Skies Looked Quiet

The first appearance of German fighters was spotted as the formation turned onto its bomb run. Escorting fighters, having reached the rim of their range, had left the bombers with the skies looking quiet over the target.

Then, suddenly, the interphone exploded as the tail gunner shouted: "Enemy fighters at five, six and seven o'clock, low, hitting the group behind us." The Germans had launched a perfectly co-ordinated attack, striking the moment our escort was out of sight.

"We caught the brunt of that first attack," Forbes related. "Starnes (2/Lt. Georg E. Starnes, of Columbia, S.C.) was hit at the middle of his ship by a rocket, and the plane started to break in half. It nosed up and crashed into

another just above in the formation. Both planes fell away and went down in a column of smoke. A ship on our right blew up with a great red flash. I saw the right waist gunner come out of his window in a grotesque swan dive. His chest was shot away."

All around them a great battle raged. The sky filled with the debris of men and planes. It ceased to be a battle in any organized sense and became a nightmare of attacking fighters and burning fighters and bombers. At one time close to 50 planes were burning and going down around them. The sky was so full of parachutes, it looked like a paratroop invasion.

## Sights Large Formation

As they neared the target, Dolan sighted a large formation of planes off to their right. At first he mistook them for Forts, because they were stacked up in a similar type of formation. But then as they turned into them and fanned out like an old Prussian infantry company charging, he identified them as twin-engine rocket planes.

"We had fought every inch of the way to the target after the bomb run had started," Forbes said. "The railroad yards were wide open. Bombs splattered all over them."

After calling out "bombs away," Forbes manned his gun. "I didn't have to look for targets," he recounted. "They were everywhere."

Capt. Bill Cabral, of San Francisco, pilot of the B17 Eight-Ball had a huge hole in his right wing, big enough for a couple of men to crawl through. The ship had been hit by a rocket and was in plenty of trouble.

Brown asked his tail gunner how the squadron was holding up, and the latter answered, "What squadron, Captain? We're all alone up here." They had lost five ships in about ten minutes. The other squadrons had fared little better.

## Spots 36 Fighters

Seconds later, Brown spotted 36 enemy fighters just ahead. And for the first time Forbes felt like throwing in the sponge. The cause seemed hopeless. They had been battling for what seemed like hours, though actually the fighting over Munster lasted just 34 minutes. The group behind had been literally blown out of the sky.

The ammunition was almost exhausted, shell casings were piled up a foot-deep on the floor. And still the Jerries came. Although they didn't know it at the time, a pair of empty guns which the Cabin's ball turret gunner was waving was the only protection left for the ship's belly. He kept off many attacks by tracking the fighters.

Directly ahead, streams of white vapor trails appeared—P47s charging in. "It's difficult to express the feeling that swept over me at that moment," Forbes commented. "All the weariness of battle seemed to drain every ounce of strength I had. I felt like yelling and praying at the same time."

The battered German forces whirled a hurry and high-tailed it in disorder. The Thunderbolts caught a few and shot them down. Then they returned to be the remnants of the bomber formation home.

## Fliers Welcome An 'Extras' Role

By Bud Hutton

Stars and Stripes Staff Writer

306 FORTRESS GROUP, Oct. 17—Heavy-bomber airmen, who before June 6 were the prima donnas of the war in the ETO, resumed their spear-carrying extra's role today with their third major blow in four days at Cologne—attacks aimed at making American infantrymen's job easier.

The rail and supply center which feeds Nazi resistance along the Rhine was hit through cloud by more than 1,300 Fortresses and Liberators.

The heavies were covered by a force of more than 800 Thunderbolts and Mustangs. The only enemy air opposition encountered was directed against a straggling bomber that had become separated from its formation. Some pilots reported seeing enemy jet-propelled planes—but only in the distance. Ack-ack fire over Cologne ranged from meager to intense.

Thirteen bombers and three fighters were lost in the operation.

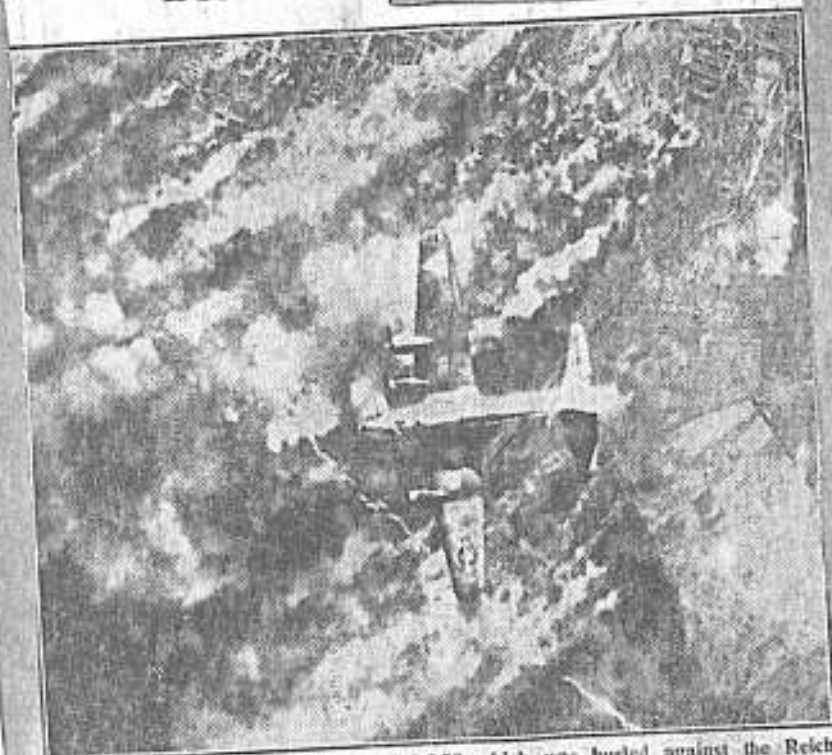
Just as almost everyone else, your correspondent, who used to fly with the bombers, chased off after the ground forces when the invasion started. Today I went back with the bombers to see how they felt about a supporting role. The crews—who used to be the glamor boys, who reaped all the publicity there was—say they don't mind the spear-carrying a bit.

2/Lt. Bob Mox, Hollywood, pilot of the B17 Lily Marlene, summed it up: "Our hats go off to those infantrymen. They've got a dirty job. If wading through

(Continued on page 4)  
the flak at Cologne (Mox lost an engine to flak there the last time out) is going to make foxhole living easier for those guys we're all for it."

That was about the way Mox' crew and the rest of the airmen from this old "First Wing" station felt about it. Once upon a time, when the bomber crews were fighting all the war there was in this theater, some of them used to be a little touchy, probably rightly so, about due credit. Today they figure they have just as tough a job as infantrymen, but they can get back to a hot meal and a warm bed at night, and anything they can do to make the ground-force Joes' stay in foxholes shorter is all right by them.

## Boss



A Flying Fortress, one of a force of 1,250 which was hurled against the Reich Tuesday, soars with grim majesty over the smashed Darmstadt marshalling yards during the attack by the Eighth Air Force.

28 March 1981

Dear Ted:

Many thanks for the materials which you sent along. I think I'll be able to use some of that Ernie Pyle stuff in Echoes at some future date.

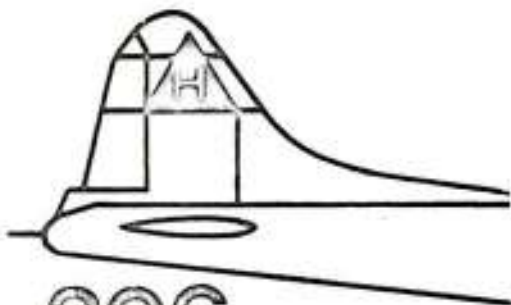
It would be most helpful if others were as conscientious.

I am attaching a copy of our "Search List", which includes names that have been found with a WW II hometown appended. This is where we begin looking for people. Could you take a look at the Arkansas list and see what you might be able to find.

We really know where Gerald Stroud is, and as he is a mental case have not pressed to get an address.

If you should come up with one or more who are deceased, I would like to know date and place.

Sincerely yours,



367th, 368th, 369th, 423rd Squadrons, and service organizations  
Thurleigh, Bedfordshire, England – September 1942-April 1945

## 306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

*Historian*

Russell A. Strong  
2041 Hilldale  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

8 April 1981

Dear Ted:

Thanks for the information on Cothran, and the other material.

I would appreciate it very much if you would call Mrs. **W. H. Pool** and find out when her husband died. He was 369th statistical officer, and transferred out of the 306th 19 Aug 43 to the 102nd Provisional Combat Wing. He would be about 71 years old now, if living.

Of course, there is always the chance they are divorced, but probably not.

As to the piece by Chaplain Poletti, I have had a copy of it for several years that he sent me. I had thought I would make use of it at some time, but have done nothing about it. But I need more material in the future for Echoes.

Chaplain Poletti died last December.

I appreciate your great interest and help.

Sincerely yours,

  
Russell A. Strong

**OVER**

6A Arkansas Democrat--Saturday, October 14, 1978

DEATHS / FUNERALS

W. Pool

W. Herbert Pool 69 of Apt. 157 West Park Meadows, a retired accountant with Russell Brown Co. , died Friday. Mr. Pool was a member of the first Christain Church, Arkansas Bar Association, veteran of WWII and was a Captain in the Air Force. Surviving are his wife, MrsLaVern Bradsher Pool, and a sister, Mrs Gladys Atkins of Little Rock. Graveside services will be at 3:30 PM today at the First Christain Church by the Rev. Dan Kenner. Burial will be in Rest Hill Cemetery by Griffin Leggett Healey Roth. Memorials may be made to the First Christain Church Memorial Fund.

Russell,

The paper copy was too faded to send, but the above is as written in the copy. I talked to Mrs Pool and she told me that he was in England and was in the Air Force, and was a statistical officer. But that was all she could remember.

Sooo! this must be him.

  
Ted Hood

4-16-81

Mrs. Pool's present address.

Mrs. W. H. Pool  
3700 Cantrell Road  
Little Rock, AR. 72202

**OVER**

8 April 1981

Dear Ted:

Thanks for the information on Cothran, and the other material.

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Chaplain Poletti died last December.

I appreciate your great interest and help.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

### 306TH BOMB GROUP SEARCH LIST

In general, these are WWII hometowns, as listed in Army records. Searches should begin at these towns, through phone books, newspaper files, veterans' records, etc. For additional help in other places, contact Russell A. Strong, 2041 Hillsdale, Kalamazoo, MI 49007, or call (h) 616/344-6466 or (o) 616/383-6160.

#### ALABAMA

- Birmingham - Louis A. Dabney, Marvin F. Gilmore, ~~E. G. Hanes~~, Comadora Miller, Jerome B. Siegel.
- Elnore - James T. Harrison
- Goodwater - Robert E. Nabors
- Greensboro - Benjamin T. Compton
- Greenville - William B. Bedsole
- Hopewell - Albert W. McMahon
- Lanette - Curtis M. Barber
- Mobile - John P. Elzen
- Piedmont - Walter C. Turner

#### ARIZONA

- Bisbee - Hugh F. Smith
- Buckeye - Lee Allen Prugh
- Canada - James E. Hunt
- Phoenix - Lyle V. Edwards, Stanley N. Kisseberth, George L. Matthews, R. Navin<sup>ger</sup>, Mason Novinger, Albert G. Smith, Floyd Williams, Jr.
- Safford - Epifanci F. Campos
- Tucson - Paul J. George
- Winslow - Richard L. Hesser, Raymond A. Ohm

#### ARKANSAS - (501)

- Arkadelphia - Jack Wood
- Benton - Billy H. Drennan
- England - Woodrow Williams
- Holly Grove - Thomas R. Hill
- Hope - Othal Woodall, Jr.
- Little Rock - Herman Cothran, John H. Dexter, William H. Pool
- Monticello - Wm. R. Grant
- Nashville - Joe G. Ross
- Ozark - Carl S. Hays
- Plomerville - Gerald Stroud
- Siloam Springs - Emmett W. Ford
- Springdale - James K. Tippin
- Swifton - J. R. Strother

↳ Listed as W.H. Pool, Mrs.  
I did not call, as this listing here is usually that of a widow.

Herman Cothran  
4315 N. Maple  
North Little Rock, AR. 72118

#### CALIFORNIA

- Alhambra - Gerald D. Barnt
- Anaheim - William R. DeWolf, Walter P. Guy

COTHRAN WAS GROUND WITH WITH  
423BS ITS ENTIRE LIFE. SHOULD  
BE GOOD SOURCE FOR INFORMATION.  
HE WAS SURPRISED & HAPPY  
THAT THERE WAS A 306 BG &  
3AF ORGANIZATION. I GAVE HIM  
A 8AFHS MEMBERSHIP APPROXIMATE  
T.C. HOOD # 2012



4-1-81

Dear Russell,

A few days ago I sent you a picture of my aircraft, the Solid Sender.  
At that time I did not know the names of the Crew Chief or his assistant.  
I ran into Herman Cothran here in Little Rock who knew them.

Crew Chief     Joe Terrana

Asst C/C             Aliello     (Last name only, hope spelling is correct)

Herman was in the 423BS for 39 months and has a very good memory of things  
at that time. I have given him a membership application to the 8th AFHS.



Ted Hood  
# 8012

# Personal Mention

► Reverend John F. Cronin, S.S., was recently announced as one of the winners of the Pabst Post-War Employment Awards for his manuscript on a workable and practical basis for the solution of postwar employment problems in America. Dr. Cronin was born at Glens Falls, N. Y., studied at Holy Cross College, Worcester, Mass., and obtained his doctorate from the Catholic University. He is the author of *Economics and Society* and several pamphlets.

► Leo Egan, who writes the second in the series *Molders of Opinion*, is a graduate of Syracuse University, class of 1928. For the past fourteen years he has been busy covering politics in New York and Washington, first for the *Brooklyn Eagle* and later for the *New York Times*. As a political reporter he has had a particularly fine opportunity to observe and trace the formation of public opinion in New York and other parts of the United States and to note the techniques employed to influence it.

► Captain Adrian Poletti, Chaplain to a Flying Fortress unit of the Eighth Air Force, was born in Union City, N. J. He became a Passionist in 1928. Prior to joining the Army, he was an assistant at St. Joseph's Monastery Church, Baltimore, Md. In his article just received from England, he tells of the life of our airmen in Britain, the men who are bombing the Nazi strongholds in Europe.

► James B. Connolly, whose autobiography *Sea-borne: Thirty Years Avoyaging* has just been published, needs no introduction as the author of many short stories and books dealing with life at sea. His stories have appeared in *Red Book*, *Harper's*, *Collier's*, *Scribner's*, *Saturday Evening Post*, etc. His most recent novel was *Master Mariner: Life and Voyages of Amasa Delano*.

► Brassil Fitzgerald returns this month with another Grandpa Casey story. When America entered the last war, Mr. Fitzgerald was a sophomore at Boston College. He became a private in the Fighting Irish Ninth of the 26th Division. Ending his military service in 1919, he completed his undergraduate course at the University of Arizona and took his M.A. at Stanford. Followed a career of teaching and writing. His stories have appeared in the *Atlantic*, *Collier's*, etc.

# THE SIGN



Monastery Place, Union City, N. J.

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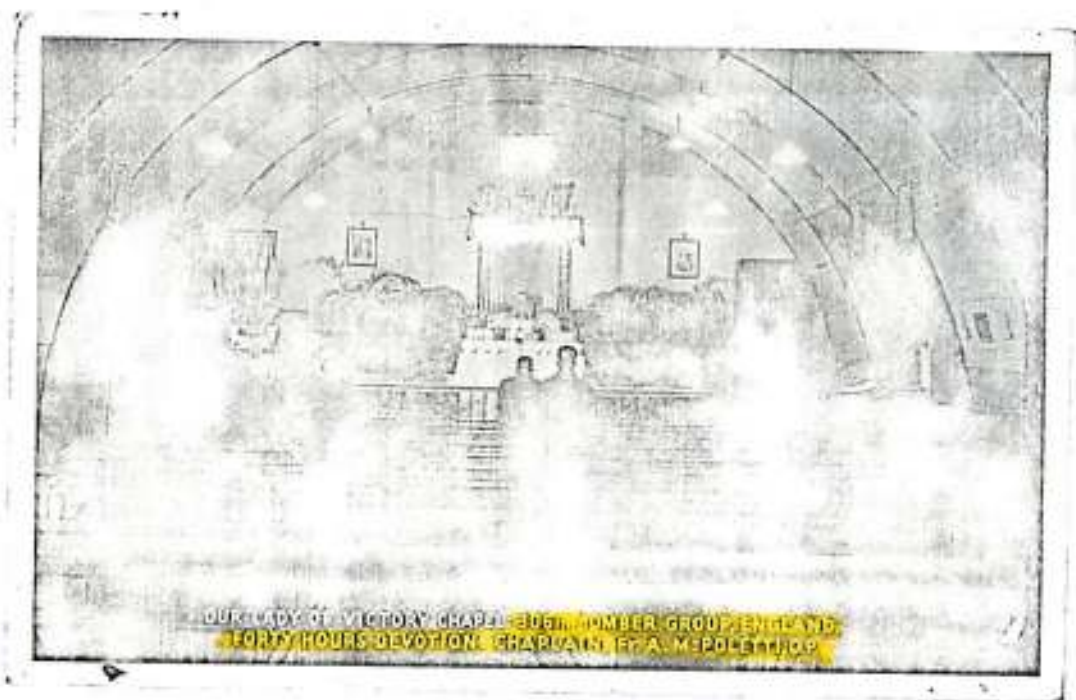
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THIS ESTABLISHES FR POLETTI  
AS BEING AT 300 BG.

THIS MIGHT BE SUITABLE FOR  
THE PAPER. I DO NOT KNOW  
ABOUT COPYRIGHT PROBLEMS.

20 June #8012



## Bomber Base in England

By  
**ADRIAN POLETTI, C.P., CHAPLAIN**

*Capt. Poletti sees off waist gunners Sgt. Harold Thorman of Omaha, Neb., and S/Sgt. Bernard Rupp of Fond du Lac, Wis.*

**D**ANGER never made a saint. Nor does a war ever make the Quartermaster Corps issue G. I. halos. Any chaplain can tell you that. It's his business to know. But I say this for the record: more men attend church here than back home. More men here count God in on their plans than is true back in the States. It may be war brings men closer to God. But this is certain: many a man here is asking himself, what's the real purpose of life?

I am Chaplain of a USAAF Bomber Station in England. Day after day I see my men take off on their bombing missions over Europe. Day after day I wait for them to return. Counting the planes. Counting the men. Some days they don't all come back.

Somewhere in the skies taps sounded for them—eternal taps. But they were ready. It's good to be able to write to a widow or a mother, "He was ready."

Back home people often wonder if these are just words, routine words written to give consolation. A Catholic Chaplain knows the truth of what he writes. And it gives him consolation and encouragement to be able to write it.

Here is why the Chaplain can write what he does. Here is why he knows that these young men who roam the clouds are ready to wander into Heaven. Here is an average, typical week at this average typical airfield somewhere in England, the homefield of this Bombardment Group.

*Sunday*—Unless there happens to be a bombing mission on Sunday morning,

**A Chaplain tells of our men  
who fly the skies over invaded  
Europe—their hopes and fears**

every man on the post is free to attend services. We are fortunate to have a permanent chapel. It is well furnished and accommodates four hundred. Since it is conveniently located in the community site, any odd hour you may drop in you will find at least one or two kneeling there, praying, thinking. Masses on Sunday morning are at eight and eleven; Protestant services are at nine-thirty. In all, over seven hundred men attend church on Sunday. The Jewish services are conducted on Saturday morning.

After dinner on Sunday, I return to the office for about three hours. Some of the men find it difficult to get around during the week, so there is always a number of callers. About four I go over to an engineering unit which is without a Catholic Chaplain. For the past ten months I have been saying Mass for them on Sunday evenings; attendance is over two hundred. Be-

sides being the hardest working men in the army, the engineers are also excellent cooks. After supper and a word with the men, the jeep is headed for home.

*Monday*—Monday morning I am awakened at four and laconically told, "Briefing at five." The Chaplain of a Bomber Group has for his first concern the welfare of the combat crews. For that reason he attends every briefing—that is where the crews are told what their target for the day is, are shown maps and pictures of it, and receive information and instructions for the raid. It may come at any time, but is usually early in the morning. The men like to see, the Chaplain there. Even though some never go to church themselves, they feel his prayers will help see them through. Again they know that the Chaplain, if he voluntarily gets out of a warm bed at three or four in the morning to be with them and wish them "God Speed," is interested in their welfare. Many reciprocate that interest.

Following the briefing I see the Catholic men, hear the confessions of any who wish to go, and give them all Communion. If anything does happen they are prepared to meet their God, and thus they set out all the better equipped to do the job; they fear nothing, have free and easy minds, and can give their undivided attention to the work at hand. I can vividly remember a pilot named Casey who flew a ship named *Banshee*. He used to be one of the first to see me after briefing. However, the morning of the first Hamburg raid he got up late and did not have time to receive before leaving. We lost several ships that day, and when I saw Casey that evening he said, "Boy, did I sweat that one out! Saw ships going down all around me and all I could think of was, 'My number's up and I didn't go to Holy Communion this morning'; I could hardly keep my mind on flying the ship. But from now on you'll see me every time." Casey made seventeen raids, finally going down over Bremen; he is now a P. W.

After Communion the men go out to their ships to check the guns, bombs, instruments, and motors. Fifteen minutes before take-off they taxi out of the dispersal areas and line up at the end of the main runway. Zero hour and the first ship opens its throttles, darts down the ramp and up into the morning sky. At thirty-second intervals the rest follow; huge four-engined birds weighing twenty-five tons, carrying a crew of ten, tons of bombs, and bristling with guns. As each plane thunders by, the Chaplain waves "good luck" to the crew and gives them conditional absolution. They gain altitude, fall in-

to formation, and come back over the field in a final salute. With their noses pointed toward Germany they are off to annihilate another part of the Nazi war machine. I return to the chapel to say the seven o'clock Mass, remembering especially those who are off fighting in the skies to protect our freedom of religion.

The planes will be gone anywhere from four to eight hours, during which time you say an occasional prayer that they will all be back; the men call this time "sweating out the ships." About fifteen minutes before they are due back, the ground crews, fire trucks, ambulances, and trucks to pick up the crews, gather at the edge of the field. All eyes scan the horizon, some even have binoculars. Right on the minute the formation appears, grows larger until the individual planes can be counted. The one question is, "Are there any missing?"

Over the field they come in perfect formation. If any have wounded aboard, they fire a flare, come right in for a landing, and are met by an ambulance with the Chaplain and doctor. The formation circles and comes over again, only the second time as it reaches the center of the field the planes peel off one after the other to come in for a landing. As they took off, so they land—at thirty-second intervals. Ground crews begin servicing the planes at once. A good hot meal is waiting for the tired crews; they are then interviewed by intelligence officers, and another raid is over.

I have seen the procedure over a hundred times, yet it is an awe-inspiring sight whose thrill does not wear off, but continually fills one with pride that he is even a small part of this great American show. Everyone is in

---

► In prosperity our friends know us; in adversity we know our friends.

—CHURTON COLLINS

---

high spirits tonight because the photographs show all our bombs hit the target; all our ships returned, and not even one man was wounded. They may be up early again tomorrow morning or they may not take off till afternoon, all depending on the weather. If it is "ceiling zero" they will have ground school. Such is life with the bombers.

*Tuesday*—Tuesday morning we are up at three-thirty; breakfast, and then briefing at four-thirty. All is in readiness for the take-off when the mission is "scrubbed" at seven because of the weather. All the hours of preparation go for nothing. This is one of the

most trying things for the crews, namely, the many times they get up and put in several hours' preparation and tension only to have it scrubbed at the last minute. (I recall one week last winter when the men got up six consecutive mornings at four hoping for a break in the weather, which never came; but they made up for it the next week by going out five times.) This morning most of the combat men go back to bed. The ordnance men who were out "bombing-up" from twelve to four and have been in bed only a few hours, are now called out again to unload. The planes are never left standing with live bombs. I return to the chapel to say Mass, at which attendance on weekdays averages fifteen.

Later in the morning I visit the hospital and spend some time with the men there. There are thirty-two today. Nearly all had mild cases of the flu; in case of anything serious the men are immediately sent to the general hospital some miles away, where they receive every care and attention. I try to visit the general hospital once a week. In the afternoon I answered several letters from anxious parents inquiring about their sons who have been reported missing. Usually nothing can be added to what they already know, but sympathy is expressed, and very often some personal information concerning the soldier when he was at this field can be given that helps alleviate the burden of waiting for definite news.

This evening we had our weekly Religious Discussion Group. This is a rather new venture here. In the several weeks of its existence the interest manifested and the questions asked point to a revival of a religious attitude of mind. The topic of discussion was "The English Reformation." Next week it will be "Religion in Germany."

*Wednesday*—The weather has closed in so there will be no flying today; the men will have ground school. I visited the line this morning, also several of the shops. The men are always glad to see you and pass the time of day. Some take the opportunity to ask about some personal problem or to make an appointment to see you privately. I gave two instructions in the afternoon to men preparing for Baptism; also had several other callers. Concerning personal interviews, they average about six a day here.

What do the men see the Chaplain about? Here are some of the typical examples: Some want to make arrangements to get married; others wish to discuss the advisability of entering the married state at this particular time (4 per cent of this group have gotten married since coming to England).

Many want him to write their folks to say they are going to church or in perfect health, and they often say, "Mother will believe you and won't worry." A few have asked me to write their wives or sweethearts back home to assure them that their men are all they hoped and believed them to be.

One of the most common questions from the ground personnel is, "What can I do to become a gunner on a Fortress? I came over here to fight." Some want information about continuing their studies through extension courses or a recommendation for O.C.S. Combat men often bring around a letter or some personal effect with the request that if anything should happen to them, it be sent to their folks. Officers often ask the Chaplain's opinion about an individual or the morale of the men or to give a talk to their men. One man who came in today said he had never been baptized, in fact, didn't know anything about religion but thought it was a good thing and would like to learn a little about it. Again, the men worry more about their families back home than they do about themselves. These are but a few of the personal problems that prompt soldiers to see the Chaplain. There are many others. But one thing is noticeably absent in talks with the Chaplain—"griping." We all know that there is plenty of it done in this man's army, but it means little or nothing. It is just a topic for conversation. It is the G.I. method of letting off steam. He doesn't even take himself seriously, and actually the Chaplain hears little of it, despite the often quoted, "Tell it to the Chaplain."

**Thursday**—Thursday morning there was a briefing at four. As usual many of the men came around to receive absolution and Holy Communion. It was still dark and foggy when they took off. I was just finishing Mass when an explosion shook the whole camp. One of the planes trying to return to the field because of engine trouble cracked up in the fog. Two of the crew were miraculously thrown clear, the other eight killed instantly. Three of the men were Catholics. I gave them conditional absolution and Extreme Unction. Then I helped prepare the bodies for burial. It was not a pleasant sight to see the burnt and mutilated remains of men I had been with such a little while before. But the thought of their folks back home kept me there. Their personal effects were put in envelopes to be forwarded to the next of kin. However, some also carried prayerbooks, medals, or rosaries, and these, at the request of the C.O., I took to send directly to their folks. That afternoon all the rest of the



*Chaplain Poletti distributing Holy Communion in the permanent chapel built in the community center. More men live up to their religion here than at home*

planes returned safely after a very successful raid. I visited the guardhouse after supper; only three prisoners were there. I spent an hour with them.

**Friday**—Briefing was at six in the morning; take-off at nine-thirty. I visited the hospital before dinner. I went out to the line to meet the planes at three. Two of them fired flares coming in, which meant that they had wounded aboard. Two of the men had superficial flesh wounds from flak, but the third, a Polish lad from Chicago, had a broken arm from a 20mm. shell. When I climbed in the plane to see how bad he was, he smiled despite the pain and said, "Not too bad, Father, only got it in the arm." A little later, in our first-aid station when they were putting a splint on his arm before sending him to the general hospital, he beckoned to me. He asked if I would reach in his hip pocket for his wallet, take out the crucifix, and hold it for him to kiss; the doctor paused with his work while I complied. Then the lad explained, "I always do that before leaving and after returning from each mission; today I couldn't until now, so that completes my fourteenth. Thank you."

I conducted the usual Friday evening services at six; attendance: sixty-two, which is above the average. Later, I stopped at a Squadron party just to pay my respects and thank them for the invitation.

**Saturday**—Weather prohibits flying today. I said the Requiem Mass this morning for those killed in Thursday's accident. Many of the Squadron attended. We left at one for the funeral in Cambridge American Military Cemetery. The caskets were draped with an

American flag and placed in a straight row over the individual graves. My co-worker, the Protestant Chaplain, conducted the service for the men of his faith, after which I read the burial service for the Catholic men and blessed the graves. While an officer called out the names of those who had given their all for their country, a soldier saluted each casket in turn. A volley was fired and taps sounded, while the large number who had come to the funeral stood with bowed heads and said a final prayer—"May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen." As they had lived and fought side by side, so we left them on that beautiful green hilltop overlooking the peaceful English countryside. What a glorious thing it is that young Americans gladly make even the supreme sacrifice in the defense of truth and freedom. Even in sorrow, their parents, wives, and children, can't fail to be justly proud.

Fortunate is the man called to be an American Army Chaplain. While receiving every help and encouragement from Commanding Officers, he is living and working with the grandest group of men in the world—the American soldier. The Chaplain is the Liaison Officer between God and His creatures, as well as between the men and their families back home. While all around him is destruction, his is a life of helping, advising, encouraging, loving his brother man. And the genuine gratitude of the men in return is almost enough to repay his efforts without the hope of an eternal reward. May the Great Commander-in-Chief make him worthy of his opportunity and calling.

A HISTORY OF THE 306th BOMBARDMENT GROUP - EIGHTH AIR FORCE

Russell A. Strong 2041 Hillside Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Name Theodore C. Hood  
Address 6107 Ridgecrest Drive Little Rock, AR. 72205  
Home Phone 501-666-5956 Date March 23, 1981  
Occupation Building Manager Employer Ted Greene Company  
Address 4901 Main Street, Suite 200 Bus. Phone 816-531-1000 (Mr Lacy)  
Kansas City, MO. 64112  
Serial No(s) 18157070 461-03-5894

Service Record:

Before joining the 306th:

Entered service summer 1943 at Kelly Fld Texas. Moved to San Marcos, Texas, then on to Amarillo, Texas, for AM school. To Las Vegas for gunnery training and on to Salt Lake City for Crew assignment. Then to Ardmore, OK. for crew training. Up to Kerny, Neb. then to Camp Kilmer for boat trip to England and the 8th AF. Assigned to 423BS, flew first operational mission June 19, 1944. Aborted due to O<sup>2</sup> leak. Flew next two missions Hamburg, Berlin, June 20-21. Flew last operational mission November 21, 1944.

After leaving the 306th:

Returned to Ft Worth Army Air Field. Discharged, worked Civil Service aircraft inspector, returned to service and retired June 1973, with the rank of Chief Master Sergeant. Served a tour in Vietnam. (1968). Also a tour in Alaska. (1955-1958) Service for most part in aircraft maintenance. Side tours as First Sgt., and NCO Club custodian. Presently on second career as Building Manager, Southland Plaza Building, Little Rock, AR.

306th Record

Arrival date at Thurleigh May 1944  
Squadron or other unit(s) 423BS  
MOS # 748 Specialty Aerial Engineer  
Missions Completed (and date of last) 35 November 21, 1944  
Promotions To TSgt Aug 15, 1944

306BG Decorations 1AM<sup>3</sup> olcs<sup>1</sup> DFC olcs SS DSM DSC MH SM<sup>1</sup> PH<sup>6</sup> Battle Stars

After 306BG decorations: Bronze Star, AF Comm., Army Comm., Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm,

(On unusual DFCs, and Silver Stars and above would like to see a copy of the citation)

September 20, 2004

Russell A. Strong  
Secretary/Editor  
306 Echoes  
5323 Cheval Pl.  
Charlotte, NC 28205

Mr. Russell A. Strong,

A journalist interested in the Mighty 8AF read your article "French view of U.S. air combat" (Echoes, July 2004) and asked me, "How did you and the other airmen stay calm and able to function?" I thought back to those days and answered:

I really think the courage displayed by our service men and women in WWII was more of a reflection on the times than on the individual. To the individual, it was a way of life.

High school students knew more about the world situation than most college students do today. We watched the Nazi movement's rise and spread across Europe. We watched the devastation of England by German bombs. We watched the Battle of the Atlantic. We watched the rape of Asia by the imperial government of the Land of the Rising Sun. When we were attacked on Dec. 7, 1941, we had leaders who could make decisions and lead. They did not study the situation for a year, then turn it over to a committee. We were put on a war footing, and war was declared within 24 hours. Only one member of Congress voted against it. This vote was cast by a member who thought it was wrong to go to war; she was not currying favor with voters at home. (She also voted against entering World War I.)

When we went on a war footing and ration controls were placed on us, we did not have naysayers yapping about our rights. When security controls were put in place, there were no cries for the people's right to know. We knew these things were for our survival.

All of this had an effect on our military. They knew that they were fighting for the survival of our country.

After I enlisted at age 20, my training was very intense for a year before I was assigned to a Bomb Group in England. After flying three missions, our crew was given three days off. Some of us went to London. I had mixed feelings about our first bombing raids. But after I saw what the Nazis had done to London and we had visited the subways and seen people living there with children who were born there and had not seen daylight, I thought, "This could be San Antonio, my hometown." I never doubted our mission again. We had been given no choice. We had to win to survive. Win, we did. And survive, we did. I guess the short answer to the journalist's question is that we stayed calm and able to do our duty, even in dire circumstances, because we had to. We had no choice.



Before sending my answer, I shared it with my children. One of my sons, Robert Hood wrote:

“And yet another testimonial to confirm that You and Others truly earned the title “The Greatest Generation”.

“For some reason in this day and time the “individual” seems occupied with the accumulation of paper wealth, useless knowledge and frivolous possessions all at the cost of our collective identity.

We buy devices that tell us the time to within 1/10,000th of a second. We don't say it is 4:30, we say it is 4:28, but for some reason we cannot remember loved ones' birthdays.

We pride ourselves in our ability to use computers and technology, but for some reason we cannot count the change we get at the checkout counter.

We travel to the same vacation destinations as our favorite movie stars but for some reason we cannot locate on a map the countries where our soldiers die.

We fill the car with shopping bags each pay day but for some reason need two trash barrels to cart our waste out to the street each week.

We will drive miles and wait in line to step up to the microphone to let our complaints be heard but for some reason cannot schedule time to do volunteer work.

For what reason.....?

Because we have turned into hens guarding our eggs, where You and Others were ants in a colony.....

I am so very proud to be able to say I am your child.”

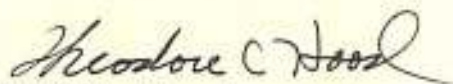
My daughter Gerry Ganong messaged me:

“I'm glad Robert answered you so quickly this morning. I'm there with him. I am proud that you endured the lessons you were given and succeeded so well in passing them along to us and to others whose lives you touch.

Thank you for your life and your commitment to your values. I'm also proud to be your child.✍

The journalist thought enough of what I'd said to encourage me to share my thoughts.

I'm doing that by writing to you, because it might remind readers of what the young fliers were thinking 60 years ago as they put themselves in danger for the sake of others.



CMSgt., Theodore C. Hood  
USAF., Retired  
8012 - 7 - LM 1306 H