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Poland, Ohio 44514

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306th Echoes



306th Bombardment Group Association

306th Gathers Again; Think About 1979!

Nearly a hundred veterans of the 306th were on hand in Washington Oct. 16-18 as the fourth annual reunion of the group and of the 8th Air Force Historical Association convened in the Park-Sheraton Hotel.

As in the other three reunions, this produced a mixed group of veterans, all of whom had a great time visiting, exchanging stories, and renewing acquaintances.

As a part of the convention, tours had been arranged both Friday and Saturday, which took many men and their wives away from the hotel.

The 306th boasted its own hospitality suite in the hotel, which provided an easy meeting place, and which was popular before and after the dinner meetings. The room was dominated by the B-17 model which Lee Kessler brought with him from Canton, OH. In fact, its presence attracted quite a number of visitors from other bomb groups who wanted to see it.

"Little Savage" was the plane Kessler was serving as engineer until it was shot down over Wilhemshaven 21 May 1943, with Maxwell Judas as the pilot. An earlier issue of Echoes carried a reproduction of a painting which Kessler had made of the incident.

By Thurleigh organizations, we recorded 26 from the 367th, 23 from the 368th, 21 from the 369th, 14 from the 423rd, 2 from the 4th Station Complement, 1 from 449th subdepot and 3 attached to group headquarters.

Friday evening there was a banquet attended by nearly a thousand, at which it was evident for the fourth year that the 306th was the predominant group in attendance.

At Saturday night's banquet, Lt. Gen Ira Eaker was the featured speaker.

To the veterans facing him, Eaker said, "I am deeply grateful for your devotion and service in World War II.

"Allied air power was decisive in

Europe," said Eaker. "The phenomenal courage and persistence of combat leaders and personnel was responsible for the victory."

Eaker added that his greatest satisfaction came when Gen. George C. Marshall, Army chief of staff, said to him: "Eaker, I do not believe the cross channel invasion would have been possible without the destruction of the Luftwaffe!"

Eaker also cited his Casablanca Conference experience, as Winston Churchill wrote him in January of 1944, "The predictions you made to me at Casablanca are now proving correct."

Maynard H. Smith, the 306th's Medal of Honor winner, was on hand for the convention, and figured prominently in ceremonies. He was honored at Friday evening's banquet with a seat at the speaker's table.

Washington Roster

Those attending the Washington reunion are listed below. If these same men have attended other reunions the initials indicate: M-Miami Beach; D-Dayton; S-St. Louis.

- Frank F. Alston 368
- William D. Barton 368
- John P. Bloom 367 M, D, S
- Ralph E. Bordner 368 M, D, S
- Warren Borges 423 M, D, S
- Wallace D. Boring 368 M, D, S
- Joseph W. Broussard 367 S
- Dellon T. Bumgardner 368 S
- Warren G. Caldwell 423
- John J. Callahan 369
- William R. Carlile 4th M, D, S
- Kermit B. Cavado 369
- William M. Collins 369 M, D, S
- John E. Corcoran 367 M, D, S
- Louis T. Cowley 368
- Richard A. Craig 423
- Robert E. Crane 369
- William L. Cullen 368
- C. Larry Emeigh 367



Jerry Cavado and Harold Lightbown



Robert E. Crane and Bob Flood

Washington Roster

(From page 1)

- Alfred Erb 367 S
- Clifford B. Evans 367 S
- William W. Fahrenhold 423 M, D
- Stanley A. Falkowski 369
- William H. Feeser 367
- William W. Flanagan 369 M, S
- Robert J. Flood 369
- William E. Futchik 367
- Joe P. Gabrish 368 S
- William J. Gordish 369
- Edward S. Gregory 367
- William B. Griffith 368
- Richard B. Hankey 369
- Donat A. Heon 367 S
- Robert B. Hermann 367 S
- Roy K. Holbert 369 M, S
- Harry W. Hoser 369
- William F. Houlihan 367
- Thomas M. Hulings 368
- Wendell L. Hull GpHq D, S
- Howard E. Hutchison 423 D, S
- George W. Johnson 423
- Charles F. Jones 369 M, D, S
- Leland J. Kessler 368 S
- George Klucick 367 S
- Jerome J. Kostal 367 D
- August J. Krajcik 368 M, D, S
- Saul M. Kupferman 423
- Albert W. LaChasse 367 M, D, S
- C. Gus Lamb 367 D
- Wendell C. Larson 423
- Robert K. Lavery 367 D
- Edward W. Leahy 367 D, S
- James B. Lenaghan 367 S
- Harold F. Lightbown 369
- Karl C. Madsen 368
- Joseph J. Marciano 368 M, D, S
- Mack Mashburn
- Field McChesney 369
- Denver A. McGinnis 368
- John E. Mellyn 369
- Eduardo M. Montoya 368
- Charles L. Mullins 369
- Joseph G. Mynatt 369, D, S
- Alfred J. Norman 369 D
- Franklyn D. Norris 423
- Elbert G. Odle 368 M, D, S
- Trygve C. Olsen 369
- William S. Rader 368
- George G. Roberts 367
- Edward L. Ronczy 367
- Howard G. Roth 423 M, D, S
- Robert H. Roth
- Robert C. Sage 367
- Daniel Schlessel 368
- John Schupp 367
- Earl Schwab 369 M, D, S
- Frank A. Serafin 423
- Dennis A. Sharkey 369
- Donald F. Sheridan 449th M, S
- Thurman Shuller GpHq D, S
- Robert G. Shultz 367 D, S
- Maynard H. Smith 423 D, S
- Robert J. Starzynski 367 D
- Robert S. Stevens 368 S
- Russell A. Strong 367 M
- Howard D. Sullivan 368
- Philip Swift 368
- Francis J. Tropeano GpHq
- Howard O., Turner 423 S
- Leslie W. Turner 367
- Donald E. Upchurch GpHq D, S
- Andy J. Vangalis 368 S
- Herbert Vetterman 4th
- Claiborne W. Wilson 423 D



Maynard H. (Snuffy) Smith



Al LaChasse, Thurman Shuller and Wendell Hull



Mrs. Catherine Brennan and Warren Borges



Casey Jones and Bill Collins



Ralph Bordner and Louis Cowley



Frank Serafin, Warren Caldwell and Frank Norris

Deceased

- John G. Acker 367th, 29 Feb 64
- M. J. Badeaux 367th, 25 Mar 71
- Floyd A. Baker 423rd, 10 Mar 74
- Francis X. Banda 367th, 10 May 58
- Lee F. Barrows, Jr. 423rd, 2 Dec 53
- William J. Bauer 367th, 12 Mar 70
- George J. Beyer, Jr. 367th, Sep 45
- Raymond J. Bruder Gp Ho, 15 Oct 75
- Herschell F. Ezell 369th
- Forrest D. Hartin 423rd, 24 Mar 76
- Carroll Q. Hills 367th
- Robert J. Jones 423rd, 12 Jun 71
- James S. LeGates GpHq, 1977
- Alphonse M. Maresh 369th, 23 Sep 71
- James J. Melillo 423rd, 14 Nov 76
- Woodrow R. Randolph 368th, 29 Jan 64
- Perry Raster 367th, 75-76
- John H. Winchell 367th
- James H. Davis 369th, Jun 75
- Clifford K. Hammersley 369th, Jan 74
- Carl B. Hathaway 368th, Dec 67
- Derrill L. Latham 423rd, Sep 63
- William Moroz 368th, May 76

Schwinfurt Survivor



No Two Exactly Alike

No two B-17s flew exactly the same way--one engineering officer always attributed it to "rigging." He claimed the tension on control cables gave "feel" in flight maneuvers that varied pretty widely between birds.

Whatever the reason, I always liked the feel of "Little Audrey" and felt comfortable with her. My crew chief, Benny Campbell, did an exceptional job that kept her operating unusually well. I never had to feather an engine for mechanical reasons, which may have been some kind of record at the time.

Add Your Thoughts on the Future--

There are considerable talk at Washington about a 306th reunion next year apart from the 8th AF reunion. Several felt that a smaller group of 306th people would have more fun for less money, and with a program of interest to the 306th, by going alone. It would be most helpful if you would indicate your interest on the following questions, and then mail this to Bill Collins, 2973 Heatherbrae Dr., Poland, OH 44514.

I would like a 306th reunion "on our own" _____

Not interested in a 306th reunion _____

I am interested and would favor a reunion at _____

If you live within a hundred miles of the above mentioned place, would you be willing to help make a reunion work? _____

Program suggestions: _____

Time of year suggestions: _____

Name _____ Sqdn _____

Address _____

Telephone: Home _____ Business _____



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Contact Man: Wm. M. Collins, Jr., 2973 Heatherbrae Drive, Poland OH 44514

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WHERE'S THE LUFTWAFFE?

Long Unpublished Document Tells Story Of Allied Dominance, German Frustration

Late in WW II, two Eighth Air Force PR men wrote the following piece for READERS' DIGEST. It was accepted by the European editor, but didn't get published. It was recently brought to light by Jerry Kavedo 369th, and then came to ECHOES. John M. Goodwin is now director of advertising for the Virginia State Travel Service, Richmond VA, and C. Carlton Brechler is a public relations man for General Motors Corporation in Los Angeles. The article is interesting, and the editor only cautions you that it was written in 1945, and not in 1978.

By Capts.

John M. Goodwin
Carlton Brechler

A German army general captured in France and being taken to England by air transport was amazed that the transport flew without fighter escort.

"Why not?" was the response of an American officer aboard. "Where's the Luftwaffe?"

"That's what I'd like to know," was the German's humorless rejoinder.

The absence of the Luftwaffe on D-Day and thereafter hasn't been satisfactorily explained to America either.

The first shocker came March 22, 1944, when 700 bombers of the Eighth Air Force flew halfway across Europe in broad daylight to blast Berlin -- the heart of the Reich and symbol of German invincibility -- absolutely unopposed by the German Air Force.

From that day the Luftwaffe inexplicably chose to fight on some days, and on some days they chose not to fight.

22 Mar 44 Col. Howard Turner, 40th CBW commander, flew with 306th and led 1st Division to Berlin. 35 a-c up, 29 bombed. All a-c damaged, 14 seriously.

When they chose not to fight on D-Day, the absence of the Luftwaffe was second in the headlines only to the fact of the invasion itself.

Yet General Eisenhower is reported to have said the night before to men about to embark for Normandy: "Don't worry about the planes you will see overhead, for they will be ours!"

Since that time conflict between statements that the Luftwaffe was annihilated, warnings that the Luftwaffe was still strong, and sporadic activity by the Luftwaffe itself, have been confusing.

As this is written the Luftwaffe is in fact stronger in number of aircraft than

just before D-Day. Major air battles over Germany may flare up again. But this does not affect the explanation of the failure of the Luftwaffe to contest the initial Allied landings in Normandy or the advance in France.

The Luftwaffe didn't contest the invasion because it couldn't.

The reasons are threefold. Allied air bombardment had broken an aircraft expansion program which, had it been allowed to materialize, would have permitted the Germany Air Force strength necessary to defend Europe against invasion. Allied air forces had defeated Germany in combat and reduced its combat aircraft and personnel to less than its strength of the pre-expansion date. Meanwhile, the Allies had amassed air power in Britain that would have shattered the enfeebled Luftwaffe in a few days had the Luftwaffe been thrown into the Battle for France.

The D-Day impotence of the Luftwaffe was the result of strategic bombardment. It was due in part to RAF night bombing of Germany centers of heavy industry, which affected production of crankshafts and other components, in part of the U. S. 15th Air Force in Italy; but chiefly to the Eighth Air Force based in Britain, which blasted German aircraft from the skies and demolished the plants which made them.

For neutralization of the Luftwaffe by D-Day was the assignment given to the Eighth, and what an assignment it was! It precipitated the greatest head-on clash of air forces in military history.

In 1942 the Germans set into motion a reorganization of the bulk of their aircraft industry. Factories making items of lower priority were converted to production of fighters. New factories were built throughout Germany, in Poland and East Prussia.

Dornier and Heinkel bomber plants were shifted to mass production of the Luftwaffe's crack Messerschmitt and Focke Wulf fighters. Germany was going to build fighters by 1944 at a monthly rate four times that of 1942. Goering was going to give Germany the toughest fighter defenses the world had ever known.

The "neutralizers" were up against pyramiding output of Nazi fighters.

In aerial warfare on three fronts Germany's aircraft losses had been heavy and were growing every month. Yet their expanding fighter production at home more than made up for the increasing air combat losses. During the first six months of 1943 their total single and twin engine fighter strength increased by nearly 100 per cent, until approximately 2,700 front line fighters defended Germany, about half of these facing westward to Britain.

Against these in July 1943, an Eighth Air Force maximum effort consisted of fewer than 400 bombers and 250 fighters.

Even so, the Eighth's gunners and fighter pilots had destroyed more German aircraft than the public could readily believe. And in July and August the combination of large scale air battles and bombing of German aircraft factories put the Luftwaffe into the red for the first time since their expansion program was begun in 1942. During these months the Luftwaffe lost more planes than German aircraft factories could produce in the same period.

On the morning of August 17, 1943, as American bombers assembled in the dawn over the English Midlands and East Anglia before heading for Germany there was no mystery of the Luftwaffe. The men in those planes knew they would have to fight their way through. Except for short range escort over the first part of their flight it would be these 350 bombers against the Luftwaffe. Sixty Flying Fortresses were lost that day in the now famous battle of Schweinfurt-Regensburg -- nearly one out of every five that crossed the enemy coast. And in the savage fight which began near the Belgian coast on the way in and continued across half of Europe, with hundreds upon hundreds of Nazi aircraft slashing at the bomber formations for more than three hours, the Flying Fortress gunners shot down 319 German planes. The Eighth's 1st Division successfully pounded the great ball bearing plants at Schweinfurt and returned to England. The 3rd Division knocked out of production one of the enemy's largest

single engine fighter plants at Regensburg in Southern Germany and flew on across the Mediterranean to land in Africa and complete the USAAF's first long distance shuttle attack.

17 Aug 43 Maj. Raper led 30 a-c to the target, with no losses. Fighter claims for the day were 16 kills, 1 probable, 3 damaged.

The Regensburg job, for which the 3rd Division was cited by the President, cost the Germans two full months of production there -- the equivalent of at least 500 Me 109's.

The fall of 1943, with many new bomber groups streaming across the Atlantic to join in the Battle of Germany, saw the Eighth growing strong enough to go anywhere. But to those who had waited so long for this new power, the fall and winter months of 1943 were heartbreaking. Weather kept them away from most of the juiciest aircraft factories in Germany from September through December.

Despite the fact that in October unescorted bombers of the Eighth were able to reach out all the way beyond the Polish Corridor and destroy an FW 190 assembly plant at Marienburg in East Prussia, and to hit a few others during this period, the Luftwaffe was again operating in the black.

Meanwhile, there were targets other than aircraft plants on the Eighth's list. And in those days there was a fight every time the Forts and Libs stuck their noses over German territory. On October 14 in a second attack on Schweinfurt, where the targets were undamaged parts of the four plants producing over half of Germany's ball bearings, another 60 heavy bombers had been lost. Other large scale battles had been fought over Wilhelmshaven, Kiel, Munster, Bremen, Anklam and elsewhere.

14 Oct 43 Capt. Schofield led 18 planes from Thurleigh. Three aborted and 15 bombed the target. 10 planes were lost. Pilots down were: 367th-Butler, Bissen, White; 369th-Peters, Lockyear, Bettinger, Holmstrom; 423rd-Cole, Jackson, McCallum. Claims: 4-1-6.

Whether the Eighth went to the submarine yards at Kiel, rail yards at Munster or any other German target, the Luftwaffe - the pilots in the air, the tacticians and ordnance specialists on the ground - was fighting tooth and nail to stop them. And on our side men were searching every means of making these daylight bomber formations less vulnerable to the Luftwaffe's tactics and new weapons, and the flak.

There were aerial battles such as the world had never seen. No holds were



Left to right: Maj. John M. Goodwin, Lt. Arthur Shay and War Correspondent Ernest Hemingway at High Wycombe. Shay was a navigator who completed his combat tour and then became an 8th Air photographer. Today he is a nationally known free-lance photographer. At this time Goodwin was press chief in the public relations office of 8th headquarters.

barred. Enemy fighters would line up and attack the bomber formations one after another for as long as three hours. They came in head on in threes, firing until at close range, then zooming or rolling over and diving in such a way as to turn armor plated bellies to the guns of the bombers.

They came in 25 abreast firing 20 mm, cannon shells and machine guns. They experimented with larger cannon in planes which flew off to one side of a bomber formation, just out of range, firing broadsides. From above the Forts and Libs they dropped bombs timed to explode in the center of the formation. One German plane carried 12 to 15 of them. Some enemy planes dropped a string of grenade-like affairs which went off in a series of about 12 bursts. They dragged through the bomber groups 300 feet cables with 100 grenades, suspended on the end of the cable. Rockets were mounted in twin engine Ju 88's and Me 210's and later on the single engine Me 109's and FW 190's.

Some of the Germans chased each other in mock dogfights as if with the bombers' escort, beginning beyond recognition range and circling nearer and nearer until they suddenly turned and attacked the bombers.

Slower twin engine planes hovered above like vultures until bombers were damaged and forced out of formation by flak or fighters, then swooped on these stragglers for the kill.

They tried everything.

Flying over the western front the Fortresses and Liberators faced an army estimated at more than half a million men, operating 8,000 to 10,000 heavy anti-aircraft guns - guns fired with increasing accuracy as the scientific devices which aimed them were improved.

These heavy guns fired projectiles three to five inches in diameter which burst in ugly black puffs of smoke. So many bomber crewmen came back from missions reporting that the flak puffs "were so thick you could get out and walk on them" that this line got to be kind of a gag. But there was nothing funny about it, for with each black puff there was an explosion which sent 1,200 to 1,400 jagged fragments of metal flying through the air, the original velocity of each small piece being greater than the muzzle velocity of a rifle bullet. They killed many of our men.

Bomber groups would return occasionally to England with 75 per cent of their planes damaged by flak to at least a slight degree. A veteran Liberator, called the "Flying Patch" for the patches covering flak holes in its metal hide, had been punctured by more than 2,500 pieces of flak shrapnel during its battle career.

Defense against anti-aircraft fire was difficult. In an effort to reduce losses to flak, the bombers tried flying at higher altitude, and while anti-aircraft fire at 30,000 feet was found to be far less accurate than at 20,000 to 25,000 bombing accuracy also decreased. At 30,000 personnel suffered as the temperature plunged to 50 below zero. Layers of ice formed on the pilot's windshield and over the glass nose, hampering pilot, navigator and bombardier. The bombers returned to their normal 20,000 to 25,000 feet, sacrificing a safety margin for a gain in bombing accuracy.

Chief defense against flak became precision navigation. Through interrogation of bomber crews and aerial reconnaissance photographs, the enemy's anti-aircraft guns were carefully and accurately charted or maps which were given to navigators before takeoff. Hair-line navigation, which was improved with months of

operations, enabled bombers to follow planned routes between the heaviest concentrations of flak batteries like tight rope walkers. There were times when wandering one mile off course would bring an entire formation within range of a heavy gun battery.

But in the target areas, where the ground defenses usually were most concentrated, evasion of anti-aircraft fire was nearly impossible, and on the bombing run no evasive action could be taken against flak or fighters. To make the straight level run required to put the bombs on the target, they had to sit up there and take it.

The Forts and Libs proved they could take it, returning to their bases in England with noses shot off, gaping holes in fuselages, wing tips gone or with half their tails blown away. It was a great tribute to the American aircraft engineers, to the men and women who made the planes, and to the combat airmen who established the Eighth Air Force tradition that planes were to be brought home to England if humanly possible.

When the flak and fighter opposition was at its worst, whole squadrons of bombers were wiped out in a single day. One group commander sent out 18 planes and got two back.

The first Fortresses and Libs to fly over Europe had only one 30-caliber machine gun in the nose. The Liberators had no ball turret to protect the belly. As battle proved the need, additional guns were poked out the windows of the nose compartment, and through the floor of the Lib. Modifications dictated by the Eighth's battle experience were adopted on the factories at home, and the new arrivals came with additional nose guns, and ultimately with power turrets.

Before the long range fighters came into the picture, a number of Fortresses were fitted with additional guns in the waist, two additional power turrets and increased armor plating. Carrying an extra load of ammunition and no bombs, the four engine fighters or "battle wagons" were placed strategically through the bomber formations to increase defensive firepower and to assist in bringing damaged stragglers home. Instead, however, these heavy planes, unable to keep up with the others which became faster after dropping their bombs, often became stragglers themselves on the way home. The experiment was abandoned, and it became more and more evident that fighter protection, not increased armor, was the solution to the problem.

Penetrations into Germany were costly and becoming increasingly so. In the winter of 1943 came a crisis. Eighth Air Force officials were concerned with the grave question of whether they could continue unescorted deep penetrations without prohibitive loss. 75 per cent of the losses were to German fighters. The German Air Force was still growing. Whether the Eighth, could take the heavy losses and yet amass and maintain a force strong enough to cripple the German aircraft production centers was a serious question.

In this crisis the advent of long range fighter escort swung the balance.

The whole vital matter of long range escort hinged upon one item of equipment -- the 108-gallon pressurized external fuel tank which Eighth Air Force engineers developed in England after months of experiment.

RAF Spitfires escorted the first Eighth Air Force missions. Then, not long after the American heavies began operations in this theater in August 1942, two groups of P-38 Lockheed Lightnings - of somewhat longer range



P-38J of the 55th fighter group, 338th squadron



P-47D of the 56th fighter group, 62nd squadron



P-51D of the 20th fighter group, 77th squadron

than the Spit - were flown to England. In September one group took Forts on a mission to France. Then, much to the disappointment of the handful of bomber crews which had been fighting over Western Europe against heavy odds, all the P-38's were sent to North Africa for the invasion.

RAF and Allied Spitfires took over again. They were good, but soon after crossing the enemy coast they had reached the limit of their range. The Luftwaffe knew the range of the Spit, and would wait until they turned back before hitting the bombers.

In the Spring of '43 about 100 P-47 Republic Thunderbolts arrived, untried in combat. They extended the escort range somewhat. They took the bombers to Amsterdam, Holland, in July, a distance of 200 miles from their bases and the limit of their range. 200-gallon external fuel tanks of fibre construction which came with the P-47's were used, but they leaked and would not stand "pressurization."

The pressurization of fuel tanks was as big an obstacle to the engineers as was the design of the tank. In the regions of low atmospheric pressure above 21,000 feet, where the fighters had to operate, fuel could not be drawn properly from the tanks, and engines starved. Pressure had to be applied to the fuel inside the external tanks. Some automotive and aeronautical engineers said it was impracticable because pressure would introduce leakage and a resultant likelihood of fire.

But the Eighth's engineers used a 75-gallon metal tank made in the

States, successfully applied pressure from the exhaust side of the engine manifold, and extended the range of the P-47 to 260 miles. In July 1943, the Thunderbolt escorted the bombers to Emmerich, just inside Germany near the Dutch border. But this still wasn't long range escort.

Since our fighters were liable to attack or be attacked the minute they crossed the European coast, belly tanks were jettisoned at that point. So the belly tank served only to get the fighter that far. But one day the fighters took a chance and kept their belly tanks until the moment of contact with the enemy. Discovery that they could do this and still win the fight that ensued created the demand for larger external tanks.

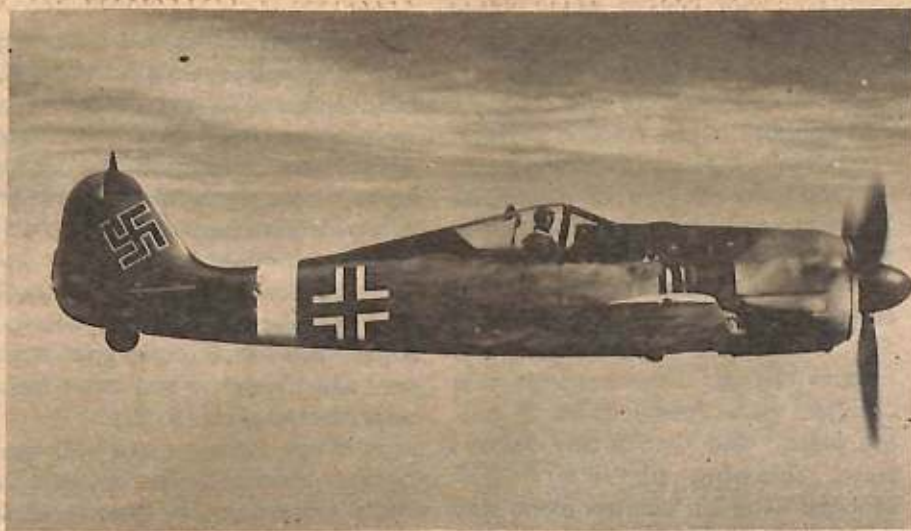
A torpedo shaped 108-gallon metal tank was fitted to the heavy, eight-gunned Thunderbolt. Then a new difficulty arose. Since these tanks were to be jettisoned a great many of them were needed. About 8½ feet long and nearly two feet in diameter, in the quantity required they demanded more shipping space from the States than was available. British firms could manufacture the tanks but there was a metal shortage.

The engineers' solution, after trying some 24 different types of tanks, was a tank of stressed paper covered with doped fabric - which could be made in Britain of last week's "London Times."

In time the Thunderbolts escorted the bombers to points east of the Rhine, about 450 miles from base. But Berlin was nearly 600 miles from base, and important German air craft



The Luftwaffe's ME-109



Germany's FW-190

factories - where the bombers would have to go - lay beyond that.

In October 1943 P-38 Lightnings arrived, followed in December by the first North American P-51 Mustangs assigned to the Eighth. Of inherently longer range than the Thunderbolt, with one external fuel tank slung under each wing the P-38's and P-51's made long range escort a reality.

But it was necessary to work out a group by group relay system involving new flying techniques, precision navigation and timing. They relay system employed Thunderbolt groups flying in relays to cover the first leg of the penetration - one or more groups taking up where others left off - Lightnings and Mustangs to cover the middle distance, and the target area. This required the fighter pilots to be at the right spot over Europe - hundreds of miles from base - within a few minutes of a predetermined time.

Often the "Little Friends" had to take off into the soup with only a few hundred yards visibility, and fly on instruments for as long as two hours without seeing the ground, in order to meet the "Big Friends" at a rendezvous 350 miles or more from point of takeoff. They knew if they missed that rendezvous the Nazi swarms would ambush the unescorted bombers.

The development of the external fuel tanks and these tactics gave the Eighth the means to send "escorted" bombers to any place in Germany.

The dramatic result was that the Eighth, which had operated for nearly a year without fighter escort that could cross even the "western" border of Germany, was in 1944 to send fighter escort (Mustangs) beyond the "eastern" border of Germany - a round trip of 1550 miles to protect Fortresses bombing aircraft plants near Gdynia in the Polish Corridor.

As 1943 ended the Eighth didn't have the number of long range fighters needed, but they had long range fighters - the answer to the doubts as to whether the job - the neutralization of the Luftwaffe - so courageously begun could be carried on to a decision.

From September through December, 1943, the Eighth Air Force gunners and fighter pilots shot down more than 1,700 German fighters. But despite these and combat losses to other Allied Air Forces during this period, and the complete loss of one of their largest Focke Wulf plants at Marienburg and damage to a few others, German factories continued to turn out fighters faster than the Allies could shoot them down.

And at Regensburg and elsewhere the destruction of the summer was recovering under the protection of weather.

By the first of January, 1944, the Luftwaffe was at a peak in fighter strength - well over 3,000 front line single and twin engine fighters. And

Germany's mass production of fighters was just getting into full swing.

The new year began with the same kind of weather that had kept the bombers away from most of Germany's aircraft factories during the preceding months. But on January 11 the weather officers promised good visibility in Central Germany. 663 Flying Fortresses and Liberators were dispatched early that morning to hit the most important Focke Wulf factory in Germany at that time, at Oschersleben, 90 miles southwest of Berlin, and Junkers and Messerschmitt plants at Halberstadt and Brunswick.

The bombers, spearheaded by the Forts of the 1st Division assigned to Oschersleben and Halberstadt, were well into Germany when a sudden and unpredicted change in weather indicated to the commanders back in England that bases there would be fogged in before the bombers were due to return. From the headquarters of the Eighth in England the following message was radioed to the bombers over Germany: "Abandon the mission and return."

About half of the bombers turned around and hit targets of opportunity in Western Germany on their way home. But the 1st Division and part of the 3rd were already nearly to their targets, and air commanders of these formations decided to go on.

11 Jan 44 31 planes bombed at Halberstadt. Attacked by 40 FW190's en route home. Pilots down were: 367th-Cavos, Compert, McCollum; 368th-Reid; 369th Tattershall. Claims. 6-4-10. Some planes landed at Hethel and Foulsham.

Before these bombers crossed the European coast on their way home, one of the greatest air battles of the war had been fought. For more than three hours the sky along the route of the invaders thundered with the bursts of aircraft cannon, machine guns, rockets and anti-aircraft artillery. Outnumbered American fighters churned up the sky in snarling dogfights with the Nazi's best, while other swarms of the determined enemy fighters swept through the bomber formations with guns and cannon blazing. So vicious and reckless were their head on attacks that more than one Fortress was rammed, and German fighters and American bombers were going down in flames all around.

It was during this battle that Maj. Jim Howard, former Flying Tiger now piloting a Mustang, piled into a force of 30 to 40 Germans about to attack a Fortress formation. The bomber crewmen thrilled to see this one man exhibition of guts and skill as they watched Howard shoot down one after another of the Germans. Howard was still on the trail of a German when all but one of his guns had run dry. The bomber boys said they saw five and possibly six Germans fall to Howard's guns, and that were was no medal or honor high enough as a reward for the

Mustang pilot who then was unknown to them. Howard claimed two destroyed, two probably destroyed and two damaged - and got the Congressional Medal of Honor.

As the bombers neared England on their return most of their bases had been closed in tight by the weather and a nearly chaotic effort to get the big bombers down ended with them scattered all over England. It was not until late the next day - the 12th - that headquarters knew how many planes the operation had cost the Eighth, or the enemy, or what had been the results.

When all the crews finally had returned to their bases from the RAF fields and wherever they had been able to land, the pieces of the story were fitted together.

"All around us there were planes blowing up and flak exploding," a radio operator from Chicago described it. "Pieces of planes - and guys, ours and theirs, with and without parachutes - were falling through the sky. It was a sight!"

"There were so many enemy planes we didn't bother calling them out to each other. Everybody had a target to shoot at," a gunner reported.

"Instead of calling off enemy fighter attacks, our gunners were calling off Forts going down," another added.

Meanwhile, before Gen. Doolittle's reports were in, the Berlin radio was gleefully claiming 150 American bombers had been shot down. This was before Doolittle himself knew how many he'd lost, and even discounting Germany exaggeration, he was worried, it was bad enough but not that bad. 60 bombers, five fighters and more than 600 trained airmen had gone down, and others were brought home dead or wounded.

But the pictures the Forts brought back showed that every major building in the Oschersleben plant had been hit, and the Halberstadt and Brunswick plants had been damaged. Our fighters and bombers shot down 233 German fighters in the battle.

The blue badge you will see over the right breast pocket of the men of the Eighth's 1st Bombardment Division represents President Roosevelt's citation of the Division for that heroic day.

Disruption of an entire industry comprising plants spread from Poland to the North Sea and from the Bavarian Alps to the Baltic could not be done by blasting one or two plants this month and one or two more next month - or two months later. The interval permitted the Germans - surprisingly efficient in restoration or transfer of bombed out production to other plants - to maintain a very substantial level of production in the industry as a whole. To stop the flow of aircraft from factory to field - the only means of gaining the degree of air supremacy needed for invasion in the west - it was necessary to cripple the

bulk of German fighter production within the shortest possible period of time, and then to keep going back to prevent recovery.

There were two requisites: 1. Bombers, fighters and crews enough to send separate task forces in strength to ten or more different targets in a single operation. 2. Good weather over those ten or more targets and our bases in England.

By February the Eighth Air Force had requisite No. 1, having become America's greatest aerial striking force. God provided the weather.

On the night of February 19, more than the usual pre-mission activity and tension pervaded the underground headquarters of Jimmy Doolittle and his staff. This was the one they had been planning for months. The big push that had been laid on before but scrubbed by weather. The moving weather fronts had laid open a wide area of Germany that contained many of Germany's most important fighter factories. Early the next morning more than 1,000 Flying Fortresses and Liberators - the greatest armada of heavy bombers ever sent cut up to the time in daylight anywhere - took to the air with bomb bays full. As it headed into Germany, the invading fleet comprising 16 separate combat wing formations extended over 100 miles in length and ten miles in width. Including 721 fighter pilots in the escort, nearly 11,000 highly trained American soliders manned this great battle array. It was regrettable that the Germany people were four to five miles below and couldn't see this display of might.

Four important enemy aircraft plants were knocked out of production that day and four others were damaged.

That was the Sunday on which Sgt. Archie Mathies, a coal miner from Finleyville, Pa., and Lt. Walter Truemper, of Aurora, Ill., gunner and navigator on the B-17 "Mizpah", neither of whom had pilot's training or experience, flew their damaged Fortress back to England with their pilot lying critically wounded and unconscious on the floor of the plane. Over their home field, they ordered the rest of the crew to bail out, then tried to land the damaged bomber. They gave their lives in the attempt - died with the unconscious pilot in the crash. Truemper's and Mathies' families have the Congressional Medal of Honor in memory of their sons.

Many others died in the fierce onslaught which followed in the next few days. On Monday more than 900 bombers went after air parks and airfields from which new aircraft from the factories were distributed to operational fields.

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday the large scale assaults continued, with aircraft plants from Augsburg in the extreme south to Rostock on the Baltic Coast reeling under the blows.

Among the targets on Thursday was a huge plant at Gotha, then the

largest known producer of twin-engined Messerschmitt 110 fighters, which was knocked out of production by Liberators of the Second Division which fought a 3½-hour running battle with the Luftwaffe. For 700 miles, into the target and back to the coast, the enemy fighters fired rockets at the Libs, dropped bombs on them, and attacked singly and in waves of 30 and 40 at a time, their machine guns and cannon blazing. Crews reported that bombers were "going down all over the place" and that enemy fighters were "blowing up like Roman candles." The Lib gunners alone shot down 75 Nazi interceptors, and their escort planes destroyed many more.

Of the 230 Libs that headed for Gotha that day, 33 were lost. Three hundred and twenty-four men had gone down in battle and some of the planes that reached home carried crewmen who had been killed or injured. That night at one of the Second Division stations a strike photograph, showing great volumes of smoke pouring from the target factory, was tacked on a bulletin board and under it someone placed a hastily-lettered sign that read: "This is it, boys. We doo it!" Men from all over the base clustered around the picture, shouting, clapping one another on the back, jubilant with the fire of triumph. They had taken the worst the Luftwaffe could deal and had fought through to do a superb job of bombing.

At interrogation a radio operator who had been looking down through the open bomb-day doors during the bombing run had smilingly reported: "The bomb were not entirely accurate. Some fell about two inches away from the target." And he was not far from wrong, for interpretation of reconnaissance photographs later showed that no important building in the entire snow-covered target area had escaped damage, and that the plant was knocked completely cut of production.

This was the week that broke the back of Germany's expansion program. In the short space of six days, about 70 percent of Germany's total single and twin engine fighter production had been attacked. During this week, Eighth Air Force bombardiers peering through the scope of Norden bombsights saw more than half of Hitler's fighter factories blasted and burning, saw Germany's total fighter production - which was to have been quadrupled by 1944 - crumble and fall below its 1942 level.

20 Feb 44 Capt. Kirk led 306th "A" and Lt. McMahon led 306th "B", totalling 41 a-c. "A" failed to make rendezvous and turned back at coast. "B" with 20 a-c hit primary at Leipzig. Lost: 423rd-Richard. Claims 0-0-4.

21 Feb. 44 Lt. Col. Lambert and 21 a-c led 40th CBW to Rheine. 17 planes damaged by flak, no losses. Claims 1-0-0.

22 Feb 44 Lt. Col. Riordan led 39 a-c to Bernburg. Fighter attacks downed: 367th-Macomber, Oliver, Rector; 368th-Symons; 369th-Horst, Quaintance; 423rd-Toombs. 23 planes damaged. Claims 5-1-12.

24 Feb 44 Lt. Col. Raper led 1st Division with 20 a-c to Schweinfurt. 17 bombed target. Lost: 367th-Page; 423rd-Garrett. Claims 2-0-1.

25 Feb 44 Capt. Witt led 19 a-c to Augsburg. 13 bombed. Lost: 368th-Bayless, Coleman, Gay. Claims 3-0-0.

This was the climax but not the end. In March there were mine attacks on aircraft factories and 23 more in April.

After the week of February 20-26, the Luftwaffe went deeply into the red.

Their combat losses had been large. Now their replacements were few. Had they continued to give battle to every invading air fleet their losses soon would have consumed the German fighter forces. They had not been able to increase the flow of new aircraft to match combat losses, so they decreased losses to match the smaller flow of replacements. They elected to defend even their most vital targets only when weather and other factors were most favorable to them.

In March, when about 700 heavy bombers flew in broad daylight over Berlin - blasting the German capital with about 2,000 tons of bombs - entirely unopposed by the Luftwaffe, it was almost unbelievable. They were known to have a strong fighter force still, but they let even their capital be blasted in daylight with no attempt to prevent it. If this needed some explaining to the public in America and Britain - the same was true in Berlin. So a Luftwaffe big shot was put on the Berlin radio to explain that the reason was the weather. It was true that the weather that day might have added a few planes to their losses, but it was not that they couldn't have come up.

They were conserving their fighter strength for two reasons. One was the coming invasion in the West. The other was the effect on our operations of the "strategic presence" of a strong enemy fighter force. The mere existence of such a force - even on the ground -- kept a great amount of Allied air forces personnel, effort and aircraft loadings devoted to defense against "possible" attack by German fighters.

Though so much of Germany's aircraft production had been crippled, the still strong Luftwaffe fighter force, with conservation, could grow stronger yet, through what production remained. With D-Day drawing nearer, the heat was turned on the German fighter force in being. The Eighth's heavies spread fragmentation bombs across fields throughout Germany where large numbers of aircraft were parked. Drawing the Luftwaffe up to be shot down was a large consideration in the planning of more than one bomber mission. And when they didn't come up our fighters went down to destroy them on their own airfields.

Throughout the Eighth Fighter Command there had been posters reminding the escort pilots of their mission in this war: "Stay between the bombers and the enemy. It's not how many Germans you destroy but how many bombers you bring back that counts." One day these posters came down and in their place went up: "Go after the Hun and destroy him wherever you find him!"

Inhaling deeply of the new doctrine, one fighter pilot declared, "If they won't come up and fight we'll go down and shoot 'em up on the ground. And if they go underground, we'll land and throw rocks down their holes."

So in April the Eighth's fighters dropped down "on the deck," sweeping across Holland, Belgium, France and half of Germany at tree-top level with their guns wide open. Working deeper behind enemy lines than American fighters had ever strafed anywhere in the world, they actually shot up German planes on airfields "east" of Berlin. Some of these fields, more than 600 miles from the nearest hostile fighter bases, the Germans had not even thought to defend.

In 30 days they destroyed nearly 500 German planes on the ground and shot down 332 more in aerial combat.

The toll for the month of April was staggering - to the Germans. Added to

the destruction by the fighters, 347 kills by gunners on the bombers and at least 470 other aircraft destroyed or damaged on the ground by bombing 38 airdromes cost the Germans a total of 1,172 aircraft definitely destroyed and 1,360 more damaged or probably destroyed. All this in addition to bombing 22 aircraft factories during the month of April. This was the crushing blow that left a battered and anemic Luftwaffe to face the invasion about to be launched from Britain.

It was anemic because quality as well as quantity of Luftwaffe opposition had declined. More than 8,581 German planes were shot out of the air by the Eighth Air Force alone in two years, and many carried dead pilots with them. Many of the "Abbeville Kids" (notorious Hermann Goering squadron flying yellow nosed FW 190's from bases near Abbeville, France, during the early days of the air war in the west) and their contemporaries were lying beneath iron crosses somewhere on the continent. ("We used to get the hell shot out of us every time we tangled with them," Mick Lambert, a former Eagle Squadron Spitfire pilot from Visalia, Calif., once told us.) Though there were good pilots left still saturated with "strength through joy" - the shortage of them was an important factor. The high rate of losses had forced the Germans to rush trainees through an inadequate "short course," and the results had become evident in combat, pilots reported.

And while the Eighth was hammering Germany's fighter production down below the 1942 level and cutting down the Luftwaffe's front line planes and pilots in battle, the Allied Air Forces based in Britain were doubling, trebling in strength. Through the combination of these factors, the invasion caught the Luftwaffe outnumbered ten to one in the west and faced with a choice between one suicidal throw at the invading forces or relative in-

activity.

It is not known what was in the mind of the man who made the decision to hold back what was left of the Luftwaffe. But it is known that had he decided to throw them into the fight in one all out effort, the approximately 1,000 planes he had been able to assemble in the west by depleting reserves and further robbing of other fronts, would have been chewed up in about one week by the overwhelming Allied air forces based in Britain.

Then, though they might have slowed and made more costly the Allied foothold in Normandy, they could have been written off in all Allied planning. As it was they weren't written off entirely. By their "strategic presence" they remained a threat against which many precautions had to be taken.

By a very conservative estimate, Eighth Air Force bombing of aircraft plants during the first five months of 1944 "alone" kept 5,000 German single engine fighters from reaching the front. In two years of bombing, strafing and aerial combat, 9,740 Nazi planes were destroyed, and 8,850 more were listed as probably destroyed or damaged. These figures do not include the aircraft which probably were in many of the hundreds of airfield hangars destroyed, or the probable curtailment of production through destruction of ball bearings plants, aero engine plants, or the effect of attacks on aircraft repair and overhaul points, or the aircraft shot down by the Eighth's 2,900 bombers and 2,000 fighters which never got home to report them.

Because of all this the air over Europe in the west belonged to the Allies, even before the first soldier landed in Normandy. And because of that, post-war exponents of air power will have no more faithful supporters than the Allied foot soldiers who fought under the protection of air power - and the Germans who didn't.

Two Small Men 'Win' Unenviable Jobs Inside Fortresses Wings

"It's no job for a guy with claustrophobia."

That is the sober statement of two guys who often work all day in a space that would make a telephone booth look like the waiting room of Grand Central Terminal.

Sgt. Clifford B. Evans, and Cpl. Russell Haughton are the men who are called on for the dirty work when there is a job to be done inside the wing of a Flying Fortress. They are the only two men in their service squadron who can worm their way for 40 feet inside the Fort's wing--and know what do to when they get there.

When one of the huge gas tanks (which fit into the wing as neatly as the kernel of a nut) is damaged it must be replaced.

The rubber, self-sealing inner tank prevents gasoline leaking from the big ship when it has been hit by German flak, or machine-gun fire, but when the time for overhaul comes, after a raid, the tank is yanked out and replaced.

It is a big job for little men who know what the inside of the wing of a Fort is all about, and Cpl. Haughton and Sgt. Evans fill the bill.

Neither Haughton nor Evans remembers how they first got started on the job. "I used to want to scream and get out quick, sometimes," Cpl. Haughton explained, "but now I'm used to it and I could work in there all day."

The two boys stand about 5 ft. 5 in. and both of them weigh less than 125 pounds.

"One day there was a job to do," Sgt. Evans said, "and they noticed that I got narrow hips and a small head, so they called on me. They found I could squeeze in, so now I'm regular at it."

Often when there is a lot of work to do the boys are inside the wing soon after breakfast and don't get out until lunch time. Cpl. Haughton says that it takes about 20 minutes to wiggle in, and about half an hour to get out. He explains the ten minutes' difference simply.

"Comin' out I gotta worm my way backwards 'cause there isn't any room to turn around and get started head first. My pants are sorta baggy too, and sometimes they get caught on the struts. That slows me up some."

Neither Sgt. Evans or Cpl. Haughton have any use for the professional midgets who work inside the wings at the Boeing plants in California.

"Those guys have it soft," Haughton insists, "they're really little and besides they don't even have any struts in when they work in there."

"Yea, it's those struts," Sgt. Evans mutters.

Arizona Harris Story Retold, Led to DSC

Dec. 20, 1942

The raid on Romilly-sur-Seine was one of the most accurate attacks made by the daylight bombers in the early days of the winter experiment. Breasting intense flak on their bomb run, the Forts laid their bombs right in on the target. The fighting was especially bitter that December day and First Wing gunners brought down forty-four enemy aircraft.

But First Wing took losses, too. In that raid six bombers were officially accounted "missing." One of those six was the plane in which Technical Sergeant Arizona Todd Harris manned the top-turret gun.

Arizona came from Tempe, not far from Phoenix. He was a ranch hand; mostly he just rode his truck around the ranch, did a few odd jobs for the neighbors and generally enjoyed life.

"Nope, never did much huntin'," Arizona used to say. "No time. Besides, the nose bothered my ears."

After the Japs believed their

After the Japs delivered their blow at Pearl Harbor, Arizona got himself a new job, riding the top turret in a Flying Fortress. He trained for the job hoping he'd get a chance to hit back at Dai Nippon. Instead he was sent to England with the rest of the combat crew with whom he had trained.

They were a smooth, hard-hitting team, that combat crew. When the Flying Fortresses and their daylight bombing crews were proving themselves, Arizona and his mates helped make history. In the course of these raids Arizona notched his guns twice.

His first kill came on a mission over a U-boat pen. The tail-end Charley's guns jammed and a yellow-nosed fighter came flahing in for what the Nazi thought was a strike. He took a short, sharp burst from Arizona's guns and fell to his death.

Arizona's guns earned their second notch not long afterward. A Focke-Wulf was maneuvering for position. The German thought he was outside the range of the Fortress' guns. Arizona wheeled his turret, brought his guns to bear. He caught the Nazi in his sights, gave him a series of short burst and the Focke-Wulf broke up in the air. The pilot bailed out.

Technical Sergeant Arizona Todd Harris was awarded the Air Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster for these achievements. Known among his mates for his short bursts, he said long bursts "might hot up my guns and besides the noise bothers my ears."

Arizona got one more German. The bombers split their way through swarms of enemy fighters en route to Romilly-sur-Seine. But it was the flak that knocked out two engines of Arizona's plane. As the run for home and safety began, the crippled plane came under the protecting guns of the formation. Two engines were out and great holes gaped in the wings and tail surfaces. Another cripple in the formation had three engines functioning, but its belly turret was out of action.

Out at sea the Focke-Wulfs let up their attack. The formation came down to "nought feet" to protect with the sea the undefended belly of the second crippled plane. But the Fort in which Arizona flew did not come down with the others. Altitude was too precious for a plane with but two engines to give up willingly; and besides the

Focke-Wulfs had all gone home. Or had they?

The English Channel is cold and wide. Not so wide, perhaps, as an ocean; but still too wide, far too wide for the peace of mind of the crews of limping bombers.

Out of the clouds, diving like maniacs, came more Focke-Wulfs. They had stalked the formation, risking their nearly empty gasoline tanks in the hope of knocking off one of the two crippled planes. When the Fortress formation split up, leaving the ship in which Arizona minded the top turret, the Germans saw their chance.

The lone bomber's only hope was to stave off the Nazi attack until the Huns exhausted their slim supply of gasoline. The Focke-Wulfs were already straining their luck, following the bombers so far out to sea.

The crews of the Fortresses at sea level had front-row seats for the brief fight that followed.

Arizona, in the top turret, went into action first. But it was hopeless. With two engines gone, effective evasive action is impossible. The fifth Focke-Wulf in the diving line placed an explosive shell in one of the plane's remaining engines. The Fortress sagged toward the Channel.

Her pilot laid her gently into the sea, a perfect "ditch" landing. Her crew could be seen trying to launch the dinghies. Then the Germans peeled off once more and dived on the dying bomber, spraying the helpless crew in the downed plane with cannon fire. Men dropped, struggling futilely to launch the rubber boats.

The guns in the top turret continued to fire as Arizona Harris tried to cover his crew mates.

One Focke-Wulf, bolder than the rest, dived in low for one last merciless blast. Arizona's turret revolved slowly. He must have been handling it manually by that time. His guns came into line-spat flame. The diving German took the fire for a long moment; then it came part in the air, only a split second before it went into the sea with a splash.

Arizona had his third and last German. The Fortress sank while his guns still blazed.

Later a boat of the Air-Sea Rescue Service, combing the area for survivors, found only a yellow, half-inflated "Mae West."



The above reproduction is the print being offered in a 16x20 charcoal print suitable for framing by the Aviation Art Museum. It is one of a great many drawings which they have, but is especially interesting because it is a B-17 triangle H of the 306th.

We erred in a previous note, by telling you it was \$3. There is also a \$3 postage and handling charge, so your order should include \$6 for a print.

They are anticipating a price increase by \$1 the first of the year.

Their address is Aviation Art Museum, PO Box 16224, St. Paul, MN 55116.

Remember! \$6 will get you a B-17 print.

Recently Missing -- Can You Help?

Echoes . . . 7

Each time we send out an issue of ECHOES we can count on some coming back as undeliverable. Some of these are lost because of moving nearby but not being forwarded because of the vagaries of the Postal Service. We need your help, if any of these men have lived in your vicinity, in trying to track them down and providing a current address.

Hollis H. Baker—Box 209 PS Company—Valdez, Alaska 99686

Eddie Barron—306 Orchard Terr—Pittsburgh, PA 15238

Jack Beach—4842 S. 18th St.—Tucson, AZ 85711

Alan R. Bice—Grand Ronde, OR 97347

Frank M. Bongiovanni—722 E. LaSalle Av.—South Bend, IN

Marvin Brown—2593 N. 400 E.—N. Ogden, UT

A. Cambi—7309 S. Troy—Penninsula, OH

A. Cambi—7309 S. Troy—Peninsla, OH

John Corcoran—1054 Third Av.—Beaver Falls, PA

M.J. Corcoran—1317 Third NE.—New Brighton, PA

James M. Corrigan—5 E 67th N.—Gladstone, MI

Harvey L. Cox—116 Downing St.—Lafayette, LA

Charles L. Curtis—15146 Dickens St.—Sherman Oaks, CA

Robert J. Custer—1140 E. Huisache—Kingsville, TX

Charles E. Dapra—912 Franklin Av.—Pittsburgh, PA

Howard L. Ellison—1433 Bering Dr.—Houston, TX

William Finklestein—5901 N. Sheridan Dr.—Chicago, IL

Ralph Gaston—Maui Surf Hotel—Maui Island, HA

Sam J. Giacalone—7923 Abbey—Cleveland, OH

Doran L. Gillette—8070 W. 38th Av.—Wheat Ridge, CO

Ernest M. Goetzberger—4164 N. 8th St.—Philadelphia, PA

Martin Goldberg—4312 15th NW—Washington, DC

James O. Grimes—Woodville, TX

Joseph W. Haire—515 Columbus Av.—San Antonio, TX

Francis Hess—Rt. 2, Box 25688—Browns Mills, NJ

Paul W. James—706 Tolna St.—Baltimore, MD

Bruce Lee Jones—8205 Green Point Av.—Riverside, CA

Ralph W. Jones—Box 526—Georgetown, CA

Roger S. Lindsay—860 Westbourne Ln.—Wheeling, IL

William H. Pool—5814 Southern Av.—Shreveport, LA

A. Quinones—Alice, TX

Shirley J. Ross—2112 Warm Springs Av.—New Orleans, LA

Ray K. Schieb—35 Forest St.—Sudbury, MA

Vernon R. Schimmel—208 N. Dwyer St.—Arlington Heights, IL

Elvin L. Sexton—8423 SW Hawthorne B1—Portland, OR

Robert W. Shingler—7838 E. Morrow—Dearborn, MI

Cecil B. Smith—Box 3398—Grand Island, NE

Clinton E. Snyder—Mountain View, MO

Robert C. Spry—2853 Clemens Dr.—Milford, MI

Eugene B. Steinmann—6565 St. Joseph—St. Louis, MO

Stephen Szpak—Rt. 20—Leighton, PA

Anthony Terenzio—923 N. 213th St.—Bronx, NY

Paul R. Wehunt—1574 Lodgepole Av.—Anderson, CA

Clement R. White—800 Harbor Ct.—Londonbridge, VA.

Robert Whitt—Rt. 1—Ardmore, TN

J.R. Winborn—Box 207—Lind, WA

Harlan D. Wolffe—8907 Fairway Hill Dr.—Austin, TX

If you can provide any information about any of these men, please contact Bill Collins or Russ Strong.

British Group Plans 306th Memorial

Dear 306ers:

As a teenager, I used to cycle from Bedford to Thurleigh and look over or through the fence at all those beautiful B17s. Then, when the Group history "First over Germany" was published in 1946, I must have been one of the first Britishers to buy it; Hockliffes, the Bedford bookshop, had three copies and I reserved one before rushing home to scrape together the princely sum of "twenty-five bob" for its purchase. Ever since, that book has been one of the most treasured volumes in my library.

I little thought at that time that, over thirty years later, I would be a found member of the 306th BG Historical Association and would have the pleasure and the honor of meeting those of you who have been able to participate in the 1976, '77, and '78 UK Reunions. May you all continue to visit us in ever-increasing numbers in the years to come!

You are all aware that we in 306 BGHA intend to erect a Group Memorial on or near the Base. The final form which this will take has not yet been decided; it will depend mainly upon the funds and material available and also upon the location. However, one part of the project which is going ahead is the gathering together of a collection of Group memorabilia. Material has been given or lent by people on both sides of the Atlantic and, pending the provision of a permanent site, each member of the 306 BGHA is holding some at his or her home; the entire collection can be brought together for viewing at quite short notice. May I appeal to you all to send us, as either a gift or a loan, any item which you can bring yourself to part with and which relates to the 306th in particular or to WW2 AAF life in general. Anything is acceptable, no matter how unimportant it may seem; my wife and I are especially interested in uniforms, but equally necessary are examples of routine paperwork, odd items of equipment, maintenance manuals, TOs. How about an Army Driver's

(Turn to page 8)

Gudger 369th Keeps Seat In Congress

Lamar Gudger, a 369th navigator, has been returned to his Congressional seat representing the 11th district of North Carolina, by a comfortable 10,000 margin.

This will be Gudger's second term on the Hill. He won election two years ago in a hotly contested race, and had another such experience in the primary this year. But, in the general election, he won handily.

Gudger is an attorney, and practiced in Asheville before going to Washington.

He is a member of the Judiciary Committee, serving on subcommittees on criminal justice and crime. He also is on the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, serving on national parks and insular affairs, Indian affairs and public lands, and the special investigations subcommittee. His most recent committee assignment was the conference committee on child pornography.



Congressman Gudger



300th Mission Wall

Collins Makes Annual Report

We have had a busy year, adding more names to the mailing list, finding lost members, typing correspondence, getting the mail out, and things like that.

Some expenses were: stamps \$454.70; printing ECHOES \$149.38; computer charges \$40.54; Souvenirs for Washington reunion \$80.00; 306th banner \$75.00; reunion hospitality room \$165.00.

Donations were \$332.00. The bar made a profit of \$33.00.

Balance on hand now \$52.62.

We expect 8th AFHS remuneration at \$2 per registrant.

To carry on we need at least \$2 from each member, particularly those who have not contributed in the past.

-Bill Collins



Mills' Appeal

(From page 7)

License? We would not wish to have anything which you would rather keep, but rest assured that your "Fan Club" over here will take very good care of anything which is sent.

We look forward to meeting many of you in the future, if not over here then at the 1980 8AF Reunion which Diane and I hope to attend.

Until then,

Sincerely,

John P. Mills

Additions to 306th

Balcom, Howard—57 Fisher St.—Natick, MA 01760
 Barber, Harry H.—Rt. 1, Box 79—Norway, ME 04268
 Barks, Wilbur S.—Rt. 6, Box 407—Three Rivers, MI 49093
 Biskup, Jerome A.—3235 S. 39th St.—Lincoln, NE 68586
 Bolinger, Percy G.—220 NE Elmhurst—Bartlesville, OK 74003
 Bowles, F. Douglas—37 Belmont Circle, S.—Oneonta, NY 13820
 Brown, John A. Jr.—208 Washington Ave.—Sunbury, PA 17801
 Cassidy, Wm. P.—3820 46th Av., S.—St. Petersburg, FL 33711
 Davis, Bill—12962 Keith Pl.—Tustin, CA 92680
 DeLaVars, Douglas T.—511 Clover St.—Fairborn, OH 45324
 Eubank, William—5307 Valerie St.—Bellaire, TX 77401
 Fairchild, James—124 Lela St.—Jasper, TX 75951
 Fatigati, Charles—6596 19th St., N.—St. Petersburg, FL 33702
 Gallegos, Leo L.—11005 Haines, NE.—Albuquerque, NM 87112
 Gann, Jewel R. Jr.—3830 Lincoln—Corpus Christi, TX 78415
 Graham, Andrew L. Jr.—708 Wren Dr.—Pulaski, VA 24301
 Hale, Charles E.—385 Strader Av.—Akron, OH 44305
 Hall, Elvie C.—Rt. 9, Box 451—Burlington, NC 27215
 Handel, Albert—249 David Dr.—Havertown, PA 19083
 Jenks, Lee T.—176 Manchester Av.—Paterson, NJ 07502
 Jordan, Edward E.—2022 Oakshire Dr.—San Antonio, TX 78232
 Kupferman, Saul M.—1327 Merry Ln, NE—Atlanta, GA 30329
 Kurk, Lester C.—Star route—Gallatin Gateway, MT 59730
 Leavitt, Sidney R.—Box 184—Bay Springs, MS 39422
 Ledgerwood, Thomas D.—823 Mockingbird Ln.—Norman, OK 73071
 Lee, Robert E.—335 Metz Av.—San Antonio, TX 78223
 Madson, Mark L.—Box 691—Pismo Beach, Ca 93449
 McKay, Robert—19450 Lorain Rd.—Fairview Park, OH 44126
 Nolasco, Peter P.—4225 Teackwood Ct.—Concord, CA 94521
 Paolini, Raymond—401 Sixth St.—Sparks, NV 89431
 Prentice, John—18430 Westhaven—Southfield, MI 48075
 Purnell, George W.—Box 1095—Garden City, KS 67846
 Schaeberle, Charles—937 Beaverbank Cir.—Towson, MO 21204
 Skahan, William J.—451 Vine St.—Leavenworth, KS 66048
 Smith, Bartlett E.—204 Steven St.—Mason, MI 48854
 VanDever, Jackson—Box 454—Osburn, ID 83849
 Whitelaw, Robert S.—3433 Springside Dr.—Decatur, GA 30032
 Wilson, Howard V.—346 Cedar Av.—Holmes, PA 19043
 Wooten, Herbert D.—Box 235—Arkansas City, AR 71630

Keith Paul Writes from Thurleigh On Nostalgia And Visitations

This fall we have had quite a number of men who served at Thurleigh return for a quick visit to the old base. Some had taken advantage of the invitations that have been offered by Wg Cmdr Rigg or myself, but several were men who had come over to England with no idea at all that there was such a thing as the 306th Assn. Some of these men just turned up at the gate and if the policeman on duty knew about my connections with the 306th he could phone me. After some quick conversations with our security officer permission was always very kindly given and the surprised visitor would find himself once more back on the base. Needless to say, they didn't get out again without being given Bill Collins' address and told about the Association!

I would like to remind everyone however that we are officially closed through Saturdays and Sundays and it is very difficult to gain admittance then. Also, please, do give us a few days warning to either the Wing Commander or myself if you want to visit us, then we can make your visit as memorable as possible.

Returning visitors often remark how much Bedford has changed since they served here. Unfortunately, much of the old Bedford has indeed been torn down, the latest place to go being the old Railway Station. Up until the very last day it look very much as it was the day when you stepped onto its dimly lit, grimy platform, looked at the sandbags, the sticky tape across the windows and the uniformed soliders and airmen in the entrance hall and thought to yourself "Wow, I really AM in the War now!" Yes, of course the sandbags and the sticky tape had gone, but otherwise it had changed very little . . . until October 1st, when the doors closed and the station was replaced by a shiny new glass and concrete object with not the slightest bit of character to its shape. I often wonder if "Progress" is always in a forward movement!

Whilst on the subject of Nostalgia (and we wouldn't be in the Association if it means nothing to us), a lady over here would like a little help. When she was a small girl she used to creep into the scrap aircraft dump at Cambridge, sit in the cockpit of one particular Fortress fuselage, the warm sun shining down through the gap where the top turret used to be, and dream her dreams. That ship was called WEARY BONES and had painted on the nose a pair of dice. After much searching she has learned that WEARY BONES flew with the 306th and she has set her heart on getting in touch with anyone who flew in that ship. So, please, if WEARY BONES was YOUR shop either in the air or on the ground, please write to me so that I can put you in touch with the lady.

Before ending these notes from Bedford, I must tell you that as yet we have not acquired a home for the Museum, but I am still working smoothly towards that goal. I have great hopes, but they could all be ruined by trying to rush things. Perhaps in the next issue of the "ECHOES" will have some definite news, who knows!

KEITH PAUL

(Writing on Thurleigh Airfield)