

306th Echoes

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Raymond Check's crew on 22 March 1943. This is one of numerous crew pictures, each picture having an array of different personnel. Front row, left to right: Jack C. Webb, John Cybulski, James Bobbett, Walter Bieloga, Ralph W. Wallace and Nicholas Sawicke. Back row, left to right: Emmett W. Ford B, David Nordberg N, William P. Cassidy CP and Check.



To the left is a cartoon of a Check crew. When J. W. Wilson was the commander of the 423rd, he had Donald Bevan make a set of crew cartoons, which were unique in the 306th and probably unseen by any other groups in the 8th in this period.

Dear Mr. Strong,

I'm a historian, WWII aviation, and I research mostly fighter ACES. Right now, I'm adding an ACE to the memorial wall display, in the Fargo Air Museum. I thought I had them all, when I completed this about six years ago.

It turned out I had missed one, a Lt. Cmdr. Leonard Check, another North Dakota native. After several months of searching, I finally found a family member, a sister-in-law of the ACE. I received a lot of information, but was surprised to find Leonard had two brothers, who were also heroes. Her husband, Col. Gilbert Check, was a factor in changing the outcome of the Korean conflict; the third Check brother was none other than Capt. Raymond Check, of the 306th Bombardment Group.

The Ace, Leonard, was a 'double' Ace, with 10 victories, winning the Navy Cross among many other decorations. Unfortunately, Leonard lost his life in a collision in the clouds, over Formosa, towards the end of the war. Gilbert Check was awarded the DSC, and lived until 1986. And I learned the fate of Raymond thru Mrs. Gilbert Check, who also told me to read more about him in Andy Rooney's book. And that is where I learned he was in the 306th, and found your fine web site, and you.

Naturally, I want to learn more about Raymond Check, before writing about him for the Fargo Air Museum. I'm enclosing \$20.00 for one of your Combat Diaries: you would have to select the one, applicable to Raymond Check. I did not learn which BS he was in, from his relatives. Perhaps I would be lucky enough so it would show a photo of him and his crew, and the B-17, *Chennault's Pappy*!

Thanks a lot, Mr. Strong.

Ozzie Groethe
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Dayton Site of Reunion for 2007

There will be a 306th reunion this year, and it will be at the Air Force Museum in Dayton, OH, as it has been in 1976, 1986 and in 2002 when we bused to Dayton from Covington, KY.

We hope that this venture into the treasure trove of aviation memorabilia will be better than in 2002 when too many exhibits were out of whack, closed or being redone. Rocky Rockwell, president and reunion chairman, has been diligently working on this Dayton venture and we are sure it will offer much more than on our previous times there.

Note the paragraphs below regarding your need to be sure you have a photo ID with you. Be also prepared for some walking, although there may well be means of assistance for those who do not handle long distances afoot as well as they once did.

Photo IDs Necessary for Dayton Attendees

Everyone attending the 2007 reunion of the 306th will need to be in possession of a photo ID card- most driver licenses fit the bill.

Rocky Rockwell, our president and reunion chairman at Dayton, has been putting in a lot of work on the '07 event for us, and recently he was told at Wright-Pat that the IDs were necessary, particularly if you will be crossing the air base to see the collection of Presidential aircraft stored there and to be in the hangar where the *Memphis Belle* is being restored.

One of the more important displays for we 306'ers to view will be the combat ready *Shoo Shoo Shoo Baby*. For some years the B-17 shown there was a non-combat version, until *Shoo Shoo*, which had gone to Sweden, was found, returned to the US and then totally restored. It came back in pieces from a junkyard in France.

Our '17s were tagged as costing about a hundred thousand, but many times that amount was spent in the restoration of *Shoo Shoo*. When it rolled out on the ramp after several years work it looked pristine and was ready to be taxied out and flown.

One time 17 pilots from 4-Star generals on down volunteered to fly it, but wiser heads prevailed. The engines were started and the plane was taxied around the ramp, and that was all. Officials said the restoration cost was so high that they dared not fly the craft.

When the editor lived in Dayton he was a frequent visitor to the Museum. On a Christmas vacation weekend the curators unlocked the door on the old '17 at Wright-Pat so he could take his five sons on a guided tour of the interior of the plane. They had warned him it was dirty inside. And it was! But they spent an hour or more as he guided his sons through it all and each one got to sit in the pilots' seats, but no one got into the ball turret. Many years later they are still talking about their singular experience. When they completed their tour museum personnel locked the dirt back in place, and got a better model of our old WWII "friend".

OBITUARIES

John C. Bunn, 369th gunner (Jack Lewis crew) has been reported as deceased by the U.S. Postal Service.

John T. Hamilton, 367th tail gunner (Henry Hanson crew), died 16 Oct 2007 in Glade Spring, VA. He came to the 306th 25 Feb 44 and was with Hanson when they ditched in the North Sea on return from Stettin. Hamilton completed his tour and later graduated from VA Tech, becoming a cost engineer in the shipbuilding industry. He leaves his wife, Eleanor.

Virgil A. Hamilton, 367th tail gunner (George Mapes crew), died 27 Jan 2006 in East Peoria, IL. He flew 31 missions and then became a gunnery instructor in Kingman, AZ and Laredo, TX. After the war he was a machinist for Caterpillar Co., retiring in 1982. He leaves his wife, Evelyn.

George A. Lehman, died 9 Jan 2007 in Parma, OH. He was the assistant to the Catholic Chaplain at Thurleigh, The Rev Father Adrian Poletti, who died in 1980. George brought home with him a British war bride, they having been married 2 Aug 45 in Kettering, England. George was a factory machine repairman until retirement in 1981. Besides his wife, Mary, he leaves 8c, 16gc, 4ggc.

Robert G. Maloney, 369th ball turret

gunner and engineer (Clifford McBride crew) died 30 Jul 1960 in Covington, KY. He left 2d.

Stuart Manthey, 423rd navigator (Henry Wills crew), died in 2004. He had come to the Group 31 Jan 45 and flew 27 missions.

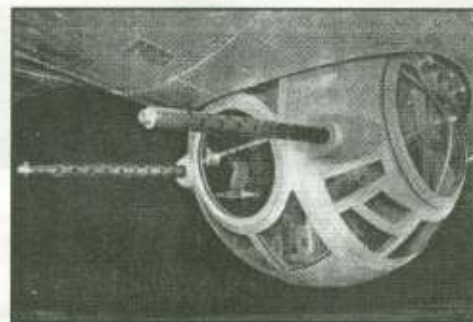
Willie C. Patton, 367th crew chief, died 4 Sept 2001 in Clute, TX. He worked for Dow Chemical Co. after service. His wife, Julia, died in Clute in 2004. 1d survives.

Elmer L. (Red) Heap, 423rd pilot, died 28 Oct 2006 in Emmett, ID. He logged over 3000 hours as a pilot, in WWII, Korea and Vietnam. He retired as a top sawyer in a sawmill. He leaves his wife, Flossie, 5c, 17gc, 6ggc.

Clinton E. Snyder, 368th toggler, died 26 Mar 1987 in Ozark, MO. He was MIA 25 Feb 44 on a mission to Augsburg, Germany, and returned. His war bride of 42 years, Joan Tomlin, of Brampton, Hunts, England, had died 1 Sept 1987.

306th Family

Georgia, widow of **Wallace T. Peckham**, died 27 Feb 2007 in League City, TX. He had died 8 Nov 2006. They leave 3c.



Many of our enlisted crewmen and probably some ground crew members flew in the ball turrets found on B-17s and B-24s.

But how many of the pilots, navigators and bombardiers got to do it, especially on a combat mission.

There were those days in the summer of 1944 when no Luftwaffe planes appeared to interrupt our missions, nor were any flak bursts fired in our direction.

Coming home from such a mission afforded this editor a chance to hike back to the turret to ask the ball turret gunner if he wanted some relief, and then to get into the turret and ride there perhaps for a half hour. I did this three times. The first ride was exploratory as I learned how to manipulate the turret and come to the realization that when one pulled the levers inside the ball and the turret wheeled around, the guns elevated and you could not see our plane. I was much more adventuresome on flights two and three than I had been on the first.

I never ever talked to any other officer who volunteered information as to "his" riding in the ball turret. But I am sure that there were some who did it.

Bad Day in the Bomb Bay

I was a radio operator in the 368th Squadron.

My first mission was on June 8, 1944, with Capt. Leland Deck, as my pilot. Due to a jaw injury to Capt. Deck, our crew was without a pilot for awhile and we filled in spots with other crews when needed. On this mission I filled in as radio operator along with a new flight engineer on his first mission.

Our bomb bays were loaded with 250 pound bombs tied together and I had removed the pins from the bombs before takeoff. As we reached our target (I've forgotten where), I heard the bombardier announce "bombs away" and as usual it was my duty to confirm that all bombs were released, but this time I found that not all bombs were away. Two sets of bombs were not released and were still attached to their original position on the rack. I announced to the pilot the situation of the remaining bombs but he continued flying back to our base in England, I guess presuming that we could land the plane without a problem.

As we proceeded I heard a loud bang inside the bomb bay. I immediately opened the door and was shocked to see both the engineer and bombardier standing there. They had made an attempt to move the bombs from the rack they were on in order to place them on the floor. They were obviously too heavy for both of them to carry and the bombs were dropped, two of them sitting halfway on the bomb bay doors. There was no conversation over the intercom that this was to be done and it appeared that they felt this was important to do so that the bombs would not fall from the rack during landing.

I had been previously warned not to step on those doors as they would open from my weight, and yet, I stared at almost 500 pounds leaning on the bomb bay doors which, miraculously, had not opened. I was struck with fear knowing we were now over England and if the bombs happened to fall through, innocent people might be killed and perhaps even the RAF might rise to meet us thinking we were the enemy in disguise.

As we approached our base in Thurleigh, we contacted the tower telling them of the situation and requesting advice. We were told to "get the hell out of there as fast as possible, fly back over the English Channel and release the bombs". Needless to say we were on edge the entire trip back. Once reached, we hand cranked open the bomb bay doors and the bombs were released, exploding as they hit the water.

This day it felt as if we had completed two missions instead of one. We were grateful having returned to our base without mishap and thankful we were safe. I talked the flight surgeon into giving me a double scotch.

Sy Shweky, Technical Sergeant



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The 306th Bomb Group Historical Association is a Federally tax-exempt organization and as a veteran's group is classified as 501 (c) (19).

306th PUBLICATIONS

Published materials now available from the Group will help you follow the 306th through the combat period 1942-45:

ORDER FORM

First Over Germany by Russell A. Strong A 325 page narrative history of the 306 th . 100 pictures & 1700 names. Fourth edition is paperback.	\$35.00
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Spiral bound.	367th \$20.00
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306th Group Directory 23 Oct. '06	\$10.00
Mission Reports Detailed information on specific missions flown between 9 Oct. 42 and 19 Apr 45. May range from 1 to 50 pages. Include the name of individual you are interested in to derive most benefits. List dates, etc. on separate sheet.	3 for \$5.00
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5323 Cheval Place
Charlotte, NC 28205

19 June 1944
Office of the Military Air Attache
Stockholm, Sweden



The following report was submitted by pilot, 2nd Lt. Louis F. Matichka, who ditched a Flying Fortress off the coast of Sweden on 8 May 1944.

B-17, 238008, 306th Bomb Group, 367th Bomb Squadron.

Take Off: 0610 hours, departed English coast 0845 hours at 15,000 feet, and arrived enemy coast 0928 hours at 22,000 feet.

Defects in ship on trip out: oil pressure dropped below 50 lbs on #1 engine, unable to feather prop.

Target: Berlin, Germany, PFF. Bombs were salvoed approximately 2 miles north of the I.P., but strikes were not observed because of cloud. Bombs dropped from 27,000 ft.

Ground Defense: encountered 2 flak barrages from I.P. out on course of 10 degrees magnetic.

When and Where Decision Made to Land in Sweden and Why:

Left formation at 53-03 N, 13-49 E, at 1105 hours, approximately 15 minutes before I.P., having lost all oil pressure on #1 engine. An attempt was made to feather prop before oil pressure dropped below 50 lbs, to no avail. Up to the time we lost #1 engine we were constantly using 2500 RPM and 46 inches of mercury to remain in formation, due to our position in formation and the rate of climb lead ship was using.

An attempt was made to stay in formation with #1 prop windmilling and pulling 2500 RPM and 50 inches of mercury on the three remaining engines. Approximately 5 minutes before I.P. the copilot checked the gas gauges, which read about 500 gallons remaining. At the time #4 engine began to detonate and vibrate excessively, with cylinder head temp. reading about 250°.

We began to straggle and when our group turned on the I.P. we were a considerable distance behind them. Because of the acute gas situation and our inability to remain in formation on two engines, and one of them detonating, a decision was reached to strike out for the Baltic Sea rather than the briefed route home, which if followed, would have probably landed us in German-occupied territory. It was impossible to notify our formation leader, the VHF radio being inoperative.

Bombs were salvoed, and on leaving the I.P. encountered two barrages of flak. One burst hit the radio room, knocking out the liaison transmitter. Upon assuming we were over the sea, we decided to let down through the overcast, breaking out at 50 ft. above the water. The visibility was very poor due to precipitation, and we continued on a magnetic course of 10° until landfall was observed.

Landfall was an island which did not appear on any of the navigator's charts. Not being certain of the position other than by D.R., navigator decided to follow coast until able to pin point. Island on our right and about five minutes later land appeared on our left. We continued midway between the bodies of land until island on right ended.

Still not having found any landmarks identifiable on navigator's charts, at 1315 hours, with approximately 100 gallons, we flew over the land on the left searching for a field suitable for a crash landing. This attempt failed as land was heavily forested and rough. Having but a few minutes of gas left, we then prepared to ditch about one half mile off shore.

#4 engine quit running and no attempt was made to feather since ditching was imminent. As we were taking positions for ditching two Swedish, single-engine planes appeared and beckoned us to follow them inland. Because of the acute gas shortage we had no choice but to ditch. We followed the Swedish planes for about two minutes when engines began to splutter. We made a turn toward land and ditched about one-half mile off shore at 1345 hours. Plane and all equipment sank about one and one half minutes after landing.

N.B. John Watt attributes the crew's escape from its sinking plane to extensive practice conducted by Matichka.

Which Is Your Generation?

Some of you may have already seen this.

I have to disagree slightly (and you may disagree with me) about the "greatest generation" statement at the end. Not to be blasphemous, but I feel that today's young soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines are the best of today's young generation, and in fact, they are so good that I think they are better than their forefathers from The Greatest Generation. Here's why:

It's not a generational thing. Less than one-half of one percent of the population is wearing a uniform (and I don't know how that translates to people between 18-34 years old), it's hard to say that this is a generational thing.

Those serving today are all volunteers, not draftees forced into battle. There are no "draftee divisions" like in WWII. Everyone who has entered the military over the past few years, and into the foreseeable future, are not just volunteering to serve, they're volunteering for multiple combat tours. It is not uncommon for a soldier with four years in the Army to have served two of those

years in combat.

Today's generation and their parents are not all in this together. The burden of trying to win this war is falling on a small group of bright, physically fit, and motivated individuals whose friends and families don't think they are failures and understand how tough it is to serve. Much of our citizenry consider those in the military "victims".

All of us who serve, or have close family serving, have heard "Oh, I'm so sorry" at the mention of being in the military or having a child in the military. Where is the commitment? Where is the pride from those who choose not to fight?

The peers of today's young soldiers have the luxury not to serve in any capacity to better our country. Most don't become teachers, medical professionals, cops, etc., let alone join the military, yet they reap the benefits from those who do.

My bottom line is that those who are volunteering to serve and shoulder the burden of our nation are beyond great and most of our fellow Americans will never really know or appreciate how they are saving the world.



Artifact Now in Our 306th Museum

This .50 caliber machine gun, pictured above, actually came off Matichka's plane. It lay on the bottom of the Baltic Sea, where it was discovered several years ago by an intrepid group of underwater exploration hobbyists. They brought it to the surface and before long Ralph Franklin of the Thurleigh Museum became aware of its presence. After several years of discussion about the gun came the offer to send it to the 306th collection on our old airfield at Thurleigh. A couple of years ago Franklin and his wife and Russ & June Strong got a phone call that there was a truck at the gate serving our museum, and when we rushed over about five miles we shortly saw it unloaded at the museum.

The four of us pitched in and it took us three hours to get it out of the box. British government officials had no qualms about letting the gun into the country as they reckoned that such a trophy, which had been underwater since 1944, could cause no problems. Thus, the .50 caliber gun came to Thurleigh where it has now been joined by a Norden bombsight, and most recently a Congressional Medal of

Honor, which reminds one of Snuffy Smith's exploits in 1943 on his first combat mission to France. His medal was actually presented in 1943 by the Secretary of War, Henry Stimson. This was unusual because those to be awarded to a living recipient were usually made in Washington by the President.

Smith became the first enlisted man in the theatre to win the medal, and it was carried in Stimson's pocket to England for its presentation to Smith at Thurleigh among the warriors whom he flew with.

Smith remained in the theatre until early 1945 when he was returned home. He grew up in Caro, MI, and arrived with the 306th 11 Apr 43 on James Lear's 423rd crew. He flew his first mission on 1 May 1943 with L.P. Johnson's crew. Smith was actually awarded the Medal of Honor 15 Jun 1943, and later flew enough missions to receive an Air Medal with one oak leaf cluster. Smith was at the opening of the 306th Bomb Group Restaurant in Sarasota, FL. The restaurant is no longer there and Smith died 11 May 1984 in St. Petersburg, FL.



As the troops marched by at the recognition of "Snuffy" Smith receiving the Medal of Honor in July 1943, flanking Smith were Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War, and Col. George L. Robinson, 306th Group Commander. Second from the right behind them is Maj. Gen. Ira Eaker, 8th Air Force Commander.

Thurleigh Museum Medal of Honor- A Tribute to "Snuffy" Smith



To build a museum takes a lot of effort by many people, and it helps the 306th Museum at Thurleigh to have Ralph Franklin in charge as he and wife Daphne are "perfect" custodians for this rapidly developing collection of memorabilia, which also bears the imprimatur of many 306th veterans who have provided items and also considerable amounts of money to help make it all possible.

Three of these fine prints feature the Congressional Medal of Honor, which came to Maynard H. Smith, 423rd gunner who received it for his efforts on 1 May 1943 to help get L. P. Johnson's plane back to England with only three members of its crew lost. This copy of Smith's medal was obtained through efforts of Congressman Michael McCaul.

The picture with more mannequins includes George Kerr's A-2 jacket and next to it an officer's blouse contributed by Hugh Phelan. And that is flanked on the left by a flak jacket, with the red release handle in front. But really central to this picture is the 1942 vintage Jeep that was totally restored through the good offices of Franklin's brother, who is a Bedford automotive dealer. The large prints on the wall were once taken from reunion to reunion, but were finally sent to the Thurleigh museum.



A Fair Break In The Terrible Business of Making War- Is It Too Much To Ask?

I like General Patton quite a bit and consider him to be one of the U.S. Army's finest wartime commanders. But neither he nor virtually any other General or soldier really compares to General of the Armies George C. Marshall, probably one of the finest people to ever serve our nation. Here is a speech that was given during the awarding of the Marshall Award. My thanks go to a friend who forwarded this excellent piece of prose.

A Fair Break In The Terrible Business of Making War- Is It Too Much To Ask?

"Just once, in the history of this country, I'd like to see the American soldier be given a fair break in the terrible business of making war," General of the Army George C. Marshall.

Former Senator Warren B. Rudman (R-NH), who led an infantry platoon and commanded a company in combat in the Korean War, was awarded the George C. Marshall Award at the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) banquet. He gave this short, but great, speech.

Rudman ended his speech with this simple, but powerful, request: "As we leave here tonight, let us all take a moment to say a prayer for all of those brave young men and women who are willing to put it on the line for the greater good."

Thank you, General Sullivan (Gordon R.- former Chief of Staff of the Army), for your generous remarks. And I have to tell you what was going through my mind as you were up there speaking. I kept thinking that my late mother and father would be very proud. And my old battalion commander in Korea- from the 38th Infantry. Second Division- would be flabbergasted!

Then again, if you have ever read anything at all about the contribution that George Marshall made to this nation, one message is clear. Virtually no one truly belongs in his class. It would have been an honor for me to carry his boots, let alone an award in his name. If you reflect on the arc of his life- and what it meant to this nation- it is just staggering.

Think about it. When Marshall started his career, he entered the Virginia Military Institute right down the road from here. And this Army was still being run by veterans of the Civil War. This nation was just a kid- barely able to keep itself in one piece.

Yet, by the end of his career- and through his vision- America had become the architect of peace in every corner of the world, the indispensable nation in the largest war in the history of humanity. More important, we had laid the foundations of the modern Army and armed forces to provide global stability. We had poured the cornerstones of global democracy. And through his Marshall Plan we had planted the seeds of a global economy that would lift tens of millions of people out of poverty. That's a record that would leave anyone in awe.

You would be hard pressed to find any single person- uniformed or civilian, Roosevelt, Truman and Churchill included- who did so much, so well, over such a long period of time, to get us to that

point. So, in the long sweep of history, I would go so far as to say that Marshall will rank up there with Washington, Hamilton, Madison, Jefferson and the rest of the founders. When you reach that level, it's simply hard to imagine anyone but that one person who could have accomplished the same for our nation.

But the real value of this award is not just the chance to reflect on history. It's an occasion to reflect on the man himself: the values, the traits, the character of this soldier and statesman. If you read anything at all of Marshall's writings, this comes through so clearly. The beliefs that he fought for are just as relevant for today's Army- and for today's leaders- as they were for his time. And I want tonight to talk just a few minutes about those.

Foremost, he believed in putting those at the bottom of the ladder- the ground troops, the infantrymen- at the top of his list.

From his time at Fort Benning, there's a great story about him ripping an officer because the troops didn't have blankets and stoves. He called the officer on the carpet and said, "Get every one of those things tonight. Not tomorrow. Tonight. We are going to take care of the troops first, last, and all the time. First, last, and all the time..." That is the kind of commitment we owe the troops.

He believed that personal integrity conferred more authority than any ribbon or star ever could. Marshall was a guy who almost never pulled rank to make a point. But he scared the living hell out of people. Think about General Patton, who was no shrinking violet. Patton once said if he had to choose between facing Marshall in an interview or face a whole Nazi Panzer division by himself... the decision would be easy: face the Panzers!

Marshall believed that he had a solemn duty to speak truth to power. That's something that you don't learn in basic training. In his very first meeting with President Roosevelt- one of the most popular and powerful Presidents and commanders-in-chief to ever sit in the Oval Office- Marshall, then Chief of Staff of the Army, had the courage to look him in the eye and say, "I am sorry, Mr. President, I don't agree with you at all." His very first meeting! And I have to tell you, that takes more than guts.

He believed in being candid and direct. Churchill was once arguing to delay the invasion of Europe in favor of an attack on Rhodes. Marshall listened quietly for a long time, nodding, and then finally he exploded. He said, "You can plan all you want. But not one American soldier is going to die on that beach."

He believed in extreme loyalty: the kind of loyalty that goes up and down the chain of command. His view was that you select talented people, you put your trust in them, and then let them do their job. In 1947, when it became clear after face-to-face talks with the Soviets that the Cold War was going to be a reality, Marshall came back to the State Department and called George Kennan into his office. He told him that he would have to immedi-



General Marshall on Horseback

ately set up a policy office and write a master plan to deal with the threat. So, there you have Kennan, this brilliant guy who immediately sees 389 dimensions to the problem. And you have the grand strategy for the fate of the Western world hanging in the balance. It doesn't get bigger than that. So Kennan tells Marshall, "Mr. Secretary. I am going to need more guidance from you." Marshall paused for a few seconds. And then he looked at him and said precisely two words: "Avoid trivia." And that's one of the things I have always loved about Marshall: he didn't believe that anyone, regardless of rank, should take himself too seriously.

One time, General Walter Bedell Smith in full uniform- came to report to Marshall's house to give him a report. And it turned out that Marshall was out in the rain, picking corn in his vegetable patch. After a few minutes in the rain and mud, Smith started to get a bit testy. And he said, "General, do I have to stand out here to make my report?" And Marshall said, "No, Smith. Of course not. Turn over that bucket and sit down."

If there's one idea- one lesson- from Marshall's life that I could leave you with tonight, I think that would be it. No matter how high or how low your rank, you should never let your respect for the privilege and prestige of an office distract you from what you're there to do- to outweigh your obligation to speak truth to power. In that spirit, I believe I would be remiss if I didn't use this occasion to close with just a few words about the current state of this fine institution, the United States Army.

When I think about the history of the U.S. Army, places come back to mind... Omaha, Bastogne, Porkchop Hill, Ia Drang and, of course, Baghdad. From my own experience in Korea, those places are notable for the courage and uncommon valor of the American soldier. Regardless of one's views about the wisdom of starting the current action in Iraq, I am deeply, deeply worried about its lasting impact on

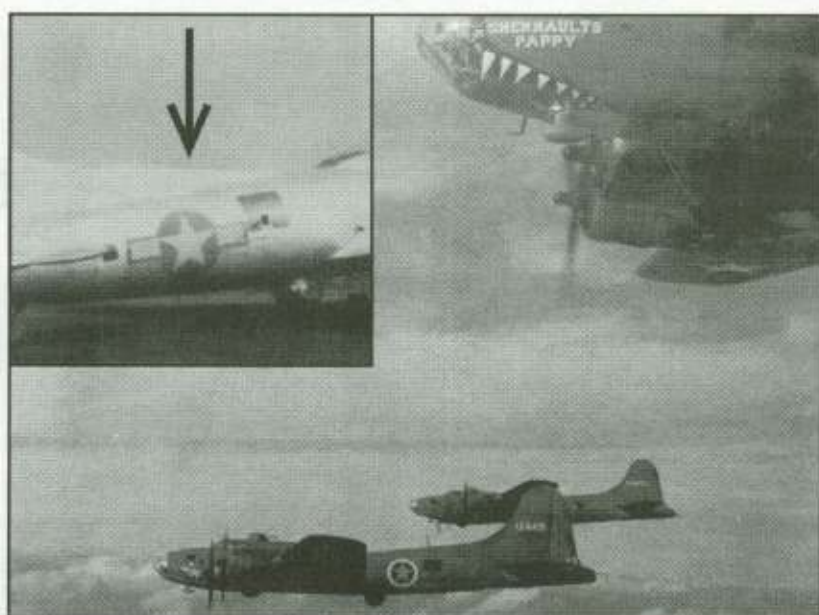
our Army- on all our armed forces, but the Army especially. By almost any measure, we have asked too small a force to operate at too fast an ops tempo with too little resources over too much territory. To paraphrase Winston Churchill, never have so many owed so much to so few for so long. And this is doing damage to our Army- active, guard and reserve- that will take a generation to repair. We are "taking it in the neck."

You can say all you want about the theory of light footprints and high-tech warfare. But as far as I'm concerned, you can save that for the classroom. At the end of the day, if you don't have enough boots on the ground, you have more instability, not less. And for families all across this country, that means you have more kids coming home without arms and legs- not less. You have more honor guard funerals- not less. That's just wrong. It's a tragedy. It did not have to be this way. And it's time for us to put the issue right in front of the American people, on the kitchen table, rather than pretend it's not there.

More than 60 years ago, at the height of World War II, Marshall stood before an audience just like this, pleading to get the resources that he believed were essential. This is a man who didn't shrug at the casualty figures. He had them on top of his desk- and in front of his president- every week! And he said, "Just once, in the history of this country, I'd like to see the American soldier be given a fair break in the terrible business of making war."

Classic Marshall. Direct. Candid. Loyal. Always on the lookout for the soldiers who are making the greatest sacrifice. And I don't think we could pay him any greater tribute today than to listen to his voice: "Just once.. a fair break." As we leave here today, let us all take a moment to say a prayer for all of those brave young men and women who are willing to put it on the line for the greater good.

Thank you.



Chennault's Pappy was the name of one of the original B-17s of the 306th, as shown in the picture to the left, depicting the idea that this plane would take care of the fighter planes who were fighting the Japanese out of India and China.

It was a popular name, as you will note that in the picture on the front page that the plane was *Chennault's Pappy III*. Which was it does not show on our airplane inventory.

While some would have you believe that all WWII planes were named, in reality, only about a third of the 306th A/C had names painted on the noses. Some came and went so swift that there was never an opportunity to get a name painted. Many others bore no such markings because crews could not agree on a name. Some planes were named by the crew chiefs who serviced them.

The photo at left was a very early shot, as you will note that the old fuselage star was in a circle. Later, to save confusion with Japanese planes, a bar was added to the star to ease identification.

Image to the left: Original 306th B-17F A/C in formation over England, 1942. Note old AF marking of star in circle. Image to the right: Entire plane from inset photo.



The photo above is of *Satan's Lady*. The photo to the left is of the *Eager Beaver* and crew, commanded by Capt. John Bennett.

Biggest Raid

Looking back upon the early days of the 306th and the fledgling 8th Air Force we can scarcely believe the accounts that were recorded then. Remember that 9 October 42 was our first raid, and we are looking at the account that appeared in the Oct 20, 1942 issue of News Week Magazine. The written copy from the pictorial rendition defy credulity as we look back into history...

Biggest Raid

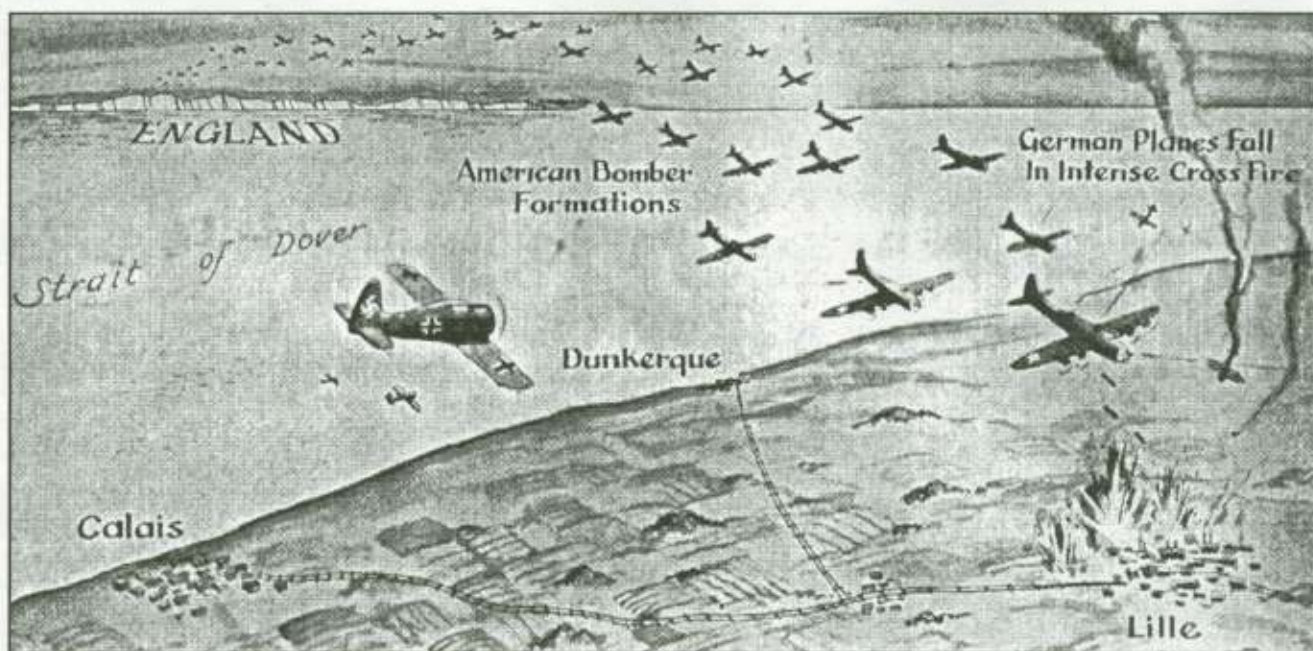
"Listen to an important communiqué of the American High Command to the French people in the occupied zone... When the bombing of a given target is done from high altitude, it may happen that a few bombs fall not only on the objective itself... we recommend to the Frenchmen of the occupied zone living within a two kilometer (1 1/4 mile) radius of factories working for Germany to evacuate their homes.

The objectives which are liable to be attacked by our bombers are all factories making or repairing planes, tanks, vehicles, locomotive, firearms or chemical products... Other targets... are railroad depots, naval construction yards, submarine shelters, airports and points of concentration of German troops."

That was the warning. The first of its kind ever issued by the American Army Air Forces, it was broadcast to Europe from the United States on Oct. 7 in ten languages over fourteen short-wave transmitters. It was also relayed on the French and German language programs of the BBC. And its meaning was brought home to the French- and to the Germans- within 48 hours.

The morning of Oct. 9 was bright and sunny. There was a clear blue sky. Over the Channel from England roared some 500 fighters manned by Americans, British and other Allied pilots. They formed an escort for 115 four-motored American bombers of the United States Army Air Forces. Some of the bombers were Boeing Flying Fortresses, including veterans of previous raids on Europe. The rest were Consolidated Liberators on their first bombing mission over Western Europe.

Many of the fighters kept close to the bombers, flying above, below, ahead of and behind the big grey-green craft. Others carried out diversionary raids over a wide area. Through fierce anti-aircraft fire, the Fortresses and Liberators headed straight for the target area, the city of Lille, near the Belgian border. There from high altitudes they loosed their bombs in a steady well



The big raid on Lille showed how fire power gives American heavy bombers superiority over Nazi fighters.

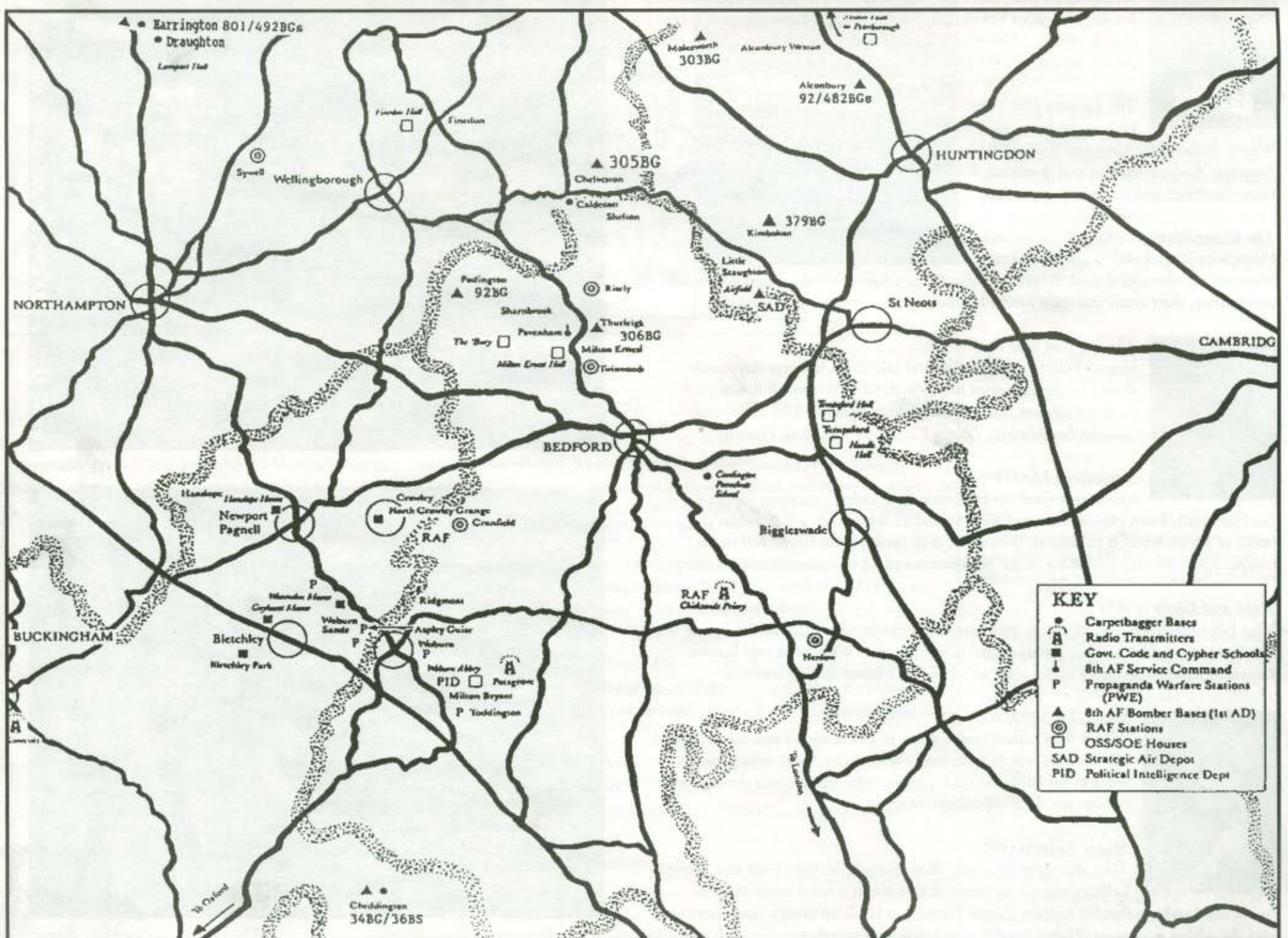
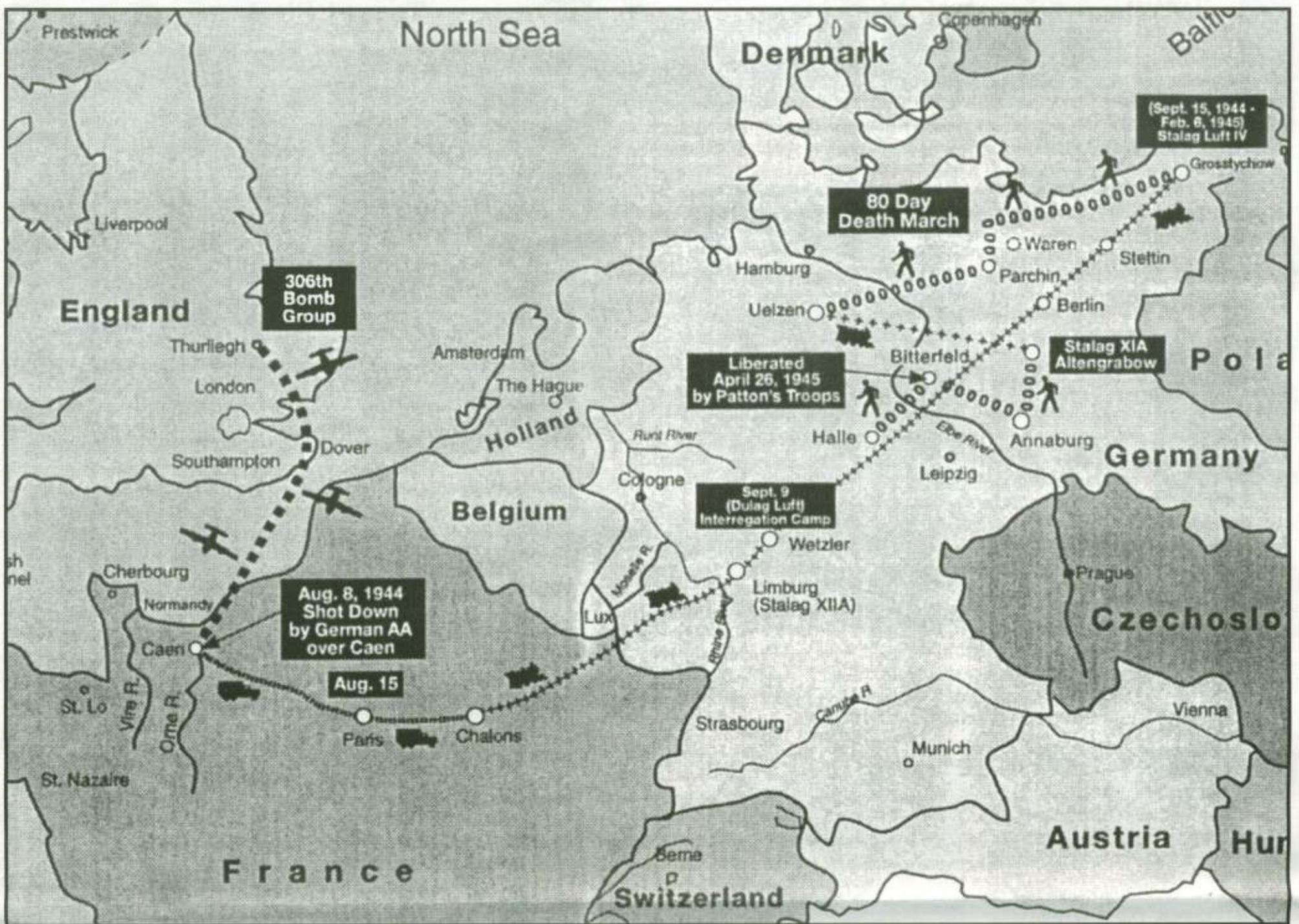
Sketch from Newsweek Vol. 20 Oct. 1942

aimed avalanche that churned up the specific targets- the Lille railroad yards and the Fives-Lille steel and engineering works, with a production capacity of 150 main-line locomotives yearly. Some of the pilots said that smoke from the bombings rose 2,000 feet high.

It was on the return trip that the bombers ran into heavy fighter opposition. Swarms of Focke-Wulf 190s and Messerschmitt 109Fs darted at them in the 5 mile high air lanes. Some were tackled by Allied fighters, which shot down five enemy fighters without loss to themselves. But the Fortresses and Liberators themselves dealt out the deadliest punishment.

When the final score was added up, they had shot down 48 enemy planes, probably destroyed 38 more and damaged another 19- a total of 105. Many of the bombers were damaged in the fight. One Liberator got home only after a heroic gunner, Aaron F. Moses, closed a 3 inch break in a gasoline pipe with his hands. But only four bombers- two Fortresses and two Liberators- failed to return.

We the 8th put up 108 planes from five bomb groups. We lost one plane to a fighter attack and had several planes get home badly wounded. No escorting planes were observed. Out of John Olson's plane, 3 were KIA, 2 evaded capture and one became a POW.



WWII on Film: A Noble Lineup

Great films have been made about the Civil War, World War I, Vietnam and Korea, yet World War II remains the war filmmakers return to again and again.

Clint Eastwood delivers Hollywood's latest World War II chronicle with *Flags of Our Fathers*, featuring an ensemble cast that includes Ryan Phillippe, Barry Pepper, Adam Beach and Jesse Bradford in the story of the Iwo Jima invasion and the historic raising of the US flag there.

Eastwood produced *Flags of Our Fathers* with Steven Spielberg, the modern master of the World War II saga, with films and television shows that include *Saving Private Ryan*, *Schindler's List*, *Empire of the Sun* and *Band of Brothers*.

With so many World War II films, a best-of list is almost impossible. But here are 12 of the finest, covering combat, prison camps, the Holocaust, espionage, life on the home front, homecomings and even the boredom of some combatants:



***Saving Private Ryan* (1998)**

Spielberg crafts a masterpiece of combat and camaraderie, with Tom Hanks dutifully leading his men behind enemy lines on what they consider a dubious rescue mission. The incredible opening D-Day invasion sequence remains the standard by which all combat action will be measured.

***The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957)**

Alec Guinness is dazzling in David Lean's prison tale as a British officer torn between duty to country and his sense of a good day's work as he supervises fellow POWs in construction of a bridge for the Japanese, while saboteurs led by William Holden plot to blow it up.

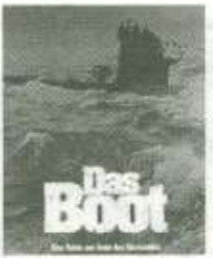


***Patton* (1970)**

In kingly firebrand mode, George C. Scott was born to play Gen. George Patton in Franklin J. Schaffner's brilliant portrait of a man who was scourge to the Germans in battle and both hero and villain to his own side. Karl Malden is a compassionate contrast as Patton's ally, Gen. Omar Bradley.

***The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946)**

Just a year after the war's end, William Wyler delivered a superb narrative of soldiers (Fredric March, Dana Andrews and Harold Russell, a veteran who lost his hands in the war) painfully readjusting to civilian life. The film holds up remarkably well today.



***Das Boot* (1981)**

Wolfgang Petersen launched the greatest of submarine flicks, following a German U-boat crew, led by Jurgen Prochnow, on a clandestine mission. The film is available in the 2 1/2 hour U.S. theatrical cut and a 3 1/2 hour director's cut.

***The Longest Day* (1962)**

One of the best casts ever assembled, including Henry Fonda, John Wayne, Robert Mitchum and Richard Benton, recreates the D-Day invasion in Ken Annakin, Andrew Marton and Bernhard Wicki's glorious epic examining the action from the Allied and German perspectives.

***The Caine Mutiny* (1954)**

Humphrey Bogart played one of cinema's colossal paranoiacs in Edward Dmytryk's combat-to-courtroom drama. Bogart is masterful as a flawed naval captain whose officers mutiny, their court martial a forum for the captain's emotional breakdown.



***The Big Red One* (1980)**

Samuel Fuller's autobiographical tale of his infantry days could almost be the blueprint for TV's *Band of Brothers*, following a group of soldiers through multiple campaigns. The stellar cast includes Lee Marvin, Robert Carradine and Mark Hamill.

***Schindler's List* (1993)**

Spielberg offered up Hollywood's grandest testament to victims of the Holocaust. Liam Neeson stars as Oskar Schindler, who made a fortune on the backs of Jewish laborers in Poland, then spent it all saving them from Nazi death camps. Ralph Fiennes is chilling as the Nazi commandant of Schindler's labor camp.

***Hope and Glory* (1987)**

John Boorman draws on the happy and horrific memories of his childhood during the London blitz and later at his grandparents' country home. With heart and humor, Boorman presents an oddly idyllic glimpse of life back home during wartime.



***Stalag 17* (1953)**

Billy Wilder injects sardonic wit in this story set in a German POW camp, where a profiteer (William Holden) draws resentment of his fellow Allied internees, who suspect he's the undercover Nazi spy derailing escape attempts.

***Mister Roberts* (1955)**

They also serve who only float and wait in John Ford and Mervyn LeRoy's marvelous comic drama about a naval cargo ship, its bored crew and insufferable captain (James Cagney), a layabout ensign (Jack Lemmon) and the selfless lieutenant (Henry Fonda) who holds it all together.

Target Photos



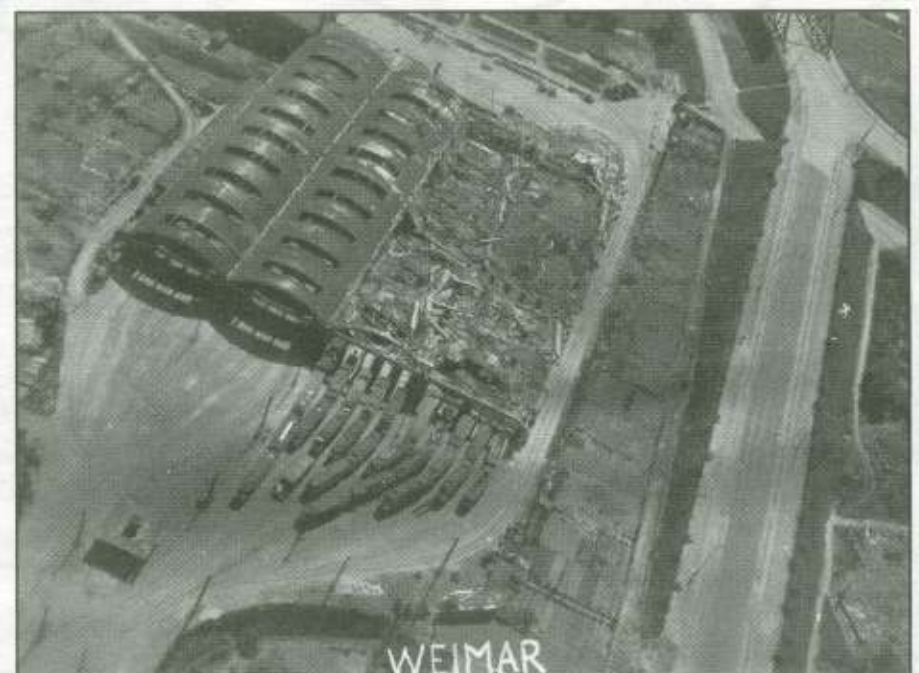
Hamburg



Plattling



St. Nazaire



Weimar