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The transcriptions were reproduced using the exact wording of the original document, including typographic errors. Insofar as possible, the original format has also been preserved.

Images of the original documents are contained in 384<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group photo album "Hometown News Releases".

1. Lane, Dennis J 1943-12-08
2. Mizgorski, Aloysius W 1943-12-08
3. Nealis, Leonard M 1943-12-08
4. Bishop, Jack T 1943-12-15
5. Mason, Jack L 1943-12-15
6. Martin, Rudolph A 1943-12-22
7. Egger Twins 1943-12-31
8. Ryberg, John 1944-01-12
9. Frink, Horace E 1944-01-14
10. Stearman, Charles L 1944-01-23
11. McGinley, Joseph P 1944-01-27
12. Yaskow, Peter T 1944-01-30
13. Haley, Bruce T 1944-02-05
14. Pisarski, Joseph F 1944-02-07
15. Carter, T. L. 1944-02-12
16. Ott, Robert 1944-02-14
17. Taylor, Sidney P 1944-02-21
18. Decker, Charles E 1944-03-02
19. Beaty, Earl L; Smith, Robert E 1944-03-04
20. Jackson, Billy J 1944-03-10
21. Boyd A. Cecil 1944-03-12
22. Ripley, Carlyle D 1944-03-29
23. Maggart, Galloway 1944-07-06 Mission (Original Undated)
24. (Picard) Christmas 1944 1944-10-14

Dec. 8, 1943

TO: LONG ISLAND DAILY STAR & NEW YORK  
CITY PAPERS

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER COMMAND STATION, ENGLAND,--- As Patches II swung over the field to come in for a landing, Technical Sergeant Dennis J. Lane left his post in the ball turret and climbed into the fuselage.

That safety-glass blob attached to the belly of the big Flying Fortress has afforded the 29-year old College Point, N.Y., gunner a bird's eye view of enemy-occupied Europe through a long string of bombing raids against German targets. Its two guns had enabled him to ward off the numberless attacks by hundreds of enemy fighters that had harried the formidable Fortresses during his six months of combat flying.

When Sgt. Lane climbed out of the turret he was doing so for the last time, as Patches II had returned from leading a formation of American heavy bombers on a mission to German-occupied France. That smash into France had rung down the curtain on Sgt. Lane's career as a flying gunner in the European Theater of Operations. He had flown the final mission required of him, and now it was either a return to the States, accompanied by a well-earned vacation and then reassignment, or a ground instructor's job as some base in the British Isles.

It had been a long haul, replete with tense and dangerous moments, since that day last June when Sgt. Lane received his first taste of combat flying against a German-operated industrial plant at Antwerp, Belgium. Perhaps to compensate for the severity of the previous ventures into enemy territory, the final mission had been an easy job, a "milk run" in airmen's terminology...no enemy fighter opposition, light flak and all the bombers in Lane's formation had returned safely to England.

One of the penetrations into German territory which remains foremost in the New York gunner's memory is the raid on Kassel. By rights, the crew shouldn't have come back from that one, but fate, plus the durable qualities of the Flying Forts, was on the side of the American airmen that day.

A burst of flak smashed the supercharger and tore loose a turbine which was flung back at the ship. The turbine punched a large, jagged hole in the waist section of the fuselage. The supporting ribs of the fuselage were splintered, but the crew brought their plane back to England. What kept the craft from breaking in two in midair is still an unanswered question.

That was also the day that Lane was credited with damaging an ME 109 with bursts from his ball turret guns. The next day he celebrated his twenty ninth birthday by shooting an ME 210 full of holes while participating in another mission to Germany.

Sgt. Lane has flown on some of the most grueling bombing missions that the Eighth AAF had undertaken and he and his crew mates have encountered some of the most vicious opposition the enemy has unleashed against the American formations.

In addition to Antwerp and Kassel, other important targets that Sgt. Lane's Fortress has bombed are Schweinfurt, Stuttgart, Emden, Anklam, Duren and Wilhelmshaven, all in Germany; Brussels, Belgium; Beaumont Le Roger, Villacoublay, Poix-Amiens, Romilly and Nates in France, and Heroya in Norway, which was reached after a long flight across the North Sea.

Sgt. Lane's home in College Point is at 125-10 15<sup>th</sup> Ave. Prior to entering the service he was employed in the publications and printing business. He wears the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and has been recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Dec. 8, 1943

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER COMMAND STATION, ENGLAND.--- There was something sentimental about the way Staff Sergeant Aloysius W. Mizgorski patted his machine gun in the waist section of "Patches II," a Flying Fortress that had just returned from leading a formation of American heavy bombers on a mission to German-occupied France.

The gun had seen the 33-year old Pittsburgh gunner through a long string of bombing raids against German targets and had warded off numberless attacks by the hundreds of enemy fighters that have harried the formidable Fortresses during his six months of combat flying.

When "Patches II" landed at its home base after that smash into France, the curtain was rung down on Sgt. Mizgorski's career as a flying gunner in the European Theatre of Operations. He had flown the last mission required of him, and now it was either a return to the States, accompanied by a well earned vacation and then reassignment, or a ground instructor's job at some base in the British Isles.

It had been a long haul, replete with tense and dangerous moments, since that day last June when Sgt. Mizgorski received his first taste of aerial combat on a raid against a German-operated industrial plant at Antwerp, Belgium. Perhaps to compensate for the severity of the previous ventures into enemy territory, the final mission had been an easy job, a "milk run" in airmen's terminology---no enemy fighter opposition, light flak and all the bombers in Mizgorski's formation had returned safely to England.

One of the penetrations into German territory which remains foremost in the Pittsburgh gunner's memory is the raid on Kassel. By rights, the crew shouldn't have come back from that one, but fate, plus the durable quality of the Flying Forts, was on the side of the American airmen that day.

A burst of flak smashed the supercharger of one of the engines, and tore loose a turbine, which was flung back at the ship. The turbine punched a large, jagged hole in waist section of the fuselage. The supporting ribs of the fuselage were splintered, but the crew brought their plane back to England. What kept the plane from breaking in two in midair is still an unanswered question.

Sgt. Mizgorski, whose home is at 2209 Mulberry Way, has flown on some of the most grueling missions that the Eighth AAF has undertaken, and he and his crewmates have encountered some of the most vicious opposition that the enemy has unleashed against the American formations.

In addition to Antwerp and Kassel, other important targets that Sgt. Mizgorski's Fortress has bombed are Schweinfurt, Stuttgart, Anklam, Emden, Duren and Wilhelmshaven, all in Germany; Brussels, Belgium; Beaumont le Roger, Villacoublay, Poix-Amiens, Romilly and Nantes in France, and Heroya in Norway, which was reached after a long flight over the North Sea.

Sgt. Mizgorski, who worked as a clerk prior to entering the service, wears the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and has been recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Dec. 8, 1943

TO: EXAMINER-ENTERPRISE  
BARTLESVILLE, OKLA.

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER COMMAND STATION, ENGLAND,--- The top turret gunner thrust himself halfway through a hatchway of his Flying Fortress, "Patches II," as it taxied to its parking place on the field. He gave a long, sweeping wave of his arm to the ground men and they threw back a cheer in his direction.

The gunner was T.Sgt. Leonard M. Nealis, 24 of Romona, Okla., and that cheer the ground men gave him was a form of celebration for his completion of his tour of duty.

"Patches II" had just returned from leading a flight of Forts on a bombing mission to German-occupied France, the mission that was Sgt. Nealis' last after six months of combat flying.

Now, after beating off attacks by enemy fighters with his two machine guns, and flying through wicked barrages of bursting flak, Sgt. Nealis could look forward to a possible return to the States, accompanied by a well-earned vacation, and followed by reassignment, or to a ground instructor's job at some base in England.

This last bombing assignment had been an easy one, a "milk run" in airmen's terminology----no opposition from enemy fighters, light flak and all of the bombers had returned home safely. But since that day last June when Nealis had received his first taste of combat flying on a bombing mission to Antwerp, Belgium, very few "milk runs" had crept into his schedule.

There was that time when Sgt. Nealis' Fortress went to Villacoublay, an enemy fighter field near Paris. The flight resolved itself into a running battle between the American bombers and German Focke Wulfs and JU-88s all the way from Paris to the English Channel. About a dozen enemy fighters were shot down by gunners in Nealis' formation, and one of them was accounted for by the Oklahoman's top turret guns.

Sgt. Nealis has participated in some of the most grueling bombing attacks that the Eighth AAF has undertaken on the continent, and his crew has encountered some of the most vicious opposition that the enemy has unleashed against the American bombers.

In addition to Villacoublay, which Nealis visited upon three occasions, and Antwerp, among the other targets that his Fortress has bombed are Kassel, Schweinfurt, Stuttgart, Emden, Anklam, Duren and Wilhelmshaven, all in Germany; Brussels, Belgium; Beaumont le Roger, Poix-Amiens, Romilly and Nantes in France, and Heroya in Norway, which was reached after a long flight over the North Sea.

Sgt. Nealis is the son of Mrs. Melvin Stockwell of Marshall, Okla., and is a graduate of the Bartlesville High School. Before the war he was employed as a bookkeeper and clerk. He wears the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, the Distinguished Flying Cross and has been recommended for the Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC.

Dec. 15, 1943

To: NEWS TRIBUNE—ROME, GA.  
CONSTITUTION ATLANTA, GA.

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND. --- How a Rome, Ga. Flying Fortress gunner helped to save the life of a fellow crewmember during a bombing mission over enemy territory, was disclosed here recently.

The gunner is 25-year old Technical Sergeant Jack T. Bishop, 306W. 6<sup>th</sup> St., who exposed himself to freezing temperatures, that ranged down to 40 degrees below zero centigrade, in order that a man overcome by the cold and lack of oxygen could be revived. Bishop was formerly Southeastern light heavyweight boxing champion.

The incident occurred in November on the long over-water hop to Knaben, Norway, where they bombed the molybdenum mine and processing plant, which were of vital importance to the German steel industry.

An interphone check was made with various sections of the bomber while it was flying over the North Sea at 22,000 feet on its way to the target. All but the ball turret gunner, Staff Sergeant Robert E. Ralph, 22, of Wellsburg W. Va., responded and Bishop, a waist gunner, was instructed to investigate.

Bishop found the ball turret man slumped unconscious over his guns, his oxygen mask off, and managed to lift him from the turret. With the assistance of Technical Sergeant Jack L. Mason, 23, of Omaha Neb., the radio operator, Bishop carried Ralph into the radio compartment.

Bishop removed his electrically heated boots and gloves and put them on the unconscious gunner, while Mason attached his radio compartment oxygen supply to Ralph's mask. Since there was only one outlet for heated clothing in the compartment, Bishop and Mason connected Ralph's suit to the unit, ignoring their own exposure to the cold, which was estimated to be 40 degrees below zero centigrade. The Georgia gunner also applied a signaling lamp to Ralph's feet in an effort to warm them, while blankets and an extra fleece-lined suit were wrapped about him.

Ralph regained consciousness within a half hour and 30 minutes later was sufficiently recovered to allow Bishop and Mason to return to their posts, as the Fortresses were nearing Norway.

Medical officers back at the airmen's home base stated that the ball turret man, who has since recovered from his experience, would have died had it not been for the efforts of Bishop and Mason. Both have been cited for their action.

Bishop, who left the ring to enter the insurance business in Atlanta, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Bishop of Rome. He went overseas as a ground photographer, but later volunteered for duty as a combat gunner.

Dec. 15, 1943

TO: WORLD HERALD  
OMAHA, NEB.

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER COMMAND STATION, ENGLAND--- For six months Hitler's anti-aircraft gunners and fighter pilots tried in vain to put over the knockout punch on Technical Sergeant Jack L. Mason, 23-year old Flying Fortress radio operator and gunner from Omaha, Neb., but they discovered that the young ex-Golden Glover knew a great deal about the fight business himself.

A successful competitor in the amateur ring before the war, Mason has emerged on top in this larger, deadlier contest by completing his operational tour of duty as a combat flyer in the European Theatre of Operations. The heavy American AAF raid on Bremen, Dec. 13, saw him finishing his last mission required of him after a half year of dealing out potent punches as a Fortress crewman.

It had been a killing pace, marred by long, exhausting rounds since that day last June when Sgt. Mason received his first taste of slugging it out with the enemy in the sky on a raid against a German-operated industrial plant at Antwerp, Belgium. After that he went through some pretty grueling bouts, participating in some of the biggest bombing attacks that the AAF has undertaken.

During the first half of his combat career, Mason rode in the Fortresses as a waist gunner, with radio as his substitute assignment, should anything happen to the regular operator. Then he was assigned to a new crew and completed his missions in that capacity.

Mason will never forget the day the Germans had he and his crew mates up against the ropes for what was their closest call. Things could just as easily gone the other way, but with a combination of luck and superb airmanship, the Fortress crew fought its way back to the home base.

The incident occurred on a smash in September on Duren, important German sea port. En route to the target, one engine of the four-motored plane ceased to function and another became partially disabled. The pilot, who later was decorated with the Distinguished Flying Cross, made every effort to remain with the formation, but when enemy fighters knocked out another engine, he found it impossible to stay with his unit.

The pilot dove the plane to a low altitude, and taking advantage of cloud cover, was able to elude the attacking fighters. Meanwhile, Mason and the other crewmen hurled everything moveable or detachable out of the ship to lighten it. Out went guns, ammunition, tools and personal equipment.

With his radio, Mason had informed the home base of the plight of the bomber, and its fate was anxiously awaited by the men on the ground. Finally, with only one good engine functioning, the stricken Fortress appeared low over the field and came in for its landing. Not a member of the crew had been injured.

At one time during that hectic dash home from Germany, the plane descended to within a few hundred feet of the surface of the English Channel. Mason thought he was due to receive an unwelcomed dunk in those icy waters.

On another occasion, the long over-water hop to Knaben, Norway, Mason along with a waist gunner, Technical Sergeant Jack T. Bishop of Rome, Ga., is credited with saving the life of the plane's ball turret gunner. The man was overcome from lack of

oxygen and Mason and Bishop lifted him into the radio compartment where they worked to revive him.

Mason connected his own oxygen supply to the unconscious gunner's mask while Bishop gave him his electrically heated boots. The two also ignored their own exposure to the cold and attached the ball turret man's heated suit to the one outlet in the radio compartment. The temperature at the time was 40 degrees below zero centigrade.

The man was revived through the efforts of his two crew mates, but medical officers at their base say that he would have died had it not been for attention given him during the flight. Both Mason and Bishop have been cited as a result of this mission.

Among the other important bombing missions in which Sgt. Mason has participated are those to Hamburg, Schweinfurt, Stuttgart, Aurich, Duren, Wilhelmshaven, Gelsenkirchen and Solingen, all in Germany; Heroya in Norway, and Villacoublay, Beaumont le Roger, Le Mans, Abbeville, Le Bourget, Watten and Nantes, all in France. He was twice over Bremen and Emden, two of the most hotly defended spots in Germany.

Sgt. Mason's home in Omaha is at 2776 Capitol Ave., where his wife also resides. His mother, Mrs. Lucille Mason, lives at 2785 Capitol Ave. He is a graduate of Technical High School, and prior to entering the service was employed as a cook at a large Chicago hotel.

Dec. 22, 1943

TO: STAR BEACON  
ASHTABULA, OHIO

Written by Lt. Owens

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER COMMAND STATION, ENGLAND--- To First Lieut. Rudolph A. Martin, 23-year old Flying Fortress pilot, goes the distinction of flying an aircraft virtually unscratched through a full tour of operations.

Aside from flak dents, the only damage of enemy origin sustained by Martin-piloted bombers consisted of two holes made by .30-caliber machine-gun bullets, one in the right wing and the other just above the right outboard nacelle.

"It looks as though I've had it pretty easy," said Lt. Martin, when he climbed out of his plane for the last time. "And I guess I have, but I've had to take some violent evasive action to avoid being hit."

Lt. Martin, whose home is on Riverdale Road, Rock Creek, Ohio, began his operational tour as a co-pilot, sandwiched in one mission as a tail gunner and observer, then finished up as a pilot. He flew his own plane the last eight trips over German or German-held territory.

There is one hitch to Lt. Martin's record, although escaping damage from enemy fighters, he lost one aircraft due to lack of gasoline.

Returning from one trip over Germany he watched his fuel indicator drop, determined to proceed although he knew it meant ditching in the icy sea.

"There were no objections from the crew, so we kept right on," he said. "We were within 20 miles of land when we finally ran out of gas, but the air-sea rescue boys picked us up in 40 minutes or so."

Lt. Martin went on his first mission July 10, when Flying Fortressed pounded the German fighter base at Abbeville, France. Among his missions were trips to Villacoublay, Heroya (Norway), Kassel, Heliogland, Gelsenkirchen, Poix and Amiens, Le Bourget, Schweinfurt, Watten, Romilly su Seine, Nantes, Frankfurt, Bremen, Duren, Wilhelmshaven and Knaben (Norway).

Upon his graduation from Rock Creek High School, Lt. Martin attended National Tech in Cleveland prior to entering the service.



Dec. 31, 1943

TO: SACRAMENTO BEE  
SACRAMENTO, CALIF.

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER COMMAND STATION, ENGLAND.--- Personnel on this Flying Fortress base are just recovering from a bad scare of the “double vision” plague.

For a while, even the ground men, who obtained their battle experience second hand from the combat crews, suspected that they were becoming “flak happy” and were thinking of applying for vacations at rest homes.

But now the word has gotten around, the situation has returned to normal.

Alike as two peas in a pod, the Egger twins, from Sacramento, Calif. Were half of the cause of the whole business. Half, because two sets of twin brothers popped up suddenly on the field and in the same squadron.

The Sacramento twins, who are 20, are the sons of Mr. and Mrs. Julius Egger, 2921 W. St., in Sacramento. Their Christian names are Robert and Richard, with Robert the older by a half hour’s margin.

The other set of twins on the field are Second Lieutenants are Ralph and Raymond Haley, 27, of Denver, Colo.

The Egger twins, both of whom are buck sergeants, are always together—asleep, awake, eating, fighting the enemy or out on pass. It is in respect to combat in the sky that the Eggers differ from the Haleys. The Sacramento boys are both gunners on the same crew whereas the Haleys are co-pilots and consequently serve on different crews.

The Eggers are versatile too. They trade off between the ball turret and the tail gunner’s position on the big four-engine bombers. Their pilot, Lt. Raymond L. McDonald, 20, of Santa Fe, N.M. just takes their word for it as to which one is flying in which position. He’d have no other way of knowing.

Oddly enough, the Egger twin were born on Friday the thirteenth in July, 1923 and their first assignment in combat duty came on Dec. 13 when the Eighth AAF bombed Bremen. That day, Richard rode in the ball turret and Robert handled the guns in the tail spot. They consider 13 their lucky number, so when the reach that thirteenth mission, generally regarded as a bugaboo by other airmen, they’ll have it in the bag even before it gets underway.

“we’ve always done everything together since we were born,” said Robert, serving as the spokesman for the brother duo, “so we decided we’d give Hitler a double dose while we were at it.”

The brothers enlisted in the Army Dec. 5. 1942 and have remained constantly together during their Army careers—through basic training at St. Petersburg, Fla., later in gunnery school in Wendover Field, Utah and now in European combat zone. The day their class graduated at Wendover, they were the first to receive the gunner’s wings and the presiding officer made added comments concerning the fact that the Sacramento youths were the first twins to graduate from the school.

“It’s double or nothing with us,” says Richard. “And that goes double for Hitler.”

Jan. 12, 1944

TO: REGISTER

DES MOINES, IA.

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER COMMAND STATION, ENGLAND.--- Before the war John Ryberg plowed and sowed his acres of good Iowa farmland near Payton. Then along came Pearl Harbor and Ryberg went into the Air Corps to become a bombardier and eventually do some plowing work on German targets from his seat in the nose of a Flying Fortress.

The other day, Ryberg, now a First Lieutenant, sowed his last bombs when unloaded a bomber belly full of 500 pounders on an aircraft component plant at Halberstadt in northwest Germany. When he pressed his bomb release he gave a resounding finis to his operational tour of duty that was heard and felt on the churned Nazi turf.

Lt. Ryberg had waited a patient two months to get in that last mission. He waltzed right up to that next-to-last one in five busy months of combat service that saw him blasting some of the choicest spots in German and German occupied territory. But the clincher was a long time in coming.

The University of Iowa graduate missed out on the usual home base fanfare that is accorded an airman finishing his "ops," because the field was blanketed in a snow storm, necessitating that his plane make an emergency landing elsewhere. However, his fellow crewmen had a hearty handshake and a thumping pat on the back for him to celebrate the occasion.

Lt. Ryberg, who is 27, did his first plowing up job on the enemy last June 22, when he dropped his bombs on an industrial plant at Antwerp, Belgium. After that he did some explosive planting at Beaumont le Roger, Villacoublay, Poix-Amiens, Romilly, Vitry en Artois and Nantes all in France. He also hopped the North Sea to bomb an aluminum plant at Heroya, Norway, and make another aerial visit to Belgium, this time to Brussels.

Outstanding targets in Germany that have found themselves in Ryberg's bombsight are Kassel, Schweinfurt, Stuttgart, Aurich, Anklam, Munster, Duren and Wilhelmshaven.

However, it wasn't all dashing across the channel, dropping bombs and running back home to England. It wasn't that easy.

There were the attacks by hundreds of enemy fighters, heavy barrages of flak, freezing temperatures and plenty of close calls.

It will be difficult for Lt. Ryberg to erase memories of the Kassel raid from his mind. By rights, he shouldn't be around to tell about it.

A burst of flak smashed the supercharger of one of the engines and tore loose a turbine, which was flung back at the plane. The turbine punched a large, jagged hole in the waist section of the Fortress and the supporting ribs were splintered. The crew held its breath, expecting the bomber to break in two in midair. But the ship was nursed back to England and landed without mishap to any of its passengers, who are still going around knocking on wood.

Lt. Ryberg, whose wife lives at Paton, wears the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, while he has been recommended to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross.

TO: BOSTON, MASS. PAPERS  
Jan. 14., 1944

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER COMMAND STATION, ENGLAND.--- From co-pilot to commanding officer of a heavy bomber squadron, all within the space of eight months, is the impressive record compiled by a 25-year old Boston flier.

He is Captain Horace E. Frink, Jr., 408 Beacon St, who, although he has actually completed his tour of duty, continues to fly in combat and is two missions above the number required of an airman before he is relieved of combat duty.

Eight months ago, back in the States, Captain Frink, then a second Lieutenant, was serving as a co-pilot of a Flying Fortress, the type of role corresponding to that of an unsung lineman on a football team, whose star halfback monopolizes the publicity limelight. Shortly before coming overseas he was advanced to pilot and given command of one of the big bombers.

Captain Frink participated in some of the biggest raids undertaken by the Eighth AAF on the European Continent and during the latter stages of his supposed tour of duty was named operations officer of his squadron. He became the unit's commanding officer when his predecessor went down while leading a force of bombers on an attack over Germany.

Now flying his second series of operational missions, Captain {Frank} Frink, when participating in an attack, leads a group, which is composed of several squadrons, to the target.

He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Horace E. Frink, Sr., of the Beacon Street address and is a graduate of the Arlington High School. Prior to entering the service, Captain Frink was engaged in the advertising business.

Jan. 22, 1944

TO: ADVANCE REPORTER  
WALDRON, ARK.

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND.--- "It was pretty easy. Not much doing. No flak, no enemy fighters."

That was Staff Sergeant Charles L. Stearman's manner of describing the final mission of his tour of duty in the European Theatre, a bombing attack against enemy targets in Northern France.

But the 23-year old Waldron, Ark., ball turret gunner, can vividly remember when the Flying Fortresses didn't have it quite so simple a few months back. Those were the days when the big bombers "went it alone" without the fighter protection they now receive.

For example, take the trip to Hamburg last July. Stearman's plane was the only ship in his squadron to survive and make it back to England.

"The target took a good pasting that day," Stearman recalls, "but the German's struck back at us with about 300 fighters. Planes came at us from every direction and even followed us 60 miles out to sea on our return. We really sweat that one out."

The week of the Hamburg attack was Stearman's first in combat and the busiest of his operational career. His crew broke in with a long over-water hop to Heroya, Norway, the next day it was Hamburg, then in quick succession Kassel, Heligoland and then back to Kassel again. A total of five missions in one week, quite a schedule for a "rookie" crew. The men became veterans in a hurry.

"We just shuttled back and forth across the channel that week," said Stearman. "We'd come back from one target and the ordnance men would be waiting for us with a fresh load of bombs."

Succeeding missions took the Arkansas gunner to Poix-Amiens, Le Bourget, the momentous Schweinfurt, Romilly, Stuttgart, Nantes, Duren, Wilhelmshaven, Bremen, Kiel, Osnabruck, with repeats on several of those---just about every important the Eighth AAF has tackled.

The names of those targets represent countless running battles with enemy fighters, intense flak barrages, freezing temperatures that dropped under 50 below zero and numerous holes in the plane that whistled about the men.

Eight of Stearman's crew mates finished their "ops" about a week before him. He fell slightly behind when illness confined him to the hospital for a short period.

Stearman has been decorated with the Air Medal with and three Oak Leaf Clusters and has been recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Jan. 27, 1944  
TO: DAILY CAPITAL  
TOPEKA, KANS.  
STAR  
ST. MARYS, KANS.

AN EIGHTH AIR FORCE BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND--- At separate intervals during his life Joseph P. McGinley has been an athletic coach, teacher, hotel operator, a plain businessman and an exponent and organizer of public recreation.

Now as a Staff Sergeant with a Flying Fortress group in England, the 44-year old former director of recreation for the state of Kansas and an outstanding athlete at St. Mary's College in his more youthful days, is a culmination of all the above mentioned individual McGinleys.

Chief function of a Flying Fortress outfit such as McGinley's is to batter targets in Germany and occupied territories on the continent with their cargos of high explosives and incendiaries, with reducing the Luftwaffe's fighter plane force to a shambles as an alternate assignment. In both these respects, it is generally admitted that the boys who fly the planes are doing a "bang up" job in more ways than one.

But all work and no play makes Jack a dull pilot, a bored bombardier, a listless gunner or a fed-up mechanic. That's where Joe McGinley steps in to take over and smooth out the non-combat rough spots.

Before he was drafted, McGinley knew quite a bit about providing diversions for servicemen couped up in training camps. During the days of the preparedness program before Pearl Harbor, when he was Kansas' recreational director under the Federal Works Program, he was instrumental in inducing communities near Army posts to develop recreational facilities for the soldiers.

When he entered the Army himself, McGinley was sent in the wrong direction as far as his talents were concerned, but once he reached his permanent unit, he literally fell into his job as the Air Force's Special Services section, which handles and furnishes entertainment for the men. He has so many irons in the fire now that he's practically re-living his past career.

Here's a survey of the Kansan's activities: he coaches two basketball teams at present---baseball and softball in season. Yes, McGinley knows a little about sports. At St. Mary's College during the last war he quarterbacked the football team for four years (all-state one season), played guard on the basketball quintet, and covered shortstop for the baseball team. He was assistant football coach and head basketball coach at St. Louis University during the seasons of 1923 and 1924 and in the succeeding six years tutored football, basketball and baseball at St. Mary's College. His two present cage aggregations, an officers' five and an enlisted men's quint are the outstanding teams in their respective spheres of competition. The latter, the only one of the two engaged in regular league play, setting the pace with eight triumphs against one setback.

McGinley organizes classes in subjects ranging from the study of the Russian language to trigonometry. He doesn't teach them himself, but he sets them up and procures the instructor. At St. Louis U and St. Mary's he was a class instructor.

When the men go on passes to the British cities, McGinley is besieged with requests for hotel or Red Cross accommodations, which Special Services arranges...prior to 1936 he operated a hotel in St. Mary's for several years.

But that's just scratching the surface of his activities. There are physical achievement tests to be given the several thousand men on the base, motion pictures and stage presentations to be booked, a library of books and musical records to supervised and tours to points of interest near the Fortress field to be arranged.

McGinley keeps no regular hours, except that his day usually starts at 7:30 A.M. It ends anywhere from 5 pm to past midnight, and it's generally after 5 p.m. He doesn't shoulder all the work personally, which would be an impossibility, but heads a staff of enlisted men, responsible for getting things done. The staff works under First Lieutenant John W. McKinnon of Spencer, Iowa, the groups Special Services officer.

This is McGinley's second war, but his first taste of overseas duty. He trained with the infantry during World War I but never left the states.

After graduating from St. Mary's College, he took a master's degree in business administration at Harvard University before entering upon his coaching career at St. Louis University and St. Mary's. He also dabbled in public relations work for a Kansas City, Mo. banking firm and finally in 1936 was appointed state director of recreation, a post he held until his induction Oct. 15, 1942.

McGinley is in a good part responsible for the development of and installation of recreational plants and progress in numerous Kansas cities and smaller communities, while he was also closely connected with the problem of dislocated populations created by defense worker and soldier influx. In this matter, he served as member of the recreational committee of the governor's State Defense Council and sat on the regional advisory committee of the federal Security Agency.

Inducted at Fort Leavenworth, McGinley received his basic training at Kearns, Utah, and then attended engineering and operations clerical school in Los Angeles. But once he reached his permanent unit, he was teamed with Lt. McKinnon in setting up an efficiently conducted Special Services section for the bombardment group.

Jan. 30, 1944  
To: REPUBLICAN  
LYONS, N.Y.

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBERSTATION, ENGLAND.--- Staff Sergeant Peter Yaskow climbed out of the Flying Fortress that had just brought him back from a bombing mission over Frankfurt, Germany, displaying a skin bruise on his forehead about the size of a quarter.

"Look at that" he muttered disgustedly. "My last mission and I pick up the first scratch in seven months flying the big ones over the channel."

The Frankfurt attack closed the combat career of the 23-year old Lyons, N.Y, tail gunner, and it was probably the easiest of all the bombing jobs in which he has participated since his initial flight into enemy territory last June when American bombers attacked a target at Antwerp, Belgium.

Yaskow's combat record is heavily punctuated with the names of targets that represent furious aerial battles with swarms of defending and desperate German fighter craft. There was Kassel, Schweinfurt, Stuttgart, Nantes, Kiel, Anklam, Duren, Wilhelmshaven, Halberstadt and Villacoublay, where the Fortresses met determined opposition, and anti-aircraft fire and machine gun bullets ripped through his plane, but never once touching him.

Then, unheroically, on his last time out, Yaskow bumped his head on his tail compartment window to sustain his sole battle scars.

While he is finished in the European Theatre of operations, Yaskow doesn't plan to be away long from his machine guns. Perhaps a deserved furlough at home, a little additional training and then off to the South Pacific arena for more action. He has already applied for duty against the Japanese.

Just how effective has proven the fighter escort now provided the Fortresses during the entire journeys to enemy targets is best demonstrated by the comparison the Lyons airman draws between the first half of his tour of duty when the bombers travelled alone and the latter stages, when his plane was shepherded by Allied fighter craft.

"Schweinfurt last August, is the raid I'll probably never forget," Yaskow relates. "Our formations, which had no protection, were attacked by hundreds of German fighters, and planes were going down all over the sky. I fired about 16,000 rounds alone that day. Just held the trigger down. I burned out the barrel of one of my guns, I fired so much."

"During the last half on my tour, when we had our own fighters with us," he adds, "I probably didn't fire more than 25 rounds for that entire period. That's just how much difference fighter support means to the bombers."

Yaskow's best day with his guns was on the Kiel raid last July when he destroyed one German Focke Wulf and damaged another. The first one exploded about 300 yards away after the gunner had put several bursts into it, while the second retired from the fight after it was badly shot up.

Also fresh in Yaskow's memories is the Kassel raid, one that he shouldn't be around to tell about.

A burst of flak smashed the supercharger, and tore loose a turbine, which was flung back at the ship. The turbine punched a large, jagged hole in the waist section of the fuselage, splintering the supporting ribs that held the plane together. The wounded

Fortress was eased back to and landed without mishap, but what prevented it from breaking in two in midair is still an unsolved mystery.

The Schweinfurt mission also carried a close call for the tail gunner. A German 20-mm pierced his tail section and exploded in a box of ammunition behind him. Luckily, the ammunition failed to explode.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Wasyl Yaskow, RFD 3, Lyons. Sgt. Yaskow wears the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross, and has been recommended for an Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC.



Feb. 3, 1944  
TO: HERALD, BOSON, MASS.  
NEWS, NEW MARKET, N.H

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND.--- Adolph Hitler will be delighted to hear that First Lieutenant Bruce T. Haley, 25-year old Flying Fortress navigator from Newmarket, N. H., will no longer guide bombing excursions to his domains.

But what is Hitler's gain is someone else's loss, because Haley is merely changing his bombing arenas---old targets for new targets.

Lt. Haley has just successfully completed a project of changing the landscape of German terrain, his specific last efforts in this direction being a little job over Wilhelmshaven, where the submarine construction activities were not to his liking. That raid marked a culmination of his tour of duty as a combat airman in the European Theater of Operations, and now he is anxious to apply his navigational skills in other fields.

Lt. Haley has travelled extensively over the European continent, hitting on his tours, Germany, France and Norway, but he is mostly remembered in Germany where he liberally distributed explosive calling cards. Wilhelmshaven, Bremen, Frankfurt and Kassel received his visits each upon two occasions, while such places as Gelsenkirchen, Schweinfurt, Munster, Duren and Solingen made his acquaintance from the business end of a Fortress each upon one occasion.

Then there has been Abbeville, Villacoublay, Le Bourget, Poix-Amiens, Romilly and Nantes in France where the Nazi intruders were properly introduced to him. The German "guests" at Heroya and Knaben in Norway, will also recall his pulverizing personality.

But practically every place he visited, Lt. Haley could not help noticing the antagonistic attitude that was directed towards him.

Last fall's visit to Bremen remains particularly fresh in his memory. Citing his position in the glass-enclosed nose of his four-engine bomber he was mobbed by curiosity-seeking German fighter planes which persisted in making head-on attacks against the Newmarket airman's ship. Lt. Haley worked up a perspiration beating off the assaults by some 20 lead-spitting Focke Wulf's and Messerschmitts, more than one of which felt the sting of his laboring machine gun.

At Schweinfurt last August, the Germans endeavored to make Lt. Haley's brief calling as unpleasant as possible when he exhibited what they termed "American crudeness" by blasting a number of holes in the roof of their prime ball bearing factory. The place was never the same after that.

It was a trip made without the benefit of the fighter protection the bomber formations now receive. Hundreds of enemy planes struck at the Forts, knocking down some of those in Haley's group. But the plane's crew fought its way out to the Dutch coast where a new difficulty arose....gas was running low.

Two engines stopped because of the fuel shortage and the crew set about tossing out all moveable equipment, including the guns and ammunition.

The plane was down to its last 40 gallons of fuel, which to a heavy bomber is a mere eyedropper full, when the English coast came into view. Luck was on the bomber's side, for stretched out below it was a several-thousand-foot long landing strip provided for emergencies such as this, and the pilot brought the parched Fortress down on its few remaining gallons. No one was injured despite the ferocity of the attacks the ship had sustained.

Lt Haley is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John K. Kent, 193 Main St., Newmarket, is a graduate of Newmarket High School and was a student at Boudoin College, Brunswick, Maine prior to entering the service. He wears the Purple Heart as a result of a slight leg wound inflicted by flak, the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Feb. 7, 1944

TO: THE CITIZEN  
PLAIN SPEAKER  
HAMTRAMCK, MICH.

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND,---- If the pilot of an Allied reconnaissance plane had been flying over bomb-blasted Bremen one day recently he would have detected and audible sigh of relief issuing from the inhabitants of the battle-scarred city.

The reason for this slight boost in Bremen morale would have been the news that a certain Hamtramck. Mich., Flying Fortress radio operator had concluded his assignment of smashing up German holdings, and was now scheduled for duty in other quarters of the globe.

But Bremen in particular had reason to rejoice over the departure of Technical Sergeant Joseph F. Pisarski, 27, 3356 Holbrook Ave., because of all the airmen in his Fortress group he had appeared over the German port with a load of explosives more times than any of them.

In all, Pisarski, in getting in his quota of raids in the European Theatre of Operations, has visited Bremen on five occasions and, each time he dropped by, he brought only ill tidings for the Bremenites and left them only ugly souvenirs to remember him by.

While he favored Bremen, Pisarski was most vividly impressed with his bombing mission last summer to Kassel.

"The flak was so thick that day you could get out and walk on it," he relates. "It was the most I experienced in my seven months of combat duty."

The enemy fighter planes were also something to contend with that day, with attacks they pressed home from every angle. Pisarski abandoned his radio to man his machine gun and help drive off the dozens of fast fighters that slashed at his Fortress.

Pisarski looks back on his tour of duty as having been comparatively easy in comparison to the narrow escapes experienced by other bomber crews.

"Luck plays an important part," he maintains.

Luck was with his crew the day they bombed dock installations at Nantes, France. The plane was badly shot up, was running low on gas and the weather conditions were miserable.

Just when the men were considering taking to their parachutes, they broke out in the clear over an airfield in Wales and landed on their last cupful of gasoline.

Other bombing missions took Pisarski to Kassel for a second time, Heligoland, Anklam, Duren, Wilhelmshaven, Gelsinkirchen, Solingen, Ludwigshafen, Halberstadt, and Frankfurt---practically every important target the Eighth AAF has bombed in Germany. In France he had targets at Abbeville, Villacoublay, Watten, Romilly, and Prueseville, while he also spanned North Sea for smashes at important industries at Heroya and Knaben, Norway.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Pisarski in Hamtramck, Sgt. Pisarski wears the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and has been recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Feb. 12, 1944

TO: RECORD & CHRONICAL  
DENTON, TEXAS

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND.---When Lindbergh made his historic landing at Le Bourget aerodrome in Paris in the middle 1920's, he was extended a rousing reception, he was dined and wined and showered with decorations and gifts.

When First Lieutenant T.L. (initials only) Carter of Denton, Texas flew over Le Bourget in August 1943....well, let him tell talk about the reception.

"We got the hell shot out of us", the 23-year old Flying Fortress pilot recalled. "We had a lot of 20-mm holes in the ship, plus others accumulated holes. On top of that, three of us were wounded".

"Us", because Lt. Carter was one of the casualties, and wears the Purple Heart decoration as a result. However, his wound was not serious and he was back in action within a few days.

That action terminated the other day, as far as the European Theater is concerned when Lt. Carter piloted his Fortress to Frankfurt for the third time, unloaded his bombs and scooted home through a dense curtain of flak thrown up by the ground defenses. Travelling orders that would take him to his next assignment were next on his program.

While Le Bourget gave Lt. Carter his most tiring moments, the memorable Schweinfurt raid of last October will not be easily erased from his memory. Enemy attacked with a great vengeance and persistence as the big bombers went about the job of destroying the vital ball bearing plant. His plane suffered some bruises, but the gunners beat off the attacks, and Lt. Carter guided his ship back to England with a weary but uninjured crew.

Lt Carter went over-seas as a co-pilot but after eight missions was given command of a plane and crew. His record of flights over enemy territory included many of the greatest efforts by the Eighth AAF---Kassel, Emden, Duren, Wilhelmshaven, Gelsenkirchen, Solingen, Ludwigshafen and Bremen, just to list a few. He made four trips in all to Bremen, while there have been many assignments to France.

"Escorting fighters have eased the task of the bombers", Lt. Carter comments "but the flak is just as bad as it ever was".

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Nulus Carter, Route 1, Denton, Lt. Denton is a graduate of North Texas State Teachers College and was employed by a Denton food processing firm prior to entering the service. In addition to the Purple Heart, he wears the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and has been recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Feb. 14, 1944  
TO: THE NEWS  
INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND.--- When Staff Sergeant Robert Ott was a kid, he and his friends probably played a game of war in their Indianapolis neighborhood in which "Bang! You're dead," was the method of decimating the imaginary enemy.

Little did the 23-year old Flying Fortress ball turret gunner expect to resort to such tactics when he started playing the game for keeps with real guns that fired real bullets with lethal effects.

Such an incident was recalled by Sgt. Ott when he completed his tour of duty in European skies on one of the recent American bombing attacks on badly battered Frankfurt.

It happened last summer when Fortresses spanned the North Sea to hammer an aluminum plant at Heroya, Norway. Mechanical difficulties rendered Ott's two ball turret guns useless before he even reached enemy territory and, when the German fighters did come up to attack, all he could do was point the useless barrels at them and holler, "Bang!"

"I couldn't do a darn thing, about those fighters," said Ott. "I just pointed my guns at them and wiggled them a little just to fool the Jerries into thinking that I was waiting for them to come in my direction. Luckily, we only had a few passes, and we got through without any difficulty after that."

Flak damaged Ott's turret still another time, the third occasion over Munster, where the defenses threw up a terrific barrage. His oxygen system was destroyed and he was compelled to leave his post.

Ott, whose home is at 312 E. Raymond St., especially remembers the bird's eye view he received of the effectiveness of the attack on Kassel, when a chemical plant was bombed.

"Mushrooming, great black clouds of smoke billowed up 3,000 feet," he recalled. "When it came up, it just spread out like a huge black ball. We could still see it when we were 100 to 150 miles away."

Among the other targets on Ott's itinerary were Gelsenkirchen, Heligoland, Bremen, Duren and Wilhelmshaven, all in Germany; Abbeville, Villacoublay, Poix-Amiens, Le Bourget, Watten, Romilly, Nantes and Le Melliard, all in France; and a second trip to Norway, to the Molybdenum mines at Knaben. He was over Frankfurt three separate times and twice over Bremen, Wilhelmshaven and Nantes.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Ott of the Raymond St. Address, Sgt. Ott wears the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross. He has been recommended for the Cluster to the DFC.

Sgt. Ott hopes that his next assignment will find him behind the ball turret guns of the new Super-Flying Fortress, the B-29, and with Japanese ground objectives and fighter planes as targets.

Feb. 21, 1944

To: NEWS, DALLAS, TEXAS  
KENTUCKY POST, COVINGTON, KY.

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND.---- When a combat flyer on the European aerial front completes his twenty-fifth operational missions against enemy targets that's a feat comparable to a golden wedding anniversary. At any rate, it's worth a celebration.

First Lieutenant Sidney P. Taylor, 26-year old Flying Fortress pilot from Covington, Ky., noted this highwater mark in his combat career the other day when he piloted his four-engine bomber, the "Kane Wolf," to Bernberg, Germany, to unload bombs on a fighter airfield that guards the approaches to battered Berlin.

That twenty-fifth mission is also an occasion for fliers to gather around for a cracker-barrel discussion of past experiences and Lt. Taylor, who was an insurance agent in Dallas, Texas, for a few years prior to entering the service, had a store of stories to relate.

As a former insurance man, Lt. Taylor certainly neglected the ethics of his business by making himself a poor risk last November when his crew attacked Bremen in the bitter cold that sent the mercury tumbling to the 50 degree below zero mark. That mission produced a trying time for the 10-man crew, and ended in tragedy for one of the men.

Difficulties beset Lt. Taylor's craft before it reached the target, with the intense cold playing an enemy role as much as the German fighter craft that attacked the ship, and the flak thrown up by the ground defenses.

Before bombs were away, the ball turret gunner died of asphyxiation when his oxygen mask became frozen, both waist gunners suffered such badly frost-bitten hands that they were unable to operate their machine guns, the navigator was overcome from lack of oxygen, although he was later revived, and pilot's aileron controls were shot away.

However, Lt. Taylor kept his "flying refrigerator" in formation and continued on over the target to enable his bombardier to release the bomb load.

Finally, the entire oxygen system went out, compelling the Kentucky pilot to leave formation and drop to a lower level.

"I sent her down to 800 feet over the Frisian Islands off the German Coast," Lt. Taylor recalled. "Flak was pouring up at us from the islands, but we were lucky and didn't sustain any serious damage. I was anxious to get the men back to the base. That trip was really torture. The cold was terrific."

While Bremen will not easily escape Lt. Taylor's memory, he classified last August's attack on Schweinfurt as probably the most strenuous effort in which he has participated.

"Every German in Germany must have been shooting at us that day," he related. "I had a pretty close call myself when a 20-mm shell exploded in our wing right next to my seat."

Lt. Taylor went overseas as a co-pilot and flew in that capacity on his first eleven missions. All his bombing expeditions since then have seen him in command of his own Fortress.

"Missions now are longer but much easier," the Kentucky flier commented in comparing present operations with those of last summer. "When we first started we had

no fighter protection, but now that we are provided with an escort over the entire route, the enemy fighters offer less of a problem.”

Lt. Taylor has participated in some of the greatest efforts undertaken by the Eighth AAF. Bremen was on his itinerary on three occasions, while other targets in Germany that he has bombed include Kassel, Stuttgart, Emden, Anklam, Munster, Duren, Halberstadt, Wilhelmshaven and Frankfurt, the last named, twice.

Targets in France include Abbeville, Poix-Amiens, Romilly, Croisette, Nancy and Nantes, twice. He participated in one attack on Brussels, Belgium.

A graduate of the University of Kentucky, Lt. Taylor is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Taylor, 15 Leathers Road, Covington. He wears the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, and now that he has notched 25 missions, he is due to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross.

FOR GENERAL DISTRIBUTION  
MARCH 2, 1944

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND.--- Hedge-hopping his crippled bomber over buildings, trees and high tension wires while his gunners shot it out at close range with German ground defenses, a 28-year old Kentucky pilot brought his plane and crew safely back to England after a scheduled bombing run to Frankfurt had been abandoned.

Back at their base after the desperate hour's dash across Northern France, the pilot, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Charles E. Decker of Clarkson, Ky., and the crew members related how they shot up machine-gun emplacements and scattered German troops as they fought their way home alone.

They also told how, while the Germans dispersed in all directions at the sight of the huge bomber skimming the ground at from 20 to 40 feet, the French people stopped and stared at them, and in some cases even waved as they roared by.

The escapade started deep in France, 55 minutes from Frankfurt, when a burst of flak scattered one engine. Lieut. Decker feathered the damaged motor and attempted to remain in the formation, which was led by General Robert F. Travis. But when two superchargers failed, he decided to turn around and head for England.

"We dumped our bombs in a wooded area," said 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. Ruffin F. Barber, 25, of Port Arthur, Texas, the bombardier, "and then hit the deck, dropping down to 9,000 feet for cloud cover."

But the clouds soon gave out and the bomber was silhouetted in a clear blue sky as a choice target for every German anti-aircraft battery in the vicinity.

Lieut. Decker dove the plane, the Daisy June, to tree-top level as evasive action against fighter attacks and flak, and with wide-open throttle began his made/mad dash over France.

For an hour, the Daisy June leap-frogged over buildings, trees and high tension wires, and taunted the Germans by bulling his way in between their flak towers. Meanwhile, enemy machine guns all along the route maintained a steady stream of flying lead at the Fortress. The ship's two waist gunners, S/Sgt. Harold D. Robinson, 23, of Philadelphia, and S/Sgt John Bratko, 25, of Worcester, Mass., and the tail gunner, S/Sgt William H. Smith Jr of Raleigh, N.C., retaliated with their 50-calibers. Whenever possible, Lieut. Decker directed his plane down the valleys to make it a more difficult target to shoot at.

"It was sort of comical to see the Germans scatter in all directions," Lieut. Barber commented. "The French people would stop, stare at us and some of them would wave. I guess they were cheering us along, too."

"We were afraid to do too much shooting for fear of hitting the French," said the ball turret gunner, S/Sgt Delbert R. Reedy, 23, of Rockville, Ind., "I saw a woman and a child take shelter behind a mound of earth when we fired at a German emplacement, but they were out of the line of fire and weren't hurt any".

S/Sgt Reedy was disappointed that he couldn't get in on the strafing. He had left his ball turret post when the Fort started skimming the ground.



At the French coast the Daisy June passed over a high cliff which gave the German gunners a chance to open up as the craft's altitude was suddenly increased.

"I dropped her down in a hurry" Lieut. Decker put in. "We were so low over the water that the ball turret must have been dragging".

Out over the water, the crew presumed it was on the last leg home across the channel and the pilot climbed up to 2,200 feet so as to clear the British balloon barrage.

Land soon hove into view, "England as last," thought the prematurely relieved crew.

But suddenly, flak began bursting all about the ship, hardly typical of the reception usually accorded when returning to England from a job over the continent.

That twisting, diving hedge-hopping flight across France had thrown the navigator, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Dexter H. Warren, 21, of Beulah, Mich., off his bearings. He made a hasty check and discovered that instead of spanning the English Channel, the Daisy June had merely crossed the Seine Bay and was now over the flak-infested Cherbourg Peninsula.

"That flak was getting too hot for us," said Lieut. Decker. "I shot down to wave-top again and headed for England."

When the Daisy June landed its home base, the crew made a survey of the damage and found the forward part of the ship well riddled with flak and .50 caliber bullet holes in addition to having its one shattered engine.

"We didn't think we would ever see this place again" said Lieut. Barber, speaking for his crew mates. It was the twelfth mission for the crew.

Other members of the Daisy June crew were 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. Robert E. Maahs, 20, of Potasi, Wi., the co-pilot; S/Sgt Charles R. Blocksidge, 20, of Mynands, N.Y., the radio operator; and S/Sgt Billy E. O'Cain, 22, of Orangeburg, S.C, the top turret gunner.

March 4, 1944

TO: NEWS SENTINAL, KNOXVILLE,  
TENN. STAR, INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

AN EIGHTH AF BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND. --- Two flying technical sergeants, who have fought together on the same Flying Fortresses on bombing missions over German-occupied territory for the past six months, recently held a joint celebration when they notched their twenty-fifth operational assignment an important milestone for men who are meeting the enemy in the skies over Europe.

The two are Robert M. Smith, 19, 1003 South Westbrook St., Indianapolis, Ind., and Earl R. Beaty, 22, of Route 1, Lenoir City, Tenn. Smith is a radio operator and Beaty is an engineer and top turret gunner.

Through those six months of combat that began inauspiciously last August with an attack on a "secret weapon" emplacement in Northern France, they have taken part in bombing efforts that have provided them with a store of memories, narrow escapes, running gun battles and death-facing moments.

As an example, there was the time when their bomber flopped into the English Channel, and they drifted for some time before being rescued. There was the time when they were compelled to abandon their battle-damaged ship and resort to parachutes. They have fought off fierce enemy fighter attacks and have flown through Flak so thick, it laid a solid carpet of steel over the sky.

The channel ditching incident occurred the day their Fortress, "Old Battleaxe," went to Nantes, France. In the ensuing running battle with German fighter craft, two engines were shot out, the tail assembly torn up and the waist riddled with bullets. The plane was forced to fall out of formation. The two waist gunners, the tail gunner and the ball turret gunner each shot down a fighter out of the wolfish pack pursuing the crippled bomber.

The pilot sent the plane down to 10,000 feet to shake off the fighters and "Old Battleaxe" skirted the Brest Peninsula alone.

"We were down to 700 feet as we went over a small island loaded with anti-aircraft emplacements," said Smith, recalling that harrowing episode in his combat career. "So we used up all our ammunition strafing the emplacements, and then threw our empty guns at them."

By that time one of the dead engines had caught on fire and the entire plane was vibrating violently because the propellor wouldn't feather.

"The pilot finally talked her up to 2,000 feet and we managed to get across the channel," put in Beaty. "But the visibility was so bad we couldn't find a landing strip."

The ship was headed out to sea and the order to ditch in the water was given.

Meanwhile, Smith was at his radio key sending out an SOS and giving the location of his plane, so that air-sea rescue launches could be sent out with a minimum of delay.

When the plane struck the water, the radio compartment collapsed, but no one was injured. The craft remained afloat about six minutes, affording the crew ample time to get out. The men drifted for some time in their one rubber dinghy and were finally rescued by fisherman, not much worse for wear as a result of their experience.

Not long afterwards, Smith and Beaty participated in that momentous attack on Schweinfurt in which some 60 American bombers went down as a result of furious enemy opposition. Their new bomber "Windy City Avenger," had its elevator shot up, but it remained in a locked position despite the loss of control cables.

Coming in for a landing the elevator went completely berserk and at a scant 150 feet above the ground, the crew prepared to bail out. But the pilot was able to coax the ship up to 1,000 feet before issuing instructions to "hit the silk."

Smith and Beaty plunged out of the plane, landing in a clover patch not far from their base. The former supered a slightly bruised ankle, as the only thing that smacked of an injury to the two youths.

Both Smith and Beaty have been decorated with the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and have been recommended to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Sgt. Smith is the son of Mr. and Mrs. W.A. Smith, 1003 South Westbrook St., in Indianapolis, Ind. While his wife resides outside the city on Rural Route 8. He is a graduate of Ben Davis High School.

Sgt. Beaty's parents reside in Lenoir City, while he is a graduate of the Knoxville High School.

March 12, 1944

TO: LIEKEN VALLEY COURIER  
WEST LIBERTY, KY.

AN EIGHTH AAF STATION BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND.--- One birthday Lieut. Boyd A. Cecil of West Liberty, KY., will never forget is his twenty-eighth---he celebrated it over Berlin.

"A man couldn't avoid feeling one year older that day because we were all a bit nervous over tackling this target," said Lieut. Cecil commenting on the American heavy bomber penetration to Hitler's capital.

Lieut. Cecil visited Berlin twice, on successive days during the series of devastating attacks by Flying Fortresses and Liberators. On the first occasion, his birthday anniversary, he rode as navigator on his Fortress, and the second time, he went as the bombardier. They were his twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth missions over enemy territory.

"We really tore Berlin apart on my first trip there," said Lieut. Cecil. "Visibility was perfect and we could see the entire city spread out below us. Tremendous volumes of smoke and large fires enveloped the target area. Our formation experienced very little interference from enemy fighter craft. Our escort performed magnificently and stymied the enemy attacks before they could even get underway."

On his second visit to Berlin, the city was shielded from view by a layer of clouds, so Lieut. Cecil was unable to observe the effectiveness of the heavy explosives he released upon the dying German capital.

The former athletic coach at West Liberty High School has participated in the majority of the greatest bombing efforts undertaken by the Eighth AAF. However, the Brunswick mission in January he terms as his "toughest raid".

"Enemy action was vicious that day", Lieut. Cecil recalled. "We were flying low squadron, the one that generally catches most of the hell, and when we came out after making our bombing run over the target, only two planes remained in the squadron. All the other Forts had been knocked down."

"As a rule, however, we've been pretty lucky," he added. "We've always been able to come back in formation with a minimum of difficulties."

Among the other targets in Germany that Lieut. Cecil's Fortress has bombed are Stuttgart, Emden, Wilhelmshaven, Gelsenkirchen, Solingen, Frankfurt, Ludwigshafen, Kiel, Leipzig, Lingen and Schweinfurt. There have been repeat performances on several of those, while he has participated in numerous attacks on German-occupied targets in France and has made one trip to Norway.

Although he was trained in the States as a bombardier, Lieut. Cecil qualified as a navigator upon coming overseas, and 17 of his combat assignments have seen him filling that position.

Like all other members of the Armed Forces, Lieut. Cecil is looking forward to the day when Allied victory is achieved. One big reason---he has a son, Allen Whitten Cecil, six months old, whom he has never seen. Mrs. Cecil and young Allen are living in San Antonio, Texas.

Lieut. Cecil wears the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters in recognition of his service on the European aerial battle front and has been recommended to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross.

March 29, 1944  
TO: STAR GAZETTE  
Elmira, N. Y.

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND. ---- One reason why the Luftwaffe is reported not to be as formidable as it was at one time is because of fellows like Carlyle D. Ripley.

Ripley, a 23-year old Flying Fortress tail gunner from Elmira, has helped place that dent in the German defenses with the blazing machine guns that have been his constant companions through 26 bombing missions over Germany or German-occupied territories.

Ripley, who is a Staff Sergeant, is credited with blasting two enemy planes out of the sky, and both of them were the Nazi's vaunted rocket firing ships. The 50-caliber bullets from Ripley's guns cause both his victims to explode in midair as they sought to level their sights against the Elmira airman's bomber.

Participating in some of the biggest bombing shows staged by the Eighth AAF, Ripley has been over Berlin twice, but he still maintains that the attack on Schweinfurt last October was the roughest assignment of his combat career.

He tells you why.

"We flew without fighter escort then," says Ripley, "and the Jerries must have sent up every fighter in their air force to attack us. We had a running battle all the way in and all the way out. One German bullet went through our gas tank and lodged in the bomb bay. If it had exploded in the gas tank, well, none of us would be around today."

When Ripley's Fortress returned to its home base after that battle in the skies, the crew counted more than 300 bullet holes from one end of the ship to the other. One German shell had burst within a few inches of Ripley's tail gun position.

The Augsburg show in February runs a close second in Ripley's book to the Schweinfurt mission. That day mechanical difficulties made two of his bomber's engines practically useless when over the target.

"It was the tension more than anything else that got us," The Elmira gunner relates. "We kept wondering whether we would be able to stay in formation. If we had had to go it alone we would have been duck soup for the enemy fighters. But somehow the pilot nursed the ship along, kept her in formation and we made it back to England okay."

Ripley notched his first enemy plane on the long flight last October to Anklam. It was a Messerschmitt 110 and it just disintegrated in midair from the hail of bullets from the tail gunner's weapons. His second victory was recorded in November over Bremen, and this time the victim was an ME 210.

In recognition of his "meritorious Achievement" while participating in the attacks on enemy targets, Ripley wears the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross. He is married, his wife, Doris, residing at 112 East Chemung Place in Elmira. His Parents, Mr. and Mrs. D.F. Ripley live at 354 O'Brien Place.

AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER STATION, ENGLAND.--- Not only plain guts but also a decided sense of honor is a requisite for the kind of men who fly America's big bombers in combat.

The other day, Dick Maggart returned from France with a plane that more closely resembled a flying Sieve than a B-17 Flying Fortress. He had only one of his four engines functioning and he had to crash land because the landing gear refused to be lowered.

The bomber had bulled its way through a veritable curtain of German anti-aircraft fire to get back to England, but that was secondary. What Dick remembered most vividly was the sight of Len Galloway, his pal since boyhood, now doubling as his navigator, knocked out of his seat by a burst of flak, and sent sprawling.

"Galloway looked like an overturned beetle, with his arms and legs flailing the air," Dick said, throwing back his head and laughing.

On the Army records, Dick is 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Richard E. Maggart, 23, a Fortress pilot and his pal, is 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Leonard Galloway, 23, who came to England as a bombardier but went into combat as a navigator. The two grew up together in Cromwell, Ind., which is still their home, Lt. Maggart maintaining that they first became friends when they were infants. They attended the Cromwell schools and finally wound up on the same combat crew, carrying explosives across the English Channel to drop on targets on the continent.

Lt. Galloway was the first to enter the Armed Forces, enlisting in the Army before the United States became involved in the war. He was stationed in Hawaii when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and soon afterwards entered cadet training, emerging as a bombardier.

Lt. Maggart became an air cadet in November 1942, and upon completing his pilot's training was sent to Salt Lake City, where his crew was to be assembled. Looking over the lists of men available for the various positions on a Fortress, he found of his best friend at the top of the bombardiers' list...that was his man.

The two arrived in England with their crew in April, but Lt. Galloway was a bit later than Maggart in being assigned to combat duty.

"They decided to convert me into a navigator," Galloway explained, "so Dick got the jump on me in getting started while I was attending navigation classes. He's seven missions ahead of me, with 22."

But back to their latest and hottest escapade over enemy territory, an experience that was shared by another Indianian, Staff Sergeant Derral B. Wittwer, 23 of Fort Wayne, the ball turret gunner.

Their formation was going in on its bomb run against a German airfield in France when---WHAM---a direct burst of flak caught the left inboard engine of their plane. Flames began licking out from beneath the cowlings, but Lt. Maggart snuffed them out by turning off the feed valve of the oil line. However, the engine was useless.

At the same time, Lt. Galloway was picking himself up off the floor of his compartment in the ship's nose. He had been spent sprawling by the concussion of the explosion and by one fragment that had struck his machine gun, bounced off and penetrated the wooden-backed pad on which he was making notations.

The shell burst had knocked the Fortress out of formation and as the pilot strove to bring it back into position---WHAM---another anti-aircraft shell exploded in the open

bomb bay. Fragments riddled the bomb bay doors with holes, ricocheted off the cargo of bombs, drove up into the fuselage, snapping control cables, and smashed into the radio compartment, destroying the radio equipment. That the radio operator, John W. Johnson, 20, 1105 Marshall St., Paris, Ill., wasn't hit by the pieces of flying steel was short of miraculous.

Almost simultaneously with the burst in the bomb bay, the bomb release man, Staff Sgt. Cecil A. Hamilton, 20, of Bairoil, Wyo., dropped the explosive to avert their detonation while still in the racks.

The bomber had been jolted still farther out of alignment and Lt. Maggart again attempted to return to his place when---WHAM!---a third direct hit smashed into the right hand wing behind the right inboard engine, gasoline gushed from a punctured fuel tank and the engine ceased functioning, leaving only the two outboard engines still in working order.

"I'd had enough by then," commented Lt. Maggart, "so I decided to leave the formation for good without any more urging from the Jerries, and head for home while I still had half a plane."

But what had already transpired, the bomber crew soon learned was merely the introduction.

Nearing the French coast, the crippled plane became the target for every anti-aircraft gun in the vicinity.

Sitting in his plexi-glass inclosed position, Lt. Galloway looked out upon a sky black with flak bursts. Down in his similarly constructed ball turret, Sgt. Wittwer felt somewhat akin to a clay pigeon.

"They seemed to be intentionally firing ahead of us and trying to drive us back inland where they could pick us off leisurely," said Galloway. "Dick went into evasive action in effort to get away from the fire, "but we must have been over an entire anti-aircraft battery." This was the setting when a third engine, the left outboard one, was hit and rendered inoperative---three down and one to go. The pilot was able to lock the propellor of only one of the damaged engines into position, and the other two whirled wildly, violently shaking the plane and threatening to break it up in midair.

"The hell with this, I'm getting out of here," Lt. Maggart shouted into the ship's intercommunication system, and like a fullback tucking the ball under his arm and smashing through the center of the opposing line, he bulled the Fortress through the cordon of flak and headed out over the channel toward England. The plane received numerous additional fragment hits as it drove through the anti-aircraft fire but none were especially crippling.

The Fortress left a trail of equipment behind it as it struck out for home, the crew members tossing overboard everything available in order to lighten the ship and help that one good engine struggle along.

Reaching the English coast, the crew spotted an emergency landing field and decided to come down there rather than attempt to gain their home base. Lt. Maggart made preparations for landing and started to let down his landing gear, but only the right wheel could be lowered. The other had been damaged and refused to budge.

Coming in on one engine was hazardous enough, but without landing wheels was just asking for additional trouble. To further complicate matters, oil from the damaged engines had been blown back against the pilot's and co-pilot's windows, where it froze into an opaque coating.

With one functioning engine, two whirling, uncontrollable propellers, no landing gear, a strong tail wind and with his head out the side window so that he could see what he was doing, Lt. Maggart brought his flak-riddled bomber down for a belly landing, which under the circumstances, was perfectly executed.

Some 300 holes had made a collander out of the bomber, the interior of the fuselage was a jungle of dangling control wires, and the radio compartment had been shot from beneath and around the radio operator---but not a man of the nine-man crew received so much as a scratch.

"It was pretty exciting day for a milk run," was Lt. Maggart's summation of the experience. "They picked exclusively on us, because of all the other planes from our outfit that were over there today none of them had flak come anywhere near them".

As a balm for its trouble, the crew was given a two-day pass.

Both Lt. Maggart and Lt. Galloway are married. Mrs. Maggart residing at 1097 East Tipton St., Huntington, Ind., and Mrs. Galloway at 211 Water St., Ligenier, Ind. Lt. Maggart's mother, Mrs. Ruth Maggart, lives on Route 3, Ligenier, and Lt. Galloway's parents, Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Galloway, make their home in Cromwell. Before entering the Air Corps, Lt. Maggart was employed by the General Electric Co. in Fort Wayne.

Sgt. Wittwer, the Fort Wayne member of the crew is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Otto Wittwer, 3304 Webster St. He is a graduate of South Side High School and was employed as an aircraft electrician at Patterson Field in Dayton, Ohio, prior to entering the service.

Other members of the crew not already mentioned are Flight Officer George H. Seidlein, 24, 1991 29<sup>th</sup> Ave., San Francisco, Calif., the co-pilot; Staff Sgt. Charles F. Gregory, 21, Eatonton, Ga., the top turret gunner; Staff Sgt. Andrew Kobulik, 21, 5025 Blair St., Pittsburgh, Pa., tail gunner; and Staff Sgt. George L. Huff, 20, 611 North Ninth St., Lebanon, Pa., waist gunner.



Oct. 14, 1944

Given press and radio circulation  
In the United States and wide  
Publicity in London dailies.

AN EIGHTH AIR FORCE BOMBER STATION IN ENGLAND---- On New Year's Day a B-17 Flying Fortress will take off from this base and head across the English Channel for a city in France.

This will be no new departure---it has been done thousands of times by the Eighth Air Force during the past two and a half years---but the type cargo the four-engine craft will be carrying will be a unique one for heavy bombers.

The Fortress won't be loaded with bombs, but with toys, candy, clothing and other gifts from the officers and enlisted men of the 384<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group and their families back home. The gifts will be delivered New Year's Day in keeping with the French custom of opening their presents on that day rather than on Christmas,

The proposition of bringing a spark of happiness to French youngsters, who have suffered from the four years of Nazi occupation and the resultant unavoidable Allied bombings of their homeland, was conceived by 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. P. Oscar Picard, of Linwood, Mass., prisoner of war officer in the bomb group's intelligence section. It was enthusiastically endorsed by the unit's commanding officer, Colonel Dale O. Smith, of Reno, Nev.

Mimeographed form letters have been distributed among the base personnel for mailing to their families. The letters contain a request for parcels of playthings, sweets, wearing apparel "and other things dear to a child's heart." When the packages arrive here they will be opened and their contents classified and made ready for St. Nick's special Flying Fortress run.

The response among the men of this veteran group was instantaneous and the letters went out on the earliest mail after they were distributed. In addition, many of the men have pledged their scanty candy ration for the next 11 weeks, with the sweets to be collected in large receptacles at the base post exchange.

"I only regret that I didn't think of it sooner," said Lt. Picard in commenting on the project. "But I think we'll be able to get a lot of packages back from the States in time for our New Year's Day mission.

Lt. Picard pointed out that the American airmen possess a great affection for the French people, Hundreds of U.S. fliers, shot down over France, he said, today owe their lives and liberty to French people who concealed them from capture by the Germans and nursed their wounds. Shooting was the penalty for harboring Allied airmen.

It is expected that the group will distribute the gift in a city that was the target of its bombs on several occasions.