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The final mission.

Klaeser, Gilbert Henry

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The Final Mission





THIS BOOK BELONGS TO


Gil Klaeser

First lieutenant Gilbert Henry Klaeser
Bombardier
B-24 Liberator, "Rigor Mortis" (42-7589)
8th Air Force
446 Bomb Group
705th Squadron
Bungay, England
90 miles NE of London
Final Mission: Aircraft factory?
Ball bearing works, Furth Germany



WAR PRISONERS AID
AIDE AUX PRISONNIERS
DE GUERRE
KRIEGSGEFANGENENHILFE

WORLD'S ALLIANCE OF YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS
ALLIANCE UNIVERSELLE DES UNIONS CHRÉTIENNES DE JEUNES GENS
WELTBUND DER CHRISTLICHEN VEREINE JUNGER MÄNNER


GENÈVE (Suisse)
CENTRE INTERNATIONAL
37, Quai Wilson

Adresse Télégraph. : FLEMGO-GENÈVE
Compte de Chèques postaux : 1. 331

June, 1944

Dear Friend,

As its title-page indicates, this "War-time Log" is part of a special remembrance from the folks at home. The other articles in the packet are more or less perishable, but this is intended to be kept as a permanent souvenir of the present unpleasantness.

If you do not want to keep a regular diary or even occasional notes on war-time experiences, these pages offer many other possibilities. If you are a writer, here is space for a short story. If you are an artist (some people are) you may want to cover these pages with sketches of your camp, caricatures of its important personalities, whether residents or authorities. If you are a poet, major or minor, confide your lyrics to these pages. If you feel that circumstances cramp your style in correspondence you might write here letters unmailable now, but safely kept to be carried with you on your return. This book might serve to list the most striking concoctions of the camp kitchen, the records of a camp olympic, or a selection of the best jokes cracked in camp. One man has suggested using the autograph of one of his companions (plus his fingerprints?) to head each page, followed by free and frank remarks about the man himself. The written text might be a commentary on such photographs as you may have to mount on the special pages for that purpose. The mounting-corners are in an envelope in the pocket of the back cover. Incidentally, this pocket might be used for clippings you want to preserve, or, together with the small envelopes on the last page, to contain authentic souvenirs of life in camp.

Perhaps you will discover some quite different use for this book. Whatever you do, let it be a visible link between yourself and the folks at home, one more reminder that their thoughts are with you constantly. If it does no more than bring you this assurance, the "Log" will have served its purpose.

Nr. 3052413

am: 29.2.44

NAME: KLAESER
 Vornamen: Gilbert Henry
 Dienstgrad: 2. Lt. Funktion: Domb.
 Matrikel-No.: 0- 682 430
 Geburtstag: 9.9.19
 Geburtsort: Kiel , Wisc.
 Religion: kath.
 Zivilberuf: Hochschule
 Staatsangehörigkeit: USA.

Vorname des Vaters: Frank
 Familienname der Mutter: Emma Jeandy
 Verheiratet mit: /
 Anzahl der Kinder: /

Heimatanschrift:
 Mr. u. Mrs. Frank Klaeser,
 725 Chicagø, St. Kiel , Wisc.

Abschuß am: 25.2.44 bei: Deutschland Flugzeugtyp: -----
 Gefangennahme am: wie oben bei:

Nähere Personalbeschreibung

Figur: untersetzt
 Größe: 5,6
 Schädelform: oval
 Haare: d,-braun
 Gewicht: 80 kg
 Gesichtsform: oval
 Gesichtsfarbe: gesund

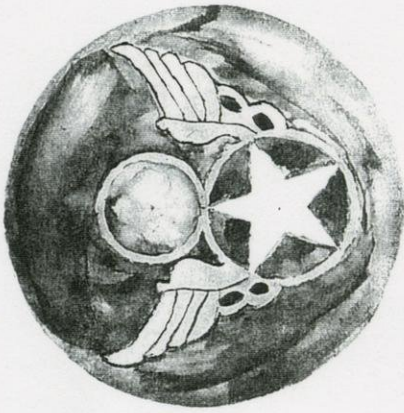
Augen: grau
 Nase: normal
 Bart: ohne
 Gebiß: gesund

Besondere Kennzeichen:

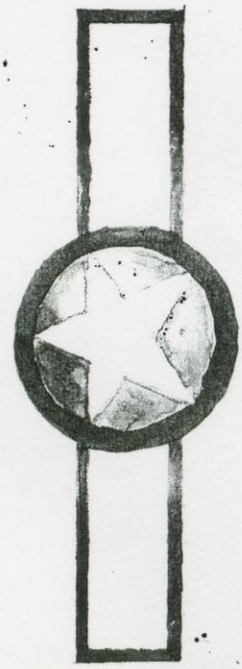


Rechter Zeigefinger





The War Memorial



Name Klaeser, Gilbert Henry

R. A. F. Nr.: 0 - 682 430 Kgf. Nr.: 3052

Dienstgrad: 2. Lt. Nationalität: USA

Baracke 101 Raum 2



The confidential military pamphlet that must not fall into German hands.

NOT TO BE PUBLISHED.

The information given in this document is not to be communicated, either directly or indirectly, to the Press or to any person not holding an official position in His Majesty's Service.

**THE HANDBOOK
OF MODERN IRREGULAR
WARFARE**

* The sphere of operations should always include the enemy's own country, any occupied territory, and in certain circumstances, such neutral countries as he is using as a source of supply.

** . . . the days when we could practise the rules of sportsmanship are over. For the time being, every soldier must be a potential gangster and must be prepared to adopt their methods whenever necessary.

PAMPHLET No. 1

The General Principles of Irregular Warfare

THIS IS A SECURITY DOCUMENT AND
MUST NOT FALL INTO ENEMY HANDS.

* cf Handbook p. 5.

** cf Handbook p. 43.

To all Prisoners of War!

The escape from prison camps is no longer a sport!

Germany has always kept to the Hague Convention and only punished recaptured prisoners of war with minor disciplinary punishment.

Germany will still maintain these principles of international law.

But England has besides fighting at the front in an honest manner instituted an illegal warfare in non combat zones in the form of gangster commandos, terror bandits and sabotage troops even up to the frontiers of Germany.

They say in a captured secret and confidential English military pamphlet,

THE HANDBOOK OF MODERN IRREGULAR WARFARE:

“. . . the days when we could practise the rules of sportsmanship are over. For the time being, every soldier must be a potential gangster and must be prepared to adopt their methods whenever necessary.”

“The sphere of operations should always include the enemy’s own country, any occupied territory, and in certain circumstances, such neutral countries as he is using as a source of supply.”

England has with these instructions opened up a non military form of gangster war!

Germany is determined to safeguard her homeland, and especially her war industry and provisional centres for the fighting fronts. Therefore it has become necessary to create strictly forbidden zones, called death zones, in which all unauthorised trespassers will be immediately shot on sight.

Escaping prisoners of war, entering such death zones, will certainly lose their lives. They are therefore in constant danger of being mistaken for enemy agents or sabotage groups.

Urgent warning is given against making future escapes!

In plain English: Stay in the camp where you will be safe! Breaking out of it is now a damned dangerous act.

The chances of preserving your life are almost nil!

All police and military guards have been given the most strict orders to shoot on sight all suspected persons.

Escaping from prison camps has ceased to be a sport!

There were many heroes there besides the Medal of Honor recipient. In my opinion, there was one unsung hero. He was the late Gilbert "Shorty" Klaeser of the 705th Squadron. He was helpful to the men of the North Compound 1. "Shorty" was from Kiel, Wisconsin and spoke German better than our guards. He was Barter Specialist, par excellence, and was responsible for many American cigarettes being exchanged for contraband goods. He was adept at bargaining and making trades. Other certifiable heroes were those who built and maintained the clandestine radios and surreptitiously spread the news throughout the camp. We knew of D-Day before our guards. It was great for morale!



The accompanying snapshot shows several members with their American uniforms. The one in the upper left is our bombardier who I think was born with a tie on. The person on the left in the front row was Gilbert "Shorty" Klaeser who spoke fluent German and one day almost walked out of the camp. Unfortunately he was recognized by one of guards and forced to return. I believe these men were my room mates in the second room that I lived in. I recognize Logan, Wallace "Chief" Tyner and Levins.
From left to right - back row

Out of the Back Shop

By "Teedles"

Looking hale and hearty after his many experiences, Lt. Gilbert Klaeser stopped in at the office Monday afternoon to have a chat with us. Even though Gibbie spent many months in a German prison camp, he says he thinks that experience, too, will do him some good—of course he wouldn't want to go through that again. Gilbert Klaeser the youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Klaeser, is a graduate of the Kiel high school, and was a student at the University of Wisconsin, when he entered service. July 8, 1941, he left for Camp Grant, Ill., and since that day has done some extensive traveling. He received his training in Camp Wolters, Tex.; Ft. Sam Houston, Tex.; Ellington Field, Tex.; Childress, Tex.; Carlsbad, N. M.; Clovis, N. M.; and Denver, Colo. The first five months of his army life were spent in the infantry; then he transferred to the M. P.s, serving 12 months. He then entered the air corps, and became a bombardier on a B-24. He went overseas by plane in October, 1943, traveling through South America and Africa to England. Five months were spent in England. During his eleventh mission over

For the service rendered to his country, Gibbie has received the Purple Heart, the air medal with two oak leaf clusters, presidential citation, the ETO with two battle stars, the American theatre of operations ribbon, and the pre-Pearl Harbor ribbon. Our best wishes go with Gibbie, and we hope the remainder of his stay in Uncle Sam's service will be pleasant. Oh yes, and we do extend our felicitations to him and his future bride.



2 months. He went overseas by plane in October, 1943, traveling through South America and Africa to England. Five months were spent in England. During his eleventh mission over Germany, misfortune befell his group. Out of 20 enemy planes, they shot six out of the sky, but during this battle over Furth, Germany, their plane was badly damaged and they had to fall out of formation and were pounded mercilessly. The entire crew parachuted to safety, only to be taken prisoners near France several hours after they landed on February 25, 1944. Gibbie made this jump in a parachute made by the Hansen Glove corporation. The chute failed to open properly, and Gibbie had to pull the rip-cord with all his might, he got his legs tangled in the cords, and due to that received a badly injured right leg, besides cuts and bruises, and an injured back. These seem to be rather minor now, as it sure feels good to be home. After being taken prisoner he was put under solitary confinement for about 3½ days; the enemy wanted information, but Gibbie had none to give. Then he was moved to Frankfurt, where again he received solitary confinement for 3 days. After that he was taken to the prison camp, passing through Leipzig, Dresden, Berlin and Stettin—finally reaching Barth, where the camp was located, and where he spent 15 long, dreary months. He feels he was lucky as he acted as interpreter for a colonel, and that helped pass some of the time, which they had plenty of. There were 8,500 American and about 1,500 other allied officers quartered at this camp. 150 of these officers were from Wisconsin. For recreation ball games were enjoyed, but Gibbie couldn't take part, and cards he didn't enjoy, as mostly bridge was played. All the boys did is sit and wait for one day after another to pass. The treatment was not too good, and most of the food they received was sent in by the Red Cross. He was imprisoned six months and sixteen days before he had any letters from home. The boys knew they were to be liberated several days in advance, as they could hear the big guns coming closer day by day. The Russian liberated the camp, and immediately the boys received better food. The boys remained at the prison camp 13 days after they were liberated, and then were moved to Rheims, France, where they spent two or three days, and then on to Camp Lucky Strike where they stayed for a month. It took them only seven days to arrive in the states—home and 60-day furlough. On August he will have to report to Miami, Fla., where he will enter a new camp, and then reassignment, unless luck is with him and he will receive an honorable discharge.



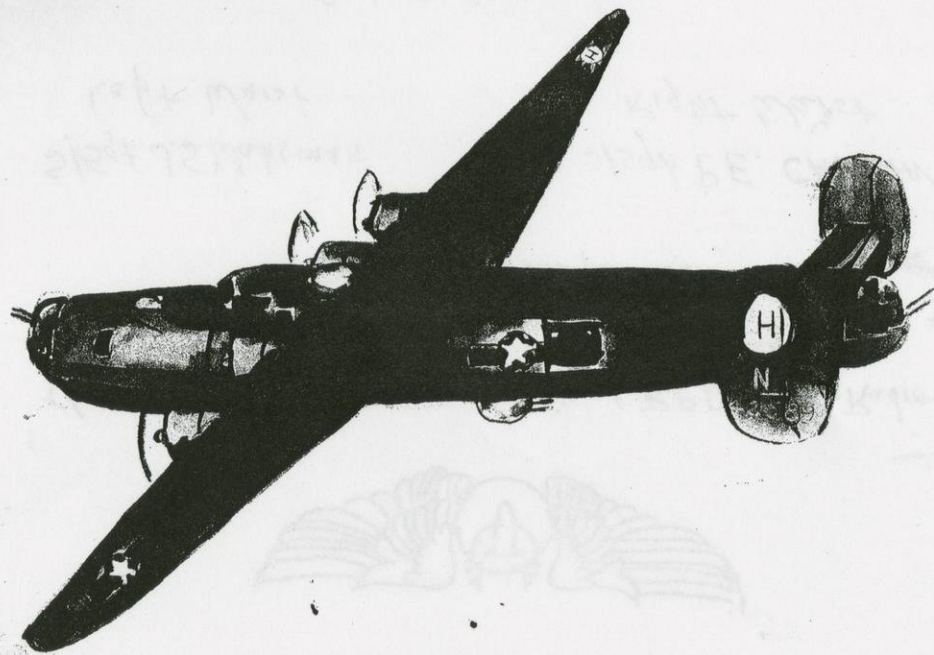
A WARTIME LOG

A REMEMBRANCE
FROM HOME
THROUGH THE AMERICAN Y.M.C.A.



Published by
THE WAR PRISONERS' AID OF THE Y. M. C. A.
37 Quai Wilson
GENEVA — SWITZERLAND

Little did I realize as I struggled out of bed on the morning of February 25, 1944 that I was never to see that bed again. It was at the absurd hour of 0230 that the sergeant awakened me. This was an indication that we were going on a long mission. Upon leaving the barracks I glanced at the sky and noticed it to be starlit and clear and the air bore a frosty sting. I was certain that the mission would 'be on'. The breakfast consisted of the usual fare of powdered eggs, toast and coffee. Really not a very wholesome meal. Riding the truck down to the briefing room we were all joking about and casting aspersions at the mission. I had flown the whole week previously so all of my flying equipment was ready and in good



4

condition. After checking out my heated suit, gloves, boots and parachute I went into the briefing room where we were to learn the details of our mission and targets. When finally the map was uncovered all crew members heaved a sigh of despair and anguish. This was a very hard and dangerous mission. We had been briefed on it before; also it was the longest trip into Germany ever assigned to our group. This meant plenty of flak and an over abundance of fighters. At the briefing we were given such information as the position we were to fly in the formation, time of take-off, route into the target, altitude to fly, the various flak positions and the number and type of fighters we were to expect at given points. All this information was necessary to carry out the mission. After this I returned to the bombardiers briefing



"Bill" Hockensmith

"Doug" Waefel



"Fritz" Riedel



Carl Klaeser



T/Sgt. A. Belcher - Engineer

I/Sgt B.P. Dutcher - Radio

S/Sgt K.E. Mayo - Ball Gunner

S/Sgt J.S. Wakeman

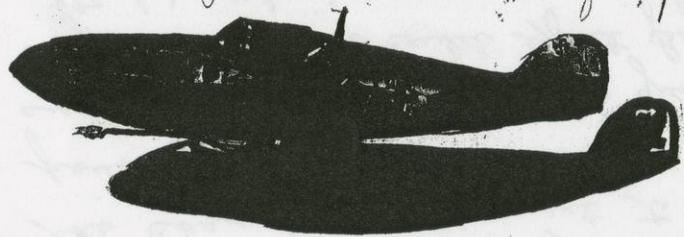
S/Sgt P.E. CALLAWAY

Left Waist

Right Waist

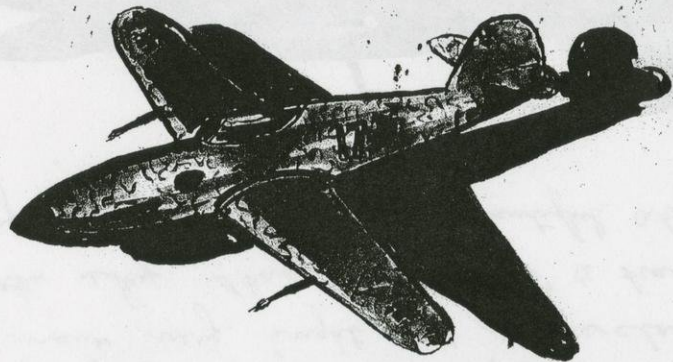
Sgt. C. Carpenter
Tail Gunner

room where I was given the bomb load, meter data, target charts and various other information. Then I went to the locker room where I proceeded to don my flying equipment which consisted of two pairs of socks, long woolen trousers, heated suit and boots over which I wore lined flying boots. As the temperature was to be fairly warm,



only an estimated -32°C , I just wore a woolen shirt under my heated suit. I topped this all off with flying coveralls, scarf, helmet with goggles and three pairs of gloves - one silk, one heated leather and one heavy leather gauntlet. I packed all my bombing equipment, heavy leather jacket, chute and heavy leather trousers into

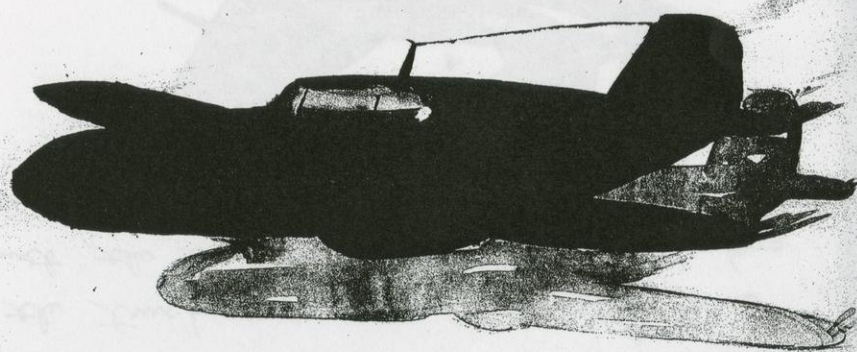
the parachute bag and then went to see Father Murphy, our chaplain, and received the sacrament. This was followed by the truck ride out to the plane. Here I met the enlisted men who were checking their guns and ammunition. I also checked



my guns and also inspected the 12 HE demolition bombs, the benches, the first aid equipment and the oxygen and microphone system. By this time Bill and Doug had started the engine and it wasn't long before we were airborne. The time of take off was about 0705 and soon we were

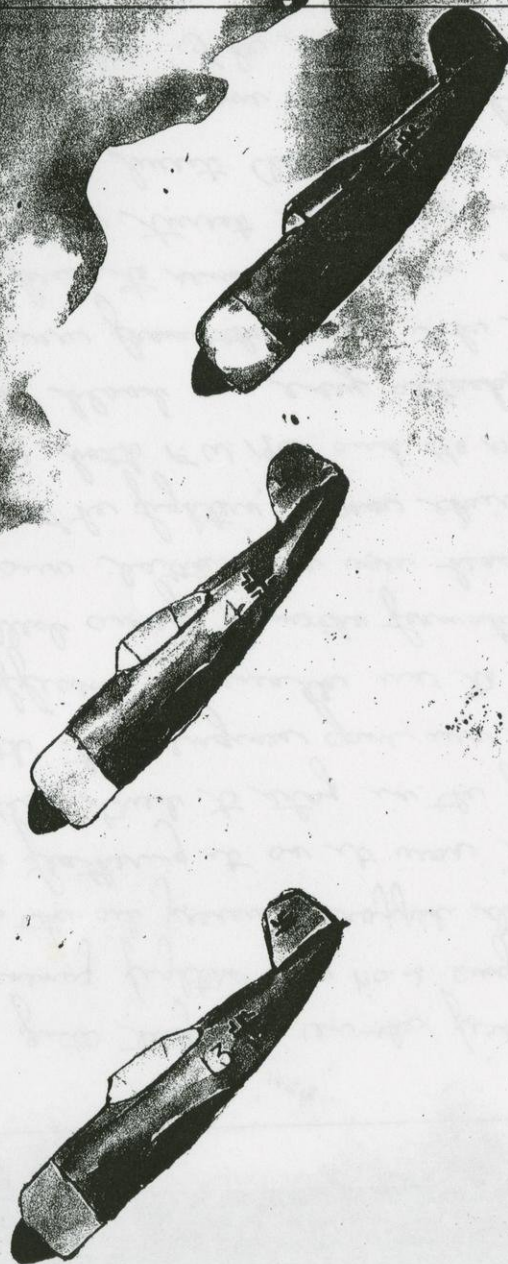
Climbing through the misty cirrus
 clouds to form the group. My last
 view of England, as all previous
 views, showed the fields, small villages
 and large cities, including London. Over
 the channel we all went to our
 positions and checked in to the pilot
 and charged and loaded our guns for
 anytime now we could expect fighter
 attacks. Ahead was the coast of
 France and I could see that the
 Groups ahead were already in flak
 and we were soon to follow. For some
 reason this heavy, accurate flak held
 us far from us. Down below were the
 beautiful fertile fields of France now
 torn up by bombings. Our first sign
 of disaster appeared about 50 miles
 N.E. of Paris. About 15,000 feet below
 us we saw a crippled Fort heading

back to England. However it never did
 reach friendly soil as it was under attack
 by about 9 F.W. 190's and soon chutes were
 seen coming from the stricken craft. The sun
 was now very bright and not a cloud
 in the sky. This enabled us to have
 a very good view of the beautiful city



of Paris. Our course now took us
 South by East and quite regularly we
 were harassed by flak. For some
 unknown reason our fighter escort didn't
 show up so we knew we were in for

some hot battles. Some 20,000 ft. below us lay Saarbrücken and this city greeted us with a hot flak barrage. Some of the groups ahead were under fighter attack so we again checked fired our 50's. However we were not marked and flew steadily on our way. Probably this mission wouldn't be so tough. At the T. P. every ship opened their bomb bay doors. The target was in sight. Light, heavy caliber flak was being shot up at us. The sights were synchronized and the bombs went on their way. The last bomb had scarcely left the ship when we received a direct burst of flak in our No. 3 engine. Lang feathered the props and we resigned ourselves to the fact of flying home on three engines. Suddenly specks in the skies - fighters! We were their target as our number engine

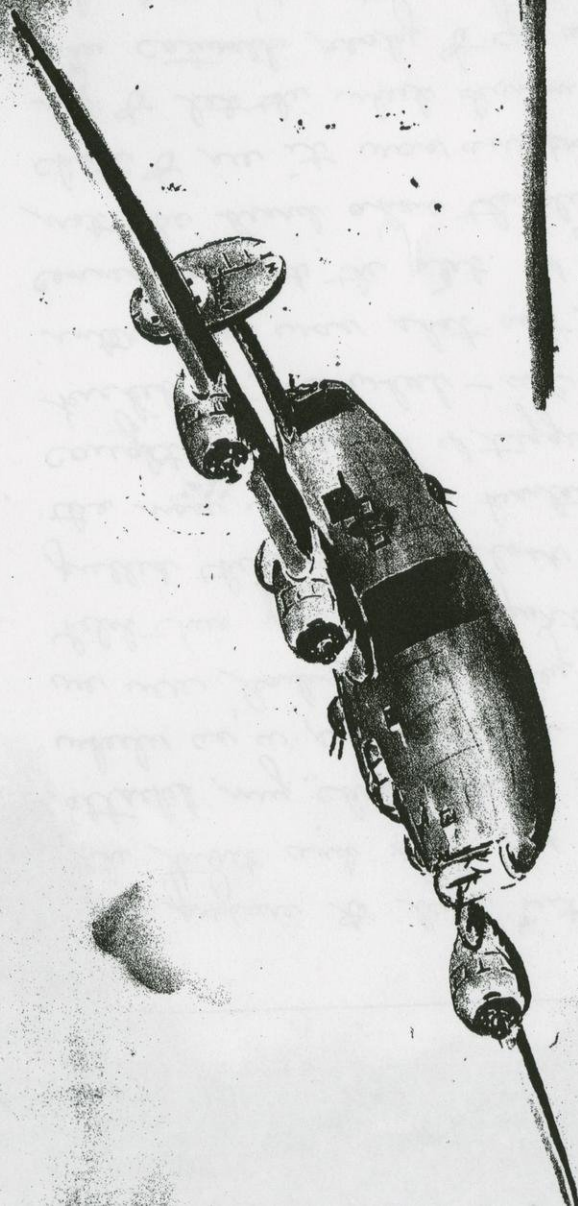


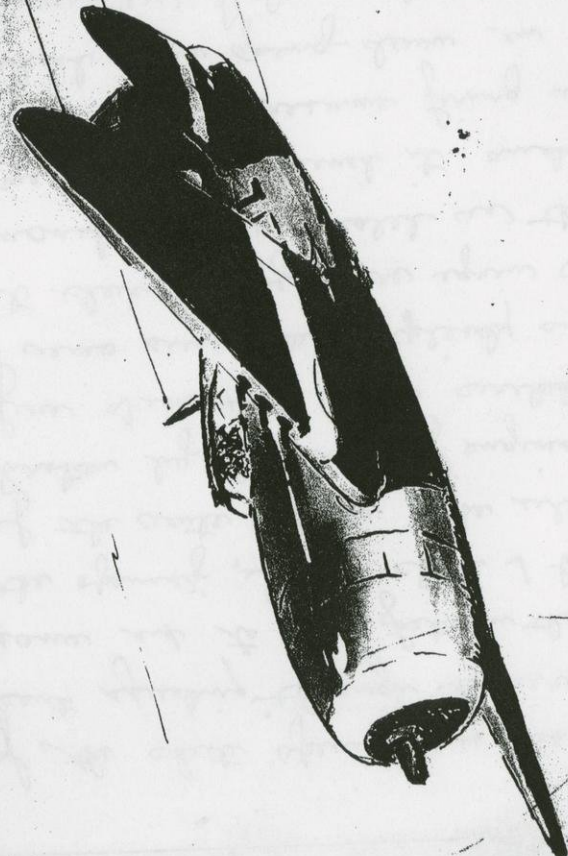
proved quite tempting. In the first pass
 by the enemy fighters our No. 2 engine was
 hit and the oil pressure dropped. Doug had
 difficulty feathering it as it was "running
 away." We tried to stay in the formation,
 but with two engines gone our speed was
 not sufficient to enable us to "stick in."
 We pulled away from the formation and
 started our battle. We were heading for
 France. The fighters began their attacks.
 There were both F.W. 190's and He 109's. Our
 guns drew blood on every attack, most
 of which were from the rear. The tail gunner
 was the first to send one down. "Dutch"
 in the upper turret blew up an F.W. 190
 with a long burst. Only one pass from the
 nose and I sent one down in flames and
 damaged another. The mad chatter of our
 guns hammered thruout the ship. We were
 slowly being shot to ribbons. Suddenly
 Bill gave the order "Put on your chutes"



and prepare to bail out." I got out of the turret and shed my flak suit and attached my chest chute. Doug lowered the wheels as a signal to the attackers that we were bailing out. They immediately held their fire - good sportsmanship! Fritz pulled the emergency creak and stepped on the nose wheel - he hesitated and his leg caught. Disaster! I tugged at Fritz and kicked at the wheel - all to no avail. Our interphone was shot out so we had no connection with the pilot. I yelled but could not be heard above the din. I checked his chute to see it was on properly and crawled up to let the wheel down. Doug was on the catwalk ready to go out. He asked me why I wasn't out so I told him and he came back with "Are you scared?" to which I replied quite frankly "Scared to death." We shook hands and with "I'll see you on the ground" out he went. I scrambled back

to the nose and Fritz was gone. My
 bombight was hit by 20 m.m. cannon shells
 and pretty thoroughly wrecked - so I just kicked
 off the telescope and went back to the
 bombay. I checked the rear of the ship and
 it was shot up, but all the fellows had
 left. From the catwalk I looked up at
 Bee, who was still at the controls. I yelled
 at him to get out. He mentioned that
 he would soon follow. I looked at the
 clock on the panel and it was 3:15.
 Looking at the ground I judged our
 altitude at about 13,000 to 14,000 ft. Quite
 high, but let's go. Muttering a short prayer
 I went out. My speed was terrific and
 I was spinning quite a bit. I pulled the
 cord and the chute didn't open so I
 began to pull silk and it started to come
 out. The strands wound around my
 right foot and with the pop and jerk





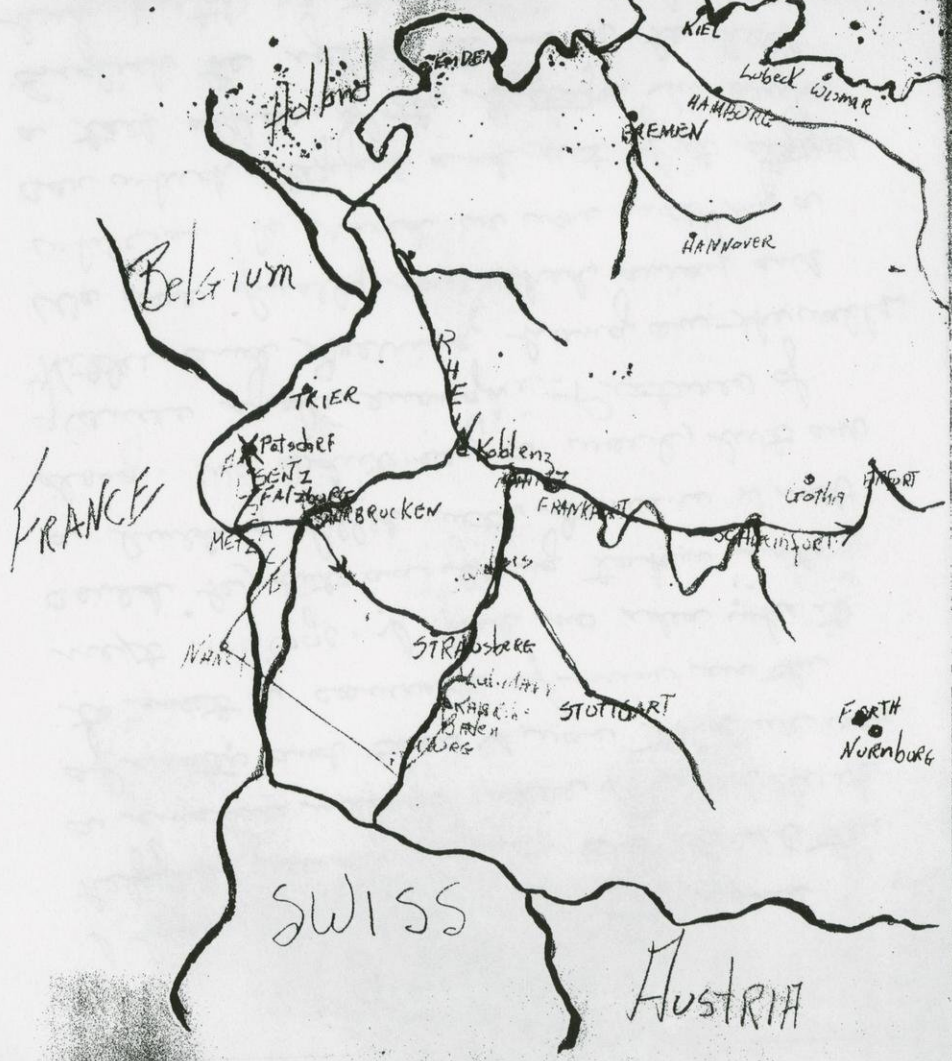
of the chute opening my boots were
 sent specking through the air. I was now
 some six to 8,000 feet in the air. Upon
 the opening of the chute I became aware
 of the acute silence. The silence was only
 broken by the drone of engines and cannon
 fire. Two F.W. pilots circled about as
 I was suspended helplessly and completely
 at their mercy. Here again their sports-
 manships was revealed as they saluted
 me and I returned it and they then
 went off to resume firing at our ship
 which was going down in a long glide.
 Regardless of the endeavors and incessant
 firing of the attackers the gallant ship
 did not burst into flames until after
 she crashed into a peaceful looking
 meadow which became her grave.
 Continuing my slow descent I floated
 over three small villages and I noticed
 people were watching my letdown.

When I saw that I was going to land into a large tract of woods I tried to spill my chute so as to enable me to land in a small clearing. However the ground made me over. Crawling my arms over my face I crashed through the lofty branches and came to a jerking halt as the silk canopy caught in the branches. The jerk sent me crashing against the tree trunk and immediately my left side from the shoulder on became numb. Now my canopy came loose from the branches and I fell about 30 ft landing with an awful jolt in a sitting position knocking the wind out of me. I could still move my left arm & leg so I felt safe. My first thought was "German soil" and I muttered a short prayer of thankfulness for my safe descent (a short period of about 2½ hrs will have to be omitted here for security reasons).

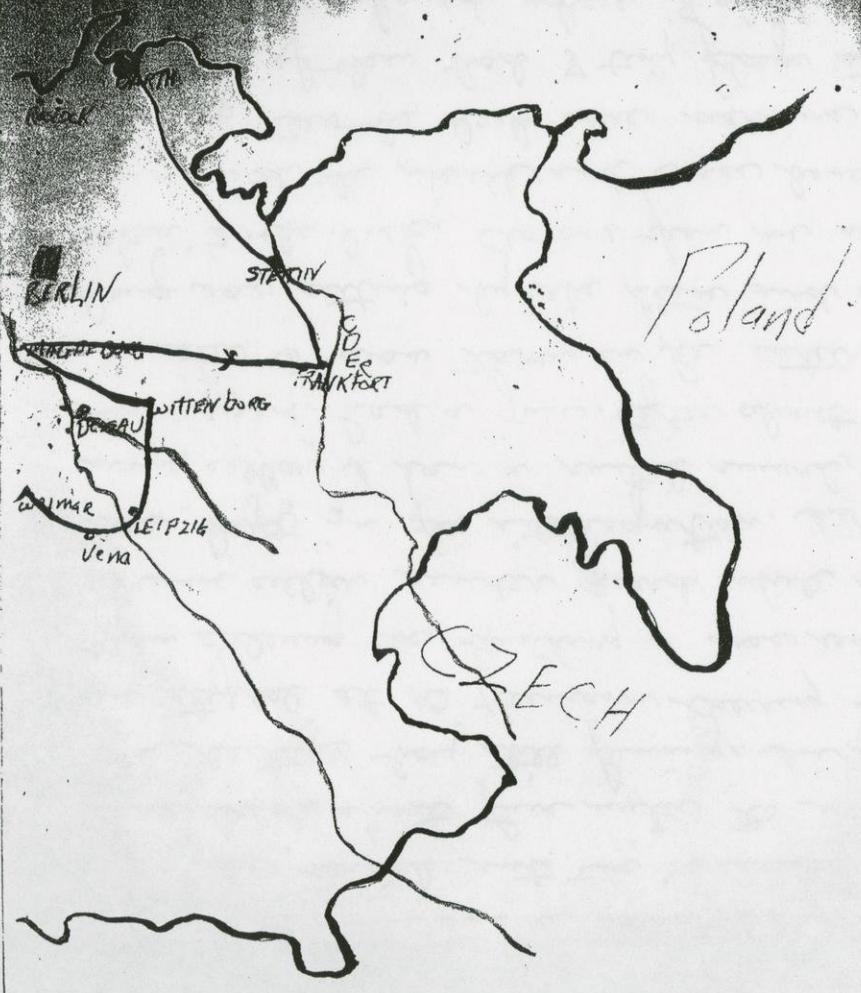
From the point of my capture I was escorted by the captors to the small village of Patsdorf. On the way to the village my abandoned chute had been found and one of the privates carried it for me. The village was typical of German village of about 300 population. The few streets were muddy and shaggy cattle and fat hogs roamed at will among the populace. Undoubtedly I was the first captured aviator to be brought here as the whole population turned out to welcome me. The people were extremely friendly as was evidenced by the fact that I was very well treated. I was taken to the home of the only doctor. He and his wife both spoke fair English. I was placed on the steps of the home and the German corporal went to use a phone.

The doctor's wife was very kind as she washed the blood from my face with some Eau de Cologne and gave me three cubes of sugar and a water glass of whiskey which she insisted that I drink and it did quiet my nerves and dull the pain in my left side. A young lady of about 25 narrowly eyed the silk of my chute. I then passed some of my cigarettes out to the crowd and thus increased the friendship. The doctor examined my long left arm and assured me that it was only bruised and not broken. My ribs however, were declared broken under his observations. He wanted to help me, but he had no supplies. Just before I was marched away the doctor's wife gave me about six small cakes. As I left the village the entire crowd followed me and there

NORTH SEA



BALTIC



I bid a fond farewell to some helpful, friendly people. We passed thru a smaller village where I got a drink of water and then I was told we were to meet a comrade of mine in the next village. I had no idea who it could be, but on being taken into a building filled with Germans I met Doug. We didn't say a word, but our glances spoke enough. Pictures of Hitler and Goering hung on the walls. We were finally marched away and while on the road we were met by a car which stopped and out of it stepped a tall officer of the Gestapo. In broken English he yelled at us as he held his pistol pointed at us "Get questions and you live or you die! Have your chance!" Doug and I both said in a husky voice to each other "We want

all that----- a damned thing. We were herded into the Mercedes Benz and driven about five miles to Seltz with the Gestapo boys still fuming. In Seltz we stopped at 10 Hermann Goering Strasse. Upon entering the building I was sent to a wine cellar under guard while Doug was kept in for interrogation. In the wine cellar I saw a rusted sword, but the guard had a gun. After about 45 minutes I was taken in for interrogation. Doug was sitting by the stove and I was taken to the desk. Across from me sat the officer, with the skull and cross bones on his cap. On the desk were various maps and one of them had 8 tiny flags stuck in it. It showed where 8 of the crew were captured. Mine wasn't shown and he didn't ask me to locate it. He offered me a cup of ersatz coffee and a German cigarette. He again gave me

ultimately "live or you die!" Then he asked me my name, rank and serial number which was to be given by order of the Geneva Conference. After I answered these he said "now remember - you live or you die!" "Now tell me your Squadron, group and Squadron Commander!" To this I replied, "I'm sorry sir I'm not permitted to answer that." He was now becoming quite angry and laid his pistol on the table. Then he asked me "Now tell me, what were you flying, how many men and machines were on the plane?" Again I came back with the answer of "I'm sorry sir I'm not permitted to answer that." To this he said "Well, I know, you were flying a four engined bomber with 10 men and 10 machines and the other gave me another cigarette and after a brief pause he again leveled his pistol at me.

He now said, "You are not a good pilot for you don't tell me what I want to know you must answer this question or you'll die." This was becoming monotonous this continual threatening along with the multiple part questions. "Now you must tell me - what is your group letter on the tail of your plane, your group commander's name and where is your field?" To this again came my reply "I'm sorry sir I'm not permitted to answer that." He slammed his pistol on the table, jumped up and kicked a panel out of the desk, kicked over a chair and kicked the door and stormed out of the room. In about 2 minutes he returned with a blank, giving it to the German sergeant saying in German, "Tell the captain he has to fill this out or we will beat and torture him at the next place." To this the German sergeant replied, "I'll tell him, but you

know he was bluffing. "Yes,"
 was the answer. "I can
 scare him." This was enough
 for me as I could understand the
 language quite well and I wouldn't
 fall for their bluff. While the sergeant
 was explaining the farm to me the
 Gestapo officer left, never to be seen
 again, and another officer, ~~the~~ of
 the Luftwaffe, stepped in. He was
 a very friendly fellow, and soon
 he was talking me all about his
 flying career as a pilot of a F.W. 190.
 One of the tales he related was that
 of an order of the Luftwaffe; a pilot
 must expend all his ammunition against
 a bomber raid and that a pilot must
 shoot down a bomber in 10 minutes
 or else that he must get a bomber
 & he has to ram it. Failure to
 comply with this order results in

the pilot's death and the
 pilot was a flying squad. This officer,
 Lt. Wagner about 26, boasted of his
 punctures explaining that each
 engine was a victory. He asked me
 whether I desired a doctor as my
 left side was paining me very badly.
 I declined the offer and he went out to
 explain that he admired us for our
 courage as flies. A short while later
 the car came and we went about 10 miles
 to a garrison in Falzburg where Benz
 and I were put in solitary cells. A guard
 brought us some ersatz coffee and some
 sour, dark, damp bread which was to
 be our bread for our stay in Germany. The
 bread was very repulsive, but I was hungry.
 Lt. Wagner came into my cell and again
 asked me whether I wanted a doctor, but
 I declined again. However in a very
 short time two doctors came into
 the cell and examined my arm

and my ribs they proclaimed
 some in the night ribs broken, for
 which they could do nothing, but they
 massaged my arm and it felt better
 after that. They also said I may
 have a hernia. After they left I took
 stock of the cell. Nothing much in this
 3'4'x7' foot cell except a bed of
 wooden planks with a slight rise for
 a pillow. Also a light bulb and a heavy
 iron bar on the window which could
 not be opened. Sleeping on this
 bed was very uncomfortable and
 time passed slowly. During the next
 day and night, Sang, who was in
 the next cell, kept contact by tapping
 on the wall. Our food was very meager
 in quantity and highly inferior in
 quality to any food I've ever eaten.
 I was locked up there from Friday
 night until Sunday morning. Most
 of the time I spent in worrying

my family were to find out
 and I was still alive. Also I was
 very much of Margie would wait for
 me. This prison was actually a garrison
 that was well manned. Contrary to
 all my former beliefs, we were very
 well treated and fed three times a
 day. On Sunday morning at about
 five o'clock we were awakened and
 taken out of our cells. Here we
 saw Bill awaiting us. I was truly
 very pleased to see him as I had
 not seen him since I left the ship.
 Immediately we were marched out
 of the garrison and thru this quiet
 town to the station. People there did
 not seem one bit hostile towards
 us. We boarded a very unique train
 which moved along at a slow pace.
 The coach was one big room with
 several benches and a small stove
 at the far end. We went with a

few miles from the Grand Train.

Just as dawn was breaking on this cold, frosty winter morning when we boarded a very modern train for Metz. This ride took about 2 hours and went through some very nice farming country. Metz was a very modern, clean city with a very large station. Here we stayed for about an hour waiting for a train. In the station we had a light lunch of dark bread, larder sausage and some hot ersatz coffee. The French woman slipped us two glasses of cognac. Most of the people were French and very sincere and inquisitive. I noticed a very pretty girl of about 20 of all dressed for skiing or mountain climbing. She was sitting at the table across from us and she seemed to be sorry at our plight. Also a brakeman on the train came in to look at

us and he seemed to be help us. Later this man pulled on the back as we went into the train. Here in this station I saw my first example of the highly vaunted, arrogant "Hitler Jugend". These six members were about 15 years old and extremely forward and haughty. After a wait of about an hour we went outside and had a fairly good view of the city of Metz from the station. The city was very quaint and very unsimilar to our cities. One of the outstanding peculiarities was that most of the houses, regardless of size, had two chimneys. One of the chimneys had a large nest on it, but we couldn't see any birds. Our train pulled in and we boarded it to resume our journey to prison. The next big city we passed thru was

Saarbrücken. We then turned south
 and came to another city which
 must have been Nancy France. The
 country between Metz and Nancy was
 very picturesque with its small
 farms and villages, also the terrain
 was becoming more mountainous
 and this added to the beauty of it.
 From here we turned east and finally
 came to the Rhine River and Germany
 itself. Here we were high in the beautiful
 alps mountains. At the little town
 of Freuburg we changed trains and
 spent about one half hour there. This
 small town was very unique as the
 houses were built on the mountain
 sides and as a result there were
 but semblences of streets as the
 houses were built in irregular
 lines, most of them built out on
 the mountain sides and only

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March							
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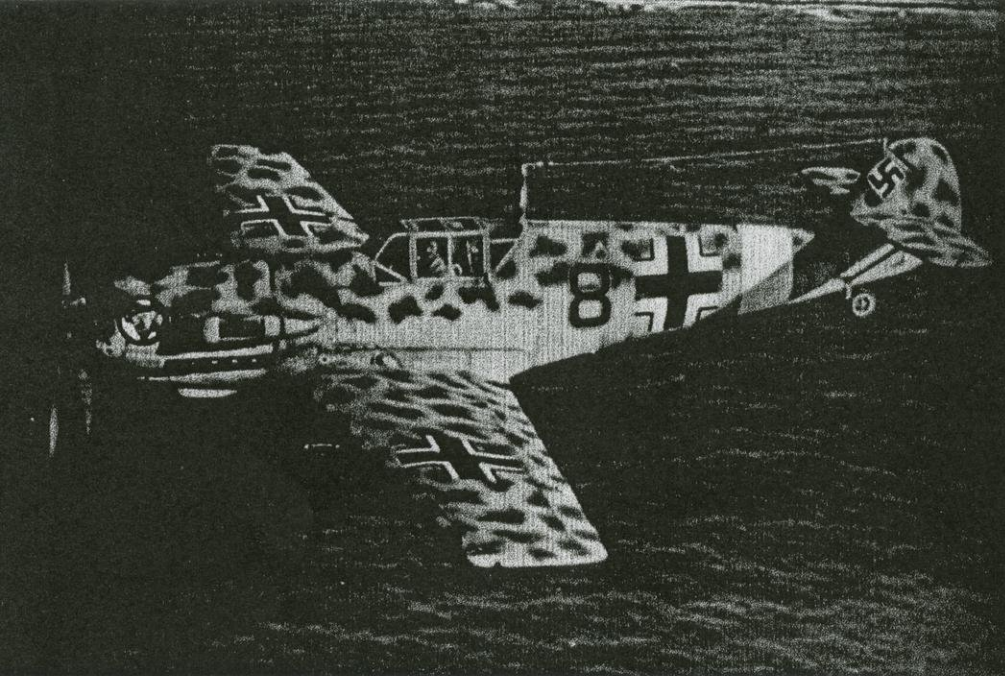
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paths leading from
leaving the train we went north
and river crossing the Rhine. We
passed thru such industrial towns
as Baden, Karlsruhe, Ludwigshafen,
Mannheim and Worms. Most of these
cities were heavily bombed and the
ruins stood out as if the horrors
of war. These cities were very clean
and all the rubble of the bombings
had been cleaned up. The twin cities
of Ludwigshafen-Mannheim were the
heaviest hit and sections of both
were completely destroyed. While going
thru Worms we passed within two
blocks of the famous cathedral of
Worms which had not been hit by
bombing. It was truly a magnificent
structure and very impressive with
its outstanding architecture. From
here we followed the Rhine up to

Mining which is at the junction
of the R.R. & main river. This city
was entirely industrial and shipping
as we saw numerous factories & barges
in the river. This city also was hit
very hard.



Bf 109E-4:N Trop/Archiv Schliephake

Messerschmitt Bf 109

Country of origin: GERMANY Makers: Messerschmitt A.G.
Purpose: Fighter. In operational use: 1939/45.

Professor Willi Messerschmitt joined the Bayerische Flugzeugwerke in 1927, and in 1932, when that company became insolvent, formed the Messerschmitt A.G. to take over its interests. In 1934, his first design, the Bf 108, appeared; this four-seat cabin monoplane is described on page 216. The first high-powered inverted Vee liquid-cooled engines, the Junkers Jumo and the Daimler-Benz DB 600, were being developed at about this time, and under the cloak of civilian usage a modified Bf 108 airframe, using the new engine, became in effect a small scale prototype for a fighter. The first prototype Bf 109 (695 h.p. Rolls-Royce Kestrel) flew in September 1935, followed in 1936 and 1937 by subsequent prototypes fitted with the 610 h.p. Jumo 210A. The Bf 109 followed the familiar civil prototype-record breaker-Spanish War train of development common to so many other German aircraft of the period; Bf 109s won three contests in the military aircraft competitions at Zurich in 1937 and on 11th November that year a machine with a specially boosted DB 601 of 1,650 h.p. set up a new World Air Speed Record of 379.4 m.p.h. which stood for two years. Meantime, the Bf 109B-1 (635 h.p. Jumo 210D) had entered production to equip the Condor Legion in the Spanish Civil War, being joined later by the Bf 109C. Experience in this campaign led to further variations, particularly in armament, and in 1939, discarding the Bf 109D after only a small production batch, the Bf 109E entered quantity production, powered by the 1,100 h.p. DB 601A and armed with two 20 mm. cannon and two 7.9 mm. machine guns. Soon replacing all earlier Bf 109s in Luftwaffe service, the Bf 109E remained the standard single seat fighter for the first three years of the war. Heavy losses in the Battle of Britain and elsewhere, however, forced the German authorities to consider the adaptation of the Bf 109 as a defensive fighter rather than an offensive one. The result was the Bf 109F (1,200 h.p. DB 601N), which featured a much refined and more streamlined airframe and reduced armament—one 20 mm. cannon and two 7.9 mm. machine guns. (After introduction of the later G



Bf 109G-2s

series, the Fs were adapted to carry underwing R.P.s. and retained in service in the ground attack role.) The next development, the Bf 109G "Gustav", first reported in the summer of 1942 in Russia and North Africa, was thereafter used extensively in all theatres until the capitulation, and was eventually produced in greater numbers than all the other Bf 109 versions put together. The Bf 109G-1 (1,475 h.p. DB 605A) had a pressurized cockpit and an armament of one 20 mm. cannon and two 7.9 mm. machine guns. The DB 605D engine, giving 1,800 h.p. with boost, was fitted to the G-5, which also introduced a modified fin and rudder; the G-6 was more heavily armed, with an engine-mounted 30 mm. MK 108 cannon, two 13 mm. nose machine guns and two 20 mm. cannon in underwing containers. Some G-6s were used as rocket-firing ground attack aircraft. The Bf 109G-8 was a photo-reconnaissance variant with reduced armament, and the designation Bf 109G-12 covered certain G-1 airframes modified as trainers with two-seat cockpits. Later variants included the Bf 109H, a long-span high altitude project which did not enter service (being discarded in favour of the Ta 152H); the Bf 109K, which was generally similar to the G except for minor structural changes, and which saw limited service; and the Bf 109L, a G-type airframe with Junkers Jumo 213 engine and greater span, a project which was unfinished when the war ended. One other interesting variant, which did not see service; was the Bf 109T, a special deck-landing model with increased wing area, adapted from a Bf 109E in 1940.

Bf 109s, originally supplied from Germany in 1937 and subsequently built by the Hispano company, have remained in service to the present day with the Spanish Air Force—now powered, ironically enough, by the very brand of engine that helped shoot them out of the sky in 1940—the Rolls-Royce Merlin!

BRIEF TECHNICAL DETAILS

(Bf 109G-10):
Engine: One 1,800 h.p. (with boost)
Daimler-Benz DB 605D inline.
Span: 32 ft. 8½ in.
Length: 29 ft. 4 in.
Height: 7 ft. 8 in.
Weight Empty: 4,330 lb.
Loaded: 7,700 lb.
No. in crew: One.
Max. Speed: 428 m.p.h. at 24,250 ft.
Service Ceiling: 41,200 ft.
Normal Range: 350 miles.
Armament: One 30 mm. MK 108 cannon firing through the spinner (optional), two 13 mm. MG 131 machine guns on top of the cowling.



Fw 190F-8 Hanfried Schliephake

Focke-Wulf Fw 190

Country of origin: **GERMANY**
Purpose: **Fighter and ground attack.**

Makers: **Focke-Wulf Flugzeugbau G.m.b.H.**
In operational use: **1941/45.**

Widely regarded by both sides as probably the best fighter which Germany produced during the Second World War, the Fw 190 flew in prototype form on 1st June 1939 as a "second string" to the Messerschmitt Bf 109. Despite some mistrust by the Reichsluftministerium of air-cooled radial engines, the BMW 132 powered early prototypes underwent very successful flight trials and the Fw 190 became Germany's first radial-engined monoplane fighter. Its subsequent achievements should certainly have allayed any doubts the RLM may have had, although they were cautious in their early use of the type and it was not seen over the United Kingdom until August 1941. The original production series (Fw 190A) were fitted with the more powerful BMW 801 engine, in sub-types differing principally in firepower. The next major production series was the Fw 190D, the "long-nosed" model powered by the Junkers Jumo 211 engine, which was introduced into service in 1943. The installation of a liquid-cooled Jumo inline engine brought several structural alterations to the Fw 190 airframe, although the annular radiator duct of the Jumo preserved the "radial" engine appearance. Standard wings and tailplane of the A series were retained, but the fuselage was lengthened to 33 ft. 11 in., and the fin slightly widened. Provision was made, in the Fw 190D-12 and -13, for mounting a 30 mm. MK 108 cannon in the engine Vee to fire through the airscrew blades. The installation of MW50 power boost in the engine stepped up the performance, the Fw 190D-12 having a maximum speed of 453 m.p.h. at 37,000 feet. Further development of the Jumo-powered D series thereafter continued under the new designation of Ta 152 (see page 197). There was no Fw 190E and the Fw 190F was developed from the A, with additional armour and no outer wing guns, for ground attack duties. The Fw 190G was a fighter-bomber, normally capable of carrying one 1,100 lb. or 2,200 lb. bomb slung under the centre fuselage.

BRIEF TECHNICAL DETAILS

(Fw 190A-8):

Engine: One 2,100 h.p. (with boost)

BMW 801D-2 radial.

Span: 34 ft. 5½ in.

Length: 29 ft. 0 in.

Height: 13 ft. 0 in.

Weight Empty: 7,000 lb.

Loaded: 9,750 lb.

No. in crew: One.

Maximum Speed: 408 m.p.h. at 20,600

Normal Range: 500 miles.

Service Ceiling: 37,400 ft.

Armament: Four 20 mm. MG 1

cannon and two 13 mm. MG 1
machine guns.

Little did I realize as I struggled out of bed on the morning of February 25, 1944 that I was never to see that bed again. It was at the absurd hour of 0230 that the sergeant awakened me. This was an indication that we were going on a long mission. Upon leaving the barracks, I glanced at the sky and noticed it to be starlit and clear and the air bore a frosty sting. I was certain that the mission would "be on." The breakfast consisted of the usual fare of powdered eggs, toast and coffee. Really not a very wholesome meal. Riding the truck down to the briefing room we all were joking about and casting aspersions at the mission. I had flown the whole week previously so all of my flying equipment was ready and in good condition. After checking out my heated suit, gloves, boots and parachute I went into the briefing room where we were to learn the details of the mission and targets. When finally the map was uncovered all crew members heaved a sigh of despair and anguish. This was a very hard and dangerous mission. We had been "briefed" on it before. Also it was the longest trip into Germany ever assigned our group. This meant plenty of flak and an over abundance of fighters. At the briefing we were given such information as the position we were to fly in, time of take-off, route to fly, the various flak positions and the number and type of fighters we were to expect at given points. All this information was necessary to carry out the mission. After this I sojourned to the bombardier briefing room where I was given the bomb load, metro data, target charts and various other information.

Then I went to the locker room where I proceeded to don my flying equipment which consisted of two pairs of socks, long woolen trousers, heated suit and boots over

2of11

which I wore lined flying boots. As the temperature was to be fairly warm, only an estimated -32 C., I just wore a woolen shirt under my heated suit. I topped this off with flying coveralls, scarf, helmet with goggles and three pairs of gloves-one silk, one heated leather and one heavy leather gauntlet. I packed all my bombing equipment, heavy leather jacket, chute and heavy leather trousers in the parachute bag and then went to see Father Murphy, our chaplain, and received the Sacraments.

This was followed by the truck ride out to the plane. Here I met the enlisted men who were checking their guns and ammunition. I also checked my guns and also inspected the 12 HE Demolition bombs, the bomb sight, the first aid equipment and the oxygen and microphone systems. By this time Bill and Doug had started the engines and it wasn't long before we were airborne. The time of take off was 0705 and soon we were climbing through the wispy cirrus clouds to form the group.

My last view of England , as all the previous views, showed the fields, small villages and large cities including London. Over the channel we all went to our positions and checked in to the pilot and charged and loaded our guns for anytime now we could expect fighter attacks. Ahead was the coast of France and I could see that the groups ahead were already in flak and we were soon to follow. For some reason this heavy , accurate flak held no fear for me. Down below were the beautiful fertile fields of France now torn up by bombings.

Our first sign of disaster appeared about 50 miles N.E. Of Paris. About 13,000 feet below we saw a crippled "Fort" heading back to England . However it never did reach friendly soil as it was under attack by about 9 FW 190s, and soon chutes were seen coming from the stricken craft.

The sun was now very bright and not a cloud in the sky. This enabled us to have a very good view of the beautiful city of Paris. Our course now took us south by east and quite regularly we were harassed by flak. For some unknown reason our fighter escort didn't show up so we knew we in for some hot battles. Some 20,000 feet below us lay Saarbrücken and this city greeted us with a hot flak barrage. Some of the groups ahead of us were under fighter attack so we again checked and fired our 50s. However, we were not molested and flew steadily on our way. Probably this mission wouldn't be so tough.

At the I.P. every ship opened their bomb bay doors. The target was in sight. Light, heavy caliber flak was being shot up at us. The sights were synchronized and the bombs went on their way. The last bomb had scarcely left the ship when we received a direct burst of flak in our no. 3 engine. Doug feathered props and we resigned ourselves to the fact of flying home on three engines. Suddenly, specks in the sky—fighters. We were their target and our useless engine proved quite tempting. In the first pass by the enemy fighters our no.2 engine was hit and the oil pressure dropped. Doug had trouble feathering it as it was “running away.” We tried to stay in formation but with two engines gone our air speed was not sufficient to enable us to “stick in.”

We peeled away from the formation and started our battle. We were heading for France. The fighters began their attack. There were both F.W. 190s and Me 109s. Our guns drew blood on every attack. Our tail gunner was the first to send one down. “Dutch” in the upper turret blew up an F.W. 190 with a long burst only one pass from the nose. And I sent one down in flames and damaged another. The mad chatter of our guns hammered thru out the ship. We were slowly being shot to ribbons. Suddenly Bill gave

the order, "put on your chutes and prepare to bail out!" I got out of the turret and my flak suit and attached my chest chute. Doug lowered the wheels as a signal to the attackers that we were bailing out. The immediately held their fire—good sportsmanship!! Fritz pulled the emergency door and stepped on the nose wheel! Disaster! I tugged at Fritz and kicked at the wheel all to no avail. Our 'inter plane' was shot out so we had no connection with the pilot. I yelled but could not be heard above the din. I checked his chute to see if it was on properly and crawled up to let the wheel down. Doug was on the catwalk ready to go out. He asked why I wasn't out so I told him and he come back with, "Are you scared?" to which I replied quite frankly, "Scared to death!" We shook hands and with "I'll see you on the ground" out he went. I scrambled back to the nose and Fritz was gone. My bomb sight was hit by 20mm cannon shells and pretty thoroughly wrecked—so I just kicked off the telescope and went back to the bomb bay. I checked the rear of the ship and it was shot up, but all the fellows had left. From the catwalk I looked up at Bill who was still at the controls. I yelled at him to get out. He maintained that he would soon follow. I looked at the clock on the panel and it was 3:15.

Looking at the ground, I judged our altitude at 12,000 to 14,000 feet. Quite high, but let's go! Muttering a short prayer I went out. My speed was terrific and I was spinning quite a bit. I pulled the cord but and the chute didn't open so I began to pull silk and it started to come out. The shroud wrapped around my right boot and with the pop and jerk of the chute opening my boots were sent speeding through the air. I was now some 6 to 8,000 feet in the air. Upon the opening of the chute, I became aware of the acute silence. The silence was only broken by the drone of engines and cannon fire. Two F.W. Pilots circled about us. I was suspended helplessly and completely at their mercy. Here again

their sportsmanship was revealed as they saluted me and I returned it and they went off to resume firing at our ship which was going down in a long glide. Regardless of the endeavors and incessant firing of the attackers the gallant ship did not burst into flames, but glided into a peaceful looking meadow which became her grave.

Continuing my slow descent, I floated over three small villages and noticed people were watching my letdown. When I saw that I was going to land into a large tract of woods, I tried to spill my chute so as to enable me to land in a small clearing. However, the ground winds carried me on. Crossing my arms over my face, I crashed through the lofty branches and came to a jerking halt as the silk canopy caught in the branches. The jerk sent me crashing against the tree trunk. Immediately my left side from the shoulder on became numb. Now my canopy came loose from the branches and I fell about 30 feet landing with an awful jar in a sitting position and knocking the wind out of me. I could move my left arm and leg so I felt safe. My first thought was "German soil" and I muttered a short prayer of thankfulness for my safe descent. [A SHORT BREAK OF 2 AND ONE HALF HOURS WILL HAVE TO BE OMITTED HERE FOR SECURITY REASONS. My emphasis]

From the point of my capture I was escorted by my captors to the small village of Patsdorf. On the way to the village my abandoned chute had been found and one of the privates carried it for me. The village was typical of German villages with 300 population. The few streets were muddy and shaggy cattle and fat hogs roamed at will among the populace. Undoubtedly, I was the first captured airman to be brought here as the whole population turned out to welcome me. The people were extremely friendly as was evidenced by the fact that I was very well treated. I was taken to the home of the only

doctor. He and his wife spoke fair English. I was placed on the stairs of the house and the German corporal went to use a phone.

The doctor's wife was very kind as she washed the blood from my face with some Eau de Cologne and gave me 3 cubes of sugar and a water glass of whiskey which she insisted that I drink and it did quiet my nerves and lull the pain in my left side. A young lady of about 23 enviously eyed the silk of my chute. I then passed some of my cigarettes out to the crowd and this increased the friendship

The doctor examined my limp left side and assured me that it was only bruised and not broken. My ribs, however, were declared broken under his observations. He wanted to help me, but he had no supplies. Just before I was marched away the doctor's wife gave me six small cakes. As I left the village, the entire crowd followed me and there I bid a fond farewell to some helpful, friendly people.

We passed through a smaller village where I got a drink of water and then I was told we were to meet a comrade of mine the in the next village. I had no idea who it could be, but on being taken a building filled with Germans I met Doug. We didn't say a word, but our glances spoke enough. Pictures of Hitler and Goering hung on the walls. We were finally marched away and while on the road we were met by a car which stopped and out of it stepped a tall officer of the Gestapo. In broken English he yelled at us as he pointed his pistol at us, "Six questions and you live or you die. Have your choice!" Doug and I both said in a hushed voice we wont tell that ----- a damn thing.

We were led into the Mercedes Benz and driven about 5 miles to Seitz with the Gestapo boy still fuming. In Seitz we stopped at 10 Herman Goering Strasse Upon entering the building, I was sent to a wine cellar under guard while Doug was kept in for

interrogation. In the basement I saw a rustic sword but the guard had a gun. After about 45 minutes, Doug was sitting by the stove and I was taken to the desk. Across from me sat an officer with the skull and crossbones on his cap. On the desk there were various maps and one of them had 8 tiny flags stuck in it. It showed where 8 of the crew was captured. Mine wasn't shown and he didn't ask me to locate it. He offered me a cup of ersatz coffee and a German cigarette. He again gave me the ultimatum, "Six questions and you live or you die!" Then he asked me my name, rank and serial number which was to be given by order of the Geneva Conference. After I answered these, he said, "Now remember-you live or you die!" "Now tell me your squadron, group, and squadron commander," To this I replied, "I am sorry sir, but I am not permitted to answer that." He was now becoming quite angry and laid his pistol on the table. Then he asked me, "Now tell me what were you flying how many men and machine guns on the plane?" Again I came back with the answer, "I'm sorry sir, I'm not permitted to answer that." To this he said, "Well I know you were flying a four-engined bomber with 10 men and 10 machine guns. He then gave me another cigarette and after a brief pause, he again leveled his pistol at me. He now said, "You are not a good soldier for you don't tell me what I want to know. Now, you must answer this question or you will die!" This was becoming monotonous, this continual threatening along with the multiple part questions.. "Now you must tell me what is the group letter on the tail of your plane, your group commander's name and where is your field?" To this again came my reply, "I'm sorry sir, I'm not permitted to answer that."

He slammed his pistol on the table, jumped up and kicked a panel out of the desk, knocked over a chair and kicked the door and stomped out of the room.

In about 2 minutes he returned with a blank, gave to the German sergeant, saying in German, "Tell the captive he has to fill this out or we will beat and torture him at the next place." To this the German sergeant replied, "I'll tell him, but you but you know he won't be tortured." "Yes," was the comeback, "but we can scare him." This was enough for me as I could understand the language quite well and I wouldn't fall for their bluffs. While the sergeant was explaining the form to me, the Gestapo officer left never to be seen again, and another officer, this of the Luftwaffe, stepped in. He was a very friendly fellow, and soon he was telling me about his flying career in a FW 190.

One of the tales he related was that on an order of the Luftwaffe, a pilot must expend all his ammunition against a bomber raid and that a pilot must shoot down a bomber in 70 missions or on the 71st he must get a bomber if he has to ram it. Failure to comply with this order results in a courts martial and the latter in death by a firing squad. This officer, Lt. Wagner, about 26, boasted of his 7 victories explaining that each engine was a victory. He asked me if I desired a doctor as my left side was paining me very badly. I declined the offer and he went on to explain that he admired us for our courage as fliers.

A short while later a car came and we went about 10 miles to a garrison in Falzburg where Doug and I were put in solitary cells. A guard brought us some ersatz coffee and some dark, damp bread which was to be our bread for our stay in Germany. The bread was very repulsive, but I was very hungry. Lt. Wagner came by and asked me whether I wanted a doctor, but I declined again. However, in a very short time a doctor came into the cell and examined my arm and my ribs. They proclaimed some six to eight ribs broken for which they could do nothing, but they massaged my arm and it felt better

after that. They also said I may have a hernia.

After that I took stock of the cell. Nothing much in this 3x4x8 cell except a bed of wooden planks with a slight rise for a pillow. Also a light bulb and 4 heavy iron bars on the window which could not be opened. Sleeping on this bed was very uncomfortable and time passed slowly. During the next day and night, Doug, who was in the next cell, and I kept in contact by tapping on the walls. Our food was very meager in quantity and highly inferior in quality to any food I ever ate. I was locked up there from Friday night until Sunday morning. Most of the time I spent worrying if my family were to find out soon that I was still alive. I also worried very much if Margie would wait for me.

This prison was actually a garrison that was still manned. Contrary to all my former beliefs, we were very well treated and fed three times a day. On Sunday morning at about five o'clock, we were awakened and taken out of our cells. Here we saw Bill awaiting us. I was truly very pleased to see him as I had not seen him since I left the ship. Immediately, we were marched out of the garrison and thru this quiet town to the station. People there did not seem the least bit hostile towards us. We boarded a very unique train which moved along at a slow pace. The coach was one big room with several benches and a small stove at the far end. We went only a few miles and changed trains. Just as dawn was breaking on this cold, frosty winter's morning, we boarded a very modern train for Metz. This ride took about two hours and went through some very nice farming country. Metz was a very modern, clean city with a very large station. Here we stayed for about an hour waiting for a train. In the station we had a light lunch of dark bread, lardy sausage and some hot ersatz coffee. The French woman slipped us two glasses of cognac. Most of the people were French and very curious and inquisitive. I noticed a very pretty girl of

about 24 all dressed for skiing or mountain climbing. She was sitting at the table across from us and she seemed to be sorry at our plight. Also, a brakeman on the train came in to look at us and he seemed to be eager to help us. Later this man patted us on the back as he went into the train. Here in this station I saw my first example of the highly vaunted, arrogant "Hitler Jugend." These six members were about 15 years old and extremely forward and haughty. After a wait of about an hour, we went outside and had a fairly good view of the city of Metz. The city was very quaint and very unfamiliar to our cities. One of the outstanding peculiarities was that most of the houses, regardless of size, had two chimneys. One of the chimneys had a large nest on it, but we couldn't see any birds.

Our train pulled in and we boarded it to resume our journey to prison. The next big city we passed thru was Saarbrücken. Here we turned south and came to another city which must have been Nancy, France. The country between Metz and Nancy was very picturesque with its small farms and villages. Also, the terrain was becoming more mountainous and this added to the beauty of it. From here we turned east and finally came to the Rhine River and Germany itself. Here, we were high in the beautiful Alps mountains.

At the little town of Freiburg we changed trains and spent about one half hour there. This small town was very unique as the houses were built on the mountainsides and, as a result, there were but semblances of streets as the houses were built in irregular lines. Most of them built out on the mountainsides and only had paths leading from them.

After boarding the train, we went north following and criss crossing the Rhein.

We passed thru such industrial towns as Baden, Karlsruhe, Ludwigshafen, Mannheim and Wurm. Most of these cities were heavily bombed and the ruins stood out, one of the horrors of war. These cities were very clean and all the rubble of the bombings had been cleared up. The twin cities of Ludwigshafen and Mannheim were the heaviest hit and sections of them were completely destroyed. While going thru Worms we passed within two blocks of the famous cathedral of Worms which had not been hit by bombing. It was truly a magnificent structure with its outstanding architecture.

From here we followed the Rhein up to Mainz which was at the junction of the Rhein and Main rivers. This city was industrial and shipping as we saw numerous factories and barges in the rivers. This city also was hit very hard.

Typist's note: The journal ends abruptly here. It would be interesting to know why. The journal starts in ink and finishes in pencil. Gib may have run out of writing tools, had them confiscated, or perhaps had to hide the journal. Sadly, I guess we will never know. I do know of at least one escape attempt which was successful until he walked back into camp of his own free will. Thus, I think confiscation is a possibility regarding writing tools. Anyway, I have been true to Gib's word choice and spellings, inserting only paragraph indentations. If you check the original document, you will notice there aren't any.

