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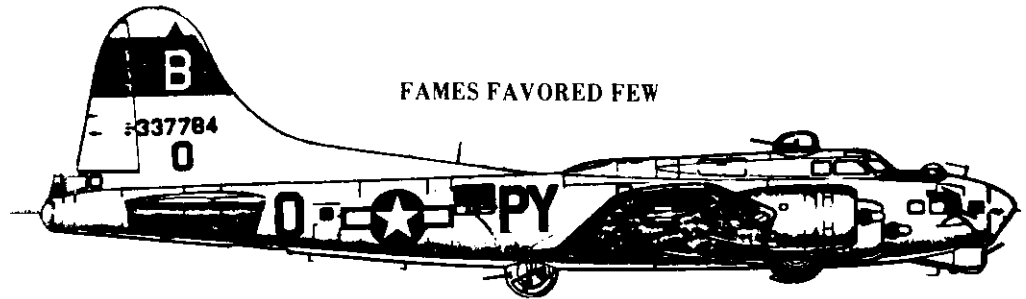
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92nd Bombardment Group NEWS



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BAD GUYS WITH BLACK HATS

by William B. Post

The Zoo

We were a mixed batch at Unter-Mansfield: warriors from nooks and crannies of the world. Some from countries that no longer exist: an Indian with a turban, an R.A.F. officer with his fancy flying boots, Polish soldiers with their WWI like uniforms, an Indo-Chinese his teeth blackened from chewing betelnuts, French, Italians, Russians, English, Scots, Aussies, South Africans, Americans with their flying jackets, and another Indian with his head shaved except for a little tuft in the back. I was an orphan of the 92nd Bmb Gp. I had on pieces of uniform from different countries donated from different P.W. camps: origin unknown.

The German belt buckle reads "God with us." Unfortunately, they had worshipped the devil. Many men of honor had prostituted themselves and had nailed that honor on the militaristic black cross of Hitler's swastika. The winter of the third Reich was coming in the spring of 1945. Their debt was massive and could never be repaid.

We played cards, read the few books available, avoided guards, chewed the fat, watched the skies and were always hungry. We lived in a timeless world from day to day. The enemy had penned us in a zoo, but he too was trapped in an ever shrinking Germany. At first, we feared only the 8 A.F. and the R.A.F., but signs that the enemy was mortally wounded brought new fears, that he would lash out and kill us all in a fit of revenge.

The Signs

Unter-Mansfield was a small town in a valley surrounded by low hills covered with pine trees. There was a village up the valley and one down. We couldn't see them but we could hear their air raid sirens. At first they were synchronized, but toward the end they would be blowing at three different times. One day ours was blowing the all clear as we watched B-17's overhead.

There must have been a concentration camp nearby, because groups of very thin men with slavic faces would

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<p>MRS VIVIAN POST JR</p>		
<p>112 WALNUT ST</p>		
<p>1945 APR 21 PM 10 20</p>		

I AM PLEASED TO INFORM YOU THAT YOUR HUSBAND TECHNICAL SERGEANT WILLIAM B POST JR PREVIOUSLY REPORTED A PRISONER OF WAR OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN RETURNED TO MILITARY CONTROL REPORT FURTHER STATES HOSPITALIZED FURTHER INFORMATION WILL BE FORWARDED WHEN RECEIVED
BY AULLO THE ADJUTANT GENERAL.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

march by carrying picks and shovels on their shoulders. They wore striped uniforms that looked like pajamas. They seemed happy enough and would smile and wave to us. I asked a guard who they were. "Workers" was all he said. We had no knowledge what those poor souls were going through.

A training field for fighters was close by. The planes used to come over us, their engines sounding like volkwagens without mufflers. They flew only when the all clear was on and as soon as the fore-alarm wailed, they'd come screaming back. One day they just stopped for good.

There was no hidden radio here like there was at Ober-Mansfield and we knew only what we could see. There was bombing around us day and night. At night, the sky would light up and distant rumblings would vibrate the building. During the day the 8th A.F. came with more and more planes, as if they were spawning, opposed only by flak. They let more bombs go at once and shook the earth even though they were miles away. The P-51's, who at first stayed in units of fours, now roamed alone over this battered land. They would fly low, pop up over the hill and strafe the town before the Germans could bring their guns to bear.

The Germans brought a large group of P.W.'s on a forced

The 92nd, to me, became by far the best wing in the 8th AF and the best outfit I have ever been associated with in the 35 years I spent in the Air Force. I could stand up here all night and talk about the things we learned. We started to put up enough bombers to go to several targets at the same time. The Germans couldn't handle that. I think Kiel on December 13th was the first time I saw F-51's go over the target with us. I don't know if you all remember that day or not. When Dolittle took over in January, the Fighters were told, "Your job is not just to escort the bombers but to destroy the Luftwaffe." So they started flying out ahead of us and attacking the German aircraft when they took off, they strafed the airfields, and flew as weather scouts and did an amazing number of things.

I told this story at Wichita and if you heard it, the hell with it. Old _____ of Rescue was there and said you guys did five things a day wonderfully well, and that reminded me of President Coolidge. And one good thing about this audience, most of them I talked to never heard of Coolidge. President and Mrs. Coolidge were going through this hen house one day and the man showing Mrs. Coolidge around told her he wanted to show her this magnificent rooster. It performed five times a day. Mrs. Coolidge said, "Would you point that out to the President." The President came by in a little while and the manager told him Mrs. Coolidge wanted him to see the rooster who performed five times a day. Mr. Coolidge said, "Is that with the same hen?" and the manager said, "Oh, no, that's with five different hens," and Mr. Coolidge said, "Did you point that out to Mrs. Coolidge?"

Those fighters performed five times a day, and we did, too. You remember D-day we went tactical. We started to support the Army, and that's the next lesson I learned. There is not one service that is going to fight and win a war, we are going to have to work together. In Vietnam what was wrong was the enemy had no urgency on his side. We bombed, and bombed very well, but no one followed up with it. Patton was not there with 50 tanks to take advantage of what we did. The enemy had no urgency as he could trundle two mortar shells down the Ho Chi Min trail, and he could shoot a village up tonight or next month or next year, he did not care. So we did not have that combination. I even became a little fond of the Navy and that took a hell of a lot of doing. But it is going to take us all and I learned that.

The next thing I learned concerned Allies. The British took a fearful beating. I was reading just a little while ago a book by a German on the Air War, and I did not realize how many airplanes they were losing. Those night fighters were getting pretty damned tough, I do not think we would have done any better at night than we did in daylight. I really don't. They had radar, and they had one raid, I told you about a while ago. They dispatched 790 bombers and 75 were shot down and 72 were severely damaged, and they could not fly again, and you know those are losses. So they were taking those 40 to 50 losses every night, so I do not think flying at night would have helped.

I also believe you only hit military targets. Hitting the cities did not do a bit of good but make the Germans mad. You know they just got tougher all the time. And when you guys went to Schweinfurt—I read up on it—you quit too soon. That ball bearing bit really would have hurt the enemy and you knocked out forty percent of their production at Schweinfurt but you did not go back. You gave up too soon. I remember my tail gunner one

time telling me there was a ME 109 on our tail and he didn't have a ball bearing in the whole airplane. But he was still flying. We finally got smart and when we hit the synthetic oil plants we had Germany on the run, and that was the day we won the technological war. We hit Mersburg and those synthetic oil plants and that killed them. We should have been on those targets a lot earlier.

It's really tough in this day and age as to what to do with Military Force. You can say there is nothing that has a Military solution to it. But I will tell you if you are not ready to use it, and do not believe in what you believe in, and have the strength to back it up you are going to get into another one of those damned things. The only thing that bothers me if we do is that we will not have you bunch of guys around to fight it. That is what I regret more than anything. So hang in there.

We are indebted to Sam Yandian for recording Moose's speech. Here is the note that accompanied the tape.

Dear Shel:

Just finished reading 92nd BG Newsletter. Fortunately, I had recorded Moose's speech, and I copied it off for you so that you can have it printed for the membership. I know this will become a great asset for the 92nd archives.

Sam Yandian (OK)

BAD GUYS WITH BLACK HATS

(Continued from page 2)

yelled back. A small group yelled, "We are Americans." "Americans, my God!" said one and he jumped back in his tank. He drove it forward and flattened a section of fence. Another tanker asked us if we wanted anything. "Food and booze," filled the air. "All we got is C-rations," a tanker said apologetically. "We love them," we shouted. "You guys must be nuts," he said. All the tankers dropped C-rations and booze liberally on the ground. We all had a party in the yard. I spoke to the tanker colonel. He told me they had spotted the man we had in the tower. They thought he was an artillery observer. He said they were about ready to crush our place when the P-51's radioed that we had a red cross on the roof. "You were very lucky," he said.

That night we went to bed with full stomachs and half looped. In the middle of the night there was an earthquake roar as all the tanks fired at once. We all fell out of our bunks. I don't know whether it was a salute or a joke but they only fired once and were gone in the morning.

The next day, we were alone again when a USO unit arrived. They were upset to find out they were ahead of the infantry, but they put on a show anyway and we all sang and had fun. The infantry arrived two days later with a convoy of ambulances to bring us back to the real world. For us, the war was technically over.

I wish to thank the brave men of the 92nd Bomb Group and especially, my crew and also the other warriors of the world I met. From them, I absorbed courage and inspiration. God Bless Them All!

Route as Brief'd—reigns no more.
Blazing guns—long since gone.
But the old warriors war,
Goes on and on.

THE END