

Zabower, Walter J.

Bethlehem Gunner "Scratched" As Bomber Blasts Nazi Germany

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AN EIGHTH AAF BOMBER COMMAND STATION, England—Skillful maneuvering and evasive tactics of a pilot, 2nd Lt. Arthur G. Neal of 312 West Washington Street, Little Rock, Arkansas, brought the Eighth Air Force Flying Fortress "Mission Belle" back safely from the recent AAF bombing assault on Bremen, Germany, with the oxygen system shot out of the left side and the plane riddled with flak and machine gun bullets.

During the severe attack by the Huns fighters, a .20 millimetre shell landed in the radio compartment of the Fortress and exploded, knocking Technical Sergeant John W. Thaxton, radio-gunner of 16 Prospect Park, S. W. Brooklyn, New York, off his feet but leaving him uninjured. Another shell of the same calibre then knocked out part of the oxygen system, and Staff Sergeant Melvin W. Kauffman, right waist gunner from Thompson-town, Pa., was on the point of losing consciousness while changing to another oxygen outlet. But Technical Sergeant Matthew S. Leo of 67 Cleveland St., Orange, N. J., top turret gunner on his 25th bombing trip in Nazi-controlled skies, came to his aid and connected Kauffman's mask with the subsidiary outlet.

Although hampered by lack of

oxygen, all gunners remained at their stations to fight off the attacking Luftwaffe and the only injury received was a scratched cheek suffered by Staff Sergeant Walter J. Zabower, left waist gunner of 808 Hayes Street, Bethlehem, Pa.

Bombs from the Fortress hit Bremen right "on the nose" according to 2nd Lt. Leslie S. Norgard of 915 S. 38 Ave., Omaha, Nebraska, bombardier.

"When the fighters were thickest, we all did some good praying", stated Lt. Neal, who was on his 24th bombing attack.

Co-pilot of the Fortress was 2nd Lt. Norman R. Magee of Rusk, Tex., who was flying his fifth attack on Nazi Europe and did his share in helping bring the "Mission Belle" home safely.

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