

Zabower, Walter

Sgt. Walter Zabower

Had Narrow Escape

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Gunner On Flying Fortress Only Scratched As Plane Is Badly Hit

ATLANTIC CITY—Three shells exploded in the Fort's radio room, three bursts in the bomb bay and at the same time another .20 mm. hit his waist gun ammunition box, the concussion knocked him over, but with all that action going on all about him the worst S. Sgt. Walter Zabower suffered was a slight face scratch.

"None of the other fellows were hurt, either, said the sergeant who is at the Army Air Forces Redistribution Station No. 1, here. He is the son of Mrs. Frances Zabower, of 808 Hays Street, Bethlehem, Pa., and is awaiting to be reassigned from here.

In telling the story of his narrow escape the 23-year-old gunner admitted that the raid was the toughest one of the 25 combat missions he had been on.

"It was December 9 and our target was Bremen. We had an escort of P-47s, but for some reason that I never learned they left us before we got to the target. That's when the Me 110s and JU 88s really came in at us.

"We were the last plane in the formation and I still don't understand how it held together as badly shot up as it was.

"At the time I was too busy to notice it but I learned later that several shells had gone right through the ship, missing me and the other waist gunner. By luck, none of them exploded.

"We made our bombing run and had to fight off the Luftwaffe all the way to the coast where it dropped us. The plane was a complete wreck, but we reached our field safely and didn't have to make a crash landing, although the last I heard they were still working on the ship trying to get it back into flying shape again," said the gunner.

The sergeant who is the son of Mrs. Frances Zabower carries the Air Medal with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

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