

Lt. Col. Robert P. Montgomery, Recently Promoted, Now Missing

FEB 22 1944

A war department telegram was received at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John L. Montgomery, 1953 Eaton Avenue, yesterday stating that their son, Lieutenant Colonel Robert P. Montgomery is missing in action in the European area since February 11.

February 10 the Montgomerys received a letter from their son dated January 29, stating that he had been promoted from major to lieutenant colonel in the Army Air Forces and had been awarded the air medal.

When the word came yesterday reporting the 27-year-old flier a casualty the family at once thought he had been killed but on further investigation they learned that a casualty of war may include a number of possibilities, one of which is that he may have parachuted to safety or might be a prisoner of war. It is to this hope that the family is courageously clinging.

Another February proved an eventful month for the young flier; in 1942 after his return to the United States after having been in England as an observer of the Royal Air Force's fighting tactics, before our entry into the war, he was piloting a plane over San Francisco Bay when he collided with another pursuit ship. Young Montgomery, then a lieutenant, brought his craft under

control again after it had locked wings with another plane and continued flying in formation. The pilot of the other ship was able to parachute to safety.

Captain Gordon L. Brandt, who was killed in a plane crash in North Carolina last August, was a brother-in-law of Montgomery.

Colonel Montgomery gained his first flying experience at the Allentown-Bethlehem Airport and enlisted in the air corps in the early part of November, 1939, with Louis A. Almeida, of Allentown, who as an AAF captain was killed in a plane crash in the Far Eastern theatre of war early in 1942.

Commissioned at Randolph Field, Texas, in 1940, he was promoted to the grade of first lieutenant the following year, advanced to a captain's rank in May, 1942, and in January, 1943, became a major. He has been in the European theatre of operations since last August 18.

Graduate of Bethlehem High and Lafayette College, he had been employed in peace time by the Lehigh Aircraft Company at the local airport. He has an older brother, Sergeant John L. (Jack) Montgomery, former department of public assistance visitor in Allentown, now stationed at Fort George Meade, Md. His sister, Mrs. Jean M. Brandt, is living at the home of the parents in Bethlehem.

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