

Hewett, James E.

Pen Argyl Pilot Bombs Jap Base After Odd Experience

JAN 3 1945

A SEVENTH AIRFORCE HEAVY BOMBER BASE IN THE MARIANAS, (AP)—Because Lt. James E. Hewett, 26, was bringing his Liberator bomber in from the direction of Tokio, the Japanese on Iwo Jima mistook him for a friend and invited him in.

Hewett, of 311 Mountain Avenue, Pen Argyl, Pa., (his wife lives at 936 East Clark Road, Ypsilanti, Mich.) was on a night mission looking for Japanese shipping around the Volcano and Bonin Islands.

"We reached a point within 300 miles of Tokio without spotting enemy surface craft, and then decided to bomb an airstrip on Iwo," he said.

"As we neared the target, a searchlight began describing a wide arc in the sky. An airplane beacon was twinkling, and the airstrips were lighted as if to welcome a friendly plane.

"Taking the cue, I put the Liberator into a gradual dive as if coming in for a landing. We flew right down the center of the runway at 9,000 feet and dropped our bombs squarely on the target.

"The Japs were so surprised they didn't fire a single anti-aircraft gun."

Hewett's father is in the piece rate office of Bethlehem Steel Company here, and his mother is a teacher in the Bushkill Township schools.

January 3, 1945