

Griffiths, Owen P.

Walnutport Sergeant on Naples Raid

A 22-year-old Walnutport radio operator-tail gunner on a Flying Fortress who pressed dresses in a Slatington dress factory and is now pressing a gun, nicknamed "Madge" for his recent bride, took part in the heaviest Allied raid on Naples Saturday.

July 20, 1943
The young Staff Sergeant Owen Pritchard Griffiths, son of Mrs. Harriet and the late Plato Griffiths, 474 Main Street, Walnutport, is quoted in yesterday's New York Times in a wirelessly dispatched to that paper following the raid as follows:

"We zoomed over, smacked the railroad yards and blew them sky high."

He added that fires and smoke could be seen 60 miles from Naples.

The Army Air Forces staff sergeant's mother received a letter from her son yesterday in which he wrote of a recent raid that created such intense excitement among the German fliers that Griffiths heard them on his radio set "cussing" the Americans. Owen told his mother: "They can keep right on cussing because this is only the beginning of what they are really going to get from us."

The flying sergeant was married on May 5 in Akron, Ohio. With his plane temporarily grounded there for repairs, he telegraphed for his Slatington High school sweetheart to meet him there. And there he wed Madeline Gable, 21, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Gable, of Walnutport.

After graduating from Slatington High school in 1938 he went to work as a presser at the Judy Dress Co. in Slatington and in April, 1942, he enlisted in the Army Air Forces. He was graduated from the Air Force Technical training command at Scott Field, Ill., as a radio operator last September and then in November was graduated as a gunner from the Army Gunnery school at Harlingen, Texas.

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