

Montgomery, Robert P.

## Lt. Col. Montgomery Awarded Distinguished Service Cross, Second Highest Valor Honor

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EIGHTH AIR FORCE 20TH FIGHTER GROUP, ENGLAND.—The Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second highest award for valor, was presented recently to Lt. Col. Robert P. Montgomery, of 1953 Eaton Avenue, Bethlehem, by Lt. Gen. Carl Spaatz, commander of U. S. Strategic Air Forces, in recognition of Col. Montgomery's aggressive leadership of the 20th Fighter Group in a highly successful engagement with the enemy over Merseburg, Germany.

Paced by Col. Montgomery group operations officer, the P-51 Mustang pilots destroyed 28 German Aircraft in routing superior formations of enemy fighters which were preparing to attack American Bombers.

The Pennsylvania flier shot down three of the Nazi planes—scoring two of the victories after his gun sight had been broken and while he was separated from his group and surrounded by German aircraft.

In addition to the DSC, the 28-year-old pilot holds the silver star and the order of the purple heart. He is a member of the veteran fighter group commanded by Col. Harold J. Rau, of Hempstead, N. Y.

Last March Col. Montgomery was shot down in occupied France and got back to American Lines after D-Day. The Eighth Army Air

Force gave Montgomery an "R and R" (Rest and Recreation at Home), which he spent with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John L. Montgomery, Eaton Avenue.

In a few weeks time he was back in action. The first time out he was shot down under friendly territory and came back for more.

He had to quit flying Lightnings because they cramped his muscles. "A Mustang's cockpit is just the right size for his 250 pounds," according to the AP report.

Lt. Colonel Montgomery has had a colorful career since his entry into the army, November, 1939, as an air cadet. He received his first flying experience at the Allentown-Bethlehem Airport. He became a captain in May, 1942, and received his present commission in February, 1944. He is a graduate of Bethlehem High School and Lafayette College. Soon after being made Lieutenant Colonel he was reported missing. Five months later he was reported safe and then came the visit to the home folks in July.

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