

Roth, Richard R.

Cpl. Richard Roth In Air Group Credited With Flock Of 'Firsts'

OCT 3 1944

15th AAF IN ITALY—Corporal Richard R. Roth, 21, of 1167 Arcadia Street, Bethlehem, Pa., radio mechanic on a 15th Air Force Flying Fortress, has received the blue ribbon signifying that his unit, the oldest heavy bombardment group in the European Theater, has been cited "for heroic performance of duty against the enemy."

The action for which his organization was cited occurred on February 24, of this year, when they led the heavy bombers of the 15th Air Force against the aircraft factory and installations at Steyr, Austria.

Despite fierce attacks by more than 100 enemy fighters against their unescorted formation, the Fortresses fought their way through to bomb the target successfully. The gunners destroyed four enemy fighters, probably destroyed three and damaged two others, while their own losses were one man killed and one

wounded. In all more than 35 enemy fighters were destroyed by the other bombers and their fighter escort that aided in destroying the manufacturing center.

In presenting the award, Major General Nathan F. Twining, commanding general of the 15th Air Force, stated, "The folks at home are now doubly proud of the oldest heavy bomb group in the European Theater. Its record speaks for itself."

The record of which General

Twining spoke includes: the first Flying Fortress raid on Europe, August 17, 1942 at Rouen, France; the first heavy bomber to land in Northwest Africa; the first heavy bomber to bomb from Northwest Africa; first formation to bomb Sardinia; first to bomb France from Africa; first to bomb Germany from Africa; participants in the first raid on Rome; first to land in Russia upon completion of the first shuttle mission; and the first heavy bomber to fly 100 successful missions, "Be-

lin Sleeper," now in the United States. The group now has more than 340 missions to its credit.

A graduate of Liberty High School, where he starred in football and track, Cpl. Roth enlisted in the Air Forces on March 26, 1943, and was trained as a radio mechanic at Fort Monmouth Radio School, New Jersey. He has been serving overseas for six months and has earned the European-African-Middle East Theater Ribbon with two battle stars.

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