

"Dead" Airman Safe In Prison Camp

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Lt. Gilbert G. Wright, Reported Killed in March, Writes From Germany

This is the kind of story every newspaperman hopes to write someday, the story of an unyielding hope that a loved one, given up for lost in the cataclysm of battle in the skies over Europe, may yet return some day in safety to his home and family.

It is the story of Second Lieut. Gilbert G. Wright, U. S. Army Air Forces, first reported missing on a bomber mission over Germany, later reported killed, who has written from a German prison camp that he is alive, well and as comfortable as may be expected under the circumstances.

The 23-year-old airman is a nephew of Mrs. James Murray of 2143 West Broad Street, Bethlehem, who sat this morning on the edge of a chair in her front parlor and told how a neighbor, Mrs. Edward Lewis, brought in a clipping from the Wilkes-Barre "Record" of October 12 in which there was printed the story of how Gilbert communicated with his mother from his place of imprisonment almost eight months after he had been reported dead.

Lt. Wright, who was familiar to Bethlehem athletic circles during his student days at Moravian Col-

lege when he was a member of the grid team, the basketball quintet and active in other sports, and Douglas Brown, son of Dr. and Mrs. Sydney M. Brown, Bethlehem, enlisted together in the Royal Canadian Air Force before the U. S. entered the war.

After training and being rated a pilot officers the two young men were shipped overseas, late in November of 1941. Subsequently Douglas Brown was reported killed in December the Jap attacked Pearl Harbor and the United States became a belligerent. In the course of time, Lt. Wright asked for a transfer to the Army Airforce. This was allowed and he made all his arrangements, even to ordering his uniforms. Before he could wear them, he was shot down over Germany.

Christmas Day, 1942, his mother, Mrs. Francis Davis, received word from the War Department that her son was missing in action over Germany, the date being given as September 26. In March of this year the British government sent word that Lt. Wright was "killed in the line of duty" and asked that his affairs be settled by his family.

The news of his safety is welcomed not only to his mother and relatives and a large circle of friends, but to his young English wife, whom he married May 10, 1942. And when he is free, he will see for the first time, his young son, Michael Graham Wright, born this Spring shortly after he was reported killed. Mother and son are living in Cardiff, Wales.

Lt. Wright is the son of the late George Wright of Wilkes-Barre. His mother has married a second time to Francis Davis and lives at Sacramento, Calif. A sister, Mrs. William Brong, and her son, George, are living with Mrs. Davis at present.

He was graduated at Meyers High School in Wilkes-Barre and was a member of the class of '41 at Moravian. He was a varsity football team star and played basketball and other sports. He was honorary captain of the grid team one year, but cut his academic career short to enlist in the RCAF with the American Eagle Squadron.

In his letter from the German camp, as quoted in the Wilkes-Barre paper, Lt. Wright says: "Dear Mother: This is my first letter to you. I am a prisoner of war and in good health... please don't worry about me—my shoulders are still broad. I will be allowed to write one letter and two postcards per month. You are able to write to me as much as you please. Write often as it will be wonderful. A letter is a celebration to us.

"Here at camp I have met several of my squadron mates whom I thought dead. They all thought me dead, and rejoiced very much to see me walk in. It sure takes a lot of adjustment to live a prison life, but one becomes accustomed to it after a while."

Mrs. Murray said that "Gilbert was just like a son to us. When his father died he was just a little fellow and we took him and his sister to live with us. He stayed with us when he went to Moravian for a while. It certainly is wonderful news."