



15th ARMY AIR FORCE —

Army regulations aim always at "first things first." Before a cavalry man goes to chow he feeds his mount. Before an artilleryman washes himself, he swabs his gun. As soon as possible after returning from a mission the aerial gunner — before taking care of his personal needs — cleans and adjusts his 50 calibre machine gun to put it in perfect working order for the next day. The gunner shown here is Sgt. Angele P. Benedetto, 23, tail turret gunner on a B-24 Liberator of 244 East Street, Rensselaer, N. Y.

Ploesti Again Hit by Bombers In Daylight

Bug Bombs Roar Into So. England

London (AP) Between 500 and 750 American heavy bombers roared out from Italian bases and attacked the Ploesti oil area of Rumania today, after night bombers had struck into Czechoslovakia and Germany.

The U. S. 15th Air Force heavies were escorted by Mustangs and Lightnings in the eleventh blow of the war by Mediterranean-based planes against Hitler's oil resources in the Ploesti area. A number of enemy fighters were met and flak was intense, the Allied announcement said.

In the last week, U. S. strategic air forces based in Britain and Italy have attacked more than 100 targets in Germany itself, including plants making jet-propelled robot planes, which the Allies consider a definite threat to their supremacy of the European skies, a spokesman said.

London (UP) The Germans shot an increasing number of robot bombs into Southern England and the London area in daylight today from bases on the Pas de Calais and Belgian coasts.

The Nazis apparently were attempting to demonstrate that homefront troubles did not impair their strength in accelerating the flying bomb offensive. During yesterday almost as many bombs were launched as in the opening day of the attacks more than five weeks ago.

Sgt. Angelo Benedetto Awarded Air Medal

Sgt. Angelo P. Benedetto, 23, whose wife, Lucille Benedetto, lives at Winter Park, has been awarded the Air Medal, it was announced by the 15th Army Air Force Headquarters in Italy.

In the words of the citation, "Sgt. Benedetto was awarded the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in aerial flight while participating in sustained operational activities against the enemy". A nose turret gunner, St. Benedetto is stationed in Italy with a 15th AAF Liberator bombardment group, and has taken part in attacks on many important Nazi installations, such as the ME-109 factories at Bad Voslau, for which outstanding performance special commendation was received from higher headquarters. Other

targets hit have included the oil fields of Ploesti, Rumania, defences on the road to Rome, airdromes and railroad yards in Italy, France, Rumania, Austria, and Yugoslavia.

Sgt. Benedetto entered the service on October 25, 1940. One brother, Austin Benedetto, is serving with the field artillery, and is still in the states.

Allied Air Fleets Hit Heaviest Blow

LONDON (AP) Approximately 750 heavy bombers of the U. S. 15th Air Force smashed at Rumania's Ploesti oil fields yesterday, bringing to more than 7,000 the total of Fortresses and Liberators which have struck within a six-day period at Hitler's staggered war plants and resoyrces.

Even without counting the Ploesti bombing, an air force spokesman described the Sunday through Friday onslaught as "the heaviest blows in a single week in the history of the U. S. Strategic Air Force in Europe." More than 100 targets in Germany alone were hit by 6,431 heavies.

Nose Gunner, Hurt In Ploesti Raid, Rescued By Jugo-Slavs

Looking back on his career as nose gunner on the B-24 "Lucky Gremlin." S-Sgt. Angelo Benedetto, sedan pool dispatcher, can relate some unforgettable experiences.

Probably the date Benedetto will remember longest is July 15, 1944, when the Gremlin was one of the ships to raid Ploesti. On that mission one of the engines was shot up over the target and another had to be feathered on the way back.

Two Engines Gone

"We tried to cross the Adriatic with only two engines but hit the water a mile or two from shore," recalls Benedetto. "I was wounded and don't recall much except the weird feeling of flying for quite a distance just inches above the water.

"The rubber life raft was thrown out after the ship hit and all but one member of the crew got on it. Our top turret gunner was killed in the crash. Jugo-Slav partisans had watched us go down and within a few hours they had rescued us. We were returned by C-47 to our base and I finally woke up in a hospital in Italy."

Possibly even a narrower escape for the crew of the "Lucky Gremlin" was its 10th mission, a raid on Munich. On that one, a 20-mm. shell came in through the tail of the ship, went between 100-pound oil bombs and finally lodged in the nose. Benedetto keeps the shell today as a souvenir.

The "Lucky Gremlin" was credited with seven of Herman Goering's crack fighters, the Yellow Noses, on that mission. In the process, the flaps and one tire were shot off the Gremlin and the brakes were gone.

Made Base OK

"The Gremlin made its base all right," Benedetto said, "even though nobody could figure out what kept us in the air."

Sedan pool dispatcher at Boca Raton since last February, S-Sgt. Benedetto is the wearer of the Purple Heart, the Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters, four battle stars and a Unit Citation. After the war he plans to make his home in Orlando.



S-SGT. ANGELO BENEDETTO

Given Promotion

Angelo P. Benedetto, 22, son of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Benedetto, Rensselaer, has been promoted staff sergeant somewhere in Italy, the 15th Army Air Force headquarters announces.

Sergeant Benedetto, in service since Oct. 25, 1940, is with a 15th AAF Liberator bombardment group overseas. A nose turret gunner, he now has 32 missions to his credit.

Florida Flying Ace Among Returnees At Miami Beach

MIAMI BEACH [AP] Capt. Charles W. DeWitt, P-47 Thunderbolt ace from Green Cove Springs, heads a group of eight Floridians now at the AAF redistribution station here.

A salesman in civilian life, he served with the Royal Canadian Air Force before transferring to the USAAF, and has five enemy planes to his credit. A veteran of 86 missions over Europe, the pilot holds the Distinguished Flying Cross with two oak leaf clusters and the Air Medal with three clusters.

S-Sgt. Solon M. Whitney of Auburndale, flew 28 missions in Europe as a B-24 engineer-gunner. He holds the DFC, the Air Medal with three clusters and a Presidential Unit Citation.

S-Sgt. Angelo P. Benedetto of Winter Park, served as a B-24 gunner on 51 missions in Italy. He earned the Air Medal with four clusters and the Purple Heart.

DFC WINNER

Capt. William A. Adams of Warrington Station, won the DFC during 36 missions as a B-24 pilot in the China-Burma-India theatre.

S-Sgt. Percy H. Adams of Jacksonville was a B-26 gunner on 65 missions in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. He holds the Air Medal with four clusters.

T-Sgt. Richard E. Nostrand of Bradenton, a B-24 engineer, flew 50 missions over Italy to win the DFC and the Air Medal with four clusters.

S-Sgt. James E. Wing Jr., of Center Hill, has 50 missions in Italy as a B-17 gunner-armorer to his credit. He wears the Air Medal with three clusters.

T-Sgt. Telford M. Gaskins of Plant City, wears the Air Medal after flying 60 missions in Italy as a B-24 engineer-gunner.

15th Heavies Rap Silesia

MAAF HEADQUARTERS,

Smashing through main German air defenses, up to 500 15th USAAF Forts and Libs today carried out the initial Italy-based bomber attack of the war on vital enemy oil installations at Odertal in German Silesia, 75 miles south-east of Breslau.

Mustangs provided target cover while Lightnings joined the P-51s in protecting the heavies during the perilous penetration and withdrawal flights. Several enemy formations rose from the Vienna and Budapest areas to parry the blow but many were sent down in flames by Allied fighter pilots and bomber gunners.

Only at the Odertal oil and coke plant, engaged in turning out synthetic diesel oil, were results observed. Liberator crews said a good pattern of bombs smashed into the plant area, causing fires and explosions. Other targets were not listed.

A second formation of Liberators blasted an airdrome and nearby railyards at Zagreb, capital of Yugoslavia. Flak opposition was moderate and only a few enemy fighters put in an appearance. Coverage of both targets was described as good.

Last night, Halifaxes, Wellingtons and Liberators attacked the enemy airdrome at Feursbrunn, 30 miles from Vienna, Austria. Early

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15th Heavies Rap Silesia

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reports indicated good coverage of the key enemy airport.

Mitchells of the 1st TAF yesterday ran into intense flak on missions against rail bridges north of Florence but managed to cut three of the spans. Marauders carried out five missions against communications in the Parma-Piacenza area, one by a French Air Force unit. The previous night, other Marauders completed their first night attack when they flew through heavy flak to bomb oil storage at Savona, 20 miles southwest of Genoa.

Thunderbombers and Spits handled yesterday's battle area patrol while other TAF aircraft blasted enemy air and rail facilities just behind the lines. Coastal Wellingtons, Beaufighters and Hurricanes damaged a 5,000-ton enemy vessel, sank three schooners and two barges in the Adriatic. Coastal Spits were out over Yugoslavia and northwestern Italy while Mosquitoes and Beaufighters ranged into Southern France.

Five enemy planes out of 25 not-too-aggressive fighters encountered during 15th USAAF heavy bombing operations over northern Italy yesterday were shot down by escorting Mustangs. Four MAAF aircraft were lost.