

**CPT CHARLES S. “SAM” EVANS<sup>1</sup>**  
**B-24 LIBERATOR COMBAT PILOT, 1943-1945, Serial No. O664988, ENGLAND**

Charles S. “Sam” Evans was born in Corsicana, Texas, in January 1922. His family moved to Goliad in about 1930, where he was graduated from high school. Owing to widespread unemployment during the Great Depression, at the tender age of 16 he joined the Texas National Guard based at Foster Field in Victoria, Texas. He had lied about his birth date, claiming it was 1919. Official records show that he later enlisted in the Army on 25 November 1940 when he was presumably 21, but was actually 18.



Not long after joining the Army, Sam saw a notice posted on a bulletin board: anyone wanting to take an examination for entry to military flying school should sign up. He did, and was sent to be tested. He was selected and then trained at the flying school at Kelly Field near San Antonio. Upon graduation, he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant and awarded his Aircrew Badge (“wings”).

After completing the school, he was transferred to Massachusetts and assigned to anti-submarine patrol, flying in twin engine aircraft. While still with that patrol, he was sent to Galveston – by this time, he was a co-pilot. He was then transferred to Bomber Command at Geiger Field in Spokane, Washington, where he remembers learning to fly B-24s. He was told that if he wanted to move from co-pilot to pilot and be assigned his own crew, he’d be sent for advanced training in B-24s at Peterson Field in Colorado Springs.

He earned his pilot’s wings at Peterson Field, where he was promoted to First Lieutenant. On 10 April 1944 in Topeka, Kansas, he was given a crew and flew a B-24 over the southern route<sup>2</sup> to Belfast, Ireland. He believes his orders were to land in Ireland, rather than England, in order to avoid German fighters. Thus he flew out over the Atlantic to steer clear of them, for unlike some aircraft ferried to Europe, his Liberator was alone, unaccompanied by sister ships. Once in Ireland, he and his crew travelled by sea to Scotland. He was assigned on 20 May 1944 to RAF Horsham St. Faith near Norwich near the east coast of England, about 120 miles northeast of London. There he served in the 753<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Squadron,<sup>3</sup> 458<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (Heavy),<sup>4</sup> 96<sup>th</sup> Combat Bombardment Wing, 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division, 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force.

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<sup>1</sup> By C. Clark Leone, © 2016.

<sup>2</sup> The flight took them from Topeka to Miami; then to San Juan, Puerto Rico; on to either or both Belem and Natal, Brazil; next to Dakar, Senegal (then part of French West Africa; this leg took about 11 hours); onward to Marrakesh, Morocco, a 7-hour flight; and finally to Ireland, about a 10-hour trip. The flight hours are from another pilot’s memoirs, <http://www.458bg.com/curtvogelmemoir> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>3</sup> On 24 October 1944, he and his crew were transferred to the 755<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron, which became the 458<sup>th</sup> BG’s lead Squadron. All lead crews were transferred into the 755<sup>th</sup>, while the non-lead, or “wing”, crews were moved to the other three Squadrons (752<sup>nd</sup>, 753<sup>rd</sup> and 754<sup>th</sup>).

Most B-24 crews were staunch defenders of the Liberator, and took offense if they sensed a hint that someone thought the B-17 Flying Fortress was superior. B-17 crews called the 24s “the crates the 17s came in”. Another epithet was “flying boxcar”. Sam’s response to a comparison of the two aircraft is, however, sanguine. He had flown once – as an observer – in a B-17 when on submarine patrol in Massachusetts, and calls it “a fine plane”. He does not rate one above the other, saying that each had its own advantages and disadvantages.

Between June 1944 and February 1945 while stationed at Horsham St. Faith, Sam flew 30 combat sorties (and was advanced to Captain sometime after 23 October 1944). Throughout these nine months the 458<sup>th</sup> BG operated primarily over Germany, hitting targets such as industrial areas; oil refineries; aircraft engine factories; fuel depots; canals; airfields; and railroad marshalling yards. The Group carried out support operations in addition to those strategic missions. It helped prepare for the invasion of Normandy by striking gun batteries, V-1 flying bomb and V-2 rocket sites, and airfields in France. After D-Day (6 June 1944) it bombed bridges and highways to prevent the movement of enemy materiel to the beachhead. It attacked enemy troops to aid the Allied breakthrough at St. Lo in July. During September, it hauled gasoline to airfields in France. It struck Nazi transportation lines during the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944 and January 1945.

The 458<sup>th</sup> BG arrived in England in January 1944. It completed 240 missions,<sup>5</sup> the first one in February 1944 and the last one in April 1945. To date, records reveal that over 5,500 named personnel served in the 458<sup>th</sup> and its sub-units.<sup>6</sup> Of those, nearly 592 combatants (pilots and crew members) were killed in action (252); interned by a neutral country (60); evaded capture (34); captured as prisoners of war (193); and died in non-battle accidents (53).<sup>7</sup> Of the 300 or so B-24s that were assigned to the 458<sup>th</sup>,<sup>8</sup> at least 71 were lost.<sup>9</sup>

Sam believes he was dealt a lucky hand. While on missions, he and his crew did not encounter some of the more common, but often fatal, problems caused by fog and

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<sup>4</sup> For the history of the 458<sup>th</sup> BG, *see* Mackay, R., *et al.*, LIBERATORS OVER NORWICH, The 458<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group (H), 8<sup>th</sup> USAAF at Horsham St. Faith 1944-1945 (Schiffer Pub., Ltd., 2010) [LIBERATORS]; <http://www.458bg.com/> (Jun. 2015); and <http://www.8thafhs.org/bomber/458bg.htm> (Jun. 2015).

<sup>5</sup> The crews flew 5,759 sorties, <http://www.heritageleague.org/Journals/2012iii%20Fall-Winter.pdf> at p. 71 (Dec. 2015). Technically speaking, a sortie is a combat flight of a single aircraft, starting when it takes off and ending when it returns. One mission involving 12 aircraft equals 12 sorties.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/alphabetical-listing> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/casualties.htm> (Jan. 2016).

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/group-aircraft> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.458bg.com/Casualties/458thAircraftLosses\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.458bg.com/Casualties/458thAircraftLosses_WEB.pdf) (Oct. 2015).

icing, or with malfunctions of bomb racks, bomb bay doors, the electrically heated flying suits or oxygen masks.

One of the most astonishing details he disclosed is that he rarely turned the controls over to his co-pilot. When he did, it was most often during the return flight to England, and then for only very short periods of time. Missions could consume 10 or more hours of flying time. B-24s had heavy controls requiring muscle to manipulate. Sam must have expended an extraordinary amount of energy, possessed remarkable concentration and strength, and endured enormous stress.

They hailed from Kansas, Maryland, Iowa, Florida, Massachusetts, West Virginia and Oregon. Two were from Illinois. They were a shipping clerk, a laborer in a coal mine, a logger, a stock boy at a retail clothing store, a budding musician who played piano and clarinet in his high school band, a section hand on the railroad, and an inspector at the Cessna Aircraft Co. Two were farm boys. One would soon lose his brother, killed in the South Pacific theater. The oldest was 33, the youngest, 19 (Sam himself was 22). Two were family men; one, a girl-chaser. They were Sam's combat crew: 1LT Frederick A. Johnson, co-pilot (1923-?); 1LT George Frederick Adkins (1920-2003), bombardier; 2LT Walter Meylan Cline (1921-2004), navigator; T/SGT Max Kenneth Van Buren (1911-1961), airplane mechanic-gunner (crew chief); T/SGT Leon Charles Huggard (1922-2004), radio operator-mechanic-gunner; S/SGT Donald Richard Conway (1923-2000), airplane mechanic-gunner; S/SGT Lawrence Richard Matson (1916-1966), airplane armorer-waist gunner; S/SGT James Alburn Michaelson (1919-1966), aerial gunner; and S/SGT Darrell Ward Latch (1924-1997), aerial gunner.<sup>10</sup>

Sam completed the then-required number of missions in late January 1945 and was transferred to the 70<sup>th</sup> Replacement Depot in February. Thus he was in England for about 10 months. His 30 combat flights consumed at least eight of those months. Many pilots completed their 30 missions in less time. The reason is explained by Darin Scorza, the leading authority on the 458<sup>th</sup> BG and a co-author of *LIBERATORS*, in an e-mail dated 25 September 2015 to the author:

Lead crews did not fly as often as the other wing (non-lead) crews in the group. [During] . . . the period prior to [the Evans Crew] becoming a lead crew, roughly June thru August, they flew 2-3 missions a week, sometimes more. After becoming a lead crew the amount of times they would fly a mission is cut drastically, maybe only 2-3 times per *month*. There was a whole squadron of lead crews to choose from each day, where you might have the need for four maybe six leads vs. twenty or so wing crews. So the rotation on lead crews was definitely long in between. They were constantly training though, on these off days, in the air and on the ground. This was a factor in a few of the cases that I have heard of

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<sup>10</sup> S/SGT Carl Vernon White (1924-1997) from Kentucky, aerial gunner, was an original crew member. He evidently misbehaved in early October 1944, was reduced in rank to private, and removed from the crew. He was reclassified twice in February 1945: once as a Telephone Operator, and once as a Munitions Worker. In April he was transferred for Infantry Training, <http://www.458bg.com/crewevans> (Feb. 2015).

crew either becoming a lead or not. Many opted to remain where they were in order to finish up quickly and go home.

Thereafter Sam piloted a B-24 back to the states, again on the southern route. As was the case when he flew from the U.S. to Europe many months earlier, he was not in the company of other aircraft – his Liberator was alone on the flight home. None of the 15 to 20 so men going home with him were his original crew members, for they did not complete their 30 missions at the same time.

Sam said he had no navigator aboard; he did his own navigating. And, as was the case during his combat missions, he had the controls almost all the time, rarely turning them over to the co-pilot, because he “wanted to make certain we got home.”

The returning flyboys were not the only homeward-bound passengers.

While stationed at Horsham St. Faith, Sam had met an Oregonian named Carey Rocky, also stationed there, a Second Lieutenant WAC with the 96<sup>th</sup> Combat Bombardment Wing (the story of her military service accompanies this). She became his bride-to-be. An animal lover, she bought a purebred English Springer Spaniel, of championship bloodlines, for \$300 from a nurse living in the same barracks as Carey (by that time, Carey had been transferred to RAF Burtonwood in western England). The nurse was unable to care for Sissy properly because of her long work hours. Carey convinced Sam to sneak Sissy aboard as a stowaway to the states.

Carey, with Sissy in tow, met Sam at RAF Lichfield (also called Fradley Aerodrome) in Staffordshire where he was assigned a B-24 to fly home. There were no pet carriers in those days – Sam had to fling Sissy onto the plane, into the waiting arms of a co-conspirator passenger, and hope that no one in authority was watching.

During an interim stop in Dakar, Sissy found a mate of her own. Sam thoughtfully delivered a very pregnant Sissy in the B-24 to Carey’s father, whom he met for the first time, at the airport in Portland, Oregon.<sup>11</sup> Sam then flew on to Geiger Field in Spokane, Washington.

Sam is one of those World War II veterans who rarely spoke of his service, and saved nothing – records, awards and decorations, photos or letters. Nor did he keep a diary, mission log or journal. Carey said he wished to leave his memories of combat

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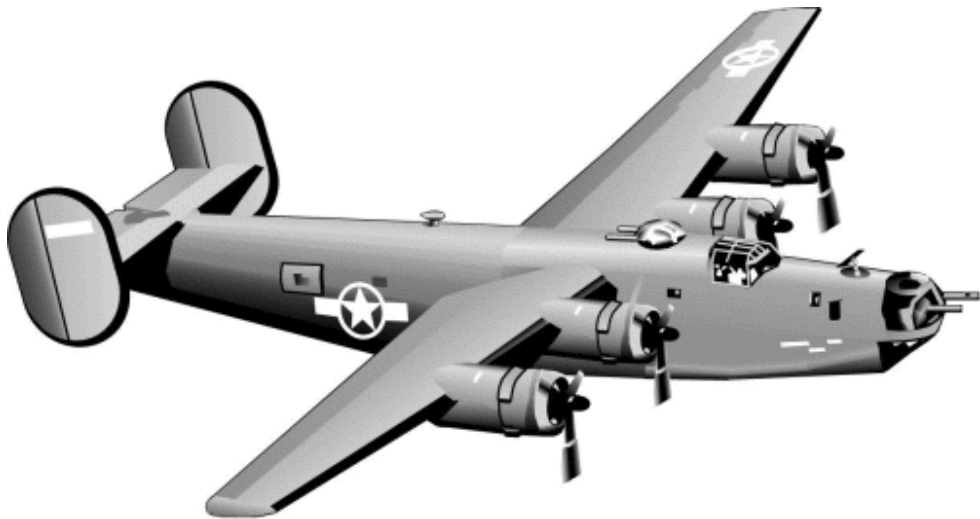
<sup>11</sup> Carey was not anxious to reveal this story because of a kerfuffle that had occurred in the summer of 1944 between the Republicans and President Franklin Roosevelt. Republicans charged that FDR, during a tour of the Aleutian Islands in Alaska, accidentally left behind his dog Fala, and that FDR sent a Navy destroyer to retrieve him, at tremendous cost to taxpayers. The charge was untrue, and the President’s “Fala speech” of 9 September 1944 put the issue to rest in a very humorous way. Thus Carey was quite nervous about asking Sam to export Sissy, and she remains slightly uncomfortable about it to this day.

Sissy, however, was not the first dog to travel from England to the states in a B-24. A navigator and a bombardier on another 458th BG crew accomplished the same task in the summer of 1944 when they flew home, <http://www.458bg.com/crew73glenn.htm> (Sept. 2015).

behind him. Nevertheless, he did remain in the Air Force Reserve for nearly 10 years. Carey herself took flying lessons in Portland after her discharge but before their marriage, even soloing in a Piper Cub. When Sam found out, he insisted she stop with the lessons because flying, he said, was too dangerous.

Sam had completed one year of college (1939-1940) at the University of Texas, San Antonio, during his two years in the Texas National Guard. Upon his discharge from the Army, he returned for another year at the University of Texas. After Carey's discharge in 1946, they were married and then both attended the University of California at Berkeley. When they obtained their degrees they moved to her hometown. In 1958 Sam earned a law degree from Northwestern School of Law in Portland. He practiced until retiring in 2011. Sam and Carey still reside in Portland.

Although he says that luck was with him, on a number of bombing missions the aileron cables were severed by anti-aircraft flak or gunfire from German fighter planes, and Sam had to take his time getting back to England because he could make only wide turns. There were, though, two especially harrowing incidents recounted below.



**The beefy lines of that inelegant workhorse, the snout-nosed B-24 heavy bomber**

### *A Mission and a War Story*

The first event occurred on 20 July 1944 when returning from a bomb run over Eisenach in central Germany.<sup>12</sup> “We hit a lot of air turbulence on the mission and used up most of our fuel. When we were landing, the nose wheel would not go down. Because most of our fuel was used up, we had only one chance to land successfully. A plane was landing on the emergency strip just before us and we were given the signal to

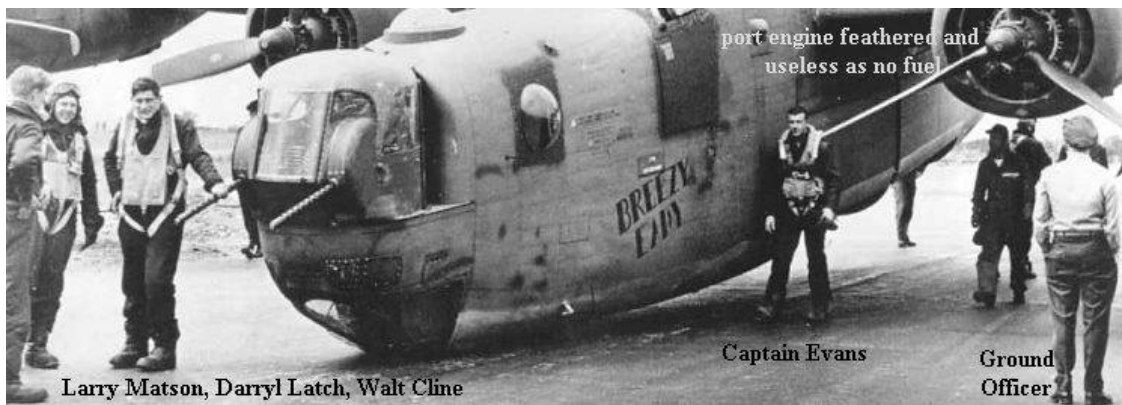
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<sup>12</sup> This was combat mission no. 7, *see* p. 15, *infra*.

go around but I knew there was no fuel to do that. I thought the other plane was off the runway far enough, so I ignored the order to go around.

“I had the crew all run to the back of the airplane so their weight and my flying could keep the nose of the airplane up till the last second as we slowed down on the runway. I feathered the port engine because there wasn't any fuel for it. I told one of the crew to attach a parachute to the plane and toss it out so it would open up just as the wheels touched the runway because I couldn't use the plane's brakes. That would cause the plane's nose to hit the runway.

“I landed it so that the nose stayed off the ground until the very last second. The emergency truck arrived just about the time when the plane came to its final stop and as the nose gently touched the ground. My crew had to hold back my angry co-pilot as the ground crew officer yelled at me, ‘Why didn't you wait for me to put a box under the nose before you put the nose down!’



“I had to answer for ignoring the signal to go around. I told the reviewing officer that I had no more fuel left and would have crashed if I tried to pull up: ‘I chose life for my crew.’ There was some grumbling but I never heard anything more about that.”<sup>13</sup>

Epilogue: The flight engineer/top turret gunner aboard *HOWLING BANSHEE* was in the same formation but a different squadron.<sup>14</sup> He kept a diary of his days at Horsham St. Faith. It has the following entry for July 20, 1944:

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<sup>13</sup> This photo of the stricken plane and its crew was taken upon their return from the Eisenach mission. The photo appears in *LIBERATORS*, see fn 4, *supra*. *LIBERATORS* notes that the nose gears on B-24s were a constant source of trouble.

While with the 458th BG, *BREEZY LADY* was modified to be part of the AZON (radio controlled bomb) project. Members of the 753<sup>rd</sup> Squadron underwent training and flew only AZON missions during May and June 1944 (they did not fly in regular combat missions). Ten AZON missions were flown, and another six were briefed but later scrubbed or abandoned. CPT Evans was not one of the original trainees, although he was assigned to a number of AZON missions. The AZON project was terminated in September 1944, <http://www.458bg.com/azonproject.htm> (Aug. 2015); <http://www.458bg.com/missions> (Aug. 2015).

**July 20 – M7** Target was an airplane plant near Eisenach, south of Leipzig. We hit an alternate target, a marshaling yard, in a little town about 20 miles northeast of the primary target. Quite a bit of flak. Some of the planes did not drop their bombs on the alternate, so we went to another target northwest of the primary. The flak was very accurate there. Planes were jinking all over the sky. I got several pictures, but it is difficult to take good pictures from the crowded upper turret. The raid took 7½ hours. Three of our planes were badly shot up. Evans' plane landed with a collapsed nosewheel. Sparkman has refused to fly any more and Cowal [Kowal] was grounded on mental grounds.<sup>15</sup>

### *Another Mission, Another War Story*

August 18, 1944, was a beautiful, clear day over France.<sup>16</sup> The Allied forces pushed inland to near Paris, and the war was going well. Bombers of the 458th Bomb Group were on a mission to Metz,<sup>17</sup> with the initial point (I.P.)<sup>18</sup> of the bomb run over Verdun.

Our crew, flying the B-24 Liberator *A DOG'S LIFE* with CPT Sam Evans as pilot, was leading the high right squadron at 21,000 feet. No flak, no fighters, an ideal mission.

That ideal mission suddenly became a disaster. As we turned on the I.P., we encountered severe turbulence, prop wash from the squadrons preceding us. That turbulence bounced the aircraft violently, flattening us out from our turn. At the same

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jul44/458BG-095-20Jul44.pdf>. (Oct. 2015).

<sup>15</sup> Combat Diary of T/SGT Donald R. Shannon, <http://www.howlingbanshee.com/> (Aug. 2015) [Shannon Diary]. S/SGT Leonard W. Sparkman, flight engineer on yet another aircraft, was removed from flying status that month. The circumstances prompting SGT Shannon's remark about S/SGT Stanley A. Kowal, radio operator on the same aircraft as Sparkman, are not known. Like S/SGT Carl White who left CPT Evans' crew, both Sparkman and Kowal were reduced in rank to private and reclassified to ground jobs, <http://www.458bg.com/crewaz06mccormick.htm>.

<sup>16</sup> This section, written by 2LT Walter M. Cline, was edited by C. Clark Leone. LT Cline was CPT Evans' navigator. It is not known when LT Cline wrote this account; he died in May 2004 at age 83. The two remained lifelong friends.

<sup>17</sup> This was CPT Evans' 15<sup>th</sup> combat mission, *see* p. 19, *infra*; he flew the lead plane of the second squadron.

<sup>18</sup> The starting point of the bomb run. On a combat mission, the formation flew not directly to the target, but to a chosen landmark that was perhaps 30 or so miles from the target. Upon reaching the landmark (the "initial point"), the lead plane of the lead squadron would turn toward the target. The entire formation then flew straight and level to the target – no evasive action could be taken, despite the presence of flak or enemy fighters – until the bombs were dropped. The bomb run, taking from less than one and up to 10 minutes, was usually the most dangerous and terrifying leg of a combat mission.

moment, and while at 20,000 feet, our deputy lead<sup>19</sup> smashed into our right wing tip, stripping 11' from the wing, and leaving it dangling in the wind.<sup>20</sup>

The drag of that broken wing sent us into a diving right turn. Somehow, the deputy lead slid under us, so close that I could have reached out and shaken hands with the top gunner. Fortunately, no actual contact was made. We continued in our diving turn, dropping 6,000 feet in one 360 degree turn (pretty close to a spin, yes?).

As we continued to nose dive, the following conversation was heard on the intercom – "Evans, have you got it?" No answer.

Again, "Evans, have you got it?" Again, no answer.

"Evans, have you got it? If you won't answer me, I'm getting out of here."<sup>21</sup>

Finally, a slow Texas drawl came back – "Ah've got it," and sure enough he did.

We straightened out at 15,000 feet, continuing to drop, but at least flying again.

Our bombs were still on board, of course, so we started to find a place to unload them. We could not make a left turn to hit a rail yard ahead, so we found a convenient forest to drop them in.

Meanwhile, our Command Pilot and squadron leader, MAJ Robert H. Hinckley, Jr. (who was sitting in the co-pilot's seat), was trying to get fighter escort for us. Flight Engineer S/SGT Donald R. Conway said, "We were all alone and rather fearful of Nazi bandits picking us off." It seemed an eternity, but it was only a few minutes before we had a P-51 sitting on each wingtip. Don't try to tell any of us that the P-51 isn't the most beautiful airplane ever built!

The navigator [Walt Cline] was laying a course for Allied lines. According to our briefed information, Paris was still in Nazi hands. Our escort pilots assured us, however, that they had been flying over Paris all day without seeing any flak, so we altered course to go that way – but our course took us close to Le Havre, and there were a few anxious moments when flak started coming up from there.

We really were not in a position to take any evasive action. With climb power on engines 3 and 4, with full left rudder trim cranked in, we could maintain straight and level flight at 153 mph indicated airspeed. When power was reduced to reduce the strain on

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<sup>19</sup> In addition to the crew, the deputy lead plane carried a Deputy Lead Pilot. This aircraft followed behind and off the wing of the lead plane (which carried the Command Pilot), and took over if the lead plane dropped out of the formation.

<sup>20</sup> This is the event that Carey Rockey Evans mentions in her account.

<sup>21</sup> He means that he would bail out and parachute to the ground.



the two engines, we found our stall speed to be 148 mph. That wasn't very comforting. The fastest we could fly was 153 mph because of the damage, and if CPT Evans flew below 148 mph, our plane would drop from the sky for lack of lift over the wings.

Eventually we reached England, and proceeded to the crash strip at RAF Woodbridge (about 40 miles south of Horsham St. Faith) which had a 10,000-foot runway. There, life became a bit more complicated again. Out of necessity we flew a right hand pattern, and when we turned final, the right wing simply refused to come up. There we were, descending to touchdown, unable to fly level. But there was no chance of going around. We were committed.

Finally, as Evans flared, preparatory to touchdown, the wings reluctantly leveled, and we were down and rolling. We were a much relieved crew, and a very thankful one for the skill of CPT Evans.

The leading edge spar of the wing had remained intact, and from the front of the airplane it looked as though we had lost only a foot or two of wing. As we in the front section exited the aircraft, one by one we looked up to see the damage, and then our eyes slowly followed the damaged wing section down to its end. The wing was nearly broken off, almost touching the ground about 18 inches from the tarmac.

That shock added the cap to our climax of excitement for the day.

Said CPT Evans, "I wasn't a hero. I had a job to do and I did it."

Epilogue: The Shannon Diary contains the following entry for 18 August 1944:

**Aug. 18 - M18** We are beginning to count them now [missions – this was mission no. 18 for the diarist]. Target was an aircraft engine works at Metze [Metz], France. The initial point of our bomb run was Nerddun [Verdun]. I will bet that my Uncle Clarence would remember many of these names. We went the long way, down south of Paris. The "Howling Banshee" behaved pretty well – only one amplifier went out. On the bomb run 3 minutes from the target, two of the lead planes got into prop wash and collided. They peeled off together with wings locked. After dropping about 1000 ft., they broke free and one came back almost undamaged. The other lost about 9 ft. of wing and began its long limp home. I listened on VHF and heard them calling "Little Friend, where are you? We need escort bad."<sup>22</sup> They gave their position and the fighters were called back and came up to them. We hit the targets well and were alerted to "Bandits in the Area". We saw no Bandits and little flak. Flight time was 8¼ hrs. The damage[d] plane, which was Evans' crew, landed OK in England.

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<sup>22</sup> When in radio contact, bomber crews called their P-51 Mustang fighter escorts "Little Friends" – the bombers were "Big Friends". "Bandits" were enemy aircraft.

From the diary of a different crewman in the first squadron of the formation: “lead–planes collided in back 8’ wing gone”.<sup>23</sup>

Moreover, the 96<sup>th</sup> Combat Bombardment Wing, headquartered at Horsham and home of the 458<sup>th</sup>’s Little Friends, noted that “[1] A/C [aircraft] did not attack for the following reasons: . . . wings damaged in collision when plane was caught in prop wash”.<sup>24</sup>

The “Tactical Bombing Report of Mission, 18 August 1944” contains the following notation:

One Squadron of the 458<sup>th</sup> Group attacked an A/F [airfield] south of Metz as a target of opportunity when the lead and deputy lead collided on the bomb run into the primary [target]. As a result of the collision the formation was scattered and was headed away from the target. It was not possible to make a second run so the [airfield] north of Metz was attacked.<sup>25</sup>

The aircraft that hit *A DOG’S LIFE* was *DOROTHY KAY SPECIAL* piloted by 2LT Harold B. Dane, the deputy lead of the second squadron and flying behind *A DOG’S LIFE*’s starboard wing. The nose turret gunner in *DOROTHY KAY SPECIAL* wrote in his Mission List: “Mid-air collision with lead aircraft which made emergency landing. Took over and led formation over target, accomplishing mission.”<sup>26</sup> (While the squadron did not bomb the primary target, it did bomb a target of opportunity.)

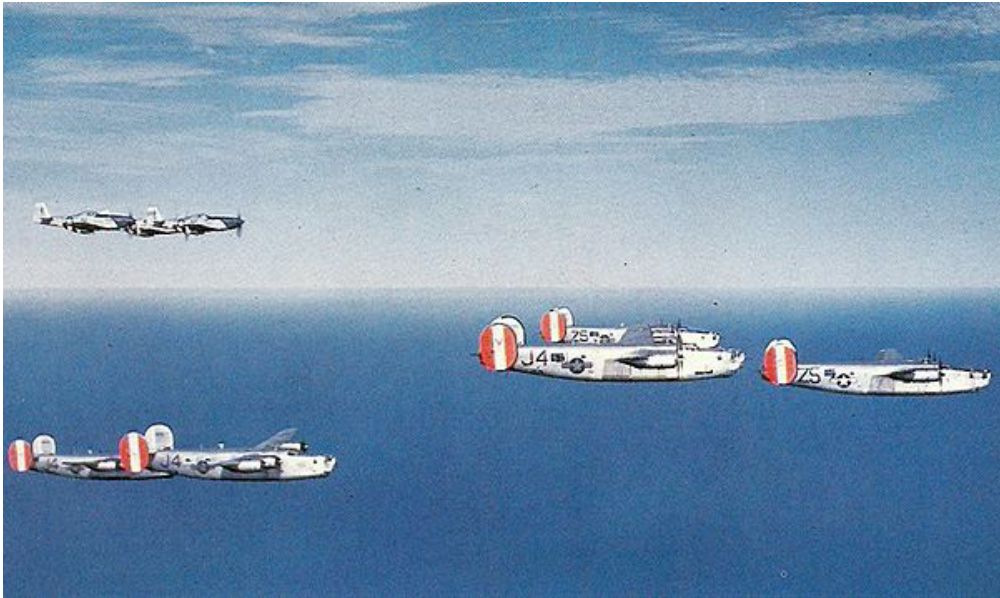
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<sup>23</sup> Mission Logbook & Calendar of T/SGT Lewis E. Roberts (radio operator aboard *PRINCESS PAT*), <http://www.458bg.com/crew/wagner.htm> (Sept. 2015) [Roberts Mission Log]. *PRINCESS PAT*, in the first squadron, was just ahead of *A DOG’S LIFE*, <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Aug44/458BG-116-18Aug44.pdf> (Sept. 2015). In fact, 11 feet, or over one-half, of the wing was nearly broken off.

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Aug44/96CBWhist1944-08Aug.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Aug44/458BG-116-18Aug44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*; <http://www.458bg.com/crew/j149dane.htm> (Sept. 2015).



**B-24 Liberators of the 458<sup>th</sup> BG with a close escort of “Little Friends”, P-51 Mustangs, in 1944/45. Aircraft of the 458<sup>th</sup> characteristically had fire-engine-red ovals (the outside rudders on the tail) with a white vertical stripe in the middle. The large letter/number grouping between the tail and the waist designates the squadron (753<sup>rd</sup> squadron = J4, for example); <http://www.458bg.com/synopsis> (Aug. 2015); [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:B-24s\\_458th\\_BG\\_with\\_P-51s.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:B-24s_458th_BG_with_P-51s.jpg) (Aug. 2015).**

CPT Evans, like the others who served during this war, gave his all. He was recognized in several ways. He and his crew were assigned AZON-equipped aircraft and flew on AZON missions, even though they had not been trained with the original AZON crews at Horsham. His excellent skills as a pilot earned him and his crew a transfer to the 755<sup>th</sup> Squadron that flew lead on bombing missions. And he was a recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross, the award for heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in an aerial flight. He also earned the Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters, among other decorations, for having flown the required 30 combat missions.

CPT Evans attended two reunions, one of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division held at Hilton Head, South Carolina, in November 1989; the other at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, in 1994.



Sam Evans, second from left, Walt Cline on right, at the 1994 reunion

They are standing beside a restored B-24 owned by The Collings Foundation, <http://www.collingsfoundation.org/aircrafts/consolidated-b-24-liberator/> (Sept. 2015). Walt Cline had insisted that the four take a look at where Sam's name was stenciled on the Liberator.

### *Combat missions and other flights*

This list describes 36 of CPT Evans' recorded flights (some did not count toward his 30 combat missions). There is no record of the countless local, practice or training flights he surely made.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Serial # and A/C Name</b>	<b>458<sup>th</sup> BG's Mission #</b>	<b>Pilot's Mission #</b>
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8 Jun 1944, UNSPECIFIED TARGETS, 44-40288 *BAD GIRL*, AZA<sup>27</sup>

The 458<sup>th</sup> BG's fourth AZON mission was abandoned owing to bad weather (did not count as a combat mission). The Shannon Diary puts it this way: "We got up at 0130 to bomb some bridges just back of the invasion lines, to tie up the Jerries [Germans]. We flew down over southern England to rendezvous, but the weather was too bad and the mission was called off."

24 Jun 1944, ST. OMER, 41-28719 *PADDLEFOOT*, 78, 1<sup>28</sup>

The target was "noball" facilities (code for Nazi V-1 flying bomb and/or V-2 rocket launch installations) between Cauchie D'Ecques and St. Omer, France (east of Normandy and Calais, near the coast). Due to complete cloud cover, no bombs were dropped. This mission took at least four hours.

28 Jun 1944, SAARBRUCKEN, 42-110163 *TIME'S A WASTIN'*, 81, 2<sup>29</sup>

The target was marshalling yards (railroad staging facilities). No enemy aircraft were encountered; flak appeared over the target area, and six to 10 rockets were fired inaccurately at the formation. Bombing results were good.

From the diary of 1LT Meredith Moore,<sup>30</sup> navigator, on the same mission and in the same squadron as CPT Evans:

During our return to England . . . we noticed another B24 with our wing's markings flying about a half mile to our right. Our radio operator . . . contacted the plane and was told that they had encountered a problem and had to drop out of formation before reaching the target but were OK now. We both continued on toward England. However, when we reached the channel, they did a 180 deg turn and headed back toward Germany. We reported this at our debriefing and were told that the plane was probably one that had crash landed behind enemy lines, been repaired and was being flown by a German crew on the flank of our

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<sup>27</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jun44/458BG-AZ04-08Jun44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jun44/458BG-078-24Jun44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jun44/458BG-081-28Jun44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/crewperkinson.htm> (Oct. 2015).

formation to radio our speed and altitude to the flak installations. No wonder the flak guns were so accurate!

29 Jun 1944, ASCHERSLEBEN, 41-28735 UNKNOWN [AIRCRAFT], 82, ABORT<sup>31</sup>

The target was a Junkers airframe factory. CPT Evans had to abort owing to an internal failure in engine #2, thus this did not count toward his 30 missions.

7 Jul 1944, LUTZKENDORF, 42-110163 *TIME'S A WASTIN'*, 86, 3<sup>32</sup>

The target was a synthetic oil plant deep inside Germany. Results were good. "Moderate to intense and accurate [gunfire] was encountered at Lutzkendorf . . . during . . . bombing runs. Considerably more [antiaircraft fire] was encountered at this target than was expected . . . Rockets were seen at Lutzkendorf . . . The rockets . . . burst into thick white smoke puffs resembling phosphorous." At one point during the mission, some 25 to 50 enemy aircraft flew under the formation, but they did not attack, probably owing to the presence of the bombers' Little Friends. Flight time was almost eight hours.

The deputy lead of CPT Evans' squadron experienced a mechanical problem and turned back before reaching the target. The crippled B-24 eventually dropped to 2,000' and flew directly over the seaport city of Emden, Germany, where flak set her on fire and she plunged into the harbor. The pilot and three crew members perished. Six survivors were held POWs for 10 months, <http://www.458bg.com/crewlarrison.htm> (Oct. 2015).

8 Jul 1944, ANIZY, 42-51110 *TOP O' THE MARK*, 87, 4<sup>33</sup>

The target was a railroad embankment along the Aisne Canal northeast of Paris. High clouds caused a recall.

12 Jul 1944, MUNICH, 44-40285 *TABLE STUFF*, 89, 5<sup>34</sup>

The target was a marshalling yard. Flak over the target was intense but only fairly accurate at best; none was encountered en route back to base. Bombing results were unobserved due to cloud cover.

16 Jul 1944, SAARBRUCKEN, 44-40285 *TABLE STUFF*, 91, ABORT<sup>35</sup>

The target was another marshalling yard. CPT Evans' co-pilot suffered severe stomach pains at 18,000'<sup>36</sup> so the sortie was aborted, although the bombs were evidently

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<sup>31</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jun44/458BG-082-29Jun44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jul44/458BG-086-07Jul44.pdf> (Sept. 2015); <http://www.458bg.com/crewhansenrw.htm> (Sept. 2015), mission log of 2LT Robert W. Hansen.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jul44/458BG-087-08Jul44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jul44/458BG-089-12Jul44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jul44/458BG-091-16Jul44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>36</sup> Inasmuch as B-24s had no pressurization, intestinal tracts "could swell like balloons and cause [a man] to double over in pain": Ambrose, Stephen E., *THE WILD BLUE*, Simon & Schuster (2001).

dropped on a target of opportunity (a highway). CPT Evans said that he rarely, if ever, returned to base carrying bombs and rarely, if ever, jettisoned them over the ocean; he always tried to find a target of opportunity.

17 Jul 1944, PAS DE CALAIS AREA, 42-52441 *LAST CARD LOUIE*, 92, 6<sup>37</sup>

The target was three noball installations along the French coast. Results ranged from poor to very good, depending on the specific area each aircraft attacked.

The intelligence officer submitted this report: “A B-17 with no markings or ball turret was observed in the formation near Rouen enroute back. It came to within 400 yards of our [aircraft *TABLE STUFF*] and the tail gunner opened fire. It then dropped back to about 1000 yards and followed the formation just past the English coast then turned west.” *TABLE STUFF* was flying in the same squadron as, and directly on the port side of, CPT Evans’ *LAST CARD LOUIE*. Clearly, the Germans, in a captured B-17, had sneaked close to the formation and reported the exact altitude to their ground troops manning the anti-aircraft guns, thus allowing for accurate flak.

20 Jul 1944, EISENACH, 42-110141, *BREEZY LADY*, 95, 7<sup>38</sup>

The primary target was an aircraft engine factory in Germany, but cloud cover resulted in the formation attacking targets of opportunity with fair to good results. The unhappy conclusion of CPT Evans’ sortie is described in the first story, *supra* at p. 5.

21 Jul 1944, MUNICH, 44-40201 *SILVER CHIEF*, 96, 8<sup>39</sup>

The target was the Dornier aircraft factory in Neuaubing (near Munich). The squadron in which CPT Evans flew hit residential areas and fields. Flak over the target area was intense and accurate. The intelligence report notes that “two B-24s with red and silver tail, marking “K” “S” in circle on wings seen flying with formation. It was observed that the waist windows were closed and the tail turrets apparently unoccupied.” These were doubtless more German-captured bombers.

24 Jul 1944, ST. LO, 44-40275 *SHACK TIME*, 97, 9<sup>40</sup>

The mission was a “ticklish, pin-point precision job” in the St. Lo area to support ground troops trying to break out of Normandy after the D-Day invasion. Thus the bomb drops had to be made after visual identification of the targets. Although many aircraft reached the target, the formation’s mission was scrapped for the day because bad weather hid the troops who were directly below.

25 Jul 1944, ST. LO AREA “B”, 44-40285 *TABLE STUFF*, 98, 10<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jul44/458BG-092-17Jul44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jul44/458BG-095-20Jul44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jul44/458BG-096-21Jul44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jul44/458BG-097-24Jul44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jul44/458BG-098-25Jul44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

Area “B” was around Montreuil; the mission was again to support ground troops in Normandy. Considering the low altitude of the attack – 12,000’ – German defense (*i.e.*, from flak) was “singularly unsuccessful”. This was likely because enemy positions were being shelled by Allied artillery so that forward positions may have been put out of action.

1 Aug 1944, T.O.s FRANCE, 44-40281 *A DOG'S LIFE*, 100, 11<sup>42</sup>

The target was three noball installations. Due to bad weather, the formation bombed several targets of opportunity (“T.O.s”) in France with unobserved results.

6 Aug 1944, HAMBURG, 44-40281 *A DOG'S LIFE*, 106, 12<sup>43</sup>

The target was an oil refinery deep in Germany with very good results; hits were made on refineries and oil storage areas. Intense and accurate flak was encountered.

CPT Evans was flying deputy lead of the second squadron, right behind and to the right of the lead aircraft. When nearly over the target, he saw the flak hit the lead aircraft and watched the plane explode and go down.<sup>44</sup> He did not see anyone bail out. He took over the lead (with CAPT Richard D. Harland, Squadron Bombardier, aboard as Deputy Lead Pilot) and they succeeded in getting the formation’s bombs dropped. During the debriefing at Horsham, COL James S. Isbell, Commanding Officer of the 458<sup>th</sup> BG, asked CAPT Evans for details. He gave them, saying that he didn’t think anyone survived. “You’d be surprised,” COL Isbell replied. Later, they learned that of the 11 men on board, two – the pilot and Command Pilot -- did survive, but as POWs through the end of the war.

T/SGT Lewis E. Roberts, radio operator aboard a B-24 also in the second squadron, wrote, “Terrific flak (240 guns) like thunder . . . lost three planes.”<sup>45</sup>

From the diary of CPT Robert W. Hansen, lead of the first squadron: “One aircraft from the 755<sup>th</sup> received a direct flak hit during the bomb run. They were flying as the lead [of the second] section. The direct hit caused the wings to fall off when the aircraft exploded and headed for the ground in flames. Total time logged was six hours and thirty minutes”, <http://www.458bg.com/crewhansenrw.htm> (Sept. 2015).<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Aug44/458BG-100-01Aug44.pdf> (Oct. 2015).

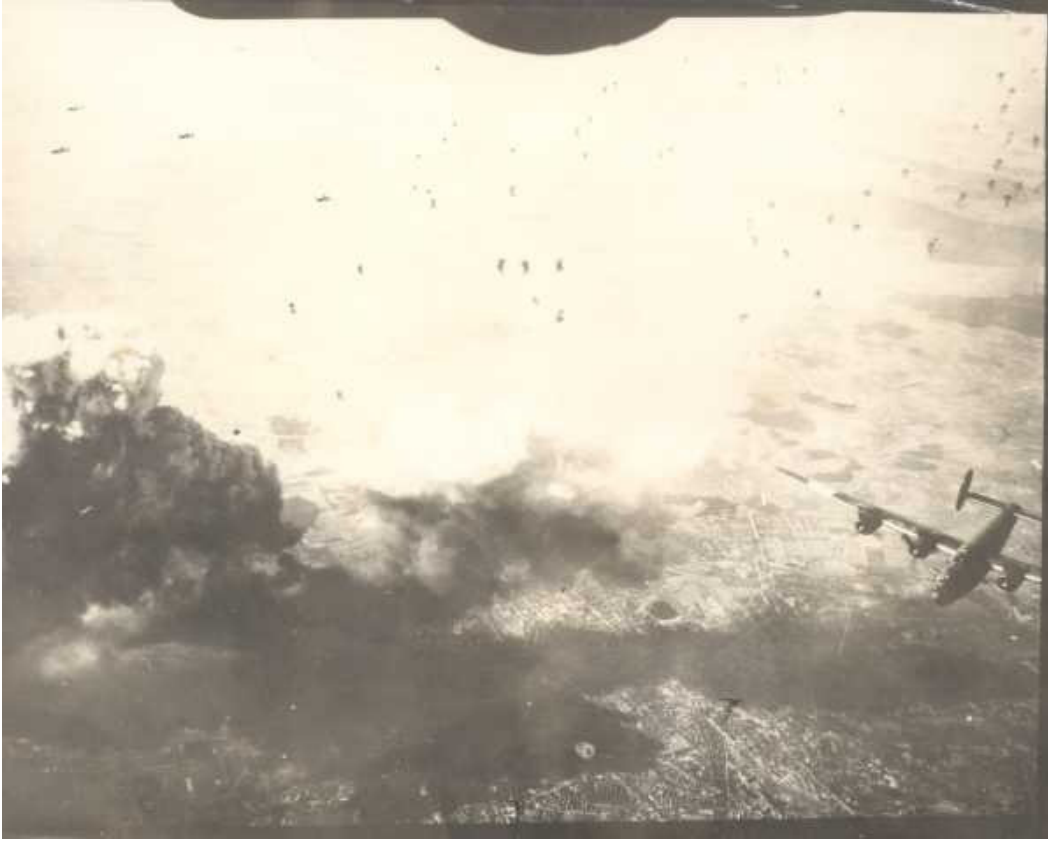
<sup>43</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Aug44/458BG-106-06Aug44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>44</sup> Nine crewmen were killed, but two survived, when the aircraft was destroyed, <http://www.458bg.com/crew77hancock.htm> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>45</sup> Roberts Mission Log.

<sup>46</sup> It is possible that S/SGT Larry Matson, waist gunner, was aboard *A DOG'S LIFE* on this mission. If so, he likely saw the stricken plane explode. This may account for his being hospitalized at Horsham for “shell shock” after his 12<sup>th</sup> mission, *see* pp. 48-49, *infra*.





**Liberators flying through the flak at Hamburg on 6 August 1944**  
<http://www.458bg.com/crew77hancock.htm> (Sept. 2015) Photo credit, Bill Kramer

9 Aug 1944, SAARBRUCKEN, 44-40281 *A DOG'S LIFE*, 109, 13<sup>47</sup>

The primary target was a ball bearing plant at the edge of Stuttgart, but due to weather, the secondary target of Saarbrücken's marshalling yard was attacked. Results were fair to good: hits were observed on the marshalling yard, railroad facilities, a road bridge and built-up areas in the city. Intense and accurate flak was encountered by most groups. CPT Evans flew the lead plane of the second squadron; MAJ Frank E. Wright was aboard as Command Pilot.

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<sup>47</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Aug44/458BG-109-09Aug44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).



Just before bomb release at Saarbrucken, 9 August 1944  
<http://www.458bg.com/august-1944> (Sept. 2015) Photo credit, William Case

15 Aug 1944, VECHTA, 44-40281 *A DOG'S LIFE*, 114, ABORT<sup>48</sup>

The target was Nazi-held airfields in northeast France. CPT Evans had to abort because all four generators failed.

17 Aug 1944, LE FOULONS, 44-40275 *SHACK TIME*, AZ11, 14<sup>49</sup>

The target was a railroad bridge. This was the 458<sup>th</sup> BG's eleventh AZON mission. No bombs were dropped due to cloud cover. CPT Leland Glenwood "Glen" Griffith was aboard as Command Pilot.

Fifteen days later, on 1 September when aboard another aircraft as Command Pilot, CPT Griffith and the entire 10-member crew were killed upon takeoff in a crash at Horsham on a bomb run to Germany. CPT Griffith's first and only child, a daughter, was born in California on 8 September. His wife did not learn of his death until 18 September.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Aug44/458BG-114-15Aug44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Aug44/458BG-AZ11-17Aug44.pdf> (Sept. 2015);  
<http://www.458bg.com/azonproject.htm> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=pv&GRid=34722685&PIpi=127837922> (Feb. 2016);  
<http://www.458bg.com/captgriffith> (Sept. 2015).

18 Aug 1944, WOIPPY, 44-40281 *A DOG'S LIFE*, 116, ABORT, 15<sup>51</sup>

The target was an aircraft engine factory in France; an 8-hour flight. CPT Evans flew lead of the second squadron with MAJ Robert H. Hinckley, Jr., aboard as Command Pilot. While the official records show “Swartz” (LTC Paul Schwartz) in that position, LT Cline’s and LT Carey Rockey Evans’ narratives, naming MAJ Hinckley, are surely correct. The reason for the abort is explained in LT Cline’s story (*supra* at p. 7) about the collision that damaged the aircraft’s wing.

25 Aug 1944, HOLLAND, 44-40275 *SHACK TIME*, AZ12, 16<sup>52</sup>

The 458<sup>th</sup> BG’s twelfth AZON mission. The target was the Moerdijk Bridge in Holland. CPT Evans flew lead with MAJ John A. Hensler, the Squadron Commander, aboard as Command Pilot. No flack or fighter opposition was encountered. The official report claims that the bridge was hit three times, although a strike photo appears to show no direct hits on it.

26 Aug 1944, HOLLAND, 42-100431 *BOMB-AH-DEAR*, AZ13, 17<sup>53</sup>

Another AZON mission attempt at the Moerdijk Bridge. No bombs were dropped due to cloud cover, but the crews got sortie credit.

10 Sept 1944, ULM, 44-40283, *LASSIE COME HOME*, 125, AZ15, 18<sup>54</sup>

The BG’s fifteenth AZON mission. The primary target, a munitions terminal in Ulm, was covered by clouds, so a secondary target, a marshalling yard, was attacked. Results were unobserved due to cloud cover. Then-1LT Evans flew the lead plane of the second squadron – MAJ Theodore J. Brevakis was aboard as Command Pilot, while CPT Richard D. Harland was bombardier.

26 Sept 1944, LILLE, 42-11063, UNKNOWN [AIRCRAFT], TR09<sup>55</sup>

The B-24 was borrowed from another Bomb Group. Much of September 1944 was devoted to the 458<sup>th</sup> BG ferrying more than 800,000 of gallons of gas for the fuel-starved tanks of General Patton’s Third Army in France. Called “truckin’ missions”, they did not count toward crews’ combat missions. Truckin’ missions required less than a 10-man crew; CPT Evans recalled that in addition to himself as pilot, a co-pilot, a navigator, a crew chief and a radio operator were aboard.

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<sup>51</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Aug44/458BG-116-18Aug44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Aug44/458BG-AZ12-25Aug44.pdf> (Sept. 2015); [http://www.458bg.com/AzonProject/AZON25Aug44MoerdijkBridges2\\_WEB.jpg](http://www.458bg.com/AzonProject/AZON25Aug44MoerdijkBridges2_WEB.jpg) (Sept. 2015); *see also* <http://www.458bg.com/azonproject.htm> (Sept. 2015), noting no direct hits.

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Aug44/458BG-AZ13-26Aug44.pdf> (Sept. 2015); <http://www.458bg.com/azonproject.htm> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/azonproject.htm> (Jun. 2015); <http://www.458bg.com/crewbrevakis.htm> (Sept. 2015); <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Sep44/458BG-125-10Sep44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Sep44/458BG-TR09-26Sep44.pdf> (Sept. 2015); <http://www.458bg.com/truckin.htm> (Jun. 2015).

29 Sept 1944, LILLE, 41-28714, *CYCLONE/UTTERLY DEVASTATING*, TR12<sup>56</sup>

On this truckin' flight, CPT Evans' Liberator carried 1,662 gallons of 80 octane gasoline.

7 Oct 1944, MAGDEBURG, 42-50456 *DOROTHY KAY SPECIAL*, 130, 19<sup>57</sup>

The primary target was an oil refinery. The third squadron dropped its bombs on a target of opportunity in the Delden/Hengelo area of Holland, "with poor results" – they fell in open fields and woods causing no tactical damage. The squadron bombed that target owing to "equipment failure at the primary [target]". CPT Evans flew lead of the third squadron; MAJ Frank E. Wright was aboard as Command Pilot.

14 Oct 1944, COLOGNE, 44-40281 *A DOG'S LIFE*, 132, 20<sup>58</sup>

The target was a marshalling yard. Due to bad weather, bombing results were unobserved. CPT Evans flew lead of fifth squadron; MAJ Charles H. Booth was aboard as Command Pilot.

This must have been an especially terrifying mission. The "Tactical Report of Mission" reads as follows: "All Groups encountered moderate to intense gunfire over Cologne of varying accuracy. The two Groups which encountered the most intense and accurate predictor control fire were the 392<sup>nd</sup> [BG] and the 458<sup>th</sup> [BG], and it appears as if the enemy concentrated largely on these two formations which their times over the target would have allowed."

T/SGT Lewis E. Roberts, radio operator in the second squadron, noted "-33 deg[rees] . . . heavy flak".<sup>59</sup>

A diary kept by S/SGT Lee Watson (ball turret gunner) in the third squadron described events this way: "We were the last of the 2000 bombers and the first part of the 458<sup>th</sup> caught hell. We got a few flak holes. One ship was lost, hit by flak. Flak was accurate and intense . . . We caught flak all the way out. Many ships were full of holes."<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Sep44/458BG-TR12-29Sep44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Oct44/458BG-130-07Oct44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Oct44/458BG-133-14Oct44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>59</sup> Roberts Mission Log.

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/crewaa48moran.htm> (Sept. 2015) [Watson Diary]. Typically, led by an assembly plane, bombers would climb into formations of three or more squadrons of 12 or so aircraft each (the assembly plane then returned to base). This group formation of 36 or more would climb to about 20,000', where the group leader would wedge it into position within the wing (about 72 planes). The wing leader then moved the flock into position within the bomber stream. As many as 3,000 various types of bombers and fighters might participate in a single raid, <http://www.2ndair.org.uk/consumption/groups/public/documents/article/ncc095743.pdf> (Feb. 2016).

CPT Evans, lead of the fifth squadron, was not far from the ship (*JOLLY ROGER*) that was lost (she was in the fourth squadron). A detailed description of the tragedy, in the words of *JOLLY ROGER*'s navigator 2LT Robert F. Farrell, is found at <http://www.458bg.com/crewaa87klusmeyer.htm> (Sept. 2015).

30 Oct 1944, HARBURG, 42-50768 *ARISE MY LOVE AND COME WITH ME*, 139, 21<sup>61</sup>

The target was an oil refinery. CPT Evans flew lead of the “high high right” (fourth) squadron; MAJ Paul F. Betzold was aboard as Command Pilot. Results were unobserved due to heavy cloud cover. T/SGT Roberts, in another Liberator in CPT Evans' squadron, wrote, “clouds – heavy flak behind us”.<sup>62</sup>

A B-24 in the rear of CPT Evans' squadron, broke in half when she was hit by flak. Five crew members bailed out and spent six months as POWs; four were unable to bail out and were killed when the plane went down, <http://www.458bg.com/crewej4curland> (Oct. 2015).



**Bombing results in Harburg when finally photographed**  
[http://www.lipper.cc/8th\\_AF/hazards/pages/Damage6.htm](http://www.lipper.cc/8th_AF/hazards/pages/Damage6.htm) (Oct. 2015)

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Oct44/458BG-139-30Oct44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>62</sup> Roberts Mission Log.

5 Nov 1944, KARLSRUHE, 42-50768 *ARISE MY LOVE AND COME WITH ME*, 142, 22<sup>63</sup>

The target was a marshalling yard. Bombing results were unobserved due to cloud cover. Moderate to intense, accurate flak was encountered. CPT Evans flew lead of the high right (third) squadron; CPT James F. Simes was aboard as Command Pilot. T/SGT Roberts (in the same third squadron) reported “-31deg[rees] – cloud over target . . . Flak at target – very rough air coming back & rain”.<sup>64</sup> Mission Diary of 2LT Walter A. Schuch, co-pilot of another aircraft in the third squadron, wrote “Very heavy flak. Field socked in on return. What a trip, whew!” <http://www.458bg.com/crewba3eisert.htm> (Sept. 2015).<sup>65</sup>

25 Nov 1944, BINGEN, 42-50575 UNKNOWN [AIRCRAFT], 149, 23<sup>66</sup>

The target was a marshalling yard. Flak was meager and inaccurate. Results were fair, though the cloud cover made observation almost impossible.

12 Dec 1944, HANAU, 42-50740 *OUR BURMA*, 156, 24<sup>67</sup>

The target was a marshalling yard. Direct hits were made on the railroad station; goods depot; rolling stock; trackage; locomotive depot; industrial area; road over railroad bridge; roundhouse; holding sidings; barges and dock areas; a Dunlop tire factory; a metal works plant; and built up areas of the city. Flak was meager and inaccurate. CPT Evans flew lead of the second section; MAJ Charles E. Breeding was aboard as Command Pilot.

30 Dec 1944, NEUWIED, 42-50504 UNKNOWN [AIRCRAFT], 161, 25<sup>68</sup>

The target was the railroad bridge. Results unobserved due to cloud cover. CPT Evans flew lead of the second squadron with CPT David S. Quinn aboard as Command Pilot. This and CPT Evans’ next four missions were flown in support of ground troops during the Battle of the Bulge, <http://www.458bg.com/december-1944> (Sept. 2015).

1 Jan 1945, KOBLENZ, 42-50504 UNKNOWN [AIRCRAFT], 163, 26<sup>69</sup>

The target was a railroad bridge. CPT Evans flew lead of the second squadron with 2LT Theodore F. Wagner aboard as Command Pilot. The “Aircraft Not Attacking Report” states that as the formation approached the I.P., two groups of aircraft cut in front

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<sup>63</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Nov44/458BG-142-05Nov44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>64</sup> Roberts Mission Log.

<sup>65</sup> 2LT Edouard J. Jacques, bombardier in the same B-24 as LT Schuch, hand-plotted the formation’s course on a map: <http://worldwartwoheroes.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Mission-7.pdf> (Oct. 2015).

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Nov44/458BG-149-25Nov44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>67</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Dec44/458BG-156-12Dec44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>68</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Dec44/458BG-161-30Dec44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jan45/458BG-163-01Jan45.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

on a heading toward England. One of the Command Pilots thought this meant a recall, so ordered the three squadrons to head for home. Thus none of the 24 aircraft in the three squadrons dropped their bombs on the target.

“Our bombing altitude was to be 22,000 feet with -32 degree Celsius at this altitude,” wrote S/SGT Maurice Lee Watson, gunner aboard a B-24 that was lead of the third squadron, “But the lead ship went to . . . 26,000 feet.”<sup>70</sup>

Moreover, this mission was described as<sup>71</sup>

[R]eally a tough one. The assigned target for the day was the [railroad bridge] over the Moselle River at Guls on the SW outskirts of Koblenz. A juicy target as it is an important [supply] link in [the German break-out during the Battle of the Bulge]. Twenty-seven A/C were dispatched . . . Even at take-off we were plagued with heavy cloud coverage and it persisted along the route. When the formation was about 40 miles from the Group I.P. they ran into a terrific headwind which was computed at 180 mph at 40 degrees resulting in a restriction to ground speed of about 20 mph. At this point the formation was alone, and rather than buck the wind which would eventually mean a low gas supply, the decision was made to abandon the mission. Three of our A/C bombed with other groups while the rest of the formation returned the bombs to base.

8 Jan 1945, STADTKYLL, 42-50740 *OUR BURMA*, 167, 27<sup>72</sup>

The target was a road intersection near a communications center. CPT Evans flew lead of the second squadron; MAJ Charles H. Booth was aboard as Command Pilot. Owing to winter weather, the formation had to fly at 24,000' (the crews had been briefed to fly at 22,000'), and eventually climbed to 25,500' where the temperature was -55°. Cloud cover over the target was complete. Bombing had to be done via G-H, a radio navigation system; thus the results were unobserved.

“The formation had a hectic flight under the clouds back to base . . . There were only five A/C left in the formation when they finally reached base after crossing B-17 landing patterns and coming through snow squalls . . . The rest of the formation . . . returned safely, the others having landed at other bases [in England] . . .” wrote SGT Lee Watson, ball turret gunner, in another aircraft in a sister squadron.<sup>73</sup>

The Mission Log of T/SGT Charles Dykstra, radio operator on a ship in the same formation, describes the flight:

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<sup>70</sup> Watson Diary.

<sup>71</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/january-1945> (Oct. 2015).

<sup>72</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jan45/458BG-167-08Jan45.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>73</sup> Watson Diary.

Boy, we thought we had it today. The weather wasn't fit for anything – not even a bird. Actually took off in a blizzard. Willie and Hess [co-pilot and pilot] both had to fly it on takeoff. It was snowing something furious – plus a terrific crosswind between 35 and 50 MPH. Thought we were going to crackup on takeoff. All the ships made it but only by a miracle of that I'm sure. Even at altitude the visibility was very bad and the ships were all over the sky. We ran low on gas and had to land at a different 'limey' base (Manston). It was awfully cold -57 degrees below centigrade - about 65 degrees below Fahrenheit.”<sup>74</sup>

16 Jan 1945, Assembly Crew, 41-28697 *SPOTTED APE*, 171<sup>75</sup>  
Assembly flight; did not count as a combat mission.

21 Jan 1945, HEILBRONN, 42-50608 *FILTHY MCNAUGHTY*, 173, 28<sup>76</sup>

The target was a marshalling yard. Heavy contrails from the lead group over the target obscured vision. Seeing a hole in the cloud at a target of opportunity, and realizing that the primary had been passed, the formation decided to drop on the target, the town of Arnback. Bombs were dropped with poor results, for only a few fell on the town itself, the others in an open field. CPT Evans flew wing in the second squadron.



**Heilbronn, Germany, from 20,000 feet**

<http://www.458bg.com/crewkj18hoffman.htm> (Sept. 2015) Photo credit, the Boudreau Family

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<sup>74</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/crewj2hess.htm> (Oct. 2015).

<sup>75</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jan45/458BG-171-16Jan45.pdf> (Sept. 2015);  
<http://www.458bg.com/storiesspottedape.htm> (Sept. 2015).

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jan45/458BG-173-21Jan45.pdf> (Sept. 2015);  
<http://www.458bg.com/january-1945> (Feb. 2016).



29 Jan 1945, MUNSTER, 42-50499 *COOKIE/OPEN POST*, 175, 29<sup>77</sup>

The secondary target, a marshalling yard, was attacked, at the request of ground forces who wanted German communication lines to be damaged. Twenty-eight aircraft went over the target; CPT Evans flew lead of the second squadron. Cloud cover was complete, so H2X (ground mapping radar) equipment was used, and the Command Pilots reported a good run.



A sample of the extreme cloud conditions that faced the 458<sup>th</sup> BG in January 1945  
<http://www.458bg.com/january-1945> (Sept. 2015) Photo credit, Roland Rue

It is not known why only 29 of CPT Evans' 30 combat missions appear in the records. Darin Scorza had this to say in an e-mail dated 23 September 2015 to the author:

Upon arrival at the [BG], each new crew's pilot would be assigned to fly a mission (as co-pilot) with an experienced crew in order to gain an understanding of how the [BG] operated on a typical mission. Likewise, the rest of the crew would usually be assigned to an experienced pilot to fly their first mission. So while this first mission counted for the crew's pilot and the crew, it may not be accurately reflected in the records that I have compiled. The primary record set for the mission lists that I have compiled are the [BG's] formation plans, which contain only the name of the pilot and not additional crew members on each

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<sup>77</sup> <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Jan45/458BG-175-29Jan45.pdf> (Sept. 2015).

aircraft. So, for this first mission of Sam's, he would not have shown on the formation plans since he would have been the co-pilot. There are load lists (in those 63 boxes at the NARA) for each mission, showing exactly who was on each aircraft. I only have load lists for about 25 of the [BG's] 240 missions.

*See also* <http://www.458bg.com/crewlammers> (Feb. 2016) for the May 28, 1944, diary entry of 2LT Gordon W. Lamers.

*Eighteen of the B-24 Liberators flown by CPT Evans*



**B-24JAZ-155 CO, 44-40288, *Bad Girl***  
<http://www.b24bestweb.com/badgirl1.htm> (Oct. 2015)

This is the aircraft he flew on his first recorded flight (second sortie), 8 June 1944. In October of that year she crash-landed at Horsham and was salvaged. *BAD GIRL* was AZON equipped, as were several other aircraft he piloted.



**B-24H10 DT, 41-28719, *Paddlefoot***

<http://www.b24bestweb.com/paddlefoot3.htm> (Oct. 2015)

CPT Evans flew her to France on his first recorded combat mission on 24 June 1944.



**B-24JAZ-140 CO, 42-110163, *Time's A Wastin'***

<http://www.b24bestweb.com/timesawastin-v2-4.htm> (Oct. 2015)

An AZON equipped aircraft he flew to Germany on his second and third missions, on 28 June and 7 July 1944.



**B-24H-25-DT, 42-51110, *Top O' The Mark***  
<http://www.b24bestweb.com/topothemark-v1-2.htm> (Oct. 2015)

He flew her to France on his fourth combat mission on 8 July 1944. She crash-landed at Horsham on 29 June 1944 when returning from a bomb run after being set on fire by flak. The pilot gave the order to bail out, then recalled it. Due to failure of the intercom, two crewmen did bail in Germany; one was taken POW, the other killed. The aircraft was repaired.



**B-24-JAZ-155 CO, 44-40285, *Table Stuff***  
<http://www.b24bestweb.com/tablestuff-v2-1.htm> (Oct. 2015)

One of the original 458<sup>th</sup> BG's AZON-equipped ships. CPT Evans flew her on mission nos. 5 (12 July 1944) and 10 (25 July 1944), and on what would have been mission no. 6 (17 July 1944), but had to abort due to his co-pilot's stomach cramps at 18,000'.



B-24H-15 CO, 42-52441, *Last Card Louie*

<http://www.b24bestweb.com/lastcardlouie3.htm> (Oct. 2015) Photo credit: Edward Silver

Shown with 2LT Edward Silver, a navigator in the 755<sup>th</sup> Squadron, in Clastres, France, likely on a truckin' run. CPT Evans flew *LAST CARD LOUIE* on his sixth mission on 17 July 1944.



B-24J-140 CO, 42-110141, *Breezy Lady*

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Consolidated\\_B-24J-140-CO\\_Liberator\\_42-110141\\_492nd\\_BG,\\_859th\\_BS.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Consolidated_B-24J-140-CO_Liberator_42-110141_492nd_BG,_859th_BS.jpg) (Oct. 2015)

On mission no. 7 on 20 July 1944, *BREEZY LADY*'s nose gear refused to descend, but CPT Evans managed to land her safely.



**B-24K-150 CO, 44-40201, *Silver Chief***  
<http://www.b24bestweb.com/silverchief-v2-3.htm> (Oct. 2015)

He flew her on mission no. 8 on 28 July 1944. She was salvaged after a forced- or crash-landing on the continent in January 1945.



**B-24AZ-155 CO, 44-40275, *Shack Time***  
<http://www.b24bestweb.com/shacktime5.htm> (Oct. 2015) Photo credit: George Reynolds

Another AZON equipped aircraft. He flew her on mission no. 9 on 24 July 1944 to the Normandy area after the D-Day invasion. He also flew her on two AZON missions, his 14<sup>th</sup> (to France on 17 August 1944) and 16<sup>th</sup> (to Holland on 25 August 1944).



B-24JAZ-155 CO, 44-40281, *A Dog's Life*

<http://www.458bg.com/crewshannon.htm> (Sept. 2015) Photo credit: George Reynolds

She was AZON equipped. CPT flew her six times, on one aborted flight (15 August 1944) and on mission nos. 11 (1 August 1944), 12 (6 August 1944), 13 (9 August 1944), 15 (18 August 1944) and 20 (14 October 1944). On mission no. 15, her wing was clipped, and CPT Evans had to limp her back to England. Six months later, she crashed near Horsham St. Faith when returning from a practice flight with the loss of all nine crew members.





**B-24JAZ-100 CO, 42-100431, *Bomb-Ah-Dear***  
**<http://www.458bg.com/crewej4curland> (Sept. 2015)**

Another AZON plane, shown taxiing at Horsham. CPT Evans flew her on an AZON mission (his mission no. 17) on 26 August 1944. She was lost over Germany in October 1944, most likely from flak damage. Four crew members perished, five survivors were taken as POWs. On that tragic flight, she was the “tail end Charlie” of the squadron CPT Evans led, <http://www.458bg.com/MissionPDFs/Oct44/458BG-139-30Oct44.pdf> (Sept. 2015).



**B-24JAZ-155 CO. 44-40283, *Lassie Come Home***  
<http://www.458bg.com/crewdiehl.htm> (Sept. 2015)

Again, AZON equipped. He flew her to Germany on mission no. 18 on 10 September 1944. In January 1945, she incurred battle damage over the continent. The flight was aborted and the crew returned to Horsham with the #1 engine feathered. During the landing, she lost a second engine on the same side and crashed into a residential area about a mile from Horsham. Only one crew member of the nine aboard survived.



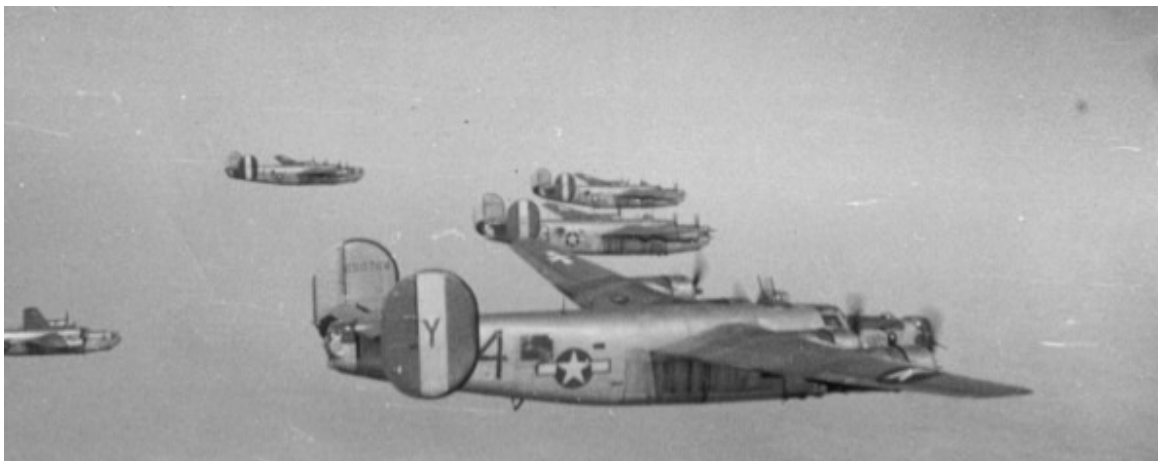
**B-24H-10 DT, 41-28714, *Cyclone/Utterly Devastating***  
<http://alfredhlockeb24crew.weebly.com/planes-389th-bg.html> (Oct. 2015)

The photo was taken in September 1944 at RAF Halesworth (about 30 miles southeast of Horsham St. Faith), the home of another BG. The people pictured were members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service from Acle, Norfolk (about 13 miles east of Horsham). *CYCLONE* was borrowed for CPT Evans' 29 September 1944 truckin' flight. She was eventually declared war weary and salvaged.



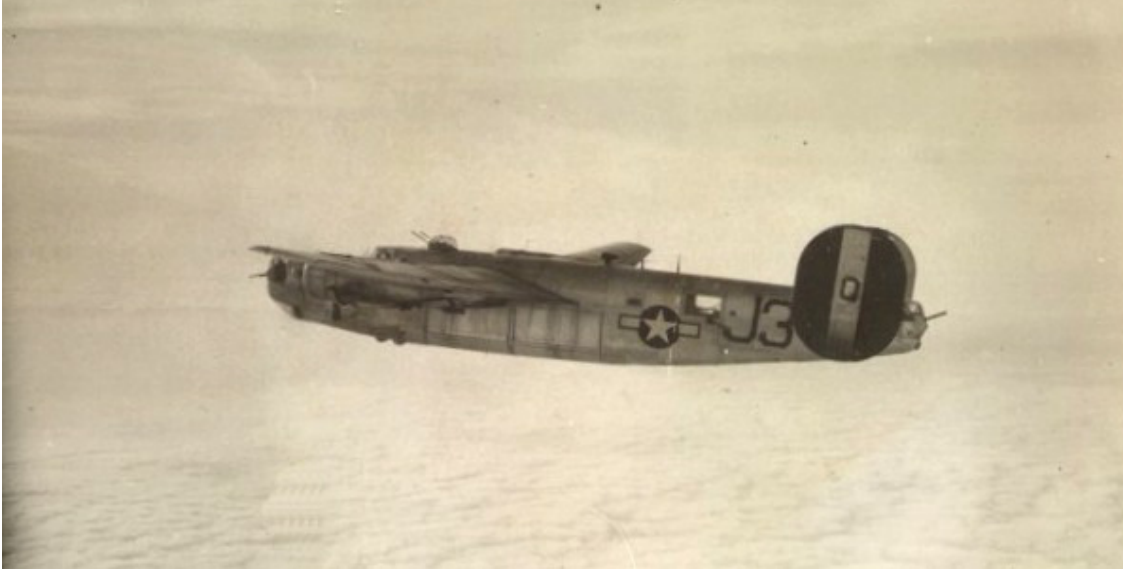
**B-24J-401 CF, 42-50456, *Dorothy Kay Special***  
<http://www.b24bestweb.com/dorothykayspecial1.htm> (Oct. 2015)

This is the B-24 that hit the wing on CPT Evans' Liberator, *A DOG'S LIFE*, on 18 August 1944. He flew *DOROTHY KAY SPECIAL* to Germany on mission no. 19 on 14 October 1944.



**B-24J-1 F0, 42-50768, *Arise My Love And Come With Me***  
<http://www.458bg.com/crewej36wilburn.htm> (Sept. 2015) Photo credit: Jim Hartwick

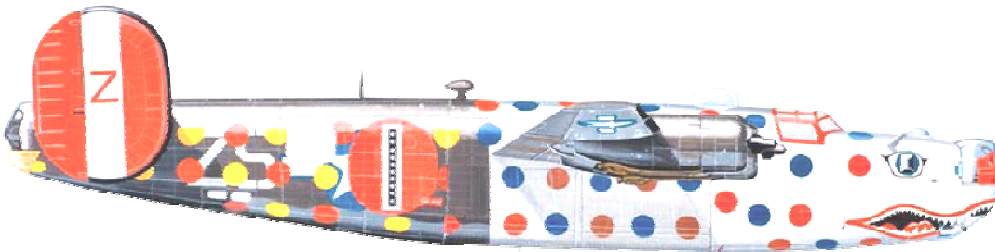
He piloted this B-24 twice, on 30 October and 5 November 1944, on mission nos. 21 and 22 to Germany.



**B-24J-5, 42-50740, *Our Burma***

[http://www.458bg.com/Aircraft/PDFsheet/OurBurma\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.458bg.com/Aircraft/PDFsheet/OurBurma_WEB.pdf) (Sept. 2015)

He flew this aircraft on two missions over Germany – no. 24 (12 December 1944) and no. 27 (8 January 1945).



**B-24H-10 DT, 41-28697, *Spotted Ape***

<http://www.458bg.com/storiesspottedape.htm> (Sept. 2015) Painting by Mike Bailey



**B-24H-10 DT, 41-28697, *Spotted Ape*, getting the formation together in good weather**  
<http://www.458bg.com/crewba6gilbert.htm> (Oct. 2015) Photo: Fold3

Assembly ships were aircraft specially fitted to assemble individual group formations at the beginning of a combat mission. They were equipped with unique lighting; carried pyrotechnics; and were painted in distinctive colors and patterns so that their flock could easily recognize them. The skeleton crew usually consisted of a pilot, co-pilot, navigator, radio operator, and flight engineer.

*SPOTTED APE*, *SPOTTED ASS APE* and *WONDER BREAD* were some names the crews called the 458<sup>th</sup> BG's assembly ship. Beginning in June 1944, she had a long career in forming the 458<sup>th</sup>'s squadrons in the crowded skies on mission days. After she got her group into proper formation, she returned to base.

CPT Evans flew her once, on 16 January 1945.

Her career ended in March 1945 when, upon landing, she skidded off the runway and ended on her belly. She was then written off as salvage,  
<http://www.458bg.com/storiesspottedape.htm> (Sept. 2015).



**B-24J-401 CF, 42-50499, *Cookie* (renamed from *Open Post*)**  
<http://www.b24bestweb.com/cookie-v3-1.htm> (Oct. 2015)

This is the aircraft CPT Evans flew on his last combat mission on 29 January 1945.



<http://www.worldwarphotos.info/gallery/usa/aircrafts-2-3/b-24-liberator/b-24-liberator-bomber-nose-art-494th-bomb-group-3/> (Sept. 2015)

While not a 458<sup>th</sup> BG's Liberator (*SABU* was in the Pacific theater), this nose art photo perhaps shows the pride that B-24 crews took in their "flying boxcars".

*Original Evans Crew, “States, May 1944”*



**Standing:** CPT Charles S. “Sam” Evans – P; 1LT Frederick A. Johnson – CP; 2LT Walter M. Cline – N; 1LT George F. Adkins – B

**Kneeling:** T/SGT Max K. Van Buren – G/FE; T/SGT Leon C. Huggard – G/RO; unknown (possibly S/SGT Donald R. Conway – G/FE); unknown (possibly S/SGT Carl White, G); S/SGT James A. Michaelson – G

Sam is certain that one of the unknowns, perhaps the one kneeling second from right, said he did not want to fly anymore – it was too dangerous – so he was relieved from flying. If so, this could be S/SGT Carl V. White. The other unknown (in the middle) could be S/SGT Donald R. Conway (if he was an original crew member) or S/SGT Carl V. White. If Sam started with a crew of 10, one crewman is missing. Crewmen who were evidently assigned in England were S/SGT Darrell W. Latch and S/SGT Lawrence R. Matson.

Sam said that he and his crew left from Topeka, Kansas, for overseas. Herington Army Airfield, about 70 miles southeast of Topeka, processed men and heavy bombardment equipment (chiefly B-24s from June 1943 to June 1944) for overseas



deployment. Over a 5-day period, pay and personnel records and orders were brought up to date, and crews were formed and assigned aircraft. Crew members were given physical fitness exams; a prisoner of war lecture; briefings on routes to be traveled; various critical items of equipment; communications instructions; and so on.

*Winter, 1944, RAF Horsham St. Faith*



**Standing:** T/SGT Max K. Van Buren – FE; T/SGT Leon C. Huggard – RO; CPT Charles S. “Sam” Evans – P; 1LT Frederick A. Johnson – CP; 1LT George F. Adkins – B  
**Kneeling:** S/SGT James A. Michaelson – G; S/SGT Lawrence R. Matson – Armorer/WG; S/SGT Darrell W. Latch – G  
**Missing:** 2LT Walter M. Cline – N; S/SGT Donald R. Conway – G/FE

The aircraft behind the crew is likely [B-24J-5 FO, 42-50768, \*ARISE MY LOVE AND COME WITH ME\*](#). If so, this photo would have been taken just after either mission no. 21 on 30 October 1944 to Hamburg or mission no. 22 on 5 November 1944 to Karlsruhe.

The winter of 1944-1945 in Europe (during the Battle of the Bulge) was the coldest and snowiest in more than 40 years. Sam claims never to have owned a B-6 (fleece-lined) flight jacket (he’s wearing an A-2 jacket in both crew photos). Such a garment seems essential at temperatures as low as -65° at altitudes of up to 25,000 feet.

*Sam's crew*



**Frederick A. Johnson, high school graduation, 1941  
1LT, co-pilot on the Evans Crew**

FREDERICK JOHNSON

Activities: Class President; The Laurels, 4, 3, 2, 1, president; vice-president, 3A representative; Senate, president; Class Day and Luncheon Committee; Student Forum; 4A Boys; 4B Boys; Senior Hi-Y, president, secretary; Junior Hi-Y, president, secretary; Schurzzone; Intramural track; fencing; R.O.T.C.; first lieutenant; Officers' Club; Picked Company; Picked Platoon; N.R.A.; Ushers; French; Clean-Up; Service letter; Library; Camera.

He's an inspiration to those "sleepers",  
Scratching his head, and saying "jeepers".



**Walter Meylan Cline, high school graduation, 1938  
2LT, navigator on the Evans Crew**

CLINE, WALTER MEYLOR "PETE"  
*He doth indeed show some sparks that are like wit.*

Born 13 April 1921 in Greenville, South Carolina; married *circa* 1945. It is not known why his high school yearbook spells his middle name incorrectly.

Walter M. Cline, 83, of Tampa, passed away Wed. May 5, 2004. He is survived by his wife, Eleanor Cline; daughter, Mary Beth Sanders, of Texas; son, Walter M. Cline, II, of Tampa; sisters, Aleida Northrup, of Houston, Texas and Sara Beek, of Ocala, Fla.; brother, James D. Cline, of Tampa; four grandchildren, Tony Cline, of Tampa, Jennifer Hundley, of Hagerstown, Md., Robert Sanders, of Amherst, Mass. and Michael Sanders, of Ft. Campbell, Ky.; and one great-grandchild, Aiden Hundley.

Mr. Cline graduated from H.B. Plant High School in 1938. He served in the U.S. Air Force during WWII and the Korean War, retiring with the rank of Lt. Colonel. He worked for the U.S. Customs for over 38 years, beginning as a messenger and working his way up to Assistant Collector, and later Assistant District Director of Inspection for the Tampa District.

For the past 24 years, he has been co-owner and president of J. Cortina, Inc. Customs Brokers. Mr. Cline has been active in the Kiwanis Club and Propeller Club, and was a charter member of Palma Ceia United Methodist Church. A memorial service will be held at 2:00 p.m. Monday, May 10 at Palma Ceia United Methodist Church, with a reception following the service in the church Fellowship Hall.

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/tbo/obituary.aspx?n=walter-m-cline&pid=2209320>  
(Oct. 2015).

### **1LT George F. Adkins, Bombardier on the Evans Crew**

GALESBURG, IL - George F. Adkins, 83, of 1127 Willard Ave. died at 7:07 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 18, 2003, at St. Mary Medical Center.

Born May 30, 1920, in Rochester, N.Y., to Raymond A. Adkins and Ethel Hirschmann, he married Jean MacDonald in 1949. She died in 1952.

He later married Mary Eloise Eichler on Feb. 14, 1955, in Providence, R.I. She survives.

Also surviving is one nephew, John, whom he cared for.

He was a World War II Army Air Forces veteran, serving in the Second Air Division, Eighth Air Force, in the European Theater and achieved the rank of lieutenant.

He received a bachelor of arts degree from Harvard University, a master of science degree from Boston University and a doctoral certificate from the University of Pennsylvania.

He was a social worker in Providence, Gardiner, Mass., and Lebanon, Penn.

He was the director of Brown County Family and Children Services in Green Bay, Wis., from 1961 to 1971 and administrator of social services at Galesburg Mental Health Center from 1971 until his retirement in 1986.

He was a member and held offices in the National Association of Social Workers.

He was a member and former president on the Human Rights Commission in Green Bay and assisted with the Human Rights Commission of Indian-Community Affairs.

He also was an active member of community theaters in Gardiner and Green Bay.

He was a member of the Green Bay Rotary Club and the Lincoln-Douglas Kiwanis Club of Galesburg.

He was in the United States Army Air Corps, Eighth Air Force, Second Division, 458th Bomb Group, World War II, Horsham St. Faith, England.

He served at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Galesburg as a lecturer and a Eucharist minister, and was a member of its Men's Club.

He was a member of The Cathedral of Green Bay Diocese, where he served as a lay reader.

Burial will be in St. Columba's Cemetery in Newport, R.I.

*The Peoria Journal Star* (IL), Sunday, December 21, 2003

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=64570304> (Oct. 2015)

### **T/SGT Max Kenneth Van Buren, Flight Engineer on the Evans Crew**

Born in 1911 in Fredonia, Kansas; married in March 1944 in Colorado Springs, Colorado; died in 1961 in Wichita, Kansas.

Sgt. Max Van Buren has been assigned to a Liberator bomber crew as aerial engineer. Stationed at Peterson Field, Colorado Springs, he will complete his combat crew training preparatory to being sent over for combat duty. He entered the service a year ago and prior to that time was an inspector for Cessna Aircraft Co. After basic training in Miami Beach, Fla., he went to Sheppard Field Tex., where he completed the course in the Army aircraft mechanics school. From there, he went to Tyndall Field, Florida, where he graduated from aerial gunnery school, receiving his wings and sergeant's rating.

[http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/11136945/person/-517267848/story/85e4c667-4a75-492b-aaf9-7b62974cd6d6?pgn=49&usePUBJs=true&\\_phsrc=gSg27](http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/11136945/person/-517267848/story/85e4c667-4a75-492b-aaf9-7b62974cd6d6?pgn=49&usePUBJs=true&_phsrc=gSg27) (Sept. 2015).

Max K. Van Buren, husband of Mrs. Ramah Van Buren, 1010 E. Lincoln, was recently promoted from the rank of staff sergeant to technical sergeant in the Air Corps. Sgt. Van Buren is flight engineer on a B-24 Liberator bomber stationed in England. He holds the air medal for missions completed in the European theater of operations. Prior to entering the service, he was employed at Cessna Aircraft Co. Sgt. Van Buren is the son of Mr. and Mrs. C.H. Van Buren, 2351 S. Greenwood, Wichita. [http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/11136945/person/-517267848/story/eb4321b2-df0d-4ec0-bdde-73a9a7243366?pgn=49#?\\_phcmd=a\('PersonMilitaryPage',\('vid':'def5ffe4-7490-4974-ab15-0e494bced8dc','TreeId':'11136945','PersonId':'-517267848'\)\)](http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/11136945/person/-517267848/story/eb4321b2-df0d-4ec0-bdde-73a9a7243366?pgn=49#?_phcmd=a('PersonMilitaryPage',('vid':'def5ffe4-7490-4974-ab15-0e494bced8dc','TreeId':'11136945','PersonId':'-517267848'))) (Sept. 2015).

Colorado Springs, Colorado. Announcement is made by Mr. and Mrs. O.B. Jeffers of Wichita, of the marriage of their daughter, Ramah, to Staff Sergeant Max K. Van Buren, son of Mr. and Mrs. C.H. Van Buren, of Wichita, Sunday, March 19, [1944,] at 12:30 in the First Methodist Church. <http://person.ancestry.com/tree/11136945/person/-517267848/facts> (Sept. 2015).

Technical Sergeant Max K. Van Buren, B-24 heavy bomber flight engineer, has reported to a specialist's school at Chanutte, Ill., following a 21 day furlough spent here with Mrs. Van Buren, 5322 E. Morris, and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. C.H. Van Buren, 1232 N. Pershing.

Van Buren holds the Presidential Citation, the Air Medal with 4 Oak Leaf Clusters, and 5 Bronze Stars [*sic*] for action in the European Theater. At the time of his furlough, he had completed 30 combat missions and 350 combat hours with a lead crew over Germany and the occupied countries. He entered the service in January 1943, and went into European combat in April 1944. He was assigned to the 458<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, Eighth Air Force.

<http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/11136945/person/-517267848/story/0e61fff4-9075-4c31-831d-74a04c500446?usePUBJs=true> (Sept. 2015).

### **S/SGT Donald Richard Conway, flight engineer/gunner on the Evans Crew**

Donald R. Conway was born 6 February 1923 and died 11 April 2000 at the age of 77. He was buried at Union Cemetery in Amesbury, Massachusetts, <http://grave-records.mooseroots.com/1/2840974/Donald-R-Conway-MA> (Oct. 2015). In 1965, he was an assistant professor, and chairman of the foreign languages department, at North Essex Community College in Haverhill, Massachusetts. His wife was Clair Hollobaugh Conway.



**Leon Charles Huggard, high school graduation, 1940  
T/SGT, radio operator on the Evans Crew**

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=39935593&ref=acom> (Sept. 2015). His only sibling, a brother, was killed in the Pacific theater in August 1944, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=Huggard&GSfn=Francis&GSiman=1&GScid=96687&GRid=36071270&>.

Leon C. Huggard, 82, of Plainfield, Iowa, died on Tuesday, December 28, 2004, at the Waverly Health Center, of natural causes.



Leon was born on October 25, 1922, in Waverly, Iowa, the son of Charles Wilfred and Susie Mable (Cook) Huggard. Leon attended the Smith Grove Country School, rural Plainfield and graduated from the Plainfield High School in 1940.

Following his schooling, Leon worked in Plainfield as a section hand with the Railroad and then moved "out west" helping with the fall fruit harvest in Washington and the wheat harvest in the summer. On February 2, 1943, Leon entered the U.S. Army Air Corps, where he served with the 215th [458<sup>th</sup>] Heavy Bomber Unit. Leon was active with the Air Offensive Unit in Europe, Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland and Ardennes. Leon was discharged on September 13, 1945, and following his discharge Leon went to an electronics school in Chicago.

Following his schooling he returned to Plainfield and worked for the Plainfield Telephone Company for three years and then for Schield Bantam. On March 13, 1947, he was united in marriage to Gertrude Schukar at St. John's Lutheran Church in Nashua. For seven years the couple made their home in Cedar Rapids, while Leon worked for Collins Radio, and then for 25 years they were in California where he was a naval electronics technician, involved with procurement and testing of equipment for the U.S. Navy.

After retiring in 1982, Leon and Gertrude returned to Plainfield. Leon was a member of the Plainfield United Methodist Church. He enjoyed fishing, camping with his family, and says that he "played at" golf.

He is survived by his wife, Gertrude of Plainfield; two daughters and their husbands, Charlotte and George Stevens and Darlene and Lynn Balvanz all of Plainfield; 7 grandchildren; and 3 great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents; his son, Gregory Huggard on February 9, 2002, one great granddaughter, and his brother, Francis Huggard.

Celebration of Life Services will be held on Friday, December 31, 2004 at 10:30 a.m. at the United Methodist Church in Plainfield, with Pastor Doug Tharpe and Pastor Bill Burchit officiating. Burial will be in the Willow Lawn Cemetery in Plainfield, with Military graveside rites conducted by the U.S. Army Reserve Unit, Waterloo, Iowa.

<http://www.kaisercorson.com/obituary/Leon-C.-Huggard/Plainfield-IA/173708> (Sept. 2015).



**Lawrence Richard Matson, circa 1943**  
**S/SGT, armorer/waist gunner on the Evans Crew**

Born 1 July 1916 in Clatsop, Oregon; married 5 June 1942; “service end date, 14 September 1945”; died 14 December 1966 in Portland, Oregon,  
<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=3912425&ref=acom> (Sept. 2015).



**SGT Matson “in a hospital in England after being shell shocked on one of his 30 combat missions”**

“This photo ran in the Astoria, Oregon, newspaper about the men overseas.”  
<http://person.ancestry.com/tree/218260/person/-2108050888/gallery> (Sept. 2015). The hospital is the one at Horsham St. Faith.



The photo also ran in *The Oregonian* and *The Oregon Journal*, both Portland newspapers, accompanied by the following text:

AN EIGHTH AIR FORCE LIBERATOR STATION, England:--CPL Billy Conn, light-heavyweight boxing champion of the world and No. 1 contender for Joe Louis' heavyweight crown, is pictured here during a visit to the station sick ward between matches for the Eighth Air Force 'Victory Squadron' war bond drive.

In bed is S/SGT Lawrence R. Matson, 167 Harrison Ave, Astoria, Ore., son of Mrs. M.R. Matson. His wife, Mrs. Grace A. Matson, resides at Route 1, Box 238, Brush Prairie, Washington. SGT Matson was a logger for the Crossett and Western Co., Knappa, Ore. before his military career. He is now an aerial gunner, and recently completed 12 missions<sup>78</sup> and was awarded the 1<sup>st</sup> oak leaf cluster to the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in aerial combat. The others, SGT James H. Estes, (standing) Boise, Idaho, and SGT James G. Snyder, (cup to mouth) Ellaville, GA.

Since this photo was taken all the men have been released after treatment of minor ailments.

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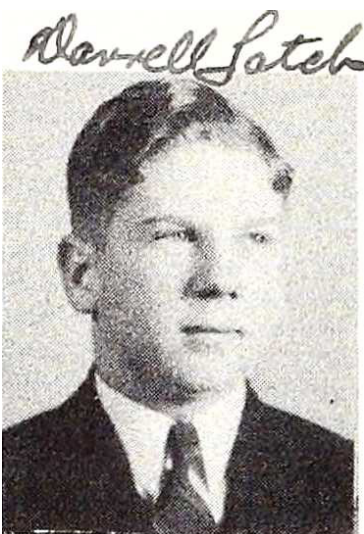
<sup>78</sup> If his 12<sup>th</sup> mission was the one to Hamburg on August 6 that CAPT Evans flew, it's no wonder he needed a rest. See p. 16, *supra*.



**Darrell Ward Latch, high school graduation, 1941**  
**S/SGT, aerial gunner on the Evans Crew**

Latch, Darrell: *The key position in the band.* Band '38, '39, '40, '41; Orchestra '38, '39, '40, '41; Band and Orchestra Annual Concert '39, '40, '41; Sophomore Social Committee '38, '39; Business Committee of Class Play '41; Christmas Vespers '40.

Born 13 November 1924 in Decatur, Illinois; married Jacqueline Carrell Harrington (Belschner) 31 May 1951; died 30 March 1997 in Omaha, Nebraska,  
<http://search.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&db=VAcemeteries&h=4947250&tid=&pid=&usePUB=true&rhSource=60901>.



**Junior year in high school, 1940**



**Sophomore year in high school, 1939**