

A HISTORY OF THE 306th BOMBARDMENT GROUP - EIGHTH AIR FORCE  
Russell A. Strong Rt. 1, Turnpike Rd. Laurinburg, NC 28352

Name Tom F Chandler  
Address Rt. 1, Box 25C Republican City, Nebraska 68971  
Home Phone 308-799-2825 Date 9 March 1979  
Occupation Educator-Retired Employer \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Bus. Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Serial No(s) 17040628

Service Record:

Before joining the 306th: Enlisted 9 Feb 42 at Omaha Basic Tr at Wichita Falls, Tex Stationed at Tucson and then 5 weeks at Las Vegas Gunnery School. Entered Glider Pilot Training in June 1942, but this was discontinued in early 1943. After a short time at BTC 10 in Greensboro, N.C., entered Scott Field radio School and was graduated in Dec. Took Phase training at Tampa early in 1944, and finally got to England about 2 June 1944. Assigned to the 367 BomB Sq. shortly thereafter.

After leaving the 306th:

Shot down and taken prisoner 12 Sept 1944 near Berlin. Liberated by the 11th Armored in April 1945. After treatment in the 387th gen. hosp. in Paris, was returned to USA about 11 May 1945. Was sent to BGH at Brigham City, Utah, where my left arm was amputated about March 1946, and where I received a Cert of Disab Disch on 31 May 1946.

306th Record

Arrival date at Thurleigh About 10 June 1944  
Squadron or other unit(s) 367 Squadron  
MOS # 757 Specialty Radio Operator-Mechanic Gunner  
Missions Completed (and date of last) 22 12 Sept 1944  
Promotions Highest Grade Held: T/Sgt Discharged as such  
Decorations X AM 2 olcs DFC olcs SS DSM DSC MH SM 1 PH 1 Battle Stars  
X

(On unusual DFCs, and Silver Stars and above would like to see a copy of the citation)

Other personal data:

**Description of Air Missions:**

(What were the highlights of your combat career? What was your role? What heroics did you witness? What events were there of which you have special knowledge?)

The highlights would be our loss of the aircraft and subsequent capture, and the day that the 11th Armored took Obermassfeld and liberated ~~was~~ That occurred on 1 April 1945, but it was about 10 or twelve days before they were able to get us back to Frankfort and then on to the 387th general Hospital in Paris.

Add additional pages, if necessary

According to the best of my recollections there were numerous fires throughout the plane as well as in some of the engines. There was an oxygen fire in the radio room where I later destroyed the code book. There was heavy fire in the bomb bay going up through the bombs that were never dropped. The bombardier and navigator reported fire and dense smoke in their compartment. The tail gunner was blown off his seat but was able to get back to his guns and destroy the attacking plane. The ball turret gunner had superficial face and head wounds and one gun knocked out, but he and the waist gunner claimed two probables. He also helped me hook my parachute pack as I was hit in both arms and unable to secure the left D-ring.

Since there was no chance of saving the plane, the pilot ordered us to abandon the aircraft. The waist gunner, the ball gunner and I went out the waist hatch, and I presume the other crew member left by their regular exits. We were at 31,500 feet and I made a delayed jump to about 2,000 or 3,000 feet. When I saw that big, beautiful 'chute open above me, I passed out and did not regain consciousness until I was on the ground. As I suffered no injury from the jump, except a broken ear drum, I have always felt thankful to riggers who fitted and packed my parachute. I understand that we were northwest of Berlin at the time.

When I regained consciousness, I was lying on my back and apparently uninjured except for my arms. I tried to damage my 'chute, but was too weak to accomplish very much. Within the next half hour I was found by two men in uniform. They kept some of the more eager civilians from getting to me. However, I remember with loving thankfulness the little old lady who timidly crept out and handed me her jar of water when I begged for "Wasser". Later I was taken by wagon and horse to a nearby village where I was kept under guard with other prisoners that afternoon. Later we were transported to a more central place where there were many more prisoners.

With the exception of the co-pilot, who hid out, and the navigator, whose fate I have never known, our entire crew was together that evening. I was with them for two or three days and then I was taken to what I think was the Herman Goering Hospital in Berlin. There my wounds were dressed, fragments removed from my right arm, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ and my left arm bound to a splint. It was later amputated in the states.

I do not remember being physically abused by the Germans, but there was considerable mental strain during interrogation at Frankfurt. From there I was sent to Obermassfeld in late October or early November. There we were cared for by captured allied medical personnel. They really worked their tails off trying to keep us alive that winter, and they did a remarkable job, considering what they had to work with. If I can get a good copy, I will enclose a letter I received from one of the English prisoners who worked so hard taking care of me.

Rt. 1, Box 25C

Name Tom F Chandler Address Republican City, Nebraska 68971  
Telephone 308-799-2825

### MISSING AIRCRAFT REPORT

Pilot Paul F. Bailey Plane # and Name 42-31065  
Mission Date 12 Sept 1944 Target Ruhland, Germany  
Cause of loss: AA fire  Fighter attack  Other, explain \_\_\_\_\_

Describe conditions in the plane as completely as you can:

The accompanying descriptions are from a memory that is greatly fogged by the passage of time and the fact that I was seriously injured at the time.

Probably, the following members of the crew could give a much better description of what things were like in their part of the plane.

Paul F. Bailey 1510 Lewis Avenue Des Moines, Iowa 50315

LeRoy Hollenberg 218 Forester Lane Bridgeton, Mo 63042 (Engineer)

Robert J. Vickers Rt. 1 Clarence, Mo. 63437 (Bombardier)

Other members of the crew were: Rodenberger, whose fate is not known to me; the navigator. See below

How and where did you leave plane?

Tom Dunford, the waist gunner and Geo. (Tex) Hargiss, the tail gunner were rotated just before this mission, and I cannot recall their replacements.

I have lost contact with Boland, the ball gunner.

What happened when you got on the ground?

*See enclosed pages*

Did you meet any of your crew mates?

How were you treated, if captured?

Any additional details, reminiscences, letters, or documents of these events would be appreciated. If you do send such materials, I will copy them and put them back in the mail to you within 24 hours. *As I have copies, please do not return.*

'NORTON'  
NETLEY STREET,  
FAARBOROUGH,  
HAMPSHIRE,  
ENGLAND

21.10.45.

Dear Tom.

For a long time now I have been wondering how you are getting on. I'm sorry to remind you of those rather grim days when you lay in the Hospital at Newnassfeld, but just because we did have such a fight with that right arm of yours, I would very much like to know how we made out. You had a very tough time, and I only hope that you have recovered as completely as you deserve.

I'm now waiting my release to go back to my medical studies at Guy's Hospital, London, and won't be sorry to see the best of the Army. 6 years war service is a long time! Major Darling is now in Palestine with the 6<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division. He got married shortly after he was repatriated from Germany. Capt. Darling is back in Australia so far as I know together with Ted, and the other Australian boys. Have you any news of Dickland? Here's wishing you all the best. I still say you were the best patient we ever had in

Station I. Please give my regards to your wife.

Yours age

Lieutenant Bill Watson

The Black Watch (R.H.R.) attached No 2 S.S.  
Commando. The British Army.

The preceding is a letter  
I received from Bill Watson  
who was greatly  
responsible for keeping  
me alive. My address  
at Obermassfeld was  
Luft 3, 9C, but I  
never received any  
mail.

Tom

Mr. & Mrs. Tom F Chandler  
Republican City, Nebraska 68971  
Rt. 1 Box 25C  
March 9, 1979

R. A. Strong  
Rt. 1, Turnpike Rd  
Laurinburg, N.C. 28352

Dear Russell,

I was happy to receive your  
interesting letter of 22 February.

With this letter I am sending  
some enclosures that may  
give you some information or  
fill in some blank spaces.

I also received the December,  
1978 issue of 306th Echoes and  
enjoyed reading it.

None of the enclosures need  
to be returned.

Sincerely,  
Tom F Chandler

9

1/ Spt. TOL F. SPANGLER, 17041628, has participated in a heavy bombardment over enemy occupied Continental Europe on the following dates, as confirmed by the Commanding Officer, 306th Bombardment Group (H):

28 June 1944, Laon, France.  
7 July 1944, Leipzig, Germany.  
8 July 1944, Amiens, France.  
9 July 1944, LeCrouaisil, France.  
13 July 1944, Munich, Germany.  
18 July 1944, Peenemunde, Germany.  
21 July 1944, Kotten, Germany.  
24 July 1944, St. Lo area, France.  
25 July 1944, St. Lo area, France.  
6 Aug 1944, Brandenburg, Germany.  
7 Aug 1944, St. Loues, France.  
8 Aug. 1944, Caen, France.  
12 Aug 1944, Charent, France.  
14 Aug 1944, Chievres, Belgium.  
15 Aug 1944, Bohlen, Germany.  
24 Aug 1944, Barmen, Germany.  
26 Aug 1944, Gelsenkirchen, Germany.  
27 Aug 1944, Wilhelmshaven, Germany.  
30 Aug 1944, Kiel, Germany.  
3 Sept 1944, Ludwigsdorf, Germany.  
11 Sept 1944, Lutzendorf, Germany.  
12 Sept 1944, Suhlard, Germany.

VERIFIED BY: /s/  
J. W. LAMOTTA, Capt.  
AC, Personnel Officer

Soldier missing in action near Berlin, Germany on 12 Sept 1944 in a B-17 G, airplane #42-31065.



*I sent this in when I  
joined the  
Caterpillar Club*

#### EMERGENCY JUMP STORY

On 12 September 1944, I was riding as Radio Operator-Gunner on a B-17 with the 306th Heavy Bombardment Group on a raid to Rhuland, Germany.

About 1120 hours, we encountered heavy flak some sixty miles NW from Berlin and the formation of twelve planes was somewhat shot apart. The pilot, Lt. Paul T. Bailey of Emporia, Kansas, was attempting to get back into formation with four or five other planes when we were jumped by possibly ten or twelve FW-190's and ME-109's.

We sustained quite a number of hits from 20 mm. cannon and from 7.9 mm. machine gun fire. The tail gunner, whose name I can't remember as he was new with us, accounted for one enemy aircraft destroyed and the ball gunner, Boland and a new waist gunner doubled on two probables.

By this time, however, Lt. Bailey had very little control of the plane and as it was on fire from one end to the other, he ordered us to bail out.

I had sustained three wounds in the left arm with fractures above and below the elbow and one wound in the right arm near the shoulder. Fortunately, the wound in the right arm did not affect its use too much. I was able to fasten the right "D" ring to my harness but could not get the left one fastened. The ball gunner, Boland, however hadn't left the ship yet and fastened it for me or I would have had to make the descent on one riser.

I bailed out of the waist escape door by backing up to it and falling out backwards. I went out lying flat on my back and never changed position until I pulled the rip-cord. For several seconds I was spun in that horizontal plane but finally stopped by holding

my right hand out flat against the motion of my spin. We all bailed out at approximately <sup>31,500</sup>~~25,500~~ feet and I made a delayed jump to what I judged to be about 2500 feet.

The 'chute opened immediately when I pulled the rip-cord and the harness must have been well fitted as there was no discomfort or injury from that. The relief must have been too much for me as I passed out before getting to the ground. It was probably the best thing in the world for me as I suffered no injuries whatsoever to my legs or back when I landed.

I don't know how long I was unconscious, but after regaining consciousness, I was picked up by a couple of Jerry Soldiers in about an hour.

22 February 1979

Mr. Tom F. Chandler  
Route 1, Box 25C  
Republican City, NE 68971

Dear Tom:

Many thanks for the check. It will be put to good use.

I am enclosing some forms, which I would appreciate your filling out.

I was flying on the Sept. 12 raid to Ruhland, but lucked out and made it home. We lost a wingman.

I assume that you were in Paul Bailey's plane, which interests me, because there is no official Missing Air Crew report on the crew, so I do not really know who was on the plane. Can you recall? I'd appreciate any help you can give me on it.

Sept. 12 was my 30th raid. I was navigator for Milton Adam, and that was the last mission together for the officers on the crew. I was grounded for about six weeks as an intelligence officer, and then went back to finish my tour and go home. My enlisted crew had all left after 20 missions-- Conger, Pluta, Ferrari, Redd and Prior.

I have a card in my file on you, but did not have any notation as to your being shot down, so I would be pretty positive you were with Bailey that day.

Nice to hear from you.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

TOM F CHANDLER  
RT. 1, BOX 25C  
REPUBLICAN CITY  
NE 68971

Russell A Strong  
Rt. 1, Turnpike Rd.  
Laurinburg, NC 28352

Dear Mr. Strong:

I am submitting the information  
asked for on page 8 of the July issue  
of 306<sup>th</sup> Echoes.

Squadron 367 Ser. No 17040628

<sup>T/SGT #757</sup>  
Job Radio - Gunner (operator & mechanic)

Date of Arrival about 8 June, 1944

Date of Departure Shot down near Berlin 12 Sept. 1944

Spec. Assignments None Pres. Title None Retired

Decorations: Air Medal 2 clusters Purple Heart

E A M E T Ribbon with 1 star

I am enclosing a check for \$5.00  
to help with postage.

Yours

Tom F Chandler

33. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS

None

34. WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION

None

35. LATEST IMMUNIZATION DATES

SMALLPOX	TYPHOID	TETANUS	OTHER (SPECIFY)
Feb 46	Feb 46	Feb 46	None

35. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONTINENTAL U. S. AND RETURN

DATE OF DEPARTURE	DESTINATION	DATE OF ARRIVAL
20 July 46	London	6 Jan 47
15 Aug 46	London	11 May 46

37. TOTAL LENGTH OF SERVICE

CONTINENTAL SERVICE			FOREIGN SERVICE		
YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS
3	1	2	0	21	21

38. HIGHEST GRADE HELD

1/SGT

39. PRIOR SERVICE

None

40. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION

Discharge for lack of record (lost of record book)

41. SERVICE SCHOOLS ATTENDED

None

42. EDUCATION (YEARS)

GRAMMAR	HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE

PAY DATA

43. LONGEVITY FOR PAY PURPOSES			44. MUSTERING OUT PAY		45. SOLDIER DEPOSITS	46. TRAVEL PAY	47. TOTAL AMOUNT, NAME OF DISBURSING OFFICER
YEARS	MONTHS	DAYS	TOTAL	THIS PAYMENT			
3	1	2	\$ 300.00	\$ 212.50	None	\$ 30.00	Agent Fin Rec Office

INSURANCE NOTICE

IMPORTANT IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY-ONE DAYS THEREAFTER, INSURANCE WILL LAPSE. MAKE CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF THE U. S. AND FORWARD TO COLLECTIONS SUBDIVISION, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

48. KIND OF INSURANCE			49. HOW PAID		50. EFFECTIVE DATE OF ALLOTMENT DISCONTINUANCE	51. DATE OF NEXT PREMIUM DUE (ONE MONTH AFTER 50)	52. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH	53. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO		
NAT. SERV.	U. S. GOVT.	NONE	ALLOTMENT	DIRECT TO			\$	CONTINUE	CONTINUE ONLY	DISCONTINUE
None	By Ind Post		None	V.A. 4	Apr 1946					

54.

RIGHT THUMB PRINT

55. REMARKS (THIS SPACE FOR COMPLETION OF ABOVE ITEMS OR ENTRY OF OTHER ITEMS SPECIFIED IN W. D. DIRECTIVES)

Non Disc: Record book issued at Madison WI on date of death

56. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED

Tom V. Chmelow

57. PERSONNEL OFFICER (TYPE NAME, GRADE AND ORGANIZATION - SIGNATURE)

John W. Cochran, 1st Lt USAF

DEPUTY

STATE OF NEBRASKA }  
COUNTY OF HARRIAN } ss.

I, the undersigned, County Clerk of the above named county and state, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the original record as the same appears in my office.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official

seal this 21st day of June, 1946.

*Iva M. Husband*  
DEPUTY County Clerk of the above named County.

# Enlisted Record - Honorable Discharge

No. 1036-S 28075

WD AGO Form No. 53-55

Army of the United States

to  
Sgt. P. G. ...

STATE OF NEBRASKA }  
COUNTY OF ... }  
the 3rd day of June 1946  
at 2 o'clock and minutes P. M. and recorded in Book 2 page 370  
of World War Records.

By ... County Clerk  
Deputy

## ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES - HONORABLE DISCHARGE

THIS IS TO CERTIFY That ... 17 ...

ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES is hereby Honorably Discharged from the military service of the United States of America. This certificate is awarded as a testimonial of Honest and Faithful Service to this country.

Given at ... Date ... 1946  
... City, ...

...  
Colonel, ...  
Commanding

## ENLISTED RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION HONORABLE DISCHARGE

1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL ... ..			2. ARMY SERIAL No. 17 ...		3. GRADE ...		4. ARM OR SERVICE ...		5. COMPONENT ...					
6. ORGANIZATION 107th ...			7. DATE OF SEPARATION 31 May 1946			8. PLACE OF SEPARATION ...								
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES ...						10. DATE OF BIRTH ...		11. PLACE OF BIRTH ...						
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE SOUGHT See 9						13. COLOR EYES ...		14. COLOR HAIR ...		15. HEIGHT ...		16. WEIGHT ... Lbs.		17. NO. DEPEND ...
18. RACE WHITE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NEGRO <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) <input type="checkbox"/>		19. MARITAL STATUS SINGLE <input type="checkbox"/> MARRIED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) <input type="checkbox"/>		20. U. S. CITIZEN YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND No. ...								

## MILITARY HISTORY

22. DATE OF INDUCTION ...		23. DATE OF ENLISTMENT ...		24. DATE OF ENTRY INTO ACTIVE SERVICE ...		25. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE ...					
SELECTIVE SERVICE DATA ...		26. REGISTERED YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		27. LOCAL S.S. BOARD No. ...		28. COUNTY AND STATE ...		29. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE ...			
30. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND No. ...						31. MILITARY QUALIFICATION AND DATE (I.E., INFANTRY, AVIATION AND MARKSMANSHIP BADGES, ETC.) ...					
32. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS											

INTERROGATION FORM

SQUADRON 367 ~~367~~ A/C Number 065 Letter Z Date 12/9/44

Bomb Load 10/500 H.E. Incend.

Position in Formation

Time Took Off 0644 Time Landed

	X	X	X	X	40th A
	X	X	X	X	
	X	X	X	X	Low
	X	X	X	X	

1. HOT NEWS to be phoned in? Yes No  
Details:

CRE.: Give Rank and Initials

Friendly A/C in any kind of distress:  
(Give position, time, altitude, full details)

*H. Adam says down to fighters 1130 hrs  
6-7 minutes - might have been 042  
instead*

- 1st Lt. Bailey, P.F. Pilot
- 2nd Lt. Babel, R.M. Co-F
- 1st Lt. Rodenberger, R.M. Nav. Kit
- 2nd Lt. Vickers, R.J. BO
- T/Sgt. Chandler, T.F. Rad
- T/Sgt. Hollenberg, L.H. Top
- S/Sgt. Boland, H.J. Bal
- S/Sgt. Durns, J.A. R/W
- L/W
- Sgt. Zvch, L.E. Tail

2. TARGET ATTACKED:

Primary Time:

Alternate Height:

Last Resort Heading:  
(circle)

Duration Bomb Run:

3. Number of BOMBS dropped on target: Jettisoned: Returned: Abortive:

4. Observed RESULTS OF BOMBING: (For this plane or others)

Own Bombs:

Other bombing:

Any Nickels: Yes No  
Number bombs dropped  
Number bombs returned

5. Any PHOTOGRAPHS taken: Yes? No?

6. GROUND TARGETS ATTACKED BY GUNFIRE AND RESULTS:

7. ROUTE: (If different than ordered) (If ABORTIVE give time, place, height of turn; reason for returning early, and Disposition of bombs.)

8. WEATHER: (If it affected mission)

9. FLAK: Encountered on way out, at target and on way home.

Rh. 1, Box 25c  
Republican City, Mo 68971  
August 26, 1981

Russell A. Strong, Editor  
306th Echoes  
2041 Hillsdale  
Kalamazoo, Mi 49007

Dear Comrade Strong:

You will find enclosed  
my check for \$8 to help with  
the postage of the Echoes.

All of the issues have been  
interesting, especially the  
latest one.

Sincerely yours,  
Tom F. Chandler

Enc/ check



P.O. Box 6  
Republican City, Ne 68971  
November 15, 1986

Russell Strong, Editor  
306th E Chace  
2041 Hillside  
Kalamazoo, Mi 49007

Dear Russell,

My wife isn't able to  
travel any more so we haven't  
been to the reunions since the  
one in Omaha. We enjoyed that  
immensely. I haven't contributed  
anything for some time so I am  
enclosing a small check.

The last address I have for  
Mrs. Paul A Bailey (Opal) is  
275 Lakeview Hts.  
Cornelia, GA 30531

Sincerely,  
Tom S. Chandler  
enc/1

\$10

Here's just a  
little help  
for the  
Echoes  
Tom

8/5/87



Tom Chandler

### Tom Chandler

Tom Faucet Chandler the third child of three children was born to William Harvey and Harriet Ann (Welch) Chandler on December 31, 1911 on the family farm near Smith Center, Kan. He departed this life at the Colonial Villa Good Samaritan Center in Alma, Nebraska early Friday morning, June 7, 2002. His age was 90 years, five months and 6 days.

Tom attended elementary school at the Stone School house, District No. 75, and graduated from Smith Center High School in 1929. After graduation he taught in rural School District No. 122 in the Jacksonburg community near Reamsville, Kan.

In 1934 he moved to Republican City, Neb. On January 19, 1935 Tom was united in marriage to Miss Dolly Maye Workman at Red Cloud, Neb.

Tom was employed as District Representative for the Western Public Service company until he resigned his position and volunteered to serve in the United State Army Air Force on February 9, 1942.

He was in the Glider Pilot Training program until it was discontinued. He was then trained and assigned as a Radio-Operator-Gunner on B-17 Bombers with the 367 Squadron, 306 Heavy Bomb Group, flying from Thurleigh, England. On September 12, 1944, while on his 22<sup>nd</sup> mission, he and the crew were forced to bail out of their disabled plane near Berlin. After seven months as a prisoner of war he was liberated and eventually returned to Bushnell General Hospital near Brigham City, Utah. Here it was necessary to amputate his left arm. Later, he was given an Honorable Certificate of Disability Discharge on May 31, 1946, after fifty-two months service. He was awarded the Air