

24 November 2003
8902 Eastbourne Lane
Laurel, Maryland
20708

Gregory, Wm
(James S.)

Dear Russell Strong

Your letter and information came today. I can't tell you how much I appreciate your help. In January I had prepared myself to spend months maybe even years searching for information about my cousin's military experiences. When after many attempts I discovered the 306th Bombardment Group Association, I was excited that someone had cared enough to remember those heroic years. Never dreaming that someone just might have information about William already accessible, I found your name last week and decided to call you. Hoping you could lead me to a source through a mail address, an email address or what ever. When you asked for William's name and then started to tell me information about him, his last flight, crew members, etc. I could hardly speak. I remember when William arrived home in Chester, SC for burial. I was ten years old and gathered with other young family members, while the adults participated in the graveside ceremony. William's older brother, George, elected to mind this group of kids. It was a proud and sad day. I had been active in home efforts to support our troops, selling and buying savings stamps, collecting scrap aluminum, even collecting scraps of meat fat (I never knew what they did with that). Even at ten years old I was aware of what was going on and what William had done.

After the funeral no one would talk about William. The atmosphere was the kind that you knew better than to ask. Once I do recall the subject came up and the reply was something like "he died for our country in the Air Force".

Then George died in January 2003 and I went down for the funeral. He was buried next in the family plot near William. Seeing the grave marker for William I was struck with vivid memories of the early 40's war years. I took out my notebook and copied down the information, USA, 8th AF, 306 BG, 369BSqn. Little did I know then that someone already cared and was waiting for me to contact him. I can't thank you enough.

William does have name sake, his nephew, Bill. My sister in Columbia, SC called him to let him know about you and that some details would be forth coming. Bill was probably as excited as I was talking to you. I will provide him every thing you send me including your address and phone number. Bill's response was that "I could never get dad to talk about Uncle William".

I have enclosed a check to pay for some items your letter said are available. They are:

* The 8x10 glossy print of his crew	\$ 10.00
* A copy of the Group history, First Over Germany	35.00
* A copy of the Squadron Diary	<u>20.00</u>
Total	\$65.00

Should other information become available, I would be very grateful if you would let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jim Burgess". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.