

RECORD UPDATE

306th Bomb Group Association

(Please complete as much of this form as you wish, and return to
Russ Strong at the reunion, or mail to Russ Strong, 5323 Cheval
Place, Charlotte, NC 28205) Little Rock 1989

Date completed 9-20-90

LAST NAME: Lawlor FIRST NAME: John TITLE:
Street address: 202 Yosemite Dr. Telephone: (512) 494-2760
City, state, zip: San Antonio, Texas 78232

Date of Birth: Jan. 4, 1924 Wife's name: Ruth Ann
College(s) attended: Syracuse Univ. Degree(s): BS, MS Year(s): 1946-1951
Current
~~xxxx~~ employment and job title: Sides Supply, Inc. V.P. & Mgr.
San Antonio, Texas

Reunions attended: (by year or location) 1990 San Antonio, Texas

Serial #: 13100191 Squadron: 369th Specialty: Tail Gunner Armorer
Date joined 306th: April, 1944 If combat, what crew: Lt. Vogel, "How Soon"
Special duties or assignments w/306th:
Number of missions flown: 35 Date of last mission: August 8, 1944
Date left 306th: Shot down 8-8-44 Highest rank/grade with 306th: S/Sgt.
Caen, France, German POW
Other 8th AF units served with: -0-

Top service assignments after 306th: -0-

USAF retirement date: Rank/grade: S/Sgt.
Discharged 10-5-45

Copies of old 306th orders, either from the Group or Station 111, or any of the
squadrons or other units, will be welcomed by the secretary.

If you know of other 306th people who do not appear in the directory, please add
their names and current or former addresses to this sheet so that we may search
further for them.

April 4, 1990

Russell Strong
5323 Cheval Pl.
Charlotte, N.C. 28205

Dear Russell:

I recently was introduced to your book FIRST OVER GERMANY by a very fine gentleman, Dale Briscoe. I am serving as a committee member with Dale, arranging the 306th Reunion in San Antonio, Texas.

Much to my surprise Dale pointed out on Page 266 of your book the story of Lt. Kata's 369th plane being shot down over the front line at Caen. I was the Tail Gunner on the plane (not B. Lowry as listed, he was at a waist position) and I was on the wrong side of the "touch & go landing point". Lt. Kata gave a "prepare to bail out" warning after the Flax hit and subsequent fire in our #3 engine. I left my combat position behind the twin "50's" to put on a chest parachute and then pulled the latch on the tail release escape hatch. In doing this I lost intercom communication. However, immediately upon releasing the hatch door "bodies" went flying by the open hatch. Seeing the entire waist section evacuated I followed them out of the plane. I landed in a hedge row clearing with my chute draped over a Lombardy poplar tree. Before I was able to clear myself from the chute strapping and reach the ground a German Officer holding a P-38 machine gun "covered me" and greeted me with the English words "for you the war is over".

Unfortunately this only turned out to mean the Air War was over! The next 10 months put me into an entirely different phase of the war as a German Prisoner. The Caen run was my 35th mission and would have climaxed my tour of duty.

The other interesting phase and very personal story in your book incurs on Page 267 where you relate the story of the fortress "Tailwind" and its crew being shot down and particularly of the death of T/Sgt Eugene Carroll. Eugene is the brother of my brother-in-law, Joseph Carroll who to this day is very close and dear to me and my family.

The morning of the day I was shot down, August 8th, I was with Eugene Carroll prior to flight take-off. We met while having a communion service with our Catholic Padre. Eugene flew the Caen mission and was able to relate later to my parents that parachutes were seen coming out of our burning airplane. It was over four months later that they received word that I was a Prisoner!

I was not flying with my regular crew on August 8th. I thought I had a "milk run" for my last mission!

Russell Strong
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I was the tail gunner on Lt. Vogel's crew and flew 34 missions starting in early May '44 in the B-17 "HOW SOON" until shot down 8-8-44 flying my last mission with Lt. Kata.

Since becoming a P.O.W. I lost track of my crew members and friends in the 306th and only discovered the "Echoes" paper and 306th Bombardment Association in this past year.

I would be forever grateful to you if:

1. I could secure a copy of your wonderful book "First Over Germany". I will personally guarantee you the purchase of 15 copies of the book for the Lawlor and Carroll family. I have six children and Joe Carroll eight children. We will put up any front money you may require.
2. I have not been able to locate any of my original crew from "How Soon" Lt. Vogel. Pilot, Mel White. Top Turret Gunner, Hal Portuey, Waist Gunner and Lt. Ford either Co-Pilot or Bombardier are the only names I can recall at this time.

I would also be interested in locating Lt. Kata and the three other members of this crew who became P.O.W.'s with me. T/Sgt S. A. Endrusick, Radio, S/Sgt Horace F. Kepler, S/Sgt Baisl Lowry.

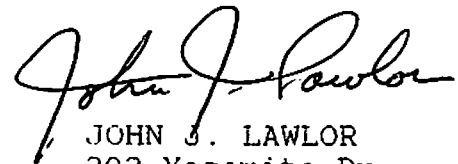
I note with interest Lt. Russell A. Strong, Navigator, having problems on August 13th mission to Rowen and getting hit by German Mobile 88 mm. flax. I assume this is our author? Looking at the time frame you and I have probably flown many 306th missions together. I hope you can attend the San Antonio Reunion. I would like to meet you.

You are to be congratulated for the great research, masterful assembly of facts and excellent narration exhibited in "FIRST OVER GERMANY".

I have always found it difficult to discuss our story of these days over Germany and my subsequent P.O.W. travails without getting emotional. Your book tells it all with factual and forceful simplicity.

I would greatly appreciate any help you can provide. Thank you for your book.

Formerly
S/Sgt John (Jack) Lawlor
Tail Gunner "How Soon" Lt. Vogel, Pilot
Ex-Kreigie, Stalag-Luft IV & others
Home - Wilkes Barre, Penn. during service years


JOHN J. LAWLOR
202 Yosemite Dr.
San Antonio, TX 78232

Russell Strong
5323 Cheryl Pl.
Charlotte, N.C. 28205

12-19-92
San Antonio, TX

Dear Russ :

Enclosed is Photo of
369th Crew "How Soon" Pilot Lt R. Vogel
Other crew members are spelled out
on back of photo. I would appreciate
the return of the photo.

I have been searching
for these crew members since our
San Antonio ~~reunion~~ reunion. I am finally
having success.

I located Mel White when his
name was published in "Echoes" as a new
member. He helped in locating Hal Portney
who in turn took on the job to find our pilot
Richard Vogel. Information from T.O. Roberts
directed him to the State of New Mexico.

Finally found him in Roswell
N.M. in good health, happily married
12 children + 19 Grandchildren - he has
been a busy fellow.

For your records: Pilot, "How
Soon" crew, 369 Squadron

Richard F Vogel 369
807 West Dewing St
Roswell, New Mexico 88201
505-622-2252

Best Regards

Jack Lawler

Reply 9 Jan 99
Ret just

11-9-94
San Antonio Texas
369 Bomb Squadron

Dear Russ:

After a review of my "Mission Reports" I find the following is needed to complete.

- Berlin Mission, May 24, 1944. I only have Page 1 + 2 of Narrative. Need Interrogation Form, Narrative, Maps, etc.
- June 16, ⁽⁴⁴⁾ Munchen, Germany. No Info at all
- June 25, 44 Loigny, France No Info
- July 28, 44 Merseburg, Ger. No Intelligence Narrative
- Aug 3, 44 Merkwilker, ^{1st} ~~no~~ ~~Intelligence~~ Intelligence Narrative
- Aug 7, 44 Montbartin & St Loudes, No Intelligence Narrative

I am enclosing a check for \$10.00 to complete. You are to be complimented for your industry in making these available.

Hope this finds you & yours in good health & spirits.

Our crew members, who have survived, are now together & we have planning another mission next May

Sincerely
John J Rawls

11/21/94

Mission Reports

3/17/92

Updated List with information from "First Over Germany" & Mel White's Records

S/SGT JOHN J. LAWLOR
8TH AIR FORCE, DIV. I, 40 CBW
306TH BOMB GROUP, 369TH SQUADRON
THURLEIGH, ENGLAND

COMBAT MISSIONS, TAIL GUNNER, B-17 FLYING FORTRESS "HOW SOON"

<u>DATE. 1944</u>	<u>TARGET</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
May 10th	Rottersburg. Airfield.....	Recalled
May 11th	Saarbrucken, Ger. - Railroad Yards.....	Completed
May 12th	Merseberg - Oil Factories.....	Completed
May 13th	Possen, Ger. - Factories.....	Aborted
May 22nd	Kiel, Ger. - Docks & Factories.....	Spare
May 24th	Berlin, Ger. (NO Intelligence Report).....	Completed
May 25th	Thionville, France - Railroad Yards.....	Spare
May 27th	Fecamp, France Coastal Batteries Fecamp	Completed
May 28th	Rubland, Ger. - Refinery.....	Completed
May 29th	Gottbus, Ger. - Factory.....	Completed
June 2nd	France - St. Cecily.....	Completed
June 3rd	France - Coastal Batteries St. Cecily.....	Completed
June 6th*	Normandy Arromanches, Fr. - Field.....	Completed
	Batteries (D-Day) 0430 takeoff	
June 6th*	Normandy Thury-Harcourt, Fr. - Guns.....	Completed
	(D-Day) 1730 takeoff	
June 8th	Rennes, Fr. - Airfield.....	Completed
2/10/93 June 11th	St. Andre del'Eure & Illiers L'Eveque.....	Completed
	Fr. - Airfield (Illvens)	
June 12th	Cambrai/Epinoy, Fr. - Airfield.....	Completed

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<u>DATE, 1944</u>	<u>TARGET</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
June 14th	Bretigny/Le Plessis Pate, Fr. - Airfield..	Completed
June 15th	Nantes, Fr. - Railroad Bridge.....	Completed
June 18th	Hamburg, Ger. - Docks.....	Completed
June 19th	Noball, Fr. - Rocket Enplacements.....	Completed
June 20th	Hamburg, Ger. - Oil Refinery.....	Completed
11/3/94 No crew list June 21st	Berlin, Ger. - City.....	Completed
June 22nd	Ghent, Bel. - M. Yards.....	Completed
June 24th	Bremen, Ger. - Oil Refineries.....	Completed
11/3/94 July 7th	Leipzig, Ger. - M.E. 109 Plant 8:35 hrs...	Completed
July 11th	Munich, Ger. - Aircraft Plant 9:20 hrs....	Completed
July 17th	Munich, Ger. - 9:30 hrs.....	Completed
July 24th	Normandy, Fr. - (St Lo) (2) Landings..... 1:15 & 4:50 hrs.	Completed
July 25th	Normandy, Fr. - (St Lo) 2:10 hrs.....	Completed
July 28th	Merseburg, Ger. - Oil Refinery.....	Completed
August 3rd	Merkwiller, France - Oil Refinery.....	Completed
2 Nov 93 no crew list August 7th	Montgartier/St. Loubes - Oil Storage.....	Completed
2 11/3/94 August 8th	Caen, Fr. - Ger - German Troop..... Concentrations (Front Line) Missing in Action	Plane Shot Down by German Flax, bailed out & captured