

1952 Antietam Street
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15206
July 8th 1975

Dear Mr. Strong:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter of July 3d 1975. I had just about given up hope of finding anyone who knew my father during his service with the 306th. I'm sorry I didn't learn your address sooner, as I was near Dayton last month, visiting the air museum at Wright-Patterson while on vacation. If you do get to Pittsburgh in the near future, please don't hesitate to call. My number is 363-3244.

As you know, my father was killed August 26th, and I was born December 10th 1944, so I never knew him. My mother was much affected by his death, and could never speak of him without sorrow, so I rarely questioned hereafter I grew old enough to appreciate her feelings. Consequently, I know very little about my father as a man, although I have learned a great deal from official sources about his wartime service.

I would very much like to have copies of documents pertaining to him, and any information about his personality, habits, mannerisms, strong and weak points, skill as a pilot, and so on. I don't want to impose upon you, but I would appreciate your help as I'm sure you can understand. I would like to know my father as he was, and must rely upon the memories of those who knew him. Perhaps I'm asking too much after more than thirty years, but I feel I must at least try.

If you can remember the other members of his crew I'd like to know something about them too, and how they got along together. Perhaps I should simply write that I'm interested in anything you can tell me!

I look forward to seeing your history of the 306th in print. I have read the old history of the Group, and toyed with the idea of writing a more complete history, but that was before I learned of your efforts. May I suggest that you contact Mr. W. W. Fahrenhold, if you have not already done so, and ask him about the mission on which "Snuffy" Smith won the Medal of Honor? His address is 115 Frustum Street; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15204 (telephone 331-2469). Since you are a historian, you may find Mr. Fahrenhold's recollection of that day quite interesting.

I was told that orders were received after my father had taken off on his last mission which retired the three oldest crews from combat because the Group (perhaps the 368th Squadron) was overstrength. His crew was second oldest, so the story goes, and had the weather been a little worse that morning he wouldn't have flown the raid on which he was killed. Do you have any information among your papers which would confirm or destroy this rumor?

I look forward to hearing from you again. I hope I'll have the opportunity to meet you personally, perhaps at the Eighth Air Force Reunion at Miami Beach in October.

In the meantime, best wishes to you and your family for the future, and thanks again for your kind letter.

Respectfully yours,

Chuck Rapp

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