

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

Name John J. Stolz  
Address 6853 Duke Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80918  
Telephone (303) 598-5646 Date 8 September 1977  
Occupation Free Lance Writer Employer Self  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Service Record:

Before joining the 306th: I joined the 306th in mid October 1943 and flew my first mission on 16 November 1943. Prior to joining the 306th I completed aviation cadet training, B-17 Transition and Provisional training. B-17 transition was completed at Sebring, Fla. Provisional training was at Ephrata, Wash. and at Spokane, Wash. with the Skaer Provisional Group.

After leaving the 306th: After leaving the 306th I was assigned to the Air Training Command at Las Vegas, Nev. From there I was assigned to the ~~555~~ 555th Ferrying Group at Love Field, Dallas, Tex. I left the service in Dec. 1945, formed an aviation company at Niagara Falls, NY I was recalled to active duty in 1950 and served a combat tour with the 3rd Bomb Group in Korea. I elected to remain in the Air Force and retired in 1971.

306th Record:

Arrival Date October 1943 Squadron or other unit 367th

MOS 1091 Combat Status Pilot

Missions Completed 23 1/2

Promotions To 1st Lt. 21 Dec. 1943 1st Lt. to Captain 28 Mar. 1944

Decorations xAM3 olcsxx DFC olcs SS DSM DSC MH SM

PH Battle Stars \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_

Other personal data: I left the Armed services in Dec.1945 and Formed a Fixed Base Aviation company. I served as President and general manager of the company until I was recalled to active duty with the Air Force in 1950. After a tour in Korea I was assigned to various air bases usually as a Director of Materiel. I retired from the Air Force in March of 1971 in the rank of Lt.Col.

1951

CO. REP. 1951

**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?)

I am enclosing copies of the diary of combat missions I flew while I was a member of the 306th.

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... (faded text) ...

Name John J. StolzAddress 6853 Duke Drive, Colorado Springs, COTelephone (303) 598 5646

## MISSING AIRCRAFT REPORT

Pilot Captain John J. Stolz Plane # and Name 758Mission Date 24 April 1944 Target Bberpaffenhaffen, GermanyCause of loss: AA fire \_\_\_\_\_ Fighter attack xx Other, explain \_\_\_\_\_

Describe conditions in the plane as completely as you can: I quote from the diary I kept of my missions, " Everything was not quite as it should have been that day, even before we took off. For one thing I didnt ask if anyone's parachute was due for repack. I also was more nervous about rendevous than I had ever been previously.

758 didn't seem to notice the nervousness of the crew though and when I opened her throttles she gave no shudder of aprehension.

Shortly after we croosed the Seine river in France, we were attacked by a large number of ME 109's and FW 190's. We estimated there were at least 80 of them. They kept us under conatant attack for approxiamately one hour and thirty minutes. At about the end of this time 758 received two mortal wounds in the form of 20mm cannon shells. Her number three engine ran away and I was unable to feather it. Number two engine was hit but as luck would have it I was able to feather it. I saw number two get hit. Our number one engine was also hit and was acting very erratic

We could not stay with the formation so we called the deputy group leader and he took over the group lead.

How and where did you leave plahe?

We received a numbersof attacks from German fighters, but we managed to fight them off, shooting down seven of them in the process.

Old 758, for she was old, by this time, did her best to get us to Switzerland. Thank God-her best was good enough. We landed that day at Dübendorf and as we groundlooped to a stop 758 coughed,

What happened when you gave up the ghost. She is now buried in the graveyard of Forts and Libs in Switzerland

Did you meet any of your crew mates?

All crew mates were interned in Camp Moloney in Adelboden, Switzerland

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.

Following are verbatim copies of pages from the diary I kept of my combat missions with the 306th Bombardment Group (H), 367th Squadron;

*John J. Stolz*

Monday

November 15, 1943

Crash landed a B-17F today. Stayed up for 6 hours running the gas out and trying to get the gear down. Finally came in on the belly. Damned good job if I do say so myself.

Damage-one ball turret, four props. Good show.

Members of crew

Pilot - John J. Stolz

Co-pilot - Bernard J. McGuire

Navigator - C.L. Couch

Engineer - Sgt. Springer

Radio - S/Sgt. F.A. Gold

Passenger - Cpl. Connelly - RAF

Gold wanted to jump, but he didn't

No one hurt.

Saw two planes collide while using up gasoline.

Tuesday

November 16, 1943

Went on my first raid today. Molybdenum mine at Knaben, Norway. The boys said it was a milk run and I guess it was. Though I'm no judge. There was no flak and very little fighter opposition. I saw only four fighters.

It was a God awful trip. Took us seven hours. I don't believe I have ever been so cold. We lost one engine after leaving the English coast. I sort of sweated that ride out. Wonder what the next will be?

Load 6,000 lbs of demos

None of our aircraft were lost.

Friday

November 26, 1943

Went on number two today. To the city of Bremen. The flak was quite heavy and we really had a time staying in formation. There were a number of fighter attacks and our ship received a rocket attack from an FW 189.

Saw three B-17's go down, one smoking.

Was forced to pull 54" MP and 2500 RPM to stay in formation. I sure hope we plastered the place. That is no place to go sightseeing.

Altitude 29,000

Bomb Load 4000 lbs demos

2000 lbs incendiaries

Our group lost two ships. Pilots were Lt. Jefferies and Lt. Hoey

December 2, 1943

I was assigned airplane 728 today. I got Mac back as a co-pilot. Really a good deal: The rest of the crew I have has about 20 raids in, on the average. The rest of my crew got here the day before yesterday. They all want to fly with me but I don't know whether it will work. I'd like a couple of them, but the others?

December 20, 1943

Number 4 was Bremen. It was my second visit to this target. This trip proved to be rougher than the previous one. Flak knocked out our number 3 engine. We were unable to feather the prop and our bombbay doors stuck open. We thought for a while that we weren't going to make it. Got two holes in the ship. The squadron lost Lt. Ryther and crew on this raid. That makes two crews in as many raids. This brings the Honor Roll of this barracks to 5. They are as follows:

Lt. W.B. Brinkley  
Lt. D.F. Dickson  
Lt. R.W. Ryther  
Lt. J. Weiselberg  
Lt. J.N. Dennison

Lt. Ballard my new navigator did a beautiful job of navigating. He got us back from the middle of the North Sea with a pilot's compass and an E6B computer.  
Bomb Load - 5200 lbs. MA7 - incendiaries

December 22, 1943

Today the target was Osnabruck, Germany. It made number five for me and it was also Air Medal day for me. I had my first real run in with enemy fighters. It was really rough. My crew shot down two fighters. Sgts. Shade and Foster got one each. We were against the Kids from Abbeville today. Herman Goering's pride and joy. They are either fanatics or they are damn good fighters. This was a rough mission. Lt. Winters was shot down in flames. Lt. Crappy had his left foot blown off. His co-pilot, navigator, engineer and radio man were wounded. Crappy flew the ship back. He is a real man and truly a hero.

Bomb Load today 4000 lbs. incendiaries  
Total 37,200 lbs.

December 24, 1943

Today was number 6. A very easy ride. One of the easiest I'll probably get. We went just across the channel to blast target number 94. They called it Andy Gump. I saw at least 1000 airplanes over there.

The target was the rocket gun installations the Jerries have in France. The Eighth Air Force really went all out to hit them.

Bomb Load 4800 lbs.  
No losses

January 3, 1944

It was number seven today. We went to Keil. The target was overcast, making the enemy flak inaccurate. There were no enemy fighters to bother us, Thank God. The mission, considering everything was fairly well carried off. Lt. Tucker failed to return from this mission. It is believed he was shot down over the target. Bomb load to this target was 22x250 lb. incendiary bombs.

We saw some rocket flak this trip, but on a whole it was uneventful.

January 5, 1944

Number eight went by the board today. It was much rougher than the one yesterday. The target was Keil again. It was clear over the target. The flak was very accurate. As a matter of fact the window over my head was broken by a piece of flak and another piece went between the waist gunners' heads. Pretty close. We lost Capt. Elliot on this raid. He crashed on takeoff. Lt. Thomas Bridgeman was seriously injured but luckily escaped with his life. We received a number of fighter attacks. I saw two B-24's go down. Bomb Load - 12x500 incendiaries.

January 11, 1944

The target today was Halberstadt. It was my ninth mission. It was far the hardest so far. For two and one half hours we were under constant fighter attack. I actually had sweat running into my eyes with the temperature at 30 below zero at 20,000 feet. I sweated through a pair of leather gloves and three hours later they were still wet.

Our group lost five airplanes on this raid. Three of them were from my squadron. The pilots included Lt. Campert, Lt. Cavas and Lt. McCollum. All swell boys. Campert and McCollum went down on fire. Cavas exploded in mid-air. Other officers aboard these ships were Lt. Dougherty, Lt. Sparks, Lt. Wright (my old navigator) Lt. Monticone and two others whose names escape me. Wounded on this raid included Lt. Charles Kinsey and Lt. Bob Crawley. My ball turret gunner, Sgt. Rashid shot down a FW 190.

Bomb Load - 42-M47 - 100lb incendiaries.

January 30, 1944

We went to Brunswick today. It was my tenth raid, and although it was not as tough as some I have been on it was no milkrun. Two Forts collided and exploded about a hundred feet behind us and the concussion of the explosion almost knocked Mac and myself out. Our number 2 engine received a hit and we could draw very little manifold pressure.

Bomb Load - 42 - M47 incendiaries

None of our squadron was lost.

February 3, 1944

Today, number eleven. The target was Wilhelmshaven, Germany. The weather was very poor and we flew most of the way through dense clouds. I don't think that our bombs hit the target. On the return trip over the North Sea my instruments went out and we had to fly needle, ball and airspeed down to the deck. Box Score 6000 lbs of H.E.  
The 306th Gp. lost Lt. Wong.

February 4, 1944

Our target for today was Frankfort am Main. It was number twelve for me. The flak was more accurate than I have ever seen it before. My ship received a number of hits. I really sweated on this raid. This is the fourth time I've flown as leader of the second element. Today we hit the target. The price of admission was Lt. Berry of the 369th and Lt. Worco of the 367th. (Clay Pigeons, us)  
Bomb Load - 6000 lbs of H.E.

February 6, 1944

It was 12B before I landed, but it was 13 after I got on the ground. We went to Nancy, France today. We could not find the target and so we did not drop our bombs. The flak was very light. We saw 4 ME 109's attack the group behind us. Our escort of P-47's and P-38's shot them down.

February 8, 1944

Today, number 14 was Frankfort am Main, Germany. It was moderately rough. Our group lost one ship, Lt. Schultz of the 369th. My ball turret gunner, Sgt. Rashid received a frost-bitten foot. He rode the whole trip in the ball without any heat and with the temperature -50C. All in all a good deal.  
Bomb load 6000lbs HE.

March 2, 1944

Number 15 was again Frankfort. It was a milk run for a change and a surprise. We encountered no German fighters and most of the flak was inaccurate. It was a momentous raid for me though. The first time I have led my squadron in combat. I guess I did a pretty fair job of it. At least that is what Col. Raper said.  
We had no losses.  
Bomb load 12x500 lb. Demo.  
6000 lbs. total

March 3, 1944

Today the target was Berlin. Although we were forced to turn back by adverse weather conditions we were credited with a mission which is number 16 for me. I flew as co-pilot in the group lead airplane. I guess I'm going to be checked out as a group leader soon. I hope so, for it means a captaincy. So it goes.



March 5, 1944

Today was number 17, the target was again Berlin. The flak over the target, as a matter of fact over the whole route, both in and out was terrific. I led the squadron today. We really had some opposition. The Luftwaffe was up in full force today. I saw more of our bombers today, fo down, than I have ever seen before. The bomb load 5000 lbs. 10-500lb demos

March 9, 1944

Today was number 18 and we learned that the tour of duty has been raised to 30 missions. The target was again Berlin. It seems that the powers that be think it has become a milk run. It isn't. I was co-pilot in the group lead ship today, and I might add with pardonable pride that I checked out as group leader.

Bomb load 5000 lbs  
10-500 lb. demos

March 16, 1944

Today was 19. Glad to get it in. Was co-pilot in the group lead ship again. We went to Augsburg, Germany. It was a comparative milk run. Not much happened.

Bomb load - 12x500  
No losses.

My notes on mission number 20 are missing. I believe the target was Dresden, Germany.

April 11, 1944

Today the number was boosted to 21. It hardly seems possible that less than six months ago I first landed in England. This was my first raid as leader of the group. We went to Stettin, Germany. Had quite a number of attacks from fighters. However, my group was lucky and we lost no one. This was also my first as a Captain. It was also the longest mission ever flown by this group. Eleven hours of combat time.

Bomb load 10x500

Accounts of missions numbers 22 and 23 are missing

April 24, 1944

Shortly after we crossed the Seine river in France we were attacked by a large number of ME 109's and FW 190's. We estimated there were at least 80 of them. They kept us under attack for approximately one hour and thirty minutes. At about the end of this time 758 received two mortal wounds in the form of 20mm cannon shells. Her number 3 engine ran away and I was unable to feather it. Number 2 engine was hit, but I was able to feather it. I saw number 2 get hit. Our number 1 engine was also hit and was acting very erratic.

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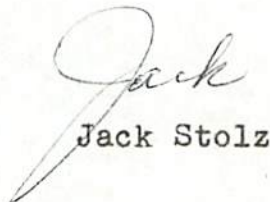


6853 Duke Drive  
Colorado Springs, CO 80918  
26 September 1977

Dear Russ,

I have enclosed a complete copy of S.O. 294. Hope it meets your requirements. I don't think I'll be able to make it to St. Louis. Perhaps the next get together will be more convenient for me. If I can be of further assistance let me know.

Sincerely,

  
Jack Stolz

13 September 1977

Dear Russell,

Please accept my apology for taking so long with this. I was called to California because of an emergency in the family and I have just returned to Colorado.

If I can be of further assistance please let me know

Jack Stutz