

War Era Story Project 2012

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 Age: Not given

Christmas Eve, December 24, 1943 – Flying with pilot Lt. Harold McKee, we were coming back from a mission to St. Omar in France Couldn't. We found the target and had returned back to our base. We had been shot up pretty bad and, when we started to land, we realized the hydraulics had been shot out. With no brakes we went off the runway into the grass. The plane nosed over and its wheels and props went into the soft dirt, and the bomb site broke off. We still had our load of bombs in the bomb racks with the fuse pins pulled – a full load of 100 lb. bombs! The plane was salvaged, but didn't make any more missions.



"Hot Foot II"

24 Dec 1943, 16:13 Hours A/C 42-30612 TS-D. Accident at AAF Station #468 (Rougham Airfield).
 1st Lt. Harold F. McKee (P) 2nd Lt. Earl C. Restorick (CP) 2nd Lt. Jake B. Jarmon (N)
 2nd Lt. William H. Reid (B) T/Sgt. Robert (NMI) Stark (R) T/Sgt. David F. Brown Jr. (E)
 S/Sgt. John T. Grasse (G) S/Sgt. Frank M. Maaks Jr. (G) S/Sgt. George V. Colie (G)
 S/Sgt. Joseph G. Byargron (G) sustained a concussion & scalp lacerations. Others not injured.
 Fuselage sprung, tail section sprung, nose section smashed.
 Flew after repair as "Freestrider" until salvaged on 20 Mar 44

March 26, 1944 – As a S/Sgt, I was flying with pilot Lt. John F. Mitchell. Our target was in Bordeaux France. While circling over Pas-Calais France to get into formation, our plane collided with one flown by Lt. Frank K. Dickman. Our plane had a six- by twelve-inch hole just left of the bomb bay doors. Dickman's plane tail was ragged and crumbled as if iron jaws had grabbed it. We both flew the twelve hour flight, dropped our bombs on the target and returned to base station #468.

April 8, 1944 – After bombing Warmemunde Germany, our pilot John F. Mitchell had two engines on one side shot out. The navigator, Lt. Milton S. Burkleo, was shot in the face. He couldn't talk on the

radio, so he wrote notes and had the bombardier relay directions to the pilot to get us home. It is almost impossible to fly with two engines on the one side out. The pilot asked us to throw all extra weight out: Guns, extra ammo and flack vests. I was helping the radio man throw out his gun, which was attached above his head by four big wing nuts. The vacuum pulled it out, catching my parachute harness. I grabbed the handle on the radio door; It bent and was ready to break. The good Lord must have been with me, because it broke loose and the gun went sailing out, hitting the rear stabilizer, almost causing him to lose control. We made it back to our base and Lt. Burkloe survived. He was sent back to the states to the hospital.