

Mustang Pilot: 352nd Fighter Group

By CHARLES B. MAYER

The blue nosed Mustang skimmed low over the hedges and fields of France, rising to clear a gentle hill and then settling into the valley beyond. Off to the left, the pilot knew, was the village of Forges and a few miles away to the right was Dieppe. He raced on, low, because that morning the 8th Air Force Operations Officer had said, "Strafe targets of opportunity on the way back from your mission."

Without warning there were flashes from the muzzles of guns on the ground and fiery golf balls sailed past the pilot's windshield. There was not even time to give a warning to his wingman as he wheeled over on one wing to evade the fire. Too late! He heard the sharp crack and ping as German bullets smashed into his Mustang. Almost immediately the needle on the coolant temperature gauge began to climb. His coolant system had been hit, and it wouldn't be long before the engine seized.

Seeking a place to land his crippled plane, the pilot studied the country ahead. There--that little open patch near the woods. Quickly he dropped his flaps and jettisoned the canopy. As speed decreased he nosed up keeping the wings level and, sinking steadily, guided the plane down. Smoke and steam poured out from the now red hot engine and left a dirty grey banner to mark the Mustang's path. The ground came closer and blurred somewhat from the speed of his approach. Then, just before the impact, he cut all switches and braced himself. With a jarring crash the plane dropped to the ground and plowed a long furrow through the turf.

Finally the machine came to a stop, and the only sound was the hissing and tinkling of the engine. The pilot loosened his shoulder harness, jumped out and sprinted toward the nearby woods. German patrols were probably looking for him even now, and he had to get as far away from the plane as possible before they found it.

These short minutes began a three-week adventure that 1st Lt. Harry H. Barnes would remember for the rest of his life.

Harry Barnes was born in 1922, grew up in Williamsville, New York living much the same life as thousands of other young men. He got his first car, had a high school sweetheart, and entered Alfred University in New York where he remained for three and a half years before joining the Army Air Forces. Winning his pilot's wings, he learned to fly the big Republic P-47, later mastered the North American P-51 Mustang and was sent to England where he was assigned to the 487th Fighter Squadron of the 352nd Fighter Group. He made several familiarization flights, was indoctrinated in procedures and was adjudged ready for operations.

Lieutenant Barnes flew his first combat missions in March 1944. He handled his aircraft well on these bomber escort missions and drew the recognition of the Squadron Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. John C. Meyer, as well as that of two other Squadron aces, William Whisner and George Preddy. His flying ability did not go unrewarded for long, and he joined the ranks of the successful 487th Hunters when he shot down an FW 190 on 4 April 1944. This kill was followed two weeks later by a Messerschmitt 109 which, though heavily hit, had to be listed as only damaged when not seen to crash.

The P-51s of the 487th continued their bomber escorts, covering the Big Friends as they hit target after target deep in Germany. On 5 May 1944, Barnes scored

his second kill with a 109 falling before the guns of his P-51C. Three days later he was along when the 352nd won a Distinguished Unit Citation--46 Group Mustangs found 100 to 150 enemy fighters coming in on the bombers near Bremen, attacked and drove them off and then chased them to the deck destroying 27 enemy aircraft for the loss of only one of their own.

Along about evening on 12 May 1944, Barnes stopped by Group Operations. A Field Order was coming in and that meant a mission the next day. He headed for his quarters to get some sack time and soon fell asleep.

Early the next morning, the orderly's flashlight glared into Barnes' still sleepy eyes. The orderly moved on, awakening other pilots scheduled to fly, and Barnes arose, washed and dressed, and headed for the mess hall. He had a tiny premonition that turned out to be right--powdered eggs again. He choked them down and washed away the taste with hot coffee, wondering how the day would turn out. Briefing, scheduled for 07:30, would give him a better idea.

At Squadron Operations, a few minutes later, Barnes checked the board. He was slated to fly No. 2 in "C" (red) Flight of the lead squadron. Well, he thought, I'll be right up in front, wingman to the Group Commander.

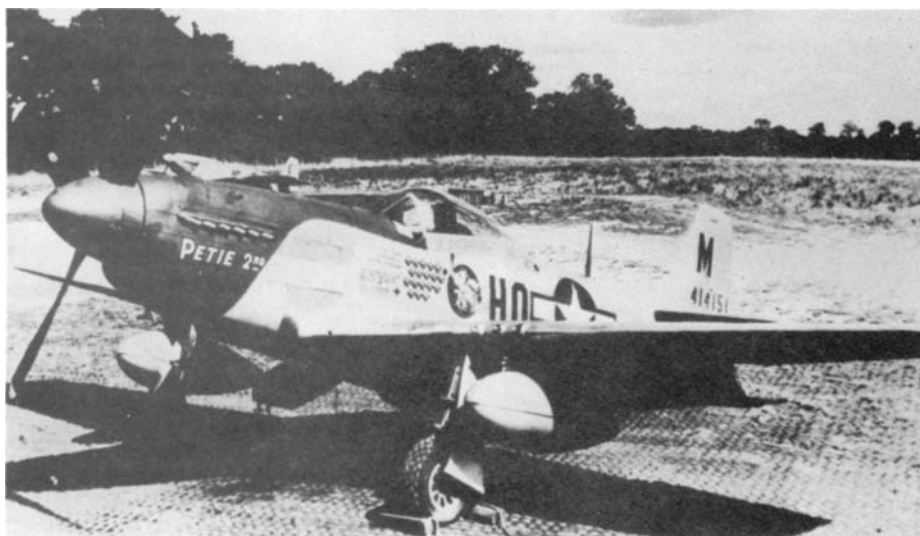
Outside he could hear the engines of the weapons carriers and jeeps as their drivers started them up. Everybody went out and piled into the vehicles which would take them to the briefing over at Group Operations. As they wheeled along the perimeter of the field Barnes watched the rising sun throw reflections off the plexiglass of the P-51s standing about.

In the large Nisson hut which served as 352nd Group Operations the pilots of the 328th, 486th and 487th Fighter Squadrons were noisily engaged in conversations about the coming mission. Up near the front, Lt. Col. John C. Meyer sat quietly amid the hubbub. Young and aloof, he was an excellent leader and his talent had been recognized when he was made CO of the 487th. He led almost every mission and was a skilled shot. His was a demanding leadership, but his men respected him and met his demands.

Over near the window Major George Preddy was talking with Glennon T. Moran. "Ratsy" Preddy was a relaxed Southerner, confident in his own ability but never cocky or egotistical, though he already had more than 20 victories. He was noted for his coolness; he never became excited, except perhaps in the middle of a roaring scrap with the 109s of JG 26. He was a good mixer and was always willing to pass along suggestions and techniques to younger, less experienced pilots.

Glen Moran was Preddy's favorite wingman. Moran had the sharpest eyes in the Group and could spot bogies long before they were visible to anyone else. This meant that he and Preddy were always one jump ahead of the enemy, and they usually led the Squadron in pressing the attack. Moran was also a crack shot and already had several kills to his credit.

Near the back of the room, as Barnes came in, was William T. Whisner. Whisner was born to fly a P-51 and he handled one as though it were an extension of his body. He was full of life and fun, and as Barnes saw him now, he was describing his last big fight to another pilot, diving and turning with his hands to simulate the aircraft in the universal gestures used by fighter pilots.



Lt. Col. John C. Meyer's P-51D-10-NA, 44-14151, PETIE 2nd, and the Colonel in the cockpit of the Mustang at right. Painted under the cockpit on the fuselage side is the insignia of the 487th Fighter Squadron. (Photos - Barnes)

Suddenly the room was quiet and the men came to attention as the Group Commander, Colonel Joe Mason, entered with his staff. The briefing began with the Intelligence Officer who settled all discussion on the target for the day as he pulled back the curtain covering a large wall chart. The chart was festooned with tapes and arrows, and they all pointed toward Schweinfurt. Another bomber escort! The 352nd was to escort the heavies from Hamburg to the Schweinfurt area where they would be relieved by the 4th Fighter Group.

The Weather Officer took over and gave the good news, clear all the way out, with 3/10ths cloud cover on the return. The Operations Officer briefed the pilots on tactics for the mission. Heavy flak was to be expected over the Dutch coast and over the Ruhr Valley (naturally). The fighters were to range out in front of the Big Friends, hoping the bombers would act as bait to draw up the German fighters.

Details of the mission followed, including the assignment of radio code names. The 487th (lead) Squadron would be Transport squadron, and the code name for the Group Commander would be Topsy. Start engines time would be 08:42, with take off commencing six minutes later. The Group would form up, climb to 29,000 feet on a heading of 112° and rendezvous with the bombers at 10:51.

"That's all. Good luck!"

Barnes, along with the other pilots from the 487th, returned to Squadron Operations and prepared for the mission. He suited up, checked his escape kit, pistol and charts. He made sure his knife was stuffed down in his right flying boot, just in case his dinghy accidentally inflated during the flight. The knife would also be indispensable should he be forced down.

All set he jumped into the truck which carried the pilots out to the line. Barnes' crew chief was waiting beside his plane, ready to help him make ready for take off. Barnes checked the plane over. Fuel tanks were full, guns were loaded and the radio equipment was all working—the plane was ready. He climbed up on the wing and into the cockpit, buckling himself in with the assistance of the crew chief. He checked his oxygen supply and mask and, satisfied, waited for the last minutes to tick away.

At 08:42 the big four-bladed prop on Topsy's P-51C began to swing over and blue exhaust smoke trailed back from the stacks. Barnes hit the starter and counted, then caught the sputtering engine with the throttle and it roared into life, sending a series of vibrations back through the fuselage. The other planes cranked up and

as Topsy taxied down the perimeter track Barnes pulled out behind him.

Fifty Mustangs (three squadrons of 16 aircraft and two spares) stood at the runway's end, waiting for the green flare from the control tower. It came, and the lead flight of four rolled down the runway, followed at 10 second intervals by the other 11 flights, and the two spares. All the P-51s lifted from the runway, tucked in their wheels and slid into position as the formation rose toward the English coast.

Over the North Sea, Topsy signalled for combat formation. The squadrons moved apart and individual flights spread out in line abreast until each plane was about 50 yards from the next. Down sun, Barnes could see the Mustangs of the 328th, the code letters PE standing out prominently on their flanks. On his right and slightly lower were the blue-nosed 486th planes.

The coast of Holland came into view and with it the flak. It was scattered and inaccurate. The order to test guns crackled over the air and for a moment the sky was filled with bright streaking tracers.

"Bogies, ten o'clock level!" The call alerted Barnes and he focussed to the left. The unidentified planes were headed toward Transport squadron. As they closed, recognition came. "It's okay, they're P-47s".

At precisely 10:49, only two minutes off schedule, the Group passed over the bomber formation and assumed its escort position. "Topsy here. Steamboat squadron patrol to left, other squadron to right. I will take Transport to the front of the bomber stream. Keep your eyes open!"

The flak was getting heavy and Topsy moved his squadron away from the bombers to confuse enemy radar. Behind the Big Friends was a sparkling carpet of Window, the strips of aluminum foil they dropped to jam the German radarscopes. Below, a flare of light. A bomber was going down, wing blown off! Three chutes appeared—four, five, six. Like shining nailheads on a wall they stood out from the drab landscape below. Only six. A B-17 carried a crew of ten.

Barnes spotted enemy aircraft below. "Topsy Red 2 here. Bogies at eleven o'clock low". "Where, Red 2, I can't see them." "Topsy, Red 2 here. The bogies are climbing up fast at ten thirty. They look like 109s. Must be a hundred of them."

"Topsy here. I see them. They're heading for the bombers. Let's go!" He winged over to the left and headed down, Barnes and the rest of the flight right behind. Another flight followed. The rest of the squadron failed to see the 109s and was left behind.

To convey an idea of the speed and confusion of an aerial combat, here are Barnes' own terse notes:

"As Topsy turns to the right in a diving turn I slide over the top and take up a position about fifty yards off his right wing, line abreast. He will shoot - I am to cover him.

"The 109s see us but make no effort to turn into us - they are ordered to get the bombers - they look like a swarm of bees bunching up in close formation for an attack head-on against the bombers. We have altitude and speed and close fast. Topsy begins to fire - a 109 starts smoking. Topsy veers slightly to the right and fires again. I adjust my position to cover his rear. He fires again and an ME 109 explodes.

"The rest of the squadron has found us now - the 109s are nearly to the bombers. We keep boring in - 109s and P-51s pour through the bomber formation - every one is firing. Why no one collides is a wonder - bombers and 109s are falling. The attack is devastating!

"I can't stay with Topsy - there are too many planes in the same airspace, all crawling up each others' tails. I am through the bomber formation now and I see a 109 headed down. They make only one pass and head for home because of the P-51s.

"Full throttle and straight down goes the 109. I follow - 20,000; 15,000; 10,000; 5,000 - my '51 can't keep up with the 109. At 3,000 feet he enters a haze layer and heads east for home. I am alone now and looking for a friend, any friend.

"Topsy' here, at 23,000 feet. Let's join up and head for home." The entire Group is split up and scattered all over the sky. P-51s join others and pick up a heading for home. I start to climb, looking for the '51s, but none is near by. At 15,000 feet I see bombers on my same heading and I climb up alongside of them.

"The bomber gunners are nervous - as I slide in

close to them they fire at me! If they don't stop it I'm going home alone!"

Up ahead Barnes spotted another P-51 and poured on the coal to catch up. The other pilot saw Barnes just about the same time and started to turn into him, preparing for an attack. Then recognition came and both P-51s formed up for the long trip home. Needles in gas gauges dropped lower and lower. Out over the coast as Jerry fired a few 88s, the two Mustangs dropped down to 10,000 feet. Barnes took off his oxygen mask and lit up a cigarette. As he exhaled the smoke he began to relax. From then on it was a matter of following radar vectors from Bodney and sweating out the gas situation. Fifty miles from home and over England they let down to tree-top level and roared over the countryside. Below a farmer tried in vain to calm his frightened horses as the Mustangs passed.

Over Bodney, Barnes asked permission to land and clearance was given, "You are number one in the pattern." Both planes pulled up to clear the trees on the perimeter of the field and dropped back down to six feet, thundering across the field. At the halfway point Barnes pulled up sharply to the left in a climbing turn, chopped throttle, dumped gear and flaps to kill speed and came out of the maneuver lined up to land. Wheels screeched as the aircraft's weight settled on them and then he was rolling down the runway. Close behind him came the other Mustang.

As Barnes climbed down from his plane he noted the time. Five hours and twenty minutes in the air. What a day! He learned at the de-briefing that the Group had scored 17 in the air, and Col. Mason had accounted for three of these. One man, Cutter, was lost.

That night they threw a party to celebrate, and re-fight the mission. About ten o'clock it broke up. Another Field Order was coming in.



WILLIAMS-VILLIAN, the P-51D-5-NA, 44-13619, flown by 1st Lt. Harry H. Barnes, 487th Fighter Squadron. Nose of the Mustang is blue, name is white and blue with white portion outlined in black, and code under cockpit is HO. (Barnes)



Lt. Harry Barnes [r] and fellow pilot beside WILLIAMS-VILLIAN at Bodney, England, home of the 352nd. (Barnes)

Lt. Barnes lay in bed thinking back over the day. It hadn't been an outstanding mission for him. He hadn't even fired a shot. But wingmen weren't supposed to shoot, he reminded himself, they were supposed to protect the man in front. There would be many more missions like today's, and maybe on one of them he would find the chance to enlarge his score.

Late in May, Barnes had the opportunity to use his guns again as he exploded a 109 which was attempting to pierce the fighter screen. The same day, 28 May, he was also credited with a 109 damaged. The young lieutenant wound up the month with his fourth confirmed kill, another 109 on the 30th.

Now came the hasty changeover to the P-51D model with the bubble canopy. The new aircraft were received with great enthusiasm and the populace of Norfolk soon became accustomed to seeing mock sky battles as the 352nd pilots reveled in their new mounts. The transition to P-51Ds was completed just in time to comply with an order to paint black and white stripes on fuselages and wings in preparation for a large-scale operation.

The morning of 6 June 1944 brought the explanation, D-Day had come! The zebra-striped aircraft of the 487th joined other 8th and 9th Air Force squadrons on fighter sweeps and strafing missions in support of the troops on Normandy beachheads.

When the Group re-equipped, Barnes replaced his P-51C with a P-51D-5-NA, 44-13619. Carrying the 487th Squadron code letters HO on its fuselage sides, the plane also had the aircraft letter B, the initial of Barnes' surname, on the tail. This practice was fairly common in the 8th Fighter Command. In the 487th Squadron, Meyer's aircraft was coded HO-M, Whisner's sported the letters HO-W and it is reasonably certain that Preddy's aircraft was coded HO-P.

HO-B was further personalized when Lt. Barnes decided to give it a name. He planned to call it WILLIAMS-VILLAIN, giving both an indication of his home and a warning that he was a tough customer. Unfortunately his crew chief, who painted the name on the plane's nose, had some difficulty with the spelling and it came out WILLIAMS-VILLIAN. Rather than say anything to hurt the chief's feelings, Barnes shed his bad-guy role and contented himself with being a resident of Williamsville.

Forward of the name, which appeared in blue and white lettering, Barnes placed a color photograph of his high school girl friend, Betty Jean Niederlander. The photo was surrounded by an aluminum frame riveted to the cowl and was covered with clear plastic to protect it from the elements.

Other markings on the WILLIAMS-VILLIAN were the blue nose, alternating white and black invasion stripes, as



Some of the 487th Hunters [l to r] : Barnes, Whisner, Palmer, Kessler, Pickering and Preddy. (Photo - Barnes)

well as the black recognition stripes which were applied to the vertical and horizontal tail surfaces. Later, after the excitement of the Normandy landings had passed, he found time to paint four small swastikas on the left hand canopy rim of HO-B as a record of his shooting prowess.

The summer passed quickly as Barnes flew mission after mission. Dive-bombing sorties, ground support missions and fighter sweeps came one on top of another. Always he watched for the chance to get kill number five and achieve the coveted title of "ace". But the opportunity did not present itself and July passed into August as he and the other 487th pilots continued to fly dangerous low-level missions. The strain of facing heavy and accurate German ground fire began to take its toll; old faces disappeared and new ones took their places, only to be replaced by still newer faces. Some of the men were seen as they were shot down, and some couldn't get out of their burning planes. Some turned up in prison camps, and others were reported as "killed in action." Still others simply disappeared.

This was the case on 12 August 1944 when another pilot took the WILLIAMS-VILLIAN on a mission over France. Barnes wasn't scheduled to fly that day and he watched with apprehension as the Squadron took off, another man flying his plane. Several hours later, long after all the other aircraft had returned, HO-B was still missing. No one had heard or seen anything of the craft or its pilot after the scrap in which the Squadron had been engaged. It just disappeared somewhere over the cold waters of the North Sea.

The next day Barnes found his name on the mission board. With a feeling of uneasiness he set out in a borrowed P-51 on a dive-bombing mission to a small airfield in France. It was on the return from this mission that he was hit and forced to crash-land.

Barnes stood near the edge of the woods watching his smoking aircraft. When he was certain it would not burst into flames or explode he strode out into the open. His wingman, Lt. Don Goodwin, roared overhead and Barnes did a few cartwheels and handstands to show that he was uninjured.

Then Barnes returned to the aircraft and tried to locate the termite grenade used to destroy a plane in just such a case as this to prevent it from falling into enemy hands. There wasn't any! The plane, a new replacement for the 487th, had apparently never had an incendiary capsule installed.

Upstairs, Lt. Goodwin sensed Barnes' plight and came down in a dry strafing run on the grounded plane. Goodwin pulled up, winged over and came down again. Barnes



Barnes with the group of FFI fighters who were responsible for his evading capture in occupied France.



The Loynell family with whom Barnes stayed. At left is Andre Brieux, engaged to Simone Loynell. (Barnes)

ran for the woods again as Goodwin sent his incendiaries streaking into the fuel tanks of the crashed Mustang. It burst into flames immediately.

As Barnes entered the woods, he saw Goodwin's P-51 pull up and set course for England. He thought to himself, "Well, Harry, you're on your own now."

A quick survey of the woods indicated that it was too small to afford cover. Heading out the other side Barnes spotted a long hedgerow, lined with trees, about 200 yards away across a field of corn. He ran through the cornfield, vaulted the hedgerow and stopped to catch his breath and get his bearings. As he stood there, he saw a woman carrying two pails of milk enter a nearby farmyard from the direction of the cornfield. He waved to her as she caught sight of him, and she pointed to a small shed.

Barnes ran to the shed and waited inside. The woman soon came to the door and pointed to the ceiling. Apparently she spoke no English, and Barnes could not speak French. He climbed up to a small loft as she had directed and made himself comfortable. As he sat there he thought about his predicament. Strangely enough, he did not feel concerned. So far he had done all right. If he relaxed, took it easy, he would find a way to get back to England. Others had walked out before, and there was no reason why he couldn't do the same.

After some ten minutes there was a knock at the door, and a young woman entered the shed carrying a tray. On it were fried eggs and burgundy for the lieutenant. He was among friends!

Dusk came, then darkness. Eight young men arrived at the shed, including Andre Brieux, who spoke English. He explained that they were members of the French underground, the FFI, and that they had come to move Barnes to a safer place. The farm where he was hiding belonged to the Loynell family and it wasn't safe for them should the Germans, who were still searching the area, find the family sheltering Barnes.

The FFI men gave Barnes some French clothing and he changed out of his flying suit, leaving it with the Loynells. He said a quick goodbye to Mr. and Mrs. Loynell and Simone, the girl who had brought him the food.

Then the young flyer followed the FFI men as they led him to a farm about two miles away. They stopped at a small woodshed near the rear of the farmyard. In it, bundles of faggots were piled on the floor. One of the men lifted the bundles, which were cleverly wired together, and exposed a trapdoor which concealed a small cubicle beneath the shed.

Barnes entered the tiny six foot square room and settled himself. Andre told him he was at the Brieux farm and that he was to stay put for a few days. As soon as it was safe to move him, Barnes would be passed

to another FFI group and so on his way out of France. After explaining this, Andre and the other Resistance fighters left.

Barnes spent the days of that first week in his small underground shelter. Henri Brieux, a brother of Andre and a Resistance man himself, brought Barnes a crystal radio and many hours were whiled away listening to the BBC. Barnes listened to Bing Crosby entertaining troops in England. One song seemed particularly appropriate, "I'll Be Seeing You." One day BBC broadcast an announcement of the invasion of southern France. Barnes thought to himself that he wouldn't have to wait very long now. If he couldn't escape from France, he could just wait for Allied troops to reach the place where he was hiding.

The days were long that first week, but at night Andre and his friends would take Barnes out to various farms in the area to show him off. They drank Calvados, ate French cakes and cookies, and sang songs. Although most of the farm people spoke no English, language proved to be no barrier to the fun and enjoyment.

Barnes and his escorts moved freely during the nights. They were heavily armed and the Germans never ventured out of their stations at night for fear of ambush. The Wehrmacht troops knew that every Frenchman was their enemy.

The FFI had stolen a 50 caliber machine gun from the burned out hulk of Barnes' aircraft. He worked with them as they tinkered with it in a vain attempt to make it usable, but it was too badly damaged by the fire.

The second week of Lt. Barnes' enforced grounding began. The Brieux brothers felt it was safe to bring him out of the hole, so he lived in the Brieux home. He had been given false I.D. papers manufactured by the FFI stating that he was Pierre Duval, an electrical engineer from Paris. His presence at the farm was explained by saying he was on a vacation.

It was haying time and Barnes (alias Pierre) joined in the harvesting. Up every day at dawn, the Brieux' and their "adopted son" went out to the fields and pitched hay onto the wagons. Barnes was impressed with the stamina of the farm people. "How those people worked! I kept up with them, but it was rough. The breaks for cider, bread and cheese were lifesavers for me."

British and U.S. planes were constantly overhead during the days, and at night Barnes could hear the RAF heavies going over on their way to bomb the German cities. Nights also brought the sound of V-Is being launched against London. Quite often a loud explosion indicated that a flying bomb hadn't made it more than a few feet off the launching platform.

On the sixth day of the second week Barnes rode a wagon load of hay back to the farmyard. The yard was

full of German troops! A moment of panic was dispelled when he realized that they were only resting after retreating all night. Still, he was on his guard. He stayed on top of the wagon and pitched hay down to another man who forked it into the barn. Soldiers wandered around, looked at him and moved on. Finally the wagon was empty and Barnes returned to the field without being discovered. But for the rest of the day he stayed in the field and Henri took the wagon loads of hay to the barn.

Andre Brieux told Barnes one day that he didn't feel it was safe to keep him there any longer in view of the increased German activity in the area. The Germans had begun a massive retreat, moving by night and hiding in the farmyards by day to escape Allied fighter-bombers. If Barnes stayed at the Brieux farm, his chances of being discovered were great.

So, for the third week of his stay in France, Barnes returned to the Loynell farm. Life was easier there, no hay to pitch! He helped Mr. Loynell around the place, repairing equipment and buildings.

In the evenings, Harry and the Loynell family would sit in the kitchen and converse with the help of a French-English dictionary. The Loynell couple and their five children were elated when Barnes was able to speak a few halting sentences in French. The children, Simone, Yvonne, Annette, Marie and Francois sang for him, and he sang the American songs that he knew.

One evening a school teacher friend of the Loynells stopped for dinner. Barnes was introduced as "Cousin Pierre from Paris." He didn't speak much during the evening, and the teacher never guessed his real identity.

The American pilot had spent 21 days in France when an FFI man burst into the Loynell home to tell him that the Canadians were coming. Sure enough, rifle and automatic fire were audible in the distance. Barnes went to a window and looked out. He could see several Canadian tanks maneuvering in the nearby fields. Mrs. Loynell brought out Barnes' flight suit and he put it on. The time had come! He walked outside and hailed a tank.

Barnes introduced himself to a tank officer and explained his situation. The tank commander said they were on their way to Dieppe and Barnes was welcome to ride along. "No thanks! Tank warfare ain't for me!" he replied. The commander laughed and suggested another plan. He was sending a tank retriever back to Rouen in an hour and Barnes could hitch a ride on that.

At Rouen he thanked the driver and hailed a truck

going back to Caen on the Red Ball Express highway. The Australian truck driver dropped him off near an airfield just outside Caen, and Barnes sought out the Officer's Club. Inside was a B-24 crew whose plane had been forced to land because of mechanical difficulties. They planned to return to England the next day after repairs had been made. Barnes was told he was welcome to ride along, and the next morning he was flown to London where he reported to U. S. Intelligence for de-briefing.

Two days later, Barnes returned to Bodney and a wild party developed celebrating his return. Exuberant pilots made him tell his story over and over again. The bash lasted until well into the night, and he went to bed feeling that at last he was back where he belonged.

1st Lt. Harry H. Barnes resumed flying operations for the remainder of the war. During his year-long combat tour he flew over 70 missions in P-47s and P-51s. He was awarded the Air Medal with three Clusters, the Distinguished Flying Cross with one Cluster, the ETO Ribbon with three Battle Stars and the Unit Citation ribbon (as a member of the 352nd Fighter Group).

To cap his flying career he was recalled during the Korean War and spent three years of active duty flying Republic F-84s with the Air Defense Command and, later, with the Tactical Air Command in Europe.

MUSTANG DRAWINGS: The following four pages of P-51 Mustang drawings were done by Norman L. Avery. Norm began work on them in 1958 as the first step in building a model of a P-51D. Dimensions measured from a local D Model didn't check with the limited data on hand (which proved to apply to the P-51H), and a thorough program of research was started to get full, accurate details on the entire Mustang series. In time, many key people were located who generously loaned or provided material including maintenance manuals, photos and a priceless few, original NAA drawings. From the material emerged detailed drawings of the North American Mustang, from the P-51 through the P-51D, with a further study of the P-51H. A full set of these drawings (there are five sheets in all, the four following, on pages 24 thru 27, and a fifth sheet on the H Model) reproduced on good stock and measuring 22 x 17, can be purchased, postpaid, for \$3.00 per set from: Norman L. Avery, 17541 Raymer St., Northridge, California.

Incidentally, the P-51D model, which started all of this, has still not been started.