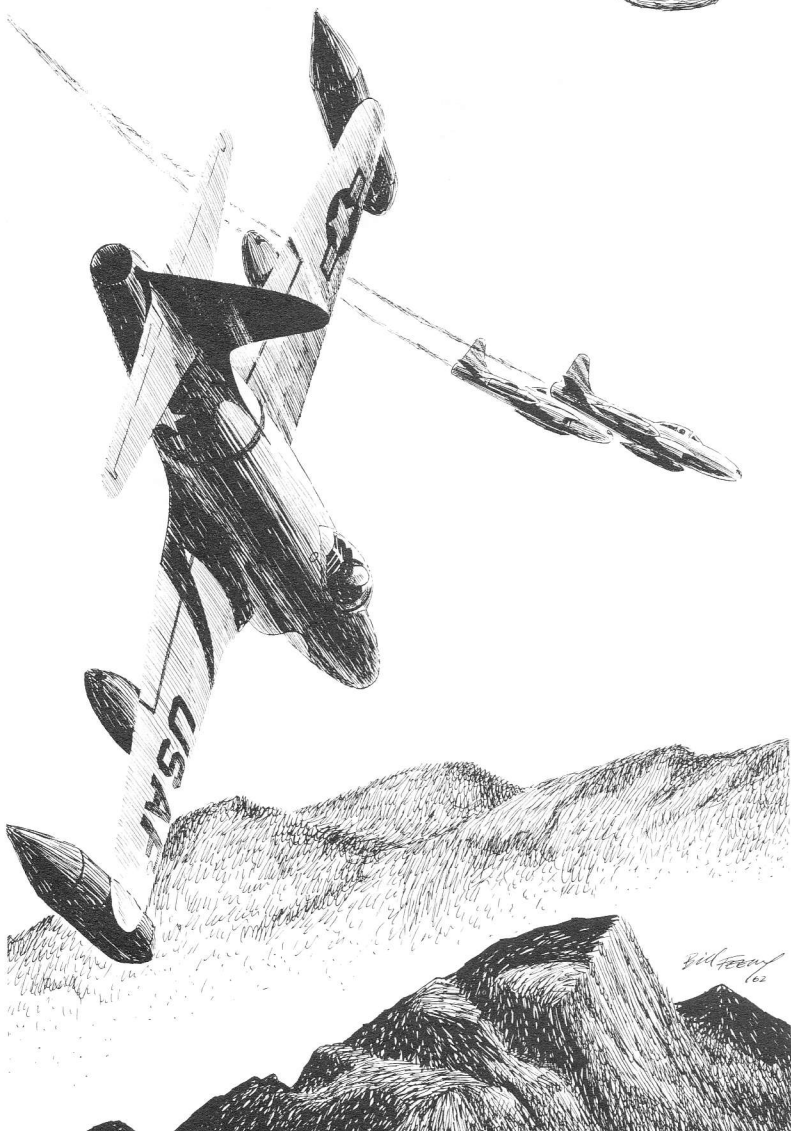


MEDAL OF HONOR



RP 6910 — MEDAL OF HONOR AIRCRAFT

Further details for TSgt. William Bennett's RP 6910



The 93rd airman to be awarded the Medal of Honor in the name of the United States Congress did so through sacrifice of his own life against an enemy gun position in Korea. Major Loring, then 34, and a veteran already of 106 combat missions in war-time, was the forty-seventh airman of the Air Force to get to the ranks of the MOH. His career to that time seemed to point to an ultimate reward.¹

Loring entered service in 1942 to learn to fly at Army air fields, and became a 2nd Lieutenant in early 1943. But instead of going to Europe as he perhaps anticipated, his assignment was to Puerto Rico for three months with the 22nd F.S., flying mundane anti-sub patrols in P-39 and P-40 airplanes, then back to the States for more training, this time on P-47's. Finally, in March 1944 his unit, the 36th F.G., went to England, to be based at Kingsnorth and fly escort and interdiction missions with the 9th Air Force.

By Christmas Eve 1944, Lt. Loring had flown fifty-four missions. His fifty-fifth was his last for awhile, for he was shot down, crashed in Belgium, and was made prisoner of war "for the duration."

Back home, Loring now elected to continue in the service, and in the period between WWII and the United Nations action in North Korea, he attended various schools, became captain, and then Major. While the "police action" continued to see-saw for nearly two years, Loring was instructing at the Army Information School at Carlisle Barracks, Pa. Then he received assignment to proceed to Korea and the Headquarters of the 8th Fighter Bomber Wing, US 5th Air Force.

At the time of his last mission Loring was serving as the squadron Operations Officer of the 80th F.B.S. With three other pilots he set out on a strafing mission, picking up directions from a T-6 Controller airplane on the way. Verifying the target location, and rolling into a dive, the four pilots went toward the deck. At about 4,000 feet, Loring's airplane was hit but instead of pulling up and moving out, he veered toward a gun position and in spite of intense fire, dove directly into it, with the resulting explosion destroying everything for yards around. More than a year later, on 14 Dec. 1953, Major Loring's citation was issued:

Rank and organization: Major, United Air Force. *Place and date:* Near Sniper Ridge, North Korea, 22 November 1952. *Entered service at:* Portland, Maine. *Birth:* Portland, Maine. *Citation:* Major Charles J. Loring, Jr., 13003A, United States Air Force, distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty near Sniper Ridge, North Korea, on 22 November 1952. While leading a flight of four F-80 aircraft on a close support mission, Major Loring was briefed by a controller to dive-bomb enemy gun positions which were harassing friendly ground troops. After verifying the location of the target, Major Loring rolled his dive-bomb run. Throughout the run, extremely accurate ground fire was directed on his aircraft. Disregarding the accuracy and intensity of the ground fire, Major Loring aggressively continued to press the attack until his aircraft was hit. At approximately 4,000 feet he deliberately altered his course and aimed his diving aircraft at active gun emplacements concentrated on a ridge northwest of the briefed target, turned his aircraft 45 degrees to the left, pulled up in a deliberate controlled maneuver, and elected to sacrifice his life by diving his aircraft into the midst of the enemy emplacements. His selfless and heroic action completely destroyed the enemy gun emplacement and eliminated a dangerous threat to United Nations ground forces. Major Loring's noble spirit, superlative courage, and conspicuous sacrifice in inflicting maximum damage on the enemy exemplified valor of the highest degree and his actions were in keeping with the finest traditions of the United States Air Force.²



AAHS Members are invited to participate in the art program for the Journal, particularly since none of the actions for which MOH awards were made were ever photographed. Instead, the situations provide a very worthwhile opportunity for portrayal of artworks in any media of choice. Write to the Editor.

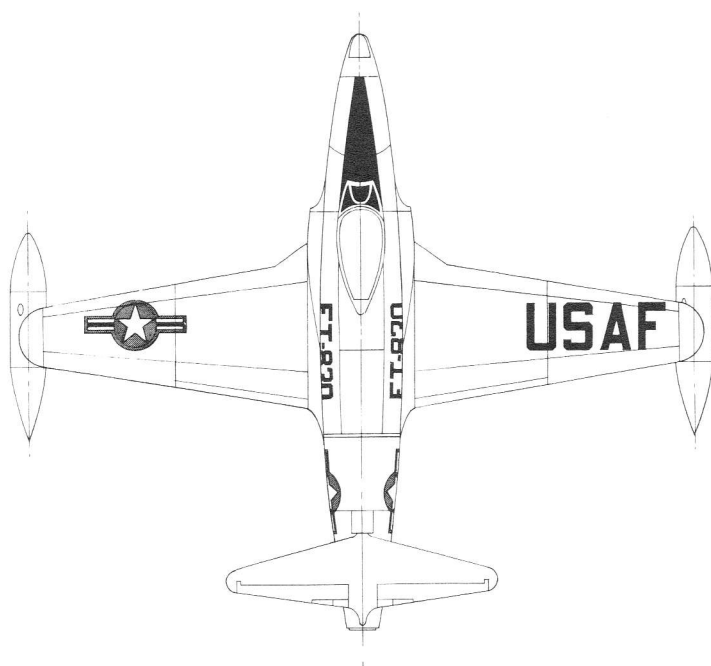
In his Research Project 6910, William J. Bennett is attempting to determine all of the particulars of the aircraft flown by MOH awardees at the time of the action, including colors, markings, serials, types, and any special features. Members with data to supply are invited to write Bennett at 17017 Orchard St., Gardena, CA 90247. He reports the following information is needed:

It is believed that color slides exist of the crashed O-1G Bird Dog, 51-5078, flown by Capt. Hilliard Wilbanks. Can anyone provide a lead? Joe Wehner's SPAD XIII was s/n 7555 when he was killed. Wehner was wingman for Lt. Frank Luke in September 1918 and was killed in action later. His airplane number (in the squadron) is unknown. (Ref. *Cross & Cockade Journal*) Thus s/n 7557 is the more plausible for Frank Luke's SPAD.

Amy W01/C Frederick E. Ferguson was awarded the MOH for action on 31 Jan. 1968 in what is believed to be a UH-1D. Attempts to contact Ferguson are unsuccessful and help is needed. Also another appeal is made for the PB4Y-1 of VP-102 flown by LCdr Bruce A. Van Voorhis of 6 July 1943. Was this a navalized version in the blue and gray color scheme, or in O.D. and neutral gray of the USAAF? Who were others lost with Van Voorhis? Are there photos of VP-102 aircraft?

SSgt Henry E. Erwin was believed to have flown in B-29-MA 42-65302, named CITY OF LOS ANGELES when he earned the MOH. His group, the 29th B.G., in which the 52nd B.S. flew, used natural metal finish "O" in a black square as the fin marking.

There was a typing error in the previous question for Lt. Col. Vance's B-24 details. For "389th B.G." read "44th 'Eight Ball' B.G."



Major Loring's airplane was an F-80C-10-LO, 49-1830, as has been determined from search of the records at the Simpson Historical Research Center, Air University, Maxwell AFB, by AAHS Member William D. Feeny. Among existing photographs, the F-80's of the 8th Fighter Bomber Wing were marked with three-ray sunbursts on the vertical stabilizer and rudder, and different colors were used by the three squadrons of the Wing. The 35th F.B.S. used blue, the 36th used red, and according to Member David Menard, Col. Casey reported that the 80th F.B.S. used yellow as its tail color. While assigned to Chanute AFB Sgt. Menard provided the scheme for an F-80 now on display there in the colors of Major Loring's airplane. At this time it is not definite that his airplane used the yellow sunburst; one photo existing at Maxwell Field shows the sunburst area in a darker than usual shade than would apply to yellow in a black and white film. However, since his F-80 was assigned to the 80th F.B.S. for maintenance, yellow seems more probable. No squadron insignia was used by the 80th, thus none is depicted here. Rudder tips are believed to have been white. Otherwise, the airplane was natural metal finish with standard national insignia on fuselage and wings, dull black anti-glare pad, and black letters FT-830.

The acrylic painting of the aircraft profile was done by James H. Farmer, top and front views by the Editor, from data supplied by William J. Bennett.

REFERENCES

1. Feeny, William D. "In Their Honor." *Model Airplane News*; August, 1962. Pp. 21, 22, 42, illus.
2. U.S. Congress. *Medal of Honor Recipients 1863-1973*. U.S. Gov't Printing Office, Washington, D.C.; 1973. Stock No. 5270-02039. 1231 pages, illustrated, indexed, bibliography. This updated edition prepared for the Committee on Veteran's Affairs, is particularly well documented with over 2,000 items in its bibliography.