

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Eighth Air Force History:

"Some 18 years ago some Americans with a few planes got started in a war over Europe. Three years later many thousands of Americans with many thousands of planes helped finish off the same war. In between there had been a lot of flying, fighting, and dying. The participants and their next of kin must bear the scars of those vicious years for life. Memories fade, and before they fade is the time to record the history they are made of.

"Although there were official historians and records galore there is an awful lot we do not know about that piece of history, a lot which was probably never officially recorded. As enthusiasts we all have our own particular interest and mine is the history of the US 8th AAF which operated out of England a decade and a half ago. Of course the other air forces of Uncle Sam are just as interesting but the Eighth happens to be my particular love. During those past 17 years I've been gradually tacking together a comprehensive history of the men, aircraft, units, and battles of this force, which one day I hope to see in print. But even if this should not come to pass, the facts will have been collected and put on record so that if someone 50 years hence wants to know who shot down Nowotny's Me 262, or the name of the pilot of the first Fort over Berlin, or the exact markings of Gabreski's Thunderbolt, the information will be available.

"Now, I still want to know an awful lot more about every aspect of the Eighth and I have an idea that there are folk in AAHS who could help. So if anybody served in the old 8th or has any evidence, please, please, turn it out; either to the Journal or me. Any little item of gen or a photo might prove to be a missing link in the story, SO LET'S HEAR IT."

Roger A. Freeman, May's Barn, Dedham, Colchester, Essex, England.

The "Graf Zeppelin" at Mines Field:

"The photograph of the Graf Zeppelin at Mines Field which appears on page 68 of the Spring 1960 Journal shows graphically the high tension wires in the foreground that nearly put an end to the round-the-world flight.

"The Graf Zeppelin was heavy, that August morning in 1929, as it readied for the last lap of its tour. Even after cutting ballast, fuel and personnel the airship was only 400 lbs. light. As they drifted away from the mooring tower Hugo Eckener called for maximum power. The ship moved along slowly, gaining speed, but still only a few feet off the ground. Ahead loomed those high tension wires. Dr. Eckener called, "Up Elevator", the nose came up and cleared the wires. But the tail hit the ground and dragged for several hundred feet. It seemed as though the tail fin would hit the wires. Eckener called for "Down Elevator", the nose dipped, the tail rose and cleared the wire. The Graf

Zeppelin climbed steadily and headed east for Lakehurst."

Paul Gaudette, Rt. 1, Birch Bay, Blaine, Washington.

Hungarian Aviation History:

"I am assisting in the preparation of an English-language book on Hungarian aviation. The principal author and editor is Lieut. Frigyes (Frederick) Hefty, one of our World War I aces and author of several books and articles (in Hungarian) on aviation. The co-authors and collaborators include a large number of Hungarian ex-fliers, now living in the free world. Unfortunately we lack official documents, therefore we will not (and cannot) write history. Being all exiles we also lack the necessary funds for an extensive research and the work is done in our spare time and the expenses are paid from our own pocket. In spite of these difficulties we will be able to produce a valuable book, judging from the completed part so far and material collected. The English-language editor is a well known British aviation writer.

"The "Hussars of the Sky" - as the manuscript is titled - will present the various phases of Hungarian aviation, divided into five parts: I. 1909-14 (pioneer days); II. 1914-18 (WWI); III. 1919-41 (years of peace); IV. 1941-44 (Royal Hung. Air Force in Russia); and V. 1944-45 (Hung. Air Force in the defence of the country). Also an inside story of the Air Force's role in the 1956 revolution will be presented. Each part will consist of several chapters. We have few hundred (mostly rare and yet unpublished) photographs, of which a final selection will be made. The book will definitely not be a "bestseller", but a collectors' item, since this will be the first English-language publication about Hungarian aviation. Part V deals mainly with the USAAF air raids against Hungarian targets. I do not think that the manuscript will be finished before the June next year, since the gathering of data and information regarding Parts III. -V. is far from completed.

"The authors would welcome the help of any:

1. Who could supply any information, data, clippings about Hungarian aviation in general, titles of publications in which mention is made of it, photographs and any other items. Photographs would be promptly returned after reproduction.
2. Who served with the Fifteenth (and Eighth) Air Force and participated in attacks against Hungarian targets in 1944-45, especially those who kept diaries or can recollect the dates, places, losses, etc. of such attacks.
3. Who were POW's in Hungarian captivity in order to give a frank account of their impressions, treatment, etc.
4. Who were willing to exchange books on the activity of the Fifteenth Air Force for British aviation publications (limited number).

"Regarding point 1., as we have a great number of photographs, we are really after some combat photos from the "other side" taken over Hungarian

targets or in Hungary. (I must mention here, that we would be unable to exchange photos at this stage, that is, at least until the book is published.) I would like to get in touch with somebody, who would take the trouble to check certain magazines and newspapers in the public libraries. (For example, about the Hung. Atlantic flight, 15th-16th July 1932; or about the first combat of the Hung. Air Force on the 24th March 1939 against the Czechs; reports in the press, cuttings, etc.) Point 2., the first USAAF raid took place on the 3rd April 1944 and regularly after that the Hung. Air Force had almost daily encounters with American planes. I need data to counter-check our records. I believe, the USAAF crews were under the impression, that the whole defence of Hungary was in the hand of Luftwaffe units. It is not so. The backbone of the fighter defence was the 101st Fighter Regiment (Wing), flying Me 109's. The official marking of the Royal Hungarian Air Force was white cross in black square on the wings and fuselage. In a few months time the 101st "Puma" Fighter Regiment accounted for at least 120 US aircraft confirmed. Own pilot and aircraft losses could not be replaced, thus the "Pumas" were greatly reduced in strength, but fought until VE-day. During April many Hungarian Me 210's took part in the battle over Budapest (1944). - Point 3, we would like to get in touch with ex-USAAF prisoners in Hungary. Individual and general impressions about their captors would be welcomed, especially the comparison between the Hung. and German treatment of prisoners. (Unfortunately all POW's were handed over to the Germans due to the Russian advance.) We are especially anxious to hear from Capt. John Dickey, 1st Lieuts. MacGee, F. Thompson, G. Thomas and F. D. Newman, Staff Sgt. Segall and Sgts. Jack Lepoutre and J. B. Coleman, and also Capt. Phillip Carosselli. - Point 4, I am willing to exchange British aviation books (recently published and few vintage editions) for good books on the Fifteenth Air Force in order to check data, preferably with statistics. Naturally I possess only a limited number of spare copies. I do not mind secondhand books in good condition."

Julius R. Gaal, 21 Carrington St., Granville (Sydney), N.S.W., Australia

Aircraft Interned in Sweden During WWII:

"I am enclosing a list of all the American planes, mostly bombers, that were forced to land on Bulltofta airport in Malmö during World War II. I would welcome some information, from your specialists on the subject, about the units from which these bombers came and what raids they had participated in before they came in over Sweden - especially about the 20th of June 1944 when the Luftwaffe seems to have taken a very heavy toll of the B-24's.

"The list includes the serial on every plane, type of aircraft, date of arrival and date of take-off. In some cases also remarks on the planes eventual fate. I received this information from a clerk at Bulltofta airport who was in charge of the parking fees for the aircraft during their stay on Bulltofta. From my experience with Swedish bureaucracy I am sure it is fairly accurate. In the cases where a ? / is placed after the aircraft type it means that I do not know the version. Most of the planes were flown out to a pool in the middle of Sweden and

from there they were flown back to England or Germany after the war."

<u>Serial</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Arrived</u>	<u>Departed</u>	
41-29191	B-24 H	1/3-44	29/4-44	
42-52118	"	9/4-44	17/5-44	
42-72858	B-24?	9/4-44	25/5-44	
42-110040	B-24 H	9/4-44	29/4-44	
41-28667	"	9/4-44	29/4-44	
42-7637	"	?	?	scrapped
42-63962	D-24 D	29/5-44	21/6-44	
42-94796	B-24 H	29/5-44	30/6-44	
42-94973	"	29/5-44	9/6-45	
41-28787	B-24 ?	20/6-44	12/7-44	
42-50343	"	20/6-44	18/7-44	
42-51079	"	20/6-44	9/8-44	
42-51213	"	20/6-44	30/6-44	
42-52733	"	20/6-44	30/6-44	
42-95135	"	20/6-44	30/6-44	
42-94892	"	20/6-44	4/7-44	
42-94765	"	20/6-44	5/7-44	
42-95013	"	20/6-44	30/6-44	
42-94850	"	20/6-44	20/7-44	
42-95200	"	20/6-44	25/8-44	
42-95030	"	20/6-44		crashed against a hill, plane caught fire, 5 of crew were killed. scrapped
44-40106	B-24 J	20/6-44	9/8-44	
44-40136	"	20/6-44	9/8-44	
44-40103	"	20/6-44		scrapped
44-40142	"	20/6-44	1/8-44	
44-40093	"	21/6-44		crashlanded, scrapped
42-95089	B-24 ?	21/6-44		crashed into a ditch when taxying at high speed, scrapped
42-52525	"	21/6-44	14/9-44	
42-109816	"	21/6-44	30/6-44	
44-40195	B-24 J	6/7-44	1/8-44	
42-52174	B-24 ?	25-8-44	8/6-45	had done 55 raids, and 4 kills (fighters)
44-13917	P-51-5-NA	6/8-44	7/10-45	
42-39994	B-17 G	1/3-44	16/1-45	
42-37985	"	9/4-44	25/5-44	
42-97496	"	9/4-44	10/5-44	
42-97155	"	11/4-44	29/4-44	
42-97212	"	11/4-44	16/1-45	in hangar 27/4-23/5
42-107067	"	11/4-44	27/12-44	in hangar 24/5-
42-30332	B-17 F	18/5-55	18/5-44	returned the same day, due to engine failure.

42-37778	B-17 G	13/5-44	9/6-44	
42-37944	"	13/5-44	9/6-44	
42-39904	"	?	?	
42-37978	"	13/5-44	21/6-44	
42-31277	"	?		scrapped
42-39792	"	?		scrapped
42-97192	"	?		scrapped
42-97314	"	29/5-44		scrapped 20/?-44. Bellylanded.
42-32076	"	29/5-44	3/12-44	
42-97144	"	21/6-44		heavily damaged, crashed against a hill, 3 of crew killed, scrapped.
42-107221	"	21/6-44	20/7-44	broke landing gear when taxiing in.
* 42-3490?	"	21/6-44	31/8-44	
42-107036	"	21/6-44	16/1-45	bellylanded when undercarriage collapsed.
42-102663	"	18/7-44	9/8-44	
42-97467	"	18/7-44	23/2-45	landed with one engine, running.
42-31737	"	18/7-44	17/8-44	46 raids completed
43-37596	"	13/10-44	14/10-44	arr. from Sovde aux. field
42-31992	"	14/10-44	6/3-45	) returned due to engine failure.
		6/3-45	7/3-45	
44-8314	"	14/1-45	23/2-45	
44-8602	"	17/1-45	9/6-45	
42-97658	"	3/2-45	26/6-45	
44-8577	"	12/3-45	15/6-45	
42-97288	"	18/3-45	15/6-45	
43-38871	"	3/4-45	9/6-45	
43-38814	"	4/4-45	8/6-45	
42-39904	"	15/6-45	16/6-45	) second time in Sweden flew in spare parts for 42-39904 above.
43-38358	"	16/6-45	16/6-45	

* last number shot away

Olov Sundgren, Tunnbindaregatan 4, Malmö SW, Sweden

Douglas Super DC-3's:

Member John T. Wible of the U. S. Air Force sent in a rather interesting bit of information on the civilian "Super Goonies". He would be interested in locating a picture of any of these planes - in fact so would we.

"Only four Super DC-3 aircraft were purchased for commercial use, the remainder being grabbed for military use. Of the four civilian types three were bought by Capital Airlines and the other was kept by Douglas as an executive transport until 1959 at which time it was sold to a construction firm in Birmingham, Alabama.

"Capital bought its three Supers during 1950. These aircraft, although

produced as new Super DC-3's, utilized the fuselage and center section of trade-in American Airlines DC-3's. The center section was strengthened and the fuselage was lengthened by adding two new sections.

"The planes were operated principally over route AM-51: Washington, D.C./ Newport News/ Norfolk/ Elizabeth City/ Rocky Mount/ Raleigh-Durham/ Greenville/ Winston-Salem/ Charlotte/ Knoxville/ Chattanooga/ Huntsville/ Memphis. In addition, two other trips were operated: Washington, D.C./ Baltimore/ Pittsburgh; and Washington, D.C./ Richmond/ Greensboro-High Points/ Asheville/ Atlanta. The exact trip numbers are not available but they were in the 200's. The planes seated 31 passengers.

"In April, 1952 Capital sold the Supers to United States Steel Corporation to be used as corporation aircraft. Capital modified the interior of the planes by removal of certain seats and turned the craft over to USS as executive aircraft on April 24th, 1952.

"During 1953, Gardner Industries of Pittsburgh installed the first actual executive interior. This modification proved to be extremely heavy, even to the point of preventing full fuel operation. The planes were again modified to the interior at present installed by Grand Central Aircraft Co. of Glendale, California.

"In early 1959 the 3 aircraft were returned to Douglas Aircraft for major overhaul. At that time the CAA registration numbers were revised to those presently used.

"The Supers bought by Capital differ from all other Super DC-3s in that they are equipped with Wright 968 C9 HE2 engines having a T/O rating of 1475 BHP and allowing a maximum gross T/O weight of 31,900 pounds. All other Super DC-3s, including the Birmingham-based aircraft, have Wright 1820-80's rated at 1425 BHP for T/O and allowing a maximum gross T/O weight of 29,325 pounds."

Super DC-3 Registration Data

Douglas Serial	Capital Number	CAA	Present	Date of M'Fature	Date Placed in Service By Capital
43191	540	N16019	N540S	8 Jul 50	25 July 50
43192	541	N16016	N541S	2 Aug 50	23 August 50
43193	542	N16012	N542S	8 Sep 50	16 September 50

A special note of thanks to Mr. James F. LeCroy, Engineering Dept., Capital Airlines for his assistance.

A2C J. T. Wible USAF, 727 ACWRON, Box 129, Myrtle Beach, S. C.

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