



A/C # 41-29607

JULY 9, 1945 - The plane that returned
to the Z of I. The pilot was 1ST LT ROBT BERGEN

CO-PILOT WILBUR MURPHY
NAV. SAM VENEABLE
BOMB. ROBT DE Vlieg
ENG CHARLES K. JONES III

CREW CHIEF ALEXANDER BLAIR



My Flight From England and My Close Call With Death

Early on the morning of July 11th was a happy moment in my life. After spending 18 months in England I was to fly home to good old U. S. A.

At 9:00 A. M. we took off from our base in England, our first stop inroute home was Valley, Wales. Our flight to Valley was a very miserable one as fog and rain were encountered during the entire flight. We landed on the Valley airstrip at 11:00 A. M. immediately our airplane was serviced and made ready for our next hop to Iceland, but due to weather conditions we were forced to stay there that night.

We were scheduled to take off for Iceland the next Morning at 8:00 A. M., but due to weather conditions at Iceland orders were changed 20 minutes before take off and the Azores Islands was our next stop. Our airplane had previously been serviced with enough gasoline to fly to Icel and The Pilot and I figured our gasoline supply and decided we had enough gasoline to make the Azores.

We made our scheduled take off, climbing to 10,000 ft. and heading directly for the Islands. After two hrs. of flying we checked our gasoline supply, and found we were using 165 gals. per hr. more than the engines should use. We cut our power settings to a minimum and continued on, realizing at that time we had made one of the biggest mistakes of our lives, by taking off without a full load of gasoline. We checked our gasoline continually until the sight guages showed empty. Our radio operator was continually trying to contact the Islands but to no avail. At five oclock we prepared for a crash landing in the ocean, that moment(I will never forget as death seemed inevitable. Ten minutes later our radio operator jumped with joy as he finally had contacted the Azores. We landed twenty Minutes later on the airstrip. Checking our gasoline tanks with a flashlight they were completely dry, there may have been enough to fill a cigarette lighter.

Our flight from the Azores to Newfoundland the next day was very successful with no complications. Spending the night in Newfoundland then flying to Bradley Field Conn. the next morning. Upon arriving there each and everyone of us kissed the good old American soil, and said goodbye to the California Baby, which was the name of our airplane that brought us safely to our United States.