

HEADQUARTERS
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FROM: HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES STRATEGIC AIR FORCES IN EUROPE.

AN EIGHTH AIR FORCE LIBERATOR STATION, ENGLAND - - - When his B-24 Liberator lurched while he was repairing broken fuel lines which were showering him with gasoline, bombardier 1st Lt. James W. Evans, of Corning, N.Y., recently fell out of the open bomb bay doors without a parachute and was left dangling beneath the bomber at an altitude of 20,000 feet on the end of a 12-foot rope that he had tied around his waist mountaineer's style.

En route to a target in Europe the Lib had been hit by flak, jamming the bombs in the bomb bay so they could not be jettisoned and severing vital gasoline lines. Lt. Evans, nearly blinded by the spraying gasoline and without a parachute because of the cramped quarters, stood on the narrow, slippery catwalk over the open bomb bay and pried the bombs loose one by one.

Then he tied the rope around his waist and, while three gunners held the other end, he stood astride the bomb bay in order to reach and repair the fuel lines. When the bomber lurched he lost his footing and plunged through the opening below. The gunners finally pulled him back into the plane.

T/Sgt. Allen V. Tuten, of Baxley, Ga., who was helping Lt. Evans work on the gasoline lines, had no rope around his waist and was thrown on his back across the narrow catwalk when the plane lurched.

The Lib was piloted by 1st Lt. George P. Bradley, whose wife resides at 1431 E. Madison St., Springfield, Mo. He brought the bomber back to its base with the hydraulic system shot out and landed successfully using two parachutes released from the waist windows in lieu of brakes which would not function.

Lt. Evans is the son of Mrs. Orrilla D. Evans, 140 Pearl St., Corning, N.Y.

END

6.45 P.M.