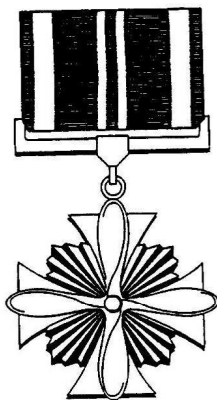


Member S/Sgt. James F Carney receives DFC Award Notice

Information given below was received recently by the Association for follow-up:

S/Sgt James F Carney ASN 17107876, 824 Sq. credited with 35 missions, received a DFC award notice after the war at home in May 1945. The paperwork was long hidden. Now, growing old, he says, "I would like to pass the award on to my sons".

The proposed citation



Sgt. Carney was the nose gunner on a B-24 type aircraft flying a combat mission to the vital enemy oil refinery at Odertal, Germany on 17 December 1944. Severe and adverse weather conditions were encountered enroute until the formation had passed over the Alps and approached the Vienna area. Evading the heavy flak concentrations over Vienna the formation proceeded directly to the target area. Still forty minutes from the objective, the penetration escort turned back. Target escort was to join the formation just a few minutes later.

Before the meeting could be effective, the formation was attacked by 130 enemy single engine fighters, the largest assault force thrown against our operations in four months.

The entire force was apparently coordinated by ground control, alert to the gap in our fighter protection against this particular objective. The enemy's forces were well dispersed along the entire route with reserves continually thrown into the attack. In waves of three and six abreast, they came in with suicidal aggressiveness, attacking from all angles, but mainly from five to seven o'clock in a desperate attempt to disrupt or destroy the formation. The enemy dove, reformed, and dove in renewed attacks.

Sgt. Carney, though under direct attack from a formation of six enemy planes, remained calmly at his guns and continued to pour a steady stream of fire on the assaulting ships. In spite of the fact that his position received a direct hit from enemy gunfire, he nevertheless remained at his station, and because of his gallant determination in the face of great odds, he succeeded in helping to destroy two ME-109s, and aiding in the destruction of several others.

The target was defended by extremely heavy concentration of enemy gunfire, his aircraft made a perfect bombing run and dropped its entire bomb load in the immediate target area, inflicting grave damage to this vital enemy installation.

The aircraft safely evaded further areas of heavy flak concentrations and arrived safely back at base without additional damages. The fact that this aircraft reached the target, bombed successfully, and returned to base, was due in great part to Sgt. Carney's unswerving devotion to duty and great professional skill.

Memories of Walter Chapman, 826 Squadron

During, WWII, I was a bombardier on a B-24 with the 484th Bomb Group, 15th Air Force stationed in Italy. On Friday, June 13, 1944 (my 24th combat mission in 39 days), we were on our way to Munich Germany when attacked and shot down by German ME-109 fighters. During the battle our gunners shot down three of the enemy fighters; but we sustained the loss (KIA) of our nose and ball turret gunners, loss of three engines which were set on fire (with 3-500 lb. bombs still aboard). Eight of us successfully evacuated the aircraft. Four of my crew were captured by the Germans and became POWs, while four of my crew were discovered and hidden by friendly Italians and later escaped to Yugoslavia and made contact with Tito's Partisans. The following is a digest of my 43 days as an evadee (MIA) in Italy and Yugoslavia.

When I hit the ground-after bailing out and before I was able to gather up the chute I was seized by a group of men (later I found that they were Italians and meant me no harm) who began to remove my flying outfit. While this was going on, one of them had removed his clothes and he indicated that I should put on the clothes he removed. I was then taken to a cave-like hollow, under a tree, along a river, given a small bottle of wine, 2 raw eggs, after which they departed.

I spent the balance of that day and night alone, going over my escape maps to determine the direction I should take to reach the Yugoslav border. The next morning helped by sign language I managed to get a man to take me across the river. I was asked in English: "you are one of the Americans shot-down yesterday aren't you?" This man was a South African (British Army) who had been taken POW by the Germans in Africa.

I was taken to a farmhouse where I found my navigator and crew chief. After four days in this area we were taken by truck through German occupied Italy to the Yugoslav border by Italian Partisans.

At that time, June 1944, Yugoslavia was occupied by the German Army while two groups (Yugoslav Partisans under Joseph Broz Tito) and (Croatian Partisan /Chetniks) under Mihajlovic, were waging a civil war between themselves as well as the Germans. We were told that either group was paid \$10,000 by the US for each escaping airman returned to Allied Central.

June 18, at the border through interpreters, we were put in contact with members of Tito's Partisans. We departed the Italian-Yugoslav border led by two young (16-17 years old) partisan soldiers, each armed with a submachine gun for a destination unknown to us for some forty-nine days in the future. These soldiers were replaced from time to time by others who were familiar with the territory through which we were to travel. We travelled for the most part at night and holed up during the day. The language barrier was the worst part of the experience, for these soldiers (guides) whom we could not understand were prone to get their heads together and after shouting at each other would take off running and we not knowing what they were running from, would take off after them and often we would end up back where we started.

One such retreat was preceded by a burst of machine-gun fire, another a flare being shot into the air ahead of us by Germans.

Food was always scarce and often nonexistent, (once we had no food for five days). We celebrated the end of our fast by having food on the 4th of July, 1944. We shared in the Partisan soldiers