

HEADQUARTERS
EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS
UNITED STATES ARMY

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NUMBER 8196

13 December 1943

FIGHTERS MAKE DEEPEST PENETRATION

AAF

Eighth/Fighter Command Thunderbolts and Lightnings made their deepest penetration of Germany today in escorting U.S. heavy bombers.

Little enemy opposition was encountered. One German plane was destroyed and one of our fighters is missing.

The enemy fighter destroyed was shared by two Lightning pilots, Lieuts. Robert L. Buttke, 851 Forty-Third Street, Sacramento, Calif., and James W. Hiner, 2704 Temple Street, Los Angeles, Calif. They brought down a JU-88.

Lieut. Charles W. Kipfer, 3511 Davenport Street, Washington, D.C., survived a vertical dive at terrific speed, although it was a close call. His oxygen system had failed above 30,000 feet and Kipfer put his plane into a dive in order to reach the heavier air below.

So great was his speed that when he pulled out at 8,000 feet, rivets were jerked out of the tail of his Thunderbolt, the stabilizer was wrinkled and other damage done. After surveying the damage, his crew chief asked "What are you doing here? You're supposed to be dead."

END