

3-16-1945

Don Meeker Is Awarded Air Medal 3-16-1945

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Don Meeker

Is Awarded *Mar. 16,*

1945-

Air Medal

Lieutenant Meeker Is Awarded Medal for "Meritorious Service" in Southwest Pacific Area

Headquarters, Thirteenth Army Air Force, Southwest Pacific.—Second Lieutenant Don E. Meeker, son of Cecil E. Meeker of Hidalgo, has been presented the Air medal "for meritorious achievement while on combat operational missions of a hazardous nature."

Lieutenant Meeker is serving with the "Long Rangers," the 307th Bombardment group of the Thirteenth AAF, as a bombardier on a B-24 Liberator. The "Long Rangers" have been instrumental in neutralizing Japanese strongholds from Guadalcanal to the Philippines and have administered devastating blows at Rabaul, Truk, Yap, Palau, and the important Balikpapan, Borneo, oil center. 307th bombers helped soften the Philippines for invasion and, following the successful landings, supported our troops.

A Newton Graduate

Lieutenant Meeker is a graduate of Newton Community high school. Prior to entering the Air Forces he was employed as a salesman for Funk Brothers Seed Company.

Overseas since June, 1944, the young bombardier has played and is continuing to play an important part, with his group, in carry the war to the enemy.

Awarded Presidential Citation

A Ninth Air Force Reconnaissance Base, France.—Staff Sergeant Frank V. Fehrenbacher, son of Mrs. Josephine Fehrenbacher of Wakefield, has been awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation ribbon as a result of a Presidential citation to the Ninth Air Forces tenth reconnaissance group.

The group, commanded by Colonel Russell A. Berg of Chicago, was cited "for extraordinary performance of duty in action against the enemy in furnishing vitally important photographs of the beaches on which the Allied forces subsequently landed on June 6." The photographs were required by the assault troops to study the shore obstacles and defenses, and had to be of large scale and superior quality.

Were Unescorted

"Flying unarmed and unescorted," the citation reads in part, "at altitudes as low as twenty-five feet, the pilots of the tenth group fearlessly flew their aircraft over the difficult photographic runs in the face of intense fire from some of the strongest anti-aircraft installations in Western Europe."

The group had previously been commended for its work by General Eisenhower, Field Marshal Montgomery, General Brereton, General Dempsey and other high Allied officials. Said letter from the First army: "Results are as fine an example of low-level oblique photography as any obtained in this theatre. Confirmation of suspected enemy defenses, which the photos provide, will prove of utmost importance in saving the lives of Allied ground and naval personnel."