

Mission: Solingen, Germany

December 2, 1943

As the *Bad Penny* was leaving the target, it became apparent that bombs did not release and were hung up in the bombays. Lt. "Duke" Grinham asked T/Sgt. Charles Lewis, the radio gunner next to the bombays, to check out the situation and, if possible, attempt to kick them loose. T/Sgt. Lewis transferred to an oxygen bottle and entered the bombays to find four bombs hung up. As he attempted to dislodge the bombs, his oxygen bottle was pulled loose after getting caught on the hand rails (cables). At that moment he made a decision to return to the radio room and switch back to the regular wall-mounted oxygen system. The hose was long enough to reach into the bombay, with enough slack to give him the freedom to work on the tangle of wires holding back the bombs. Sitting on the catwalk with his legs hanging out over the lowest bombs and holding onto the hand rail with one hand, he finally was able to kick the bottom bomb free. As it dropped, the aircraft jerked up and his oxygen hose pulled loose in the radio room. Not being immediately aware of this, he continued attempts to dislodge the remaining bombs, but in a short time the lack of oxygen and the numbing wind from the -50° temperatures at 25,000 feet became apparent. T/Sgt. Lewis was able to get his feet back up to the catwalk and crawled to the radio room, collapsing over the doorsill—head, shoulders and arms inside room, the lower part of his body dangling on the catwalk. Second Lt. Fred Brown came back to help dislodge the bombs, found T/Sgt. Lewis,

used his own oxygen bottle to revive him, and reconnected the hose to the T/Sgt.'s regular oxygen supply. He re-entered the bombay and kicked the remainder of the bombs free, and returned to the cockpit.

(These facts were disclosed to a medical team using a sodium pentothal procedure to bring about relief from T/Sgt. Lewis's continuous restless and sleepless nights. The procedure was performed at a military hospital with his wife in Denver, Colorado, sometime prior to Christmas 1944. The results were positive. It was disclosed that T/Sgt. Lewis had an extremely vivid and retentive mind, which provoked the sleeplessness.)

THE ABOVE PARAGRAPH REGARDING THE MEDICAL FACTS IS
FOR GENERAL WILLIAM T. SEAWELL, ONLY!

THANK YOU.

CHUCK LEWIS

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Charles M. Lewis

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