



LT. MASSEY



LT. STELLJES

## These Three Survived Explosion At 26,000 Feet

Blown out of their Fortress when it exploded over France, these three crew members survived and returned to their base soon after. All other crew members were killed.

Lt. William E. Massey, pilot, was unconscious from lack of oxygen at the time of the explosion. He came to about 3,000 feet above the ground, miraculously clutching his parachute in one hand. He managed to snap the 'chute to his harness and landed safely.

Second Lieutenant Lewis V. Stelljes, bombardier, was crushed against the nose of the plane with terrific force when the plane went into a spin and then was knocked through the nose by the explosion. Being able to breathe was "wonderful," and at about 5,000 feet he pulled the ripcord and landed near friendly Frenchmen.

Like the pilot, Sgt. Francis J. Berard, waist gunner, was unconscious at the time of the explosion. When he came to he was coming down on the center section of the fuselage. He grabbed a 'chute, snapped it to his harness and landed safely. By the next day he had rejoined his crew mates and they made it back to base.



SGT. BERARD