

James A. Goforth, Class of 1939.



Plane Crash Injuries Prove Fatal to Memphian

2d Lt James A. Goforth served in World War II in the United States Army Air Corp, 15th Air Force, 47th Wing, 449th Bombardment Group, 719th Squadron. On the original Cadre of Air Crews, he is listed in Crew 9-1-AC. He was the bombardier on 2d Lt Robert D. Easters' crew. The B-24 Liberator he was on at the time of his death was named

"Pudgy II" Lt Goforth completed his overseas training at Bruning NE and on November 14, 1943, Special Orders No. 228 was issued for the movement overseas. This set of special orders provided a list of the officers and enlisted men assigned to the original cadre of personnel that were to fly the Group's B-24's overseas to Grottaglie Field near Taranto, Italy.

The Group began movement overseas on 16 November 1943. The individual airplanes of the air echelon headed for Italy by a route which took them to Florida, then to Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Brazil. The Atlantic crossing was made between Brazil and Dakar, Africa. From Dakar the Group flew north to Morocco, then east to Tunisia, and finally north across the Mediterranean Sea to Southern Italy. In North Africa, they had to negotiate a flight through the Atlas Mountain Range. By the first week in December, the individual aircraft formed a long, unending

chain stretching from Topeka to North Africa. Such a massive movement of men and equipment was certain to produce mishaps. Tragedy struck the Group for the first time on the 8th of December when the "Pudgy II", Tail #01, commanded by Captain David Council, C. O. of the 719th squadron, struck a mountain peak in the Atlas Mountains of North Africa. All fourteen men on board died in the crash of "Pudgy II". They are all buried together in one grave at St. Louis, MO at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, Section 82, Grave 21.