

William King Little, Faculty
10 April 1916 – 8 August 1943
(aged 27)



MEMPHIS HERO OF PLOESTI AIR RAID IS DEAD

Lt. Bill Little, Ex-Grid Star, Dies of Wounds While Prisoner in Rumania

Lt. William K. Little, Memphis hero of the Ploesti oil field bombing raid in Romania, has died of wounds received in the raid. This word was received from the War Department Sunday by his wife, the former Lucille Tobey, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Tobey. And with the death of this war hero the end came to the romance that began when Bill Little and Lucille Tobey were freshmen students at Southwestern. At Southwestern Bill was also in the role of hero when he played end on the football team. In 1939 he scored the touchdown that defeated Mississippi State.

News on Anniversary Sunday, the day Mrs. Little received the word of his death, was September 12, the first anniversary of her wedding to Bill Little at, NE, just three weeks ago after he had gotten his wings and commission as a bombardier. Lieutenant Little was one of 200 Liberator

bombers that swept in at tree top heights to plaster the Romanian oil fields, one of Hitler's big sources of oil supply, with 600,000 pounds of high explosives.

First Reported Prisoner. When Lieutenant Little's plane failed to return after the raid, Mrs. Little was notified that he was missing in action. Then about a week ago later came word that he was a Romanian prisoner. Apparently, he had been wounded in the raid or injured in a subsequent crash, causing his death later. Lieutenant Little is the son of Mr. and Mrs. R. P. Little of Dennison TX. He entered the Army Air Forces in 1940, after graduating from Southwestern. He was sent overseas last May and operated from England before being sent to the Middle East. He had also participated in the first big raid on Rome. Information from The Press-Scimitar, Tuesday, September 14, 1943 -----

----- "I'm sure he'll get back if he gets a half a chance," Mrs. Little said today. Lieutenant Little took part in the first raid on Rome and his Liberator had 10 new bullet holes in it when it returned to the base. He also helped bomb Sicily into submission before going on the Ploesti raid. Little had a real college romance. He was in the class of '40 coming to Southwestern from junior college. He and Miss Tobey met in the fall of '38, when she was a freshman and he had just entered Southwestern. She dropped out after a year, having already decided she would marry him.

Joined Before Pearl Harbor Lieutenant Little played two years as a crack wingman on the Southwestern Lynx football team. He assisted Charlie Jamerson as a coach at Tech High in the spring of his senior year. He lacked only a few credits of getting his degree, was considering going to Tulsa, where his coach, Henry Franka, was coach of the college team and wanted Bill as an assistant while he finished his college work. But war seemed imminent, and in October, 1941, Little joined the Army Air Forces.

He was graduated as a bombardier from Victorville Army Air School, Victorville CA, August 15, 1942. He and Miss Tobey were married September 12, 1942, at First Presbyterian Church, Elko NE. Lieutenant Little instructed eight months before going overseas about June 1. His wife has been living with her parents. Information from The Press-Scimitar, Tuesday, September 14, 1943.

HONKEY TONK GAL with pilot

Lieutenant Womble and crew crashed near the target during "Operation Tidal Wave" one of the most daring raids of WW II. The 93rd Bomb Group comes in at tree top level to destroy Romanian oil fields. Following Honky Tonk's crash, Lieutenant Little inhaled gas

fumes which resulted in his pneumonia. Lieutenant Little lost his life in a Romanian hospital, Aug 8, 1943. Lieutenant Little was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his valor.

