



Chester F. Rogala
World War II - Europe
U. S. Army Air Corps
3508th
(and 301st Bomb Group, Italy)

Staff Sergeant

Chester F. Rogala

**Veterans
History
Project
Transcript**

**Interview conducted
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Niles Public Library
Niles Public Library District
Niles, Illinois



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Veterans History Project Transcript

Veteran: **Chester F. Rogala**

Rank: **Staff Sergeant**

Branch of Service: **U.S. Army Air Corps**

Theater: **World War II - Europe**

Unit: **3508th Army Air Forces Base Unit**

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Interviewer: Neil O'Shea

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This Veterans History Project interview is being conducted here at the Niles Public Library in the group study room on the beautiful morning on November the 3rd, 2007. My name is Neil O'Shea. I'm a member of the reference staff here, and I'm privileged to be sitting across the table from Mr. Chester Rogala who is donating his time this morning to provide us with a memoir of his service in World War II as a member of the Army Air Corps. And Mr. Rogala was born on June 7th, 1925. On Mr. Rogala's left is his son, Richard, who gave us a wonderful interview earlier this fall. He was a veteran of the Pueblo, taken by the North Koreans. And on Mr. Rogala's right is sitting his wife of sixty-one years, Dorothy. So we've got a lot of the family here this morning. So it should make for a very good interview. Mr. Rogala, we have a series of questions here that they recommend that we ask all of our vets. And I think you're about our 31st interview now. So, our first question is,

Mr. Rogala, do you recall when you entered the Service? When did you enter the Service?
(Italics denote interviewer's remarks)

What is it? Do I recall--? (Mr. Rogala's statement)

Yes, when you went in, the date?

Yes, I recall, and--

Dorothy: The date? (Mrs. Rogala's participatory comments)

And I've got a picture. Oh, there it is. That was taken about a day after I went into the Service. That was when I was inducted. We went to this area in Michigan, and this was the group of people that I was with. (Note: A scan of this picture follows in the Appendix)

My induction was the 19th of August, 1943, and--

Dorothy: Well, you just got out of high school.

So, you were just eighteen?

Dorothy: Yes.

Eighteen years old.

Dorothy: He graduated in June. And August, he would be-- you said he would have been, what do they call, you know, what they do when--

Drafted.

Dorothy: He would have been drafted, he said, right? So, he joined, right.

Yes. Well, no sooner had I turned eighteen and graduated from high school, Crane Tech High School this was, I was not-- they told me I was going to be drafted in a couple of weeks. I couldn't believe it. I was planning on going to college, you know, and this all happened in the month of June right after my eighteenth birthday and then graduation.

Uncle Sam had a graduation present for you.

Family: Yes.

Yes, so--

So you went to Crane Tech High School?

Yes.

So you lived down in?

I lived on Thomas Street.

Dorothy: He took three buses to get there.

But it took ..., I had no car or anything.

Was that the North Austin area?

Yes.

North Austin.

That's the north-- There was Division Street streetcar. At that time, they had—

Oh yes.

And if you go to Grand Avenue, on Grand Avenue, get on that, go down to Western Avenue, get off, and get on another streetcar, take that down to--

Dorothy: Now, the kids get on the buses. That's it. It took you forever, especially in the winter!

So, all the guys, were they looking forward to going in the Army, or were they worried? They all probably wound up in the Service, did they?

I tell you, I don't know what happened to them.

Well, this one guy--

Dorothy: Glinka, did he go to Crane?

I don't remember whether he went to the school.

Dorothy: Or did he go to Holy Trinity?

But this, you know, in 1943, that was a big time where everybody was being drafted. Everybody was, you know, unbelievably involved in the war. You know, people-- everybody was going into the Service or working for somebody, you know, like--

Dorothy: Working in the war projects, right? They had everything going in Chicago. All the people working in the war, you know, for the

The homefront, the war effort.

Dorothy: The homefront. Yes.

Yes. So, Mr. Rogala, you were-- You were drafted.

I had no choice.

You had no choice? And then, so did you--

You know, I just got out of school.

Right.

With all this, and I was planning to go to school, you know, college.

Yes.

Were you interested in the Army instead of the Navy?

Well, I wanted the Air Force.

You wanted the Air Force. Why was that?

Dorothy: Because he had a high IQ, they took him as a cadet.

I went in as a cadet, and I was going to-- I went to Jefferson Barracks. That was in St. Louis. And there, I went through six weeks of basic training. And, from there, I was going to go into the aviation field to try to become a pilot. And that's when they told me I couldn't do it.

Dorothy: He didn't have the coordination.

Yes. They told me that I --

Dorothy: Why did you choose the Air Force?

Because I wanted to become an Air Force pilot.

And you were explaining about the judgment or the assessment of the abilities to be coordinated in the air, and you were saying something about right hand versus left hand or?

Yes

How does that work?

Well, I could do a lot of things with my right hand, but with my left, that's all I do is hold something or that. But the right-- to use wrenches, you know, I can't do it with my left hand.

Dorothy: Left hand, yes.

But I could do everything with my right hand.

Dorothy: And on a plane he has to use. You have to use two hands.

You have to be able to handle all the instruments and all that part of the plane. You've got to be able to guide the plane and all this.

So, you complete this aviation cadet training, or you go through it, and then this issue comes up that while you are probably not going to be able to be a pilot because of the left hand, right hand.

Right. Right.

But they're still going to keep you in the Air Force, in the Army Air Force,

They went ahead, and they sent me to school, not to school, but, let's see, I went-- from there, I went to Del Mar, Texas. I went to one or two others, you know, traveling from base to base. And then I wound up in Gulfport, Mississippi. And then they assigned me to the crew, you

know, and when I was at Gulfport, Mississippi, we were all together, we picked up our plane, a B-17.

Brand new plane.

Brand new. It was just-- yes. And from there, we flew to Maine, and from Maine, we went to Iceland, and stayed there a couple of days. And then from Iceland, we flew to the Aleutian Islands. You know, I think what it was, was to let people know that where we were going is, they weren't going to tell anybody, because at that time everything was secret, you know.

That was a long flight!

Yes. Yes. We went to the Aleutian Islands. From there, we went to-- what's that island?

Dorothy: Tunisia, you were in Tunisia.

We went to Madagascar. From there, we went to Tunisia. And from Tunisia, we went to, I forget.

That's where I flew all my missions.

So all that flying around the world--

Halfway, Yes.

That does kind of shake out, Yes.

Yes. Iceland was very interesting to go to.

Why was that? It's all ice?

But the thing there was-- that became my home then.

Dorothy: Foggia, which is located near Naples.

Oh, thank you. I didn't know. Yes.

And there we lived in tents, you know. And it was unbelievable how we lived there. And not only that, but then you never knew from one day to another day what you were going to be doing, where were you going, whether you were going. And you had to worry about-- people would take off, you know, people that you talked to today, and a mission came, you'd go out, you'd come back, and, all of a sudden, this person was missing. They were, you know, somehow, they were either shot down, or whatever. And that you had to do every day, you know. Wait a couple days before you fly your next mission.

Dorothy: And that was early in the morning, like 3:30 or 4 o'clock.

And you would get up at four in the morning, you know. And then a flight would normally take off around eight o'clock, nine o'clock. And you would come back sometime in the afternoon.

Richard: What time of the year was this?

This was August.

Richard: August, September. August--

August to roughly, I got it listed somewhere.

This was August 1944?

Okay.

Yes.

August of '44, probably.

Dorothy: Yes.

Yes. Yes.

Yes.

And--

Dorothy: He was only two months out of high school.

And I was more or less all away from it, because when we were--Yes, those are all the missions. And it was unbelievable! (Mr. Rogala refers to small notebook in which he wrote all his missions.)

Yes. It looks like your first mission was July 24th, 1944.

Yes, I had--

And you have-- you flew fifty missions, is it?

Dorothy: Fifty-one.

Fifty-one. Were you--

Actually, I think it all amounted to about thirty-six flights, but, because of the distance, you know, like if you flew like into Yugoslavia, or, those were short, they were maybe 500 miles.

But some of missions we went to Stettin, (?) Poland. Then we flew into Germany. And those were long flights, so you would get credit for two missions, but they would take you a long time.

Was there any kind of rule that if you flew so many missions you didn't have to fly anymore?

No, no, no. Well, Yes, if you flew fifty missions like I did, Yes, that's how I got it. I left there, and I think the war was still going on pretty bad, but from there, I, you know, we were shot down. I went to Bari, Italy and from Bari. I flew a few more missions. And then when I got done, then I went to France. And then I put on a-- they wanted me to go on a mission as a what do they call those?

Dorothy: Bond rallies.

Bond rallies, you know, where they try to raise money.

Yes.

And they wanted me to go on a plane, on one of the B-17s that--

Dorothy: was shot down.

Returned, was shot down, and returned. And they were going to put me on that, you know, to go touring, but I didn't want to fly anymore at that time. I said, "I am running out of time."

Dorothy: Well, tell them when you were shot down. Describe what happened.

Richard: Was that November 16th of that year? From what I see here, it said Yugoslavia. What was that the date then? (Richard is Mr. Rogala's son and also participated in the interview).

Yes

Richard: That was your 36th mission actually, which was classified 51. That was your last one, obviously, but it was November 16th.

Dorothy: Tell them how you were shot down and then you had to find your way back to Italy.

I was shot down, and let's see now, I've got to put this together. We were shot down and then it was in, what was that?

Dorothy: An olive garden.

An olive garden, and the people from Tito's partisans came and surrounded the plane. They were very, very friendly. And they looked at the plane. They looked at the rear end of the plane where I was standing next to, and they couldn't believe that I made it without getting hurt. And what

happened is the plane was hit above, but right behind me, and it was-- that was torn off and the bottom where I was kneeling. You know in the tail position you had to fly on your knees, you know, and that area was damaged also. But they had a metal, what do they call those, protecting that area metal? And a good thing I didn't get hit! They couldn't believe that I flew and made it there.

So the plane was able to land?

It was forced down, Yes. We couldn't-- we were planning on going maybe to what was it? Sweden or one of those countries. But we couldn't get that far, and we went down over there. We couldn't even make it to Italy.

So you were shot at by German planes, or ground artillery, or?

We were shot down by flak. And there was, oh, once you got close to any target, you were surrounded by flak. What they call these missiles, or whatever, were shot from the ground level and they surrounded-- the fighter planes would be coming in at you. It was everything all at one time. And you had to fight back with your guns, you know, to try to shoot them down and--

Do you remember when you fired the guns for the first time in the air?

Oh, Yes. That was memorable.

At one time we were shot down so bad, and then those-- I remember, Tuskegee

Dorothy: Airmen.

Airmen.

Black pilots, pilots.

At that time, they were, they had a fighter group, and they protected us. If it wasn't for them, we would never have made it to the base.

Yes.

Dorothy: They were all black men, the Tuskegee Airmen.

Yes, they have a great record

Dorothy: Yes.

of protecting the bombers in the air.

Dorothy: Right. Yes.

And they-- if it wasn't for them and, basically the way I was there, almost every two days or so, I didn't know where I was going, whether I was coming back, because a lot of these, you had, you knew friends, people, and all that, and you would go in the morning, and if you were lucky enough, get back, but then some of these people would not come back. They just disappeared. Like our crew, Yes, the rest of our crew, you know.

When you were forced down by the flak

Yes?

in Yugoslavia, was anybody, did all the crew make it out of that, or was anybody--

Well, we all went down. But from there, we went down, and of course we met, and they took us to one of the towns there. And they took us in, and we stayed there for a couple of days. But we met some-- I mean, being me, I was basically no one, but the pilots and all that, they were, what do you call that, they were quizzed, and all that, by the--

Richard: Interrogation.

They treated us real nice. They gave us a-- little, from where we were to this little town there. They had escorted us, you know, and then we stayed there for a couple of days. They fed us and all that. And then they-- that was the last I saw of the crew, more or less, because they, somehow, being ranked, you know, like lieutenants and all that, they, more or less, went their way. And we went our way.

Dorothy: Did you have to find a way to get back to Italy? Tell them that story.

Yes, how did you get back from--

Finally, I got onto a fishing boat, got away, and that was just off the island there, and we took that, and we went to--

Dorothy: How many people, just you, or somebody else?

No, that was where I got more or less separated from the crew. After that, I didn't see any of them. I don't know what happened to them, but I know that was the last time where I saw the pilot and, of course, the navigator. He was shot down before that, you know. He went on a mission. We never heard what happened to them or anything.

So did you have to make your way back to on that?

Yes. We got on that boat and we went to Bari, Italy. And going there, you were on a small fishing boat, and I was the only one from the crew that was on it. And when we got there, there was guns being fired. You know, it was the war was going on. People, and they told me to get out of the area, go somewhere, you know. So then I went, more or less, into the hills or whatever

you want to call that. Then, finally, someone picked me up. And they drove me back to the base. But anything could have happened. And it was unbelievable that you would be going through all this every day not knowing what the next day was going to be like.

The stress, even for a young person who is pretty resilient, the stress has got to get to you after a while, I would guess.

And, you know, being like that every day. You were waiting, get up, and you never knew where you were going. You get up at four in the morning. Then you would be told to go to a, what do they call that area?

Dorothy: Holding area.

And where they make the assignments of what you are going to be doing that day and that's how we found out, you know. From day to day, you never knew where you were going.

So did you fly more missions after you were in Yugoslavia?

Oh, yes.

But with a different crew? Was it a different crew?

Every day after that, they would assign me, being a tail gunner at that time, being a tail gunner, I think there were only about 20 percent of the tail gunners would make it to come back to the States, and I, you know, so that was the way it was. You, from day to day, you never knew. Because you were a tail gunner you were-- they needed a lot more, so you were assigned to a different crew, you know, whoever needed a pilot, I mean a tail gunner, and that's the way I had to wait.

And then when you were, when you folks were hit in Yugoslavia, when you first got hit, you must have thought, this is a bad situation!

Yes.

I wonder what's going on!

Yes.

You start saying your prayers or something. Or, right, I mean, it must have been

Oh, when I was in--

frightening!

When I was in Yugoslavia, those people were out of this world. And then they made up their minds they were going to take care of us, take care of me. And they finally got a boat,

Yes.

put me on a boat.

And then you were able to go back up in the air after that without any fears.

A couple of days later, I was flying again. It was rough.

How did you do it? I'm amazed.

I don't know. It was rough, you know, being more like an individual, because every day you were assigned to a different crew.

Yes.

The crew I was on, I don't know whatever happened to them.

Wow.

Because when we were in Yugoslavia, you know, they separated me from them, you know. I was sent on the, to get on that boat, you know, and I was the only one. And it was something horrible. I think someone paid, I don't know, gave them something to bring me to Bari. But I was the only one from the crew.

What an experience.

And then, when I think about it, you know, people were being, shooting at one another. It was actually-- a war going on.

Yes, a war going on.

Did your parents know that you had been shot down?

Oh, Yes, they knew that.

They must have been worried sick to death.

Yes. I would write, you know, write letters. Well, even like myself when I went into the Service, there were a few people that I knew. And we would correspond. We would send letters. But, then all of a sudden, you know, some of them went to England. Some went somewhere else. And, all of a sudden, no more letters. Something happened to them, you know.

It was rough. From day to day, you didn't know whether you were here, or there, or where.

Dorothy: Okay, now for the humorous side, he sang in the USO!

Oh, that was--

That is a question on here. How did--

Dorothy: Yes.

the soldiers entertain themselves when off duty? Did you have USO shows?

Dorothy: Yes.

Did you have famous entertainers? What did you do when you were on leave or travel?

I tried, but--

Dorothy: You sang in the USO.

Yes. That was a one time deal.

Dorothy: And then you saw a lot of celebrities, right? You saw a lot of movie stars and all that?

That was-- That was in California.

Dorothy: Oh, in California.

I think so.

I thought you said it was in Italy. You didn't see movie stars?

You're right.

Dorothy: You were in a USO in Italy.

Yes. They used to have these, you know, they had entertainers. I forget at that time who the heck was there. Was one--

Dorothy: Did you see Bob Hope?

I was just going to say Bob Hope.

Dorothy: Yes. He saw Bob Hope!

But, at that time, we used to have groups of people that would entertain, you know, the people in the Service.

It must have helped.

Dorothy: Yes.

Oh, yes, it helped a lot.

Dorothy: What movie stars did you see?

I don't remember now. There were so many.

Dorothy: Yes.

But that was it.

Were there any other-- can you recall anything else that was memorable, or funny, or--

What?

Was there anything funny that happened, or something strange?

No.

Do you find yourself still thinking about it at an odd time, like, oh, Yes, wonder how that happened?

Well, the only thing I remember a lot was when they informed me that, because I wanted to be in the Service and become a pilot,

A pilot.

and when they told me that I would not be able to, and all this and that. It means nothing to me.

That hurt.

But I always wanted to be a pilot.

So your-- this morning, you brought in some of your medals, the medals that you received, right? We probably should read some of this into the record. So, you have, you got on this 301 bomb group, the framed collection here of the medals.

See, this is the medal here. (Scan of framed medals collection appears in Appendix)

Which one is that?

These are the, what do they call those?

Dorothy: Cluster.

Cluster there.

That says what? Sharpshooter, carbine, submachine gun, and then this one says rifle.

Yes, those were when I was going through gunnery school, and I got them.

And then this patch means that you are in-- the triangular patch with the bomb, what does that mean?

You know, you get one of those when you were flying, you know, with bomb runs. And they had these for you to put on your--

And then this?

See, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, Naples, that's where I went.

Join the Air Force and see the world, huh?

Huh? Yes, I guess so.

Sorta--

And then up here, these are?

Those are-- medals, I forget what those are now.

And there's clusters up here, right? Are these oak leaves?

Yes.

Up here on the bars.

Yes.

And this is a handsome medal here. This is the Air--

Yes.

That is the Air medal.

The aerial gunnery, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Yes. So, you fly fifty missions?

Yes.

So, you've reached the limit then?

Yes. I went all the way.

All the way.

You must have been delighted when the war was over.

No, the war was still going on.

But were you-- You must have been happy, though, when the war did end.

The what--

Dorothy: Yes. You were happy when the war ended.

Oh, yes! Oh, yes!

Dorothy: Because he might have been sent to the other side of Japan.

They were, at that time the war was still going on, and it was going on with the Japanese, and they were planning on taking me and putting me to go on a B-29.

On a mission?

On a mission, yes.

Even though you already did your fifty?

Yes. They were planning to assign me to a crew to go on a mission to --

Dorothy: Japan.

Even though you already did your fifty

Dorothy: Yes. They were planning it.

Wow.

There was still another war going with the Japanese.

Yes.

And they were going to put me on a crew to, you know, to fly missions up there. And I'm glad that didn't happen!

Richard: Why didn't it happen? The war ended?

Dorothy: Yes.

The what?

Richard: Why didn't it happen?

Dorothy: Because the war ended with Japan?

That's right, Yes.

Richard: Okay.

Dorothy: The war ended, right?

That was when the war was, August.

August.

Dorothy: We sent out-- the man was ninety-two years, from the Enola Gay, that threw the bomb. He died.

He just died.

Dorothy: He just died a day or two ago.

Mr. Tibbets, I think.

Dorothy: Yes. And they said that the Enola Gay, that was his mother's name. I didn't know that. I read that in the paper.

That was just the time where they bombed.

Dorothy: And they dropped the bomb on Hiroshima.

Yes.

It was the atomic bomb.

Yes.

Dorothy: They killed so many people, and they asked him if he--

But I was there when the war was at its peak, you know.

Dorothy: '43. '44. It was at its peak with the Americans there.

'43, '44, '45 were the big years. '43 was just before the war really got started, the invasion of France, and the invasion of Africa. And that's the way it went.

So when the war ends and you came back to Chicago, did you have a-- how did it feel to be a civilian again?

Oh, when I got back--

Dorothy: No, they sent him to Truax Field in Madison. No, you were in California for a while for R & R, right?

When I got back, they put me on a-- I didn't want to fly back on that mission, you know, on that, so I told them no. So, then I waited about a week or two, then, finally, they got me on a boat to come back. On a boat, it was not a military-- it was, I don't know if it was run by the government, or what. But, anyway, I came back, and it took almost two weeks.

To cross the Atlantic?

Yes, because of the, what do you call it, you had submarines?

Yes.

And you had to avoid everything.

Richard: They didn't have any celebrity troops flying at that time

No. Well--

Richard: to take you across.

They wanted to assign me to a plane to put me on, what do they call that?

Dorothy: Selling bonds

I turned them down. I told them no, enough of that.

So, then, I was on that fishing boat, and then it took a while to get to New York, and the thing that I remember distinctly, and I couldn't believe it, was the Statue of Liberty.

Yes.

Oh, was she pretty!

And from there, we went to-- I forget where it was, and what we had-- I had.

Dorothy: You went to California for R & R, I know you told me.

I had a terrific, when I got to, I think it was New Jersey or somewhere around there, it was unbelievable. Any kind of food you wanted. It was all made. Help yourself. Eat all you want. You couldn't believe it, how they fed us!

Dorothy: In California, you fell off a horse.

Oh well, that was--Yes. But it was, it's true.

Dorothy: Yes, (Laughing) He went to California on R & R, and he fell off a horse, right?

Yes. That was at the time, I think, when I was-- they were going to get me ready for going to

Dorothy: Japan.

Japan, yes, but I was, more or less, you know, being a tail gunner, they would have assigned me. You go here today, and the next day you go there. What's that guy that they flew, entertaining the troops?

Dorothy: Bob Hope.

No, not Bob Hope, somebody else. And they took off and nobody ever heard of him.

Dorothy: Oh, Glenn Miller.

Glenn Miller.

Dorothy: Glenn Miller's band.

I don't know if you remember?

Oh, Yes.

Dorothy: And they don't know what happened. To this day, they don't know what happened to him.

They took off, and they never heard--

Dorothy: They never heard from him again.

Richard: Yes. So, what happened now with California?

Dorothy: Yes. Tell them.

Richard: You went to California, and you were there, so when the war ended, and you were shipped back here--

The war ended in '45. No, '46. '45.

Dorothy: '45.

Richard: Well, what happened? I mean, you were in California. Was that where the last place you were in the Service?

I think that was. You know, where I went from there, I went to Wisconsin.

Dorothy: Truax Field, Madison, Wisconsin.

Richard: Okay, so you went from California to Madison?

Yes.

Richard: What the heck did you go there for?

Dorothy: He was getting mustered out.

Richard: Oh, that's where you get released.

Dorothy: Yes.

Yes. Yes.

Richard: Because the war was over.

Dorothy: Yes.

Richard: So, the war was over. You were in California--

Dorothy: Right.

Richard: when they dropped the bombs in Japan?

Dorothy: Yes.

Richard: Right.

Dorothy: I don't know.

I don't remember now.

Richard: Yes, well, it must have been, and then based on what you are saying here. And then when the war was over, though, they sent you to be checked out.

Dorothy: To be checked out, and that was October. And I met him, prior to that, he was still in the Service. I met him in June of '46, no, '45.

He was in his uniform when you met him?

Dorothy: Yes. That was-- that was--

Where did you meet him?

Dorothy: At a dance.

Where was the dance?

The dance was at Helene Curtis on North Avenue. And my girlfriend's mother worked for Helene Curtis, and we went to a dance. And I was eighteen.

Richard: That's Wal-Mart now, that's Super Wal-Mart with all the--

You were eighteen?

Dorothy: Yes, and I liked men in uniform.

Richard: You should go back there. You could go shopping at that Wal-Mart. That's the Super Wal-Mart where they had all that commotion about--

Dorothy: Yes, I know.

Richard: About building it or not building it.

Is that North Avenue and Pulaski or someplace?

Richard: North Avenue and Kostner.

Kostner.

Richard: That's where Helene Curtis, I remember, going by.

Dorothy: And then the funniest part of it is I went to Carl Schurz High School.

Oh, the Bulldogs, yes.

Dorothy: Yes, and I went-- I had-- And, in my class, was a girl, Albina Welch, and he was writing to her.

All during the war.

Dorothy: During the war.

Overseas.

Dorothy: And she said, "I can't go to the prom, because my boyfriend's in Service." Little did I know that was going to be my husband! And I met him at this dance, and I showed some of my friends, you know, his picture, and they said, "Oh, my God, that's Albina's boyfriend!"

Richard: What happened to Albina?

Dorothy: I don't know.

I don't know what happened.

Dorothy: And, so, then, what was that? Oh, then, he made a date with me. He took me home from the dance. We had to go on a streetcar, because he didn't have a car at that time. We went on the streetcar. He took me home. He made a date to see me in a week or two. And his sister called me saying that he can't make it. And then I was all upset, and I started praying. I worked at St. Anne's Hospital.

Oh. Yes.

And every day I'd go to the chapel, and I'd pray that I'd get a letter from him. And I got a letter from him saying that he had to go back to muster out. But he was going to see me then. On top of it, I had a cousin that was a sergeant in the Army. He said, "Oh, you know, those servicemen, they're here today, and gone tomorrow!" I started crying.

Richard: Oh, so he basically came from California back home for a short period?

Dorothy: Truax Field

Richard: And then mustered out in--

Dorothy: Yes, and then Field. He would come home every week.

Richard: That was later. First, you were home for a while?

Yes.

Dorothy: And from Truax Field, Wisconsin, Madison, he used to come home almost every week, because of, you know, it was close. He would get a ride from somebody, and he would come home. But he had to go back.

Richard: Oh. Okay.

So you were married the following year, then?

Yes. Yes. '46.

But I remember, when I was at Madison there, the people, I guess they were, more or less, drafting these guys into the Service, but they were pointing their fingers and couldn't believe that I, at my age, had fifty missions already. You know, they were treating me as a-- they couldn't believe it that someone, you know. But it was like a, I don't know whether they were drafting them or-- but they were going into the Service.

Yes.

Richard: But that was after the war, already.

Well that's--

Richard: Transit.

Like I went to `Frisco.

Richard: Transit. People, for where you wait for assignments.

Dorothy: Where were you mustered out? I forgot.

Richard: It was Treasure Isle, San Francisco.

Dorothy: Oh, San Francisco. You went home.

Yes.

Dorothy: I thought it was Great Lakes.

Richard: No, that was where I was on, where I did my duty before. Boot camp.

Dorothy: Boot camp.

So, in Chicago then, you mentioned before the war that, you mentioned that the war interrupted your plans for college. Did you use the GI bill?

Dorothy: No. He got married.

No. I remember, from there, I went to, you know, like I told you, to, I saw the Statue of Liberty. And then I went to this place for a few days, and then they sent me home. And at that time, of course, you had to take the train, because flying was limited. And so they sent me, from there, they sent me to this area by North Chicago.

Richard: Great Lakes.

Great Lakes.

Dorothy: No, not Great Lakes. Fort Sheridan.

Fort Sheridan.

And then from there, I went on a-- I had to get home. We had no transportation. So, from there, I went to, what's that lake?

Dorothy: I don't know.

But anyway--

Dorothy: What lake?

But, anyway, from there, I had to take a street--

Dorothy: Lake Michigan?

Streetcar. Not a streetcar, but something, to Chicago. Downtown, from there, I took a train and went home to where I lived, 4300 Thomas Street. And walked, I got there, and then I walked up the stairs. My sister was home. And she said, "What are you doing here?" She couldn't believe it, you know, because I never knew where I was going. And I wound up where I was at home. And I got home, it was Christmas Eve at that time, just for the holidays.

Dorothy: I can't--Isn't that funny!

Richard: I got home Christmas Eve, too. (Mr. Rogala's son is referring here to his release in 1968 by the North Koreans who had captured the USS Pueblo and its crew. His interview can also be read in the VHP collection)

Wow. Yes.

Dorothy: I'll never forget the Mass. We went to church when we got to San Diego when he was released. And we had Mass. Catholic Mass in a, it was in a room where all the big, big shots, you know, like the lieutenants and all that, they used to gather there. And they had Mass there, and they had one place they were having the Mass. And, the next place, they had a bar.

Richard: They used the table right in--

Dorothy: Yes.

Richard: the middle of the bar.

Dorothy: And then the next day, we had a feast. The Navy put on a feast for all the families, and they had everything from soup to nuts. And then we gathered with all the Pueblo crew. And my daughter was sixteen at the time. She had the life of Riley with all the men, all the Pueblo men. And, oh, and then, my other son was in Service, too. And they didn't take him.

Richard: At the same time.

Dorothy: Yes, at the same time. Because they didn't take him. He said, "Ma, don't stop me!" His brother was missing, and he was going in, I was falling apart here. So, they didn't take him overseas, because I wrote a letter. I said, "My one son is missing. Don't take another one away from me!" So, he stayed in San Diego, and he was in the Navy Air. He was in the Navy Air and, so--

Richard: Yes, he was supposed to go.

Dorothy: So, when we came to San Diego, we all joined in, the family, and they gave us-- the Navy. First time I ever was on a plane. I was forty years old. They escorted me down the ramp, United Airlines. When we got to San Diego, we had to hide from the reporters. We had to go the other way, because they were on our necks. And then we all had a reunion, a friendly reunion. My daughter was sixteen, and my other son was, how old was Larry, twenty?

Richard: I was twenty-one, so he was twenty.

Dorothy: They were a year apart. They were like almost twins, brothers.

Richard: Yes. I guess Larry was supposed to go aboard the Kersage. But then it got cancelled. His orders got cancelled.

Dorothy: But I thought he had a lot of courage to go in when his brother was missing. And my son-in-law, too, served in the Army Air Reserves. No, Army Reserves. But he didn't go overseas. Mark was my son-in-law, my daughter's husband. He went in, but he had to go for like every week or, you know, to Reserves to do the things that they used to go on. But he didn't go overseas. He just stayed stateside.

So, Mr. Rogala, did you get married just right after the war?

Yes. Right.

So was it easy to get a job then?

Well, it was difficult, being--

Dorothy: He worked at Florsheim Shoe Company.

Being young, you know. So the first job I got was over at--

Dorothy: Florsheim Shoe.

No.

Dorothy: No?

It was at North Avenue.

International Harvester.

Yes. North Avenue and what's that other street, way down west ?

Dorothy: I don't know.

All the way down west, they had that big-- they were building bombers in that location, so I went there and I got a job. But there was too much travel time between where I lived and going all the way out there, so I quit. And then from there, I went and worked for Florsheim Shoe, but I didn't like that job either. But there was nothing available.

Dorothy: Then, my father, I knew he was very good in drafting, you know, he was articulate with all that drafting stuff, so I pulled out all that material, and I gave it to my father. My father was a salesman. He traveled all Chicago, and he knew the places. So, he got him a job at Delta Star. Delta Star, right?

Yes. Electric.

Dorothy: And he started as a draftsman, because I gave him the material for him to show. And they liked it. They liked what they saw, and they started him with on-the-job training. And he didn't make much money at the time, but he was they were training him.

No. But I stayed there and--

Dorothy: He stayed there thirty-five years.

And I worked my way up to where I had people working for me.

Dorothy: He was a design engineer.

I used to design equipment for power plants from, you know, like Florida Power, or the one we have here in Wisconsin. But, anyway, they, let's see, what was it?

Dorothy: He worked there for thirty-five years. And then they closed the door. And then at age fifty-eight, he had to stop.

I was designing the equipment from the generator to the main power transformers. To design it, you know, and, at that time, I had a terrific memory, you know. I could-- I had when I built that stuff, someone would ask me a question when they were assembling it. "Where does this go?" That's all I would do is, "It goes over here." I had-- I could remember. I didn't need no books or nothing!

Dorothy: He traveled, too, you know, he traveled to Florida.

But I worked my way.

In a plane?

Dorothy: No, no, no.

In a plane?

Dorothy: Oh. Yes, a plane. Yes, he traveled in a plane, yes. You traveled when you were--

Oh, yes.

Yes.

Dorothy: Traveled in a plane, yes.

Going to all these places.

Yes.

Dorothy: And he loved flying, even after all that experience. Even to this day, he loves flying.

Richard: Is that why you are looking forward to the 15th, you're going to fly?

I'm going to Florida.

Oh, good, good.

See, this is this page, and the next page.

Yes. Mr. Rogala is showing me, this is a notebook

Yes.

that he carried with him through the war.

That--

And it has a lot of

That came from Italy.

the details. So, is this s-slash-sergeant, does that indicate staff sergeant or--

Yes.

Staff sergeant.

Staff sergeant, when he got out, Yes.

Dorothy: He was sergeant.

"The roughest mission was on a--." Could you read this into the record, right there?

"The roughest mission was on August the 27th, Mission number 21, over Blechhammer ("Black Hammer"), Germany, site of oil storage. We had a lot of fighters and flak on the way in and next to the target. And on the way back from the target area, we were forced down over Yugoslavia. From there, we came back to Bari, Italy, by fishing boat.

And that's the time you met--

Yes.

Tito and the partisans.

Right.

Partisans or whatever, Yes.

Dorothy: It was good he had that book. Because you would never remember all that now.

No.

Dorothy: You know, it was good thing you had that written down.

Yes.

Dorothy: You'd never remember that now.

That's true.

Dorothy: Yes. That's priceless.

It is. All the destinations and the numbers. What does that say?

"Finished."

Dorothy: "Finished." Finished. Kaput.

This bombing on November the 16th,

Dorothy: It was kaput this week.

Mission number 51, troop concentration in Yugoslavia, and that's when all the missions were over with.

Good for you.

Yes.

Did you-- Could you have a beer when you got out after that trip, or something?

Dorothy: Believe it or not, he didn't drink!

He didn't drink? Okay.

Dorothy: He sold his beer and cigarettes.

When I was in the Service, when we were in Europe when I was with the rest of the people, I was very popular, because every week you would get six beers that you could buy, six beers, you know. And, of course, at that time, I didn't drink. So, I would sell my beers to these-- they would fight over it. And I would get their Coke, or whatever refreshment they had, and they would give that to me. And I'd give them the beer and--

Richard: How much did you make?

Huh?

Richard: How much did you make on each beer?

Dorothy: A couple thousand, he made.

No, at that time--

Dorothy: You said you sent your mother home a couple thousand dollars.

Well, I don't remember. But, every week, you know, these guys, well, I don't blame them, you know. And then, of course, I used to play a lot of dice.

Dorothy: Dice.

Gamble.

Dorothy: Did you play cards too?

No, I didn't.

Dorothy: No?

Richard: How long did it all start then after that, where you started doing all that? Because then he started drinking. He started playing cards. He did all that stuff. Made up for lost time. He played around.

Dorothy: With the family. With the family get-together. His mother loved to play cards.

Oh, we used to play until four in the morning. When I got home--

Richard: All evening. All, you know, Sunday night.

Dorothy: The whole family.

Sunday evening.

Pinochle or?

Pinochle was the big--.

Family. Pinochle.

Those games with pinochle.

Richard: On Sunday nights, they'd play like until nine or ten o'clock in the evening. You know, we were all going to work in the morning. But that's how much they loved it. They played Friday, or Saturday, Sunday.

So you, when you came back from the war and you were married and getting a job, did you-- you didn't have time to-- for veterans' groups, or reunions, or things like that, or--

Dorothy: No.

No.

Dorothy: Oh, yes, he did belong to a Polish organization for a while until it folded up. It was a Polish veterans.' And the kids were little. We used to go to their Christmas party. But it folded up shortly, right? It wasn't in existence too long. That was the only thing. Do you remember that?

Richard: Not at all.

Dorothy: Not at all. You were little at the time. You were small, and we used to take you to these Christmas parties with Santa Claus.

As we approach the end of the interview, we always ask the question, how do you think being in the Service and having those experiences affected your life?

Well, I think it helped my life a lot, you know, because I was, in a way, I was in like a hardship, being in the Service. But, then, now, when I got out, I always liked the family, liked to be with the family and stuff like that. But I worked for the company so many years, and the things I did, I think, had a lot tied into it, you know.

Dorothy: A lot of discipline. The Service disciplined them, ordered them a lot.

Richard: Well, hardship. It was a--

Dorothy: It was hard.

A sense of accomplishment that you can-- a sense of accomplishment.

Yes.

Dorothy: Yes.

You can look back on and derive strength from.

Yes.

Dorothy: Right.

If I handled this, I could probably design that generator, or whatever, Yes.

Design, being a design engineer, they couldn't believe that I--

Dorothy: They couldn't believe he didn't have college.

That I didn't have the education to do that type of work. People, I had people working for me that had college, graduates.

Yes.

And they couldn't-- Without me, they wouldn't be able to do the work.

Yes.

And that's a fact. I'm not--

That's the high IQ.

Dorothy: Yes.

That's the high IQ.

Dorothy: That's the high IQ, yes. He had a high IQ, yes.

Do you think your military experience influenced your thinking about war or about the military in general?

Well, I don't know. That's, I--

Dorothy: We don't believe in the Iraq war.

I don't believe in wars, no. What they are doing in Iraq or--

Dorothy: Yes. I think we're against that.

That is a mistake.

Dorothy: They should never have went in there.

It's your man, Bush.

Well, sometimes, people, when they are in office, they think they have to act presidential. And it's not, maybe not, what people were thinking, when they were thinking about him before. I don't know.

Richard: And see his appropriations for-- he claims that the amount that they are giving the veterans, he's jacked that number way up.

I don't know what they are doing there.

Richard: Way up. I know. I know.

Dorothy: I still think they're lacking--

Richard: He's given a lot to veterans, though. More than other presidents.

Dorothy: I think they're lacking in the medical field, in--Where you go to the VA hospitals, they're lacking.

Yes.

Dorothy: They're not equipped for all these people coming back with mental health problems. They're not equipped for that.

I think they're going to do a better job, though.

Dorothy: I hope so.

I hope so. Yes.

It's just too bad, Yes. I was reading, my aunt sends me these papers from England. And it's the same thing with their soldiers coming back. They're not prepared. They're not prepared to handle these problems. There are a number of them, and they're on a much smaller scale, but--

But I remember, when years ago in the VA, you walked in the building, whatever you wanted to do, you wanted to eat a doughnut, or coffee, or whatever it was, they didn't charge you for it. Now, you go in there, they have these slot machines.

Dorothy: Slot machines.

Basically--

Richard: Slot machines.

Vending machines, probably.

They rip you off, no matter what.

Richard: Slot Machines.

Nothing for nothing. You have to pay for it. You wanted to get glasses, you know, pay for it, you know.

Reading glasses.

Dorothy: This year, they said, "We'll give you a prescription, but no glasses." So what good does that do? They denied him glasses, a man that served fifty-one missions, served the country, and then they denied him glasses.

Richard: It's not like it used to be, in other words. Category 7 and 8, or something like that, those veterans lost a lot of their benefits recently. That's what he's talking about.

Dorothy: Yes.

Richard: I mean, for me, it's just the opposite, because I'm a 3 with the POW status. But with him not having any history, see, he didn't go to the VA and go to the hospitals

Yes

for a lot of years after. I started going as soon as I could start going, because I had these issues. So, once we became POWs, like 20 years after they didn't recognize us, so I didn't go for a long time, either. But once they did, then I started going, you know, whereas he didn't. And then the two of us started going, and he was getting real good care. But then they started cutting back at the, you know, top end, you know, the 7 and 8 category, but you still got the medicine benefit.

Dorothy: The medicine benefit.

Richard: You had to pay a small amount.

Dorothy: Yes.

Richard: So, that's helpful.

Dorothy: Yes.

Richard: And he could see a doctor. And that--

Dorothy: Once a year.

Richard: There's still the benefits there, but there's not as good as-- there are a few things that are not like they used to be, but--

Dorothy: Yes, the old gray mare ain't what she used to be.

The old gray mare!

Mr. Rogala, is there anything you want to add to the interview at this time

No.

that we didn't cover?

I don't think so. I do have a nice family.

Yes.

My two sons and my daughter, they're very nice people.

Dorothy: We're fortunate in raising our kids.

And, for sixty-one years, I have a wife, a very good wife, so I'm happy with that.

Richard: Tell him what you said yesterday.

Dorothy: Thank you.

Thank you for coming in and donating your memoir of service and for sharing your wonderful family with us for the purposes of this project. Thank you.

Reader's Note:

In the following appendix you will find these scans of photos and documents which illustrate Mr. Rogala's memoir of service:

- Individual photographs of Mr. Rogala in uniform
- Basic training group photo
- 2 pictures of Mr. Rogala with his B-17 crew in Gulfport, Mississippi
- Picture of B-17 Crews 4379, 4380, 4381
- Mr. Rogala's "Enlisted Record and Report of Separation Honorable Discharge"

- Mr. Rogala's "Separation Qualification Record"
- Certificate of Honorable Discharge from U. S. Army, Air Corps, 10 October 1945, Truax Field, Madison, Wisconsin
- Scan of mounted and framed collection of Mr. Rogala's medals
- Pictures of B-17 at Palwaukee Airport, July 28, 2001

The website http://www.efilarchives.org/collections/sabihon_biography.htm of the Filipino Digital Archives and History Center of Hawaii. links to a biography of Mr. Rogala's original pilot, Lieutenant Stanley M. Sabihon. Entitled Hope of Survival and written by G. Pz. Petilos, it can be accessed at <http://www.efilarchives.org/collections/sabihon%20files/hopeofsurvival-3.pdf> The online version of the book in pdf format contains two references to Mr. Rogala. He is mentioned by name on pages 445-446, or screens 16 and 17, and again on p.508 or screen 48. This valuable supplementary source was identified by Joel Hahn, the Head Cataloger of the Niles Public Library in his accessioning of this transcript. Mr. Hahn also found the references made by Mr. Petilos to Mr. Rogala.

More information on the Tuskegee Airmen cited by Mr. Rogala as saving many bomber crews over Europe is available at this web site:

http://www.pbs.org/wnet/aaworld/reference/articles/tuskegee_airmen.html

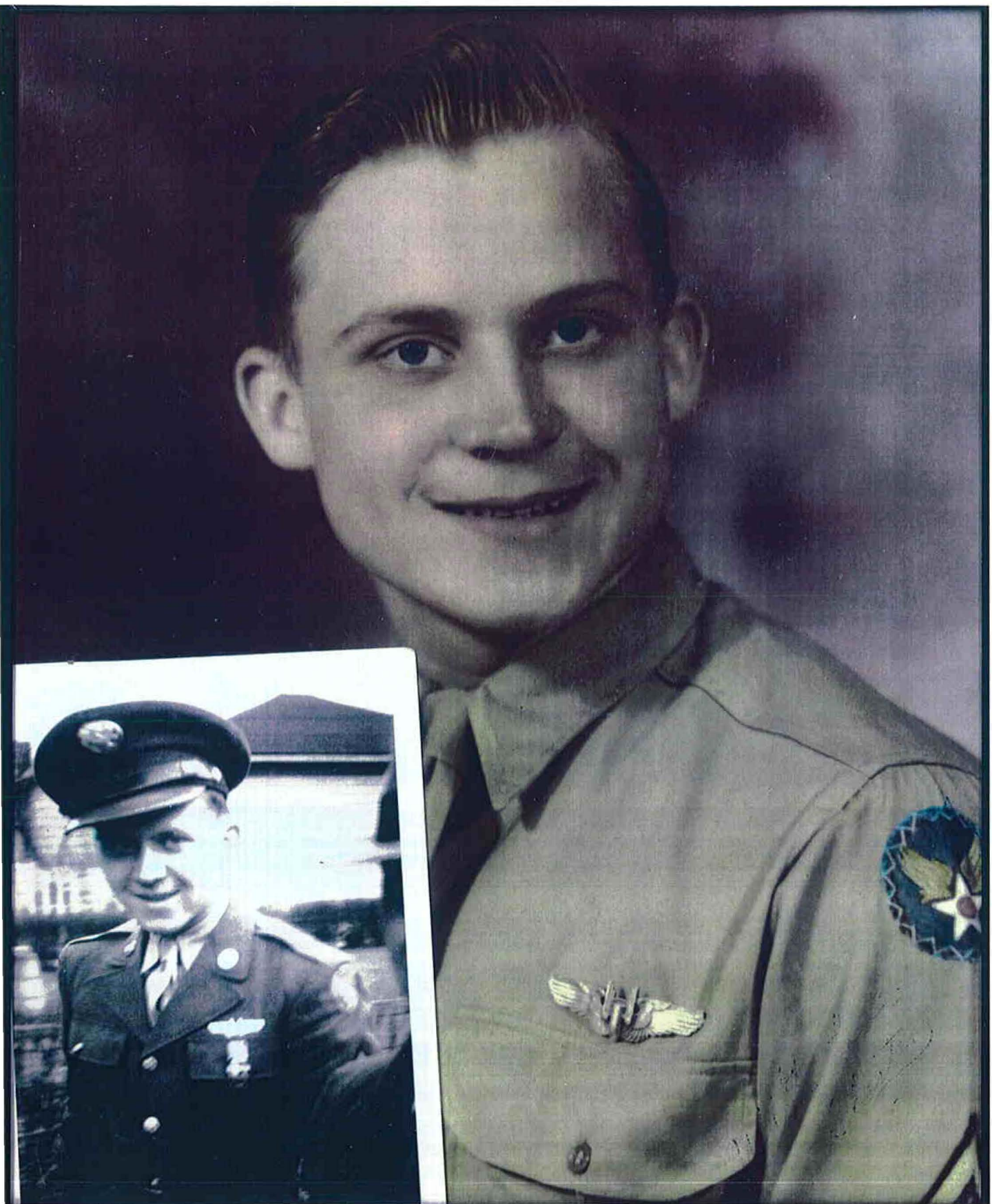
Basic Training



Scanned back of card reads,

“Third guy from the left, standing, is me
And next to me is Stan Glinka.
Hope you like it.”

Staff Sergeant Rogala's early and later pictures
while in the service.





B-17 flight crew in Gulfport, Mississippi with a watermelon. Mr. Rogala is standing in the second row, second from the left. The website <http://www.efilarchives.org/collections/sabihon%20files/hopeofsurvival-3.pdf> p. 442-443 (screen 15), which is based on the pilot's wartime experiences, provides interesting details surrounding the watermelon).



Mr. Rogala standing on far right in front of B-17 in Gulfport, Mississippi . The crew's pilot, Lt. Sabihon, stands first on the left.

B-17 Crews

Mr. Rogala is in lower right corner. At the time of picture he was most likely in Crew No. 4381.



Mr. Rogala's "Enlisted Record and Report of Separation"
and Honorable Discharge, noting his service in
5 "Battles and Campaigns."

ENLISTED RECORD AND REPORT OF SEPARATION											
HONORABLE DISCHARGE											
1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL ROGALA, CHESTER F				2. ARMY SERIAL NO.		3. GRADE S/SGT		4. ARM OR SERVICE AO		5. COMPONENT AUS	
6. ORGANIZATION 3503TH AAF BASE UNIT				7. DATE OF SEPARATION OCT 45		8. PLACE OF SEPARATION TRUAX FIELD SEPARATION BASE WISCONSIN					
9. PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES W THOMAS ST, CHICAGO, ILL				10. DATE OF BIRTH 7 JUNE 26		11. PLACE OF BIRTH CHICAGO, ILL					
12. ADDRESS FROM WHICH EMPLOYMENT WILL BE RESUMED SEE #9				13. COLOR EYES BLUE		14. COLOR HAIR BLOND		15. HEIGHT 5 8		16. WEIGHT 135 LBS	
17. NO. DEPEND.		18. U.S. CITIZEN		19. MARITAL STATUS		20. RACE		21. CIVILIAN OCCUPATION AND NO.			
0		X		X		X		STUDENT			
MILITARY HISTORY											
22. DATE OF INDUCTION 1 AUG 43			23. DATE OF ENLISTMENT SEPT 43			24. DATE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE CHICAGO, ILL			25. PLACE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE CHICAGO, ILL		
26. SELECTIVE SERVICE DATA X			27. LOCAL A. NUMBER #44			28. COUNTY AND STATE CHICAGO, ILL			29. HOME ADDRESS AT TIME OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE SEE #9		
30. MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY AND NO. AERIAL GUNNER 611						31. MILITARY QUALIFICATION AND DATE (If Infantry, aviation and marksmanship badges, etc.) GAUZE MKN					
32. BATTLES AND CAMPAIGNS ROME ARNO RHINELAND AIR COMBAT BALKANS SOUTHERN FRANCE NO APENNINES											
33. DECORATIONS AND CITATIONS AIR MEDAL G.O.#2731 HQ 15TH A.F. 21 AUG 44 WITH THREE O.L.C.											
34. WORKS RECEIVED IN ACTION NONE											
35. LATEST DEMONSTRATION DATES SEPT 43 SEPT 43 DEC 43						36. SERVICE OUTSIDE CONFIDENTIAL U. S. AND RETURN DATE OF DEPARTURE DESTINATION DATE OF ARRIVAL					
37. TOTAL LENGTH OF SERVICE 1 7 26 0 5 5						38. HIGHEST GRADE HELD S/SGT					
39. PRIOR SERVICE NONE						40. REASON AND AUTHORITY FOR SEPARATION CONVENIENCE OF GOVERNMENT RR1-1 (DEMOBILIZATION) AR 615-365 15 DEC 44					
41. SERVICE RECORDS ATTACHED AERIAL GUNNERY LAS VEGAS, NEV						42. EDUCATION (Years) 8 4 0					
PAY DATA											
43. LONGEVITY FOR PAY PURPOSES 2 MONTHS 21			44. INCENTIVE PAY 300			45. TRAVEL PAY 6.75			46. TOTAL AMOUNT. NAME OF DISBURSEMENT OFFICER 139.75 E V SPELLMAN CAPT AG		
INSURANCE NOTICE											
47. IF PREMIUM IS NOT PAID WHEN DUE OR WITHIN THIRTY-THREE DAYS THEREAFTER, INSURANCE WILL LAPSE. EXAMINER'S OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO THE TREASURER OF THE U. S. AND FORWARD TO COLLEGE OF SUBSISTENCE, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, WASHINGTON 25, D. C.											
48. KIND OF INSURANCE X		49. HOW PAID X		50. EXPIRATION DATE OF ALLOTMENT DISCONTINUOUS 30 SEPT 45		51. DATE OF NEXT PREMIUM DUE 31 OCT 45		52. PREMIUM DUE EACH MONTH 8.40		53. INTENTION OF VETERAN TO Continue	
54. REMARKS (This space for completion of above items or entry of other items specified in D. Directly) EUROPEAN AFRICAN MIDDLE EASTERN THEATER SERVICE MEDAL ONE LAPEL BUTTON ISSUED ASR SCORE (2 SEPT 45) 74 * CHOLERA AUG 44											
55. SIGNATURE OF PERSON BEING SEPARATED 1						56. PERSONNEL OFFICER (Type name, grade and organization - signature) NORMAN R BOEHMER 2ND LT AG ASSISTANT ADJUTANT					

WD AGO FORM 53-1
7 November 1944

This form supersedes all previous editions of
WD AGO Form 53 and 55 for enlisted persons
entitled to an Honorable Discharge, which
will not be used after receipt of this revision.

13625942
RECORDED
INDEXED
3711
R. O.

Mr. Rogala's "Separation Qualification Record," dated 10/10/1945
and noting his 50 missions flown as an aerial gunner.

ARMY SEPARATION QUALIFICATION RECORD															
NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL ROGALA, CHESTER F.				ARMY SERIAL NUMBER 1		GRADE 8/SGT		DATE OF ENTRY INTO SERVICE SEP 43		AGE 26		DATE OF BIRTH 7 JUNE 25			
PERMANENT ADDRESS FOR MAILING PURPOSES (Street and Number - City - County - State) W. THOMAS ST., CHICAGO, ILL.															
CIVILIAN EDUCATION															
HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED 12TH GRADE			LAST YEAR OF GRADUATION 1943		HIGHEST DEGREE RECEIVED		MAJOR COURSE OF STUDY VOCATIONAL			NAME AND ADDRESS OF LAST SCHOOL ATTENDED CHICAGO, ILL.					
OTHER TRAINING OR EDUCATION															
COURSE		NO. WKS.		COURSE		NO. WKS.		COURSE		NO. WKS.		COURSE			
SERVICE EDUCATION															
SERVICE SCHOOL LAS VEGAS, NEV.			COURSE AERIAL GUNNERY 6			INSTITUTION WHERE ENROLLED			ARMY SPECIALIZED TRAINING PROGRAM (COURSE OF TRAINING FORWARDED)			NO. OF YEARS 1		DETERMINED YES	
CIVILIAN OCCUPATIONS															
MAIN OCCUPATION (Typed) STUDENT VOCATIONAL							SECONDARY OCCUPATION (Typed) JOB SUMMARY								
SUMMARY OF MILITARY OCCUPATION AND CIVILIAN CONVERSIONS (Shown by title)															
AERIAL GUNNER ON B-17 IN ETO FLEW 50 MISSIONS.															
SUMMARY OF MILITARY OCCUPATION AND CIVILIAN CONVERSIONS (Shown by title)															
<p>* THIS INFORMATION BASED ON SOLDIER'S STATEMENT. (Indicate by * any item not supported by military records)</p> <p>DATE OF SEPARATION OCT 45</p> <p>SIGNATURE OF SOLDIER <i>[Signature]</i></p> <p>SIGNATURE OF SEPARATION CLASSIFICATION OFFICER <i>[Signature]</i></p>															



Honorable Discharge

This is to certify that

CHESTER F ROGALA STAFF SERGEANT
3508TH ARMY AIR FORCES BASE UNIT

Army of the United States

*is hereby Honorably Discharged from the military
service of the United States of America.*

*This certificate is awarded as a testimonial of Honest
and Faithful Service to this country.*

Given at

ARMY AIR FORCES SEPARATION BASE
TRUAX FIELD MADISON WISCONSIN

Date

OCTOBER 1945

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Robert H. Sommers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

ROBERT H. SOMMERS
MAJOR, AIR CORPS

Scan of mounted and framed collection of Mr. Rogala's medals.





B-17 on display in July of 2001 at Palwaukee Airport.
Mrs. Rogala stands near the tail gunner's combat position where her
husband served in 50 missions.

