



**Ralph
Snyder**

Army Air Corps

Ralph Snyder

Dec 1, 1918 - Jan 23, 1998

BIRTHPLACE: Dickinson County, KS

SOLDIER DETAILS

DIVISION: Army Air Corps, 487th Bomb Group (H)

THEATER OF OPERATION: European

SERVED: Dec 1, 1942 - Dec 16, 1965

HONORED BY: Ralph Snyder

BIOGRAPHY

I registered for the draft in Abilene, KS. Was employed in construction at Fort Riley. Got laid off; not much work in this area. So left for California in December of 1940. After a dish washing job in Los Angeles, I found a job working in a machine shop and manufacture of hydraulic controls in Burbank. I was drafted in December of 1942. Took a few written tests after arriving at Fort Leavenworth. They asked if I would object to going into the Air Corps branch. Went to Basic Training in Miami Beach. Shortly there after, I was transferred to Lowry Field, Colorado; took a training course in bomb sight - automatic pilot and armament, turrets and miscellaneous equipment. I was then interviewed by 5 commissioned officers and sent to Boca Raton, Florida for basic cadets; from there I went to New Haven, Conn. For ground corps officers training. Graduated from there about one year after I was drafted. I was shipped overseas aboard the British ship the 'Duchess of Bedford'. Landing in Scotland. We went by train south into England. Ending our journey at a town by the name of Laveeham. Shortly thereafter the bombers started arriving. The first 46 missions were in B-24s. We then converted to B-17, the re-training for both the air crews and ground personnel took a bit of effort, but was done without too many problems. The maintenance crews, parts supplies and air crews did an outstanding job during this transition. The Group flew their last mission on April 21, 1945; the 185th over Europe. The Group was operational a little less than one year and flew 185 missions. The Group led the Air Force on the largest mission that was flown; they lost (in combat) 232 members. We were to re-deploy throughout the United States; retraining in B-29s. I was to return to the United States on one of the aircraft, but I had the bad luck of coming down with pneumonia; landing in the hospital long enough to miss all flights back. I was taken to South Hampton to return to the United States; returning on the Queen Elizabeth liner. I had 30 days leave to return home and then went to Tampa, Florida to turn in the property book. I decided to end my service time. Then I didn't like how everything had shaped up in Germany and the Eastern Front, so decided to stay in the Reserves. I remained in the Reserves until December of 1965. I retired at the rank of Lt. Colonel.