

AVIATION WALL OF HONOR



First Lieutenant William E. Loewecke Bomber Pilot USAAF WWII Killed in Action

William E. Loewecke was born in Merrill, Wisconsin where his family lived briefly before moving to Michigamme. He lived there until 1940, when he enlisted in the army. After training at Air Force training facilities, he was commissioned as a Lieutenant and awarded his silver wings.

Initially stationed in England, Loewecke's plane was identified as one of a flight of Flying Fortresses that took part in an extremely successful raid on northern France on October 2, 1942. In this raid, the American bombers brought down 13 of Germany's prized Folke Wolfe 190 fighters without a single loss to themselves.

The next news his sister, Mrs. William Johnson of Ishpeming, received was of a grimmer nature. A telegram from the Italian Red Cross advised her that her brother's plane had been brought down by anti-aircraft fire over the city of Bizerte, Tunisia in North Africa. At first, hopes of his survival were raised when she received a letter from a fellow officer who expressed belief that Lieutenant Loewecke had come out of the accident safely. He said all of the bomber crew had parachuted out of the ship when it broke in two. Unfortunately, this information was followed by a letter from the War Department that he had died of his wounds on the day he was

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shot down. In the letter was the announcement that he had been posthumously awarded the Order of the Purple Heart.

He was the second of his family to lose his life on the North African front. His younger brother, Private Robert Loewecke, died of wounds he received in infantry action some weeks previously.

TJ Mudge, May 2004