

The Pilot Whose Bravery Saved Alresford From Disaster:

Robert Whitney Cogswell

18th August 1917 – 23rd October 1951

by

Glenn Gilbertson

Robert Whitney Cogswell was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on 18th August 1917. His father was Wesley Herbert Cogswell II, an Electrical Engineer born on Boston, MA and his mother was Emma Alberta née Raymond, born in Digby, Nova Scotia. His siblings were Raymond Herbert Cogswell (1911 – 2003), who served with the U.S. Army in Western Europe in WW2 as an Intelligence Officer and then worked for the Bell telephone Co. & Alice Christina Cogswell (1914 – 2006), who co-founded Animal War Relief and was a lifelong worker for animal welfare.

Information from Debra Raymond



Historic Pittsburgh (via www.pittnews.com)

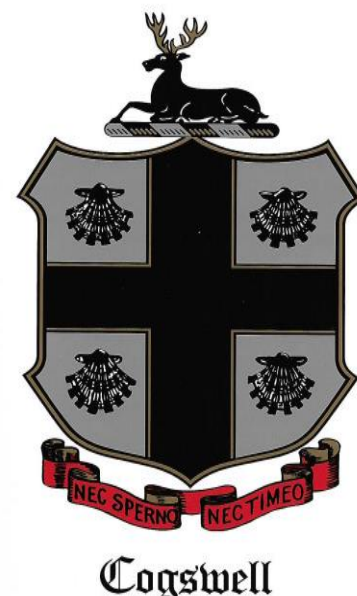
The Historic Cogswell Family

The Cogswell Arms and Crest

The Coat of Arms first appears in 1337 when it was granted to Sir John de Coggeshall, b. 1302, d. 1361, by King Edward III, who knighted Sir John in 1337. The Arms that Sir John chose were a cross between four escallops. The choice of a sable cross on a white or silver field is of great significance, denoting service in the Crusades (1092 -1297). From these dates it is certain that John himself did not see service, but that he was knighted during his term of duty as Sheriff of Essex and Hertfordshire and chose his arms in memory of an ancestor who was in Palestine – possibly Ralph Coggeshale who was at Jerusalem when that city was besieged by Saladin.

Motto: 'Nec Spero Nec Timeo' – 'I Neither Hope Nor Fear'.

(<https://www.cogswellfamily.org/crest.html>)



The ancestor of the American Cogswells

From <https://www.cogswellfamily.org/djc.html>:

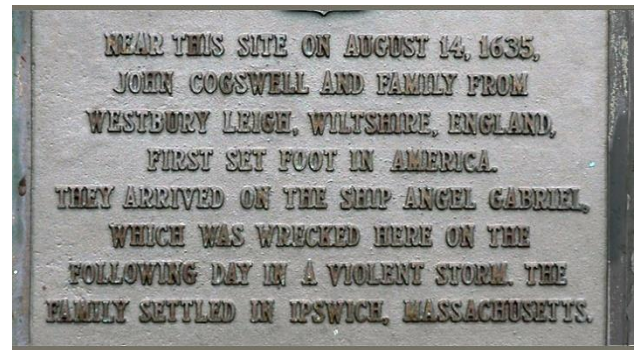
John COGSWELL was born on 2 Apr 1592 in Westbury Leigh, Wiltshire, England and baptized on 7 Apr 1592 in Westbury Leigh, Wiltshire, England. John died on 29 Nov 1669 aged of 77 in Chebacco, Ipswich, Essex, Massachussets.

(Rev. E.O. Jameson): At the age of twenty-three John married the daughter of the parish vicar, succeeded to his father's business, and settled down in the old homestead. His parents died soon after his marriage, and he received his inheritance "The Mylls called Ripond, situate within the Parish of Frome Selwood," together with the home place and certain personal property. Like his father, he was a manufacturer of wollen fabrics, largely broadcloths and kerseymeres. The superior quality of these manufactures gave to his "mylls" a favorable reputation, which appears to have been retained to the present (1884) day. John Cogswell doubtless found in London a market for his manufactures. He may have had a commission house in that city, which would account for his being called, as he sometimes has been, a London merchant.

Mrs. Cogswell's father was the Rev. William Thompson, vicar of Westbury from 1603 to his death in 1623. About twenty years after their marriage, with a family of nine children about them, and having the accumulations of a prosperous business, Mr. and Mrs. Cogswell determined to emigrate to America. The particular reasons which led them to leave England may have been much the same that influenced others in their times. It appears that early in 1635 Mr. Cogswell made sale of his "mylls" and other real estate, and soon after, with his wife, eight children, and all their personal effects, embarked at Bristol, May 23, 1635, for New England. Their passage was long and disastrous. Their arrival in America was after a most unexpected fashion. Having reached the shores of New England, they were landed very unceremoniously at a place called Pemaquid, in Maine, being washed ashore from the broken decks of their ship "Angel Gabriel," which went to pieces in the frightful gale of August 15, 1635, when such a "sudden, dismal storm of wind and rain came as had never been known before by white man or Indian." Traces of this storm remained for years.



Mr. Cogswell and his family escaped with their lives, but well drenched by the sea and despoiled of valuables to the amount of five thousand pounds sterling. They were more fortunate than some who sailed with them, whom the angry waves gathered to a watery grave. On leaving England Mr. Cogswell had taken along with him a large tent, which now came into good service. This they pitched, and into it they gathered themselves and such stores as they could rescue from the waves.



As soon as possible Mr. Cogswell, leaving his family, took passage for Boston. He there made a contract with a certain Capt. Gallup, who commanded a small barque, to sail for Pemaquid and transport his family to Ipswich, Mass. This was a newly settled town to the eastward from Boston, and was called by the Indians, "Aggawam." Two years earlier, March, 1633, Mr. John Winthrop, son of Gov. John Winthrop, with ten others, had commenced a settlement in Aggawam. An act of incorporation was secured August 4, 1634, under the name of Ipswich. "August 5, 1634. It is ordered that Aggawam shal be called Ipswich".

It was probably near the last of August, 1635, when Capt. Gallup sailed up the Aggawam River, having on board Mr. and Mrs. Cogswell, their three sons and five daughters, and whatever of household goods his barque would carry, the rest of their effects being taken by another ship. The settlers of Ipswich at once manifested an appreciation of these newcomers. They made John Cogswell liberal grants of land, as appears from the following municipal records: "1636. Granted to Mr. John Cogswell Three Hundred acres of land at the further Chebokoe, having the River on the South east, the land of Willm White on the North west, and A Creeke romminge out of the River towards William White's farme on the North east. Bounded also on the West with a Creek and a little creeke." "Also there was granted to him a parsell of ground containinge eight acres, upon part whereof ye sd John Cogswell hath built an house, it being the corner lot in Bridge street and hath Goodman Bradstreet's house-Lott on the South East.

The family flourished and built their historic 1728 house "Cogswell's Grant", now an art museum:



(via www.historicnewengland.org)

Jonathan Cogswell Jr. (1687-1752) inherited the 165-acre property in 1717 at age thirty, and his time at Westberry Lee is the most significant in terms of buildings that survive today. Two years after inheriting the property, Jonathan built a salt hay barn, the oldest building currently standing at Cogswell's Grant. In 1728 he built the western portion of the current house, possibly as an addition to the existing seventeenth-century house that was oriented north to south. The terraces in front of the house may also date to his tenure, as they are typical of country house landscaping in this period.

Ipswich In The Massachusetts Bay Colony, pp. 290-291, by Thomas Franklin Waters, The Ipswich Historical Society, 1905: "Five members of the Cogswell family were among the twenty prominent people who signed the petition drawn up by the Rev. John Wise on behalf of Goodwife Proctor, who stood accused of witchcraft. Mary Warren alleged that she had been threatened and abused by Goodwife Proctor, and that she had seen apparitions of people who had long since been murdered by the wife of John Proctor. This evidence prevailed and the good woman was sentenced to death."

By 1749 Jonathan Cogswell Jr. was so prosperous that he had the second-highest taxable wealth in all of Ipswich. Sometime before 1752, the seventeenth-century portion of the house was taken down, and a new addition, the eastern portion of the current house, was constructed. It appears that this portion of the house was not entirely finished, however, before Jonathan Jr. died in 1752. The farm was leased to tenant farmers until 1761, when Jonathan Jr.'s son was old enough to take possession.

Colonel Jonathan Cogswell (1740-1819) lived at Westberry Lee and worked the farm for thirty years, starting at age twenty-one, when he came into his majority. He was Captain of an Ipswich alarm list company raised in 1774, promoted to Major in 1775, and was Colonel of the Second Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers in the army from 1776 until the end of the Revolutionary War. A Justice of the Peace, a member of the State Constitutional Convention in 1780, and part of the Massachusetts delegation to the United States Constitutional Convention in 1788.

Robert Whitney Cogswell's Service

After graduating from Eigewood High School, Pennsylvania in 1935, he attended the University of Pittsburgh for three years from 1935 to 1939. From 1935 to 1941 he was a bookkeeper and clerk. ([Korean War Educator: Topics - Black Tuesday B-29 \(koreanwar-educator.org\)](#))

SERIAL NUMBER 729	1. NAME (Print) ROBERT WHITNEY COGSWELL		ORDER NUMBER 1235
2. ADDRESS (Print) 5405 FIFTH AVE PITTSBURGH ALLEGHENY PA (Number and street or R. F. D. number) (Town) (County) (State)			
3. TELEPHONE Schenley 5029	4. AGE IN YEARS 23	5. PLACE OF BIRTH PITTSBURGH PA	6. COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP U. S.
7. NAME OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS MR. WESLEY HERBERT COGSWELL		8. RELATIONSHIP OF THAT PERSON FATHER	
9. ADDRESS OF THAT PERSON 184 MORRISON DR. MT. LEBANON ALLEGHENY PA (Number and street or R. F. D. number) (Town) (County) (State)			
10. EMPLOYER'S NAME GULF OIL CORP.			
11. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS GULF BLDG. 74 AVENUE GRANT ST. PITTSBURGH ALLEGHENY PA (Number and street or R. F. D. number) (Town) (County) (State)			
I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.			
REGISTRATION CARD D. S. S. Form 1 (over)		16-17105 Robert W. Cogswell (Registrant's signature)	

1940 Draft Card

REGISTRAR'S REPORT				
DESCRIPTION OF REGISTRANT				
RACE	HEIGHT (Approx.)	WEIGHT (Approx.)	COMPLEXION	
White <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5'9"	155	Sallow	
Negro	Blue	Blonde	Light	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Gray	Red	Ruddy	
Oriental	Hazel	Brown	Dark	
	Brown	Black	Freckled	
Indian	Black	Gray	Light brown	
		Bald	Dark brown	
Filipino			Black	
Other obvious physical characteristics that will aid in identification.....				
I certify that my answers are true; that the person registered has read or has had read to him his own answers; that I have witnessed his signature or mark and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge are true, except as follows:				
SCAR OF RIGHT THUMB				
James J. Hughes (Signature of registrar)				
Registrar for 7 PITTSBURGH PA (Precinct) (Ward) (City or county) (State)				
Date of registration OCTOBER 16, 1940				
L. B. No. 7 28th ENGINE HOUSE, FILBERT ST.				

He joined the USAAF, attending the following military schools: Santa Ana, California (pre-flight, 1942); Cal Aero, California (primary, 1942); Polaris Flight Academy, California (basic training, 1942); Victorville, California (advanced training, 1942); Hobbs, New Mexico (B-17 transition, 1943). The now Captain Robert Cogswell was posted to England to join the 360th Bomb Squadron, 303rd Bombardment Group (H), 8th Army Air Force ("The Mighty Eighth"). He was to fly Boeing B-17 Fortress bombers from Molesworth, Cambridgeshire.



USAAF 8th Air Force
'The Mighty Eighth'



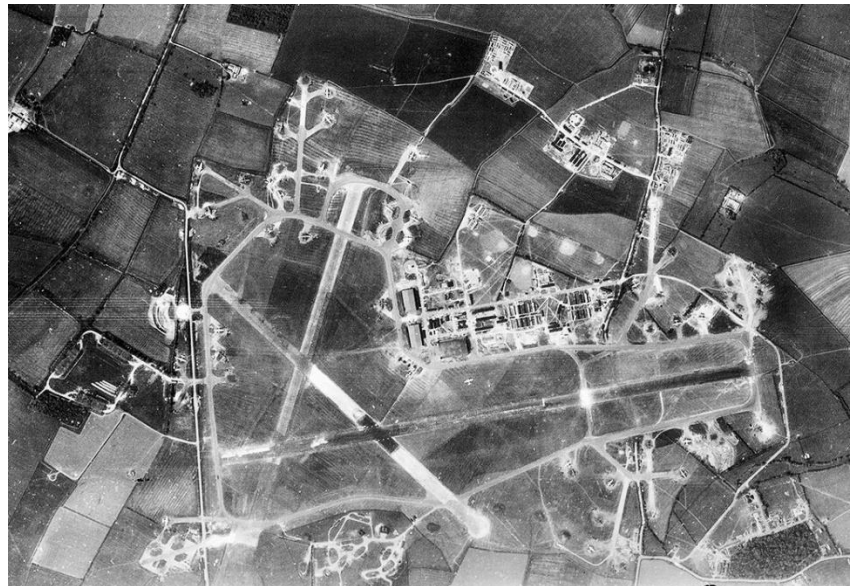
303rd Bombardment Group (Heavy)
'Hell's Angels'



360th Bombardment Squadron
(via Wikipedia)

RAF Molesworth, Cambridgeshire, England

(https://everipedia.org/wiki/lang_en/RAF_Molesworth)



Via d26horl2n8pviu.cloudfront.net

ROBERT W. COGSWELL CREW - 360th BS
B-17F #42-29754 Shangri-La Lil 360BS (PU-B)

(Crew assigned 360BS:

26 June 1943 - photo: 26 June 1943)



(Back L-R) S/Sgt Augustus V. Brundage (LWG)(10); 1Lt John Dwight Kennedy (B)(4); Capt Robert W. Cogswell (P)(1);
1Lt H. Robert De Wall (CP)(2); 1Lt Edward L. Cobb (N)(3)

(Front L-R) S/Sgt Paul Kistulentz (R)(12); S/Sgt Harold R. Timm (TG)(11); S/Sgt Paul J. Davis (BTG); T/Sgt Gilbert E.
Bengston (E)(6); S/Sgt Alvin Etheredge (RWG)(9)

[photo from the 303rdBGA Archives]

ROBERT W. COGSWELL CREW - 360th BS
B-17F #42-2973 Iza Vailable 360BS (PU-G)

(Crew assigned 360BS:

26 June 1943 - photo: 17 Aug 1943)



[photo courtesy of Eddie Deerfield]

(Back L-R) 1Lt H. Robert De Wall (CP)(2); Capt Robert Cogswell (P)(1); S/Sgt Alvin Etheredge (RWG)(9);
S/Sgt Augustus V. Brundage (RWG)(10); M/Sgt William B. Stamper (TOG)(5)

(Front L-R) S/Sgt Paul J. Davis (BTG); T/Sgt Eddie Deerfield (R)(7); 1Lt John Dwight Kennedy (B)(4);
S/Sgt Harold R. "Red" Timm (TG)(11); T/Sgt Gilbert E. Bengston (E)(6)

S/Sgt Elmer L. "Pete" Peterson was dispatched on 28 missions, his first 8 missions were with the Cogswell Crew

Cogswell (P) - Medically grounded after aborting a mission on 04 Oct 43 due to back injuries during the bail-out. Transferred to Squadron/Group Operations. Cogswell, then a Major, was KIA in a B-29 crash in the Sea of Japan during the Korean War.

De Wall (CP) - Upgraded from CoPilot to Pilot on 13 Jan 44 and was given his own Crew. Completed his combat tour on 02 Mar 44. Cogswell Crew replacement was 1Lt Paul S. Tippet who was upgraded from CoPilot to Pilot on 26 Sept 43 and KIA on 02 Oct 43 mission #73 to Emden, Germany in B-17 #42-5260 Yardbird II 360BS (PU-A)

Cobb (N) - POW on 30 Dec 43 mission #93 to Ludwigshafen, Germany in B-17 #42-39795 Women's Home Companion 360BS (PU-E), 1Lt W.C. Osborn Pilot

Kennedy (B) - last mission (16th) on 08 Sep 43.

Stamper (TOG) - Completed combat tour 07 Jan 44.

Bengston (E) - Last mission (18th) on 04 Oct 43 shortly after bail-out on 26 Sep 43.

Deerfield (R) - Completed combat tour of 30 missions on 11 May 44. Wounded by shrapnel on last mission when flak burst penetrated Radio Room.

Davis (BTG) - Completed combat tour 30 missions on 27 Apr 44

Etheredge (RWG) - Last mission (13th) on 27 Aug 43. Transferred to M/Sgt Robert B. Heiliger ground crew. Died on 22 May 45 in 303rd Station Hospital from a lower spine tumor.

Brundage (LWG) - Last mission (9th) on 17 Aug 43 following mission #60 to Schweinfurt, Germany

Timm (TG) - Last mission (10th) 27 Aug 43 following crash landing

Kistulentz (R) - Flew no missions with the 360BS Cogswell Crew. Was replaced by T/Sgt Eddie Deerfield. First ten mission with the 360BS George Stallings Crew (#51 - 17 July 1943) and two with the 360BS Carl J. Fyler Crew. Was then transferred to 358th BS. Flew mission #101 (29 Jan 1944) with the 358BS Walter W. Troppman Crew, mission #105 with the 358BS John F. Henderson Crew and then his thirteen final missions with the 358BS Jack W. Watson Crew.



B-17 piloted by Bob Cogswell

(303 BG, Colourised by Glenn Gilbertson)

The Cogswell Crew was the only 303rd BG(H) crew to have survived a Ditching, Crash Landing and Bail-Out.

Five of the original crewmen were aboard on all three of those missions. They were Capt Cogswell (P), Lt Cobb (N), T/Sgt Bengston (E), T/Sgt Deerfield (R) and S/Sgt Davis (BTG).

Ditching - 30 July 43 mission #56 to Uschlag, Germany in B-17F #42-29738 Upstairs Maid 360BS (PU-I). The B-17 was attacked by German fighters. Capt Cogswell had feathered the #4 engine and dropped behind the formation after leaving the Dutch Coast with only two engines operating. The aircraft was ditched about 22 miles from Felixstowe when another engine ran out of gas and sank in about two and one-half minutes. Air Sea Rescue arrived after 35 minutes and picked up the crew from their life rafts. Lt Cobb had injuries to his head, left leg, right hand and tooth. Substitute crewmen were: S/Sgt Elmer L. Peterson (LWG) for Sgt Brundage; CoPilot was Lt Tippet.



Picture from "The Eddie Deerfield Story" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Pt7hVhUE70>

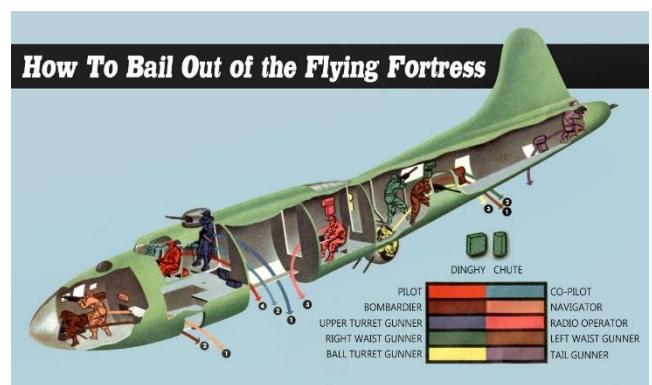
Crash Landing - 27 Aug 43 mission #64 to Watten, France in B-17F Iza Vailable 360BS (PU-G). The B-17 was badly damaged after fighter attacks. #1 engine controls shot away, #2 engine on fire and had to be feathered, #3 engine oil lines were knocked out. An emergency landing was made on the extra wide "Lame Duck" runway at Manston, Kent, England. All men were safe. Substitute Crewmen were: S/Sgt E.L. Peterson (LWG) for S/Sgt Brundage, Lt De Wall (CP) for Lt Tippet.

Bail Out - 26 Sept 43 recall mission to Nantes, France in B-17F #42-5434 Lady Luck aka Bob's Boudoir aka Shad Rack. The B-17 suffered a runaway prop and fire on the #4 engine which could not be feathered. The crew was ordered to bail out when it appeared that the wing had become loose.

Cogswell rode the Fortress down to a few thousand feet to make sure that it didn't crash in a populated area. Lady Luck crashed near the Medstead Airdrome near Winchester. The bombs didn't explode. Lt Cogswell tore the ligaments in his back when he bailed out at a high rate of speed and low altitude and was medically grounded after aborting a mission on 04 Oct 1943

In a letter written to his family, Bob Cogswell recalled the Nantes, France mission. He wrote:

On my way to enemy territory I lost an engine, which isn't unusual, but complications set in. The engine set up such a vibration that structural failure was started in the wing. I told the crew to bail out and went on by myself to find an airdrome at which to set her down. Oh yes, the bombs were still on board and ready to go off at the slightest jolt. I couldn't jettison them because I was over England. I also knew the wing was liable to leave at any time. The Yankee almost made it, but at about 2,000 feet, the engine cowling went and the wing tip started to curl up. At first glance, I couldn't find an open area at which to point the ship and thought I'd have to ride it in to avoid loss of life and property. But, almost by miracle, the open area appeared. I was almost too low to jump by this time, but tried it anyway. It worked though, because I'm still here. The plane exploded so near that I could feel the heat of the blast in my face. No one was killed or injured, no property was damaged (except a few cabbages) so once again I thank God for divine assistance.



Wartime poster

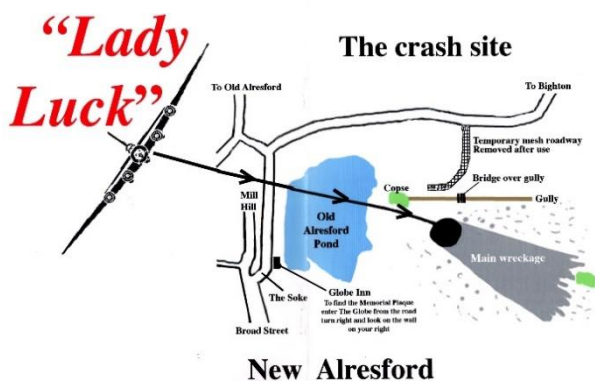
A plaque to the memory of Capt Cogswell was unveiled at the Globe Inn, Alresford, England in November 1943. Substitute crewmen were: Lt D.E. Kendall (CP) for Lt Tippet; Lt F.E. Kulesa (B) for Lt Kennedy; T/Sgt E.L. Peterson (LWG) for S/Sgt Brundage; S/Sgt S. Oxendine (RWG) for S/Sgt Etheredge; S/Sgt J.P. Deffinger (BTG) for S/Sgt Timm (TG) . S/Sgt Davis flew as Tail Gunner.

[Researched by 303rdBGA Historian Harry D. Gobrecht]



303rd BG artist Sgt. Sam P Rodman painting Lady Luck's tail

Colour illustration by Mark Styling



Lady Luck Crash Site drawn by Nelson Trowbridge (Alresford) 1993



Cogswell Memorial 1993



Cogswell House, Alresford



New Cogswell Memorial 2022
(Photos by Glenn Gilbertson)

Further information and videos can be found at www.alresfordhistandlit.co.uk/pilotsmemorials

A personal view from a member of the Cogswell crew, published in the *Hell's Angels Newsletter* May 1998:

The Luck of the Draw

...

I used to puzzle over "the luck of the draw" in aerial combat. Why was it that some of us gave our lives, some were downed and taken prisoner, others were wounded or suffered through the roughest of missions, and still others breezed through tours with barely a flak dent in their B-17s? It serves no purpose to dwell on this. We need to thank whatever Gods may be for having had the privilege of serving our country and surviving, and to go on honoring the memories of lost comrades.

Our Cogswell bunch earned the unenviable tag of "jinx crew" almost from the time of our first mission on 10 July 1943. We ditched before the end of July, barely managed an emergency landing at an RAF base a month later and bailed out four weeks after that. Throw Hamburg and Schweinfurt into the mix of those first 13 missions, and it was a recipe for disaster.



Picture from "The Eddie Deerfield Story"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Pt7hVhUE70>

Target Kassel on 30 July. We lost number four engine on crossing the enemy coast en route to the target, but didn't abort. We were beaten up by flak and fighters going in and coming back. We lost another engine on the return leg. We exhausted out fuel over the North Sea, and Bob Cogswell ditched about 22 miles off Felixstowe. We cleared the B-17 and were in the dinghies in less than a minute, hauling out Ed Cobb, the injured navigator. **Upstairs Maid** went under a minute later. A P-47 circled overhead protecting us and sending a distress location. In less than an hour, we were swept to safety by a British Air-Sea Rescue mosquito boat.

Target Watten on 27 August. Our favorite B-17 **Iza Vailabie** was heavily damaged by deadly accurate anti-aircraft fire and we barely made it back to England for an emergency landing at a coastal RAF base. As we walked around the aircraft checking damage, we counted more than 200 flak holes, yet none of us was wounded. Tragically, **Shangri-La-Lil** flying nearby in our 360th formation took a direct hit and blew up. We saw only four parachutes.

Target Nantes on 26 September. The mission was recalled because of cloud cover over the target. On the return, approaching Southampton on the southern coast of England, Bob Cogswell was unable to feather a runaway prop. When the engine began pour smoke, he ordered the crew to bail out. We came down on rooftops, in trees and on farmer's fields in the vicinity of Alresford and Winchester. **Lady Luck** crashed in a field near a lake, and the only fatalities were six grazing cows. Ironically, we didn't even get credit for a mission!

Cogswell was injured in the bailout, and the original crew drifted apart after that. I went on to complete 30 missions, flying with four different crews. Twelve of those missions were with Joe Stevens at the controls. A flak burst smashed a hole in the wall of my radio room on the Saarbrücken mission and my face was cut up by metal fragments.

My most vivid memories, however, even after at these years, are of B-17s exploding in flames and the empty bunks that night in our Nissen hut.

Eddie Deerfield (360) Radio Operator

Eddie Deerfield survived 30 missions, leaving the USAAF as a Technical Sergeant. Recalled in 1950 he was commissioned, retiring as a Lt. Col. in 1983 but then becoming a diplomat, author and leading light of the 303rd BG Association. He visited Alresford to see the Cogswell memorial and flew over the area. He died aged 99 in August 2022.

The information about the 303rd Bombardment Group is reproduced with the kind permission of the 303rd BG Association (<http://www.303rdbg.com>)

The Mighty Eighth in Europe

The modern day Eighth Air Force traces its lineage to the VIII BC, which came to life on 1 February 1942 at Langley Field, Virginia. About 23 February, the VIII BC moved to England, first to Daws Hill and later to High Wycombe, where it established its wartime headquarters in the Wycombe Abbey school for girls. On 22 February 1944, the Army reorganized its Air Forces in Europe by renaming Eighth Air Force as the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe (now known as the United States Air Forces in Europe). That same day, the VIII BC became Eighth Air Force.



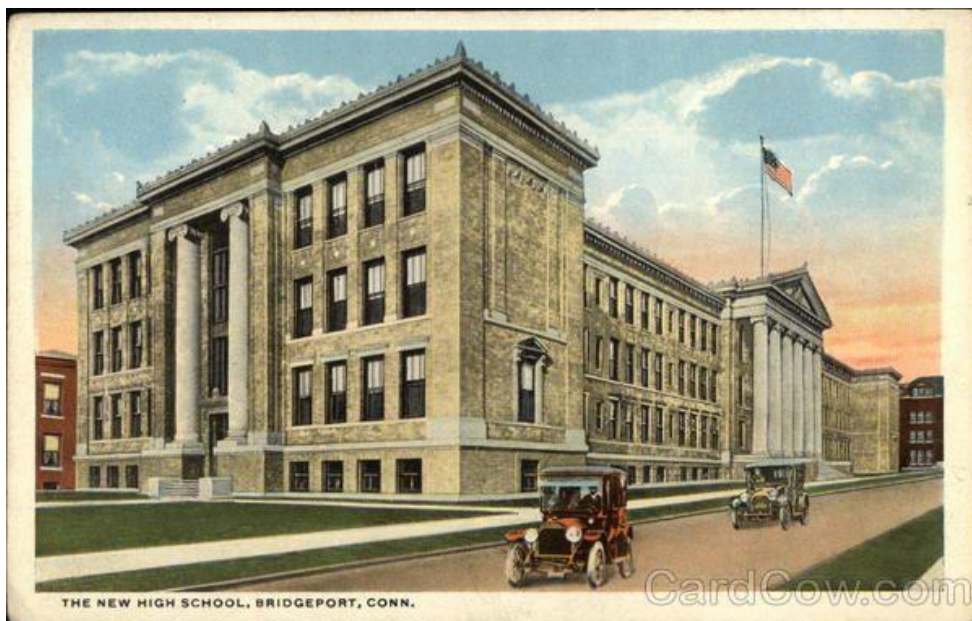
During World War II, under the leadership of such generals as Ira Eaker and Jimmy Doolittle, the VIII BC (then Eighth Air Force) formed the greatest air armada in history. By mid-1944, the unit had a total strength of more than 200,000 people, and it could send more than 2,000 four-engine bombers and 1,000 fighters on a single mission against enemy targets in Europe. For this reason, Eighth Air Force is commonly known as the "Mighty Eighth."

From May 1942 to July 1945, the Eighth planned and precisely executed America's daylight strategic bombing campaign against Nazi-occupied Europe, and in doing so the organization compiled an impressive war record. That record, however, carried a high price. For instance, the Eighth suffered about half of the U.S. Army Air Force's casualties (47,483 out of 115,332), including more than 26,000 dead. The Eighth's brave men earned 17 Medals of Honor, 220 Distinguished Service Crosses, and 442,000 Air Medals. The Eighth's combat record also shows 566 aces (261 fighter pilots with 31 having 15 or more victories and 305 enlisted gunners), over 440,000 bomber sorties to drop 697,000 tons of bombs, and over 5,100 aircraft losses and 11,200 aerial victories.

(From <https://www.8af.af.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/333794/eighth-air-force-history>)

Robert Cogswell's Later Service

Robert married Dorothy Vollbrecht (1921 – 1989) in 1947 and moved to Bridgeport, Connecticut. He was the District Representative for General Electric from 1945 to 1947, and then re-joined the Air Force.



M. 1584 Series W.
Robert W. Cogswell.
and
Dorothy Vollbrecht.
APPLICATION FOR MARRIAGE LICENSE
State Tax \$.50
License 2.00
Filing Decree
Consent Fee
Petition and Order of Court
Guardian Appointment Fee
Total Paid 3.00
Filed, Apr 17 19 41
Post, Docket No. 154
Page No. 264
Physician's Statements
Filed, Apr 17 19 41
F. Clerk of Orphan's Court.

In 1951, now a Major, Robert Cogswell was posted as a member of the Headquarters Squadron with the 372nd Bomber Squadron, 307th Bomber Wing, to Kadena Airfield on Okinawa. From the Okinawa airfield, group bombers staged attacks against the rapidly advancing communist forces in South Korea. The unit operated the Boeing B-29 Superfortress, which had been the most technically advanced bomber of World War 2:



Korean War Service



USAF 5th Air Force



307th Bombardment Group (M)



B-29 Black Tuesday (Namsi, Korea)

From [Korean War Educator: Topics - Black Tuesday B-29 \(koreanwar-educator.org\)](http://koreanwar-educator.org)

In September of 1951, U.S. aerial reconnaissance discovered a build-up of 18 new North Korean jet-capable airfields in the Saamcham area. The US decided to destroy the airfields before they became operational. The largest of these airfields was Namsi. With new concrete runways, the airfield would have the capability to stage jet aircraft.

On the morning of October 23, 1951, nine B-29 Superfortresses took off from Kadena Air Base in Okinawa to strike the airfield at Namsi. They were in three flights--Able, Baker, and Charlie.

- Able - 44-61816 (Fogler's B-29), 44-87760 (Lewis' B-39), 42-94045 (Krumm's B-29)
- Baker - 44-86295 (Reeter's B-29), 44-61940 (Foulks' B-29), 44-27347 (Griner's B-29)
- Charlie - 44-70151 (Shields' B-29), 44-61824 (Dempsey's B-29), 44-86395 (Field's B-29)

Russian MiG-15's attacked the B-29s, and the result was that six of the nine American aircraft were lost. It was the highest percentage of U.S. bombers ever lost in a single mission, hence the name "Black Tuesday". There were numerous casualties.

Serial Number 44-61940

When the plane engine of B-29 (44-61940) caught fire, the B-29 headed for safety, but before it could get back to base the crew had to bail out in the Yellow Sea. Of the crew of 13, one was picked up after landing in the Yellow Sea by an Australian frigate, HMAS Murchison and one man's body was found the next day washed ashore.

Five of the men were taken prisoners of war and returned in 1953. The remaining men were not heard from again.

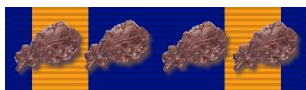


montage by Glenn Gilbertson

Crew Members

- Black, Cpt. Wayne Forrest - MIA (radio operator)
- Botter, TSgt William Joseph - MIA/POW (flight engineer)
- Cogswell, Maj. Robert Whitney - MIA/POW
- Foulks, Cpt. James Arch Jr - MIA/KIA (commander-pilot)
- Coffey, Cpl. Arthur G. - KIA (tail gunner)(Body recovered)
- Beissner, 1st Lt. Fred Jr. - (rescued at sea) co-pilot
- Fuehrer, SSgt Alios Anton - MIA/POW
- Jones, Sgt James H. - POW returned '53 (left gunner)
- Kisser, TSgt Kenneth E. - POW returned '53 (gunner)
- MacClean, Cpl Gerald Charles - POW returned '53 (right gunner)
- Mooradian, 1st Lt. Ara - POW/MIA (bombardier)
- Strine, TSgt John T. - POW returned '53 (radio operator)
- Wentworth, 1st Lt. Lloyd G. - POW returned '53 (navigator)

Major Cogswell earned:



Distinguished Flying Cross
with 4 Oak leaves



Air Medal
with Oak Leaf



European.- African - Middle Eastern
Campaign Medal.



Purple Heart



WW2 Victory Medal



Korean Service Medal



UN Service Medal Korea



National Defence Service Medal



Presidential Unit Citation (S. Korea)



Rep. Korea Service Medal

He lies in the Yellow Sea, but is commemorated on:



Korea Memorial
Freedom is not free

I will never leave you or forsake you
Hebrews 13 5

In my generation this was not the first occasion
when the strong attacked the
weak. Communism was acting in Korea just as
Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese had acted ten
fifteen and twenty years earlier. I felt certain that
If South Korea was allowed to fall communist leaders
would be emboldened to override nations
closer to our own shores.
President Harry Truman

For if the trumpet give an uncertain voice who
shall prepare himself for war
Corinthians Chapter 12 8

Bridgeport, CT Korea Memorial



The Hall of the Missing, Honolulu Memorial, Honolulu, HI



Korean War Veterans' Memorial. Washington, DC