

THOUGH BADLY INJURED.....

Captain Ledford Makes Delayed Opening Jump in Futile Effort to Save Friend.

A XX BOMBER COMMAND BASE, WESTERN CHINA.—The heroic attempt of a wounded Superfortress pilot to save the life of his dying flight engineer following a recent mission over Japan was disclosed here by interrogation officers.

After bombs were dropped over Omura, on Kyushu Island, the B-29 piloted by Capt. Jack C. Ledford, Zaneville, Ohio, was attacked and riddled by bullets from a Jap fighter.

A bullet slashed a gaping wound in Captain Ledford's right hip, fracturing his hip bone and exposing his backbone and kidney. Another bullet hit the flight engineer, piercing his flak*helmet and knocking him unconscious. Other bullets damaged gas lines, instruments and interior wiring of the bomber.

Captain Ledford refused medical aid until the engineer had been treated. The pilot handled the engineer's controls for nearly one hour before loss of blood weakened him. He then accepted aid, but declined an opiate in order to keep his head clear.

Later, when loss of fuel forced the crew to abandon ship, Captain Ledford and other crew members ripped open an extra parachute, cut off the shroud lines and

One unidentified doughfoot was eating breakfast recently in Germany—in the Huertgen Forest to be exact—when a German shell passed between his legs. The shell did not touch the soldier. But it struck a tree nearby. The tree fell down.... And a falling branch broke the soldier's ankle.

It's better to be cautious than sorry. Observe ground safety rules.

attached one end of them to the interior of the plane, the other end to the unconscious engineer's rip-cord ring.

They dropped the engineer through the nose wheel well. The scheme worked, and the parachute blossomed open.

Captain Ledford then jumped and delayed opening his chute

in order to be near the engineer when they landed. The wounded pilot fell free for nearly 5,000 feet before pulling his rip-cord.

However, despite Captain Ledford's courageous effort, the engineer died shortly after reaching an emergency hospital in unoccupied China. He failed to regain consciousness.

Captain Ledford's wounds were treated and several days later he and the other members of the crew, all of whom landed safely, returned here.

Col. William B. Blanchard, group commander, presented the 24-year-old former Ohio State University diving star with the Purple Heart at informal bedside ceremonies in an Army hospital nearby, where Captain Ledford is recovering from his wounds.

B-29s CARRY TEN TONS OF BOMBS

(ANS).—According to a recent announcement by the Army Air Forces, a Superfortress can carry at least ten tons of bombs. Previously, the highest reported bomb load ever carried by a plane was for the RAF's Lancaster bombers which carry about nine tons on short missions and five tons on longer strikes deep into Germany. The gasoline load of the B-29 is at least 8,000 gallons.



Recuperating.—Capt. Jack C. Ledford, wounded B-29 pilot who free fell nearly 5,000 feet before opening his parachute in order to land near his dying flight engineer, is shown here recuperating in a Chinese hospital. The pretty nurse is Miss Nancy Chang.