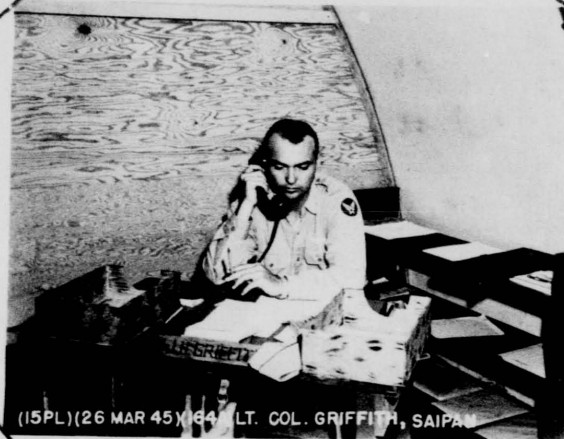


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Lt. Colonel John H. Griffith

Lieutenant Colonel John H. Griffith, was appointed Deputy Group Commander on 26 February (See page 15).

The new Deputy Commander was born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Although he is no longer a resident of that city, he is still a resident of Pennsylvania. He attended Upper Darby High School, in the suburban district of Philadelphia, and after graduation went to Penn State College, where he later graduated with the degree of B.S. in Forestry.

He received his reserve commission on 30 May, 1937, and in due course obtained a second lieutenants commission in the Regular Army. His first assignment was at Ft. Meade, Md. Colonel Griffith's promotions came rapidly, and after the outbreak of the war received an overseas assignment, in the European Theatre. At one point he was Commanding Officer of the 15th Bombardment Squadron (L), and at another, assistant A-3 of

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- 21 -

0306

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the 12th Bomber Command. When the B-29 project was more fully developed, Colonel Griffith, was appointed Commanding Officer of the 875th Squadron of the 498th Group. He came to the 497th, from that assignment, in which he had made an excellent record.

On the same day that he was appointed Deputy Group Commander, Colonel Griffith was awarded the D.F.C. On a mission of 3 January, while over the target, his plane received a 20 mm explosive shell through the left center of the plexi-glass nose, knocking out No. 1 engine and wounding the bombardier. Despite the terrific cold blasts of air coming thru the nose, Colonel Griffith was able to move the 205 pound bombardier, to a place where he could more effectively be treated for his wounds and the shock. His actions showed great efficiency, inspired the crew, and contributed materially in saving the life of the wounded man. The 497th Group is fortunate to have a man of Colonel Griffith's flying ability, and experience, for its Deputy Group Commander.

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- 22 -

0307