# Merry Christmas in July An oral history interview with B-26 tail gunner John Sweren



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# MERRY CHRISTMAS IN JULY AN ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH B-26 TAIL GUNNER JOHN SWEREN



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CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. Paperback. Condition: New. This item is printed on demand. 116 pages. Dimensions: 8.8in. x 5.9in. x 0.4in.I had two kills and one probable.... The second one, we always flew in different boxes. Youd have a high box, a middle box and a lower box. The lower box was kind of a Purple Heart box. The second one, we were in the low box, and the fighter kind of circled. I lost track of it, and it came up from underneath and made a 90-degree turn and started firing. Of course my rapid fire I think got him, but he just, just a flash of light, thats all, I couldn't tell, I blew it up. But... after that happened, I said a little prayer, God bless the guy, he was in the war just like I was, fighting for his country, and I felt sorry for what happened. It was either him or me. Or us. John Sweren, tail gunner, flew 58 missions in a B-26 before his plane was shot down. The tail section broke apart from the rest of the plane, with him in it. Three of the six crew members were killed. John became a prisoner of war and endured the harsh conditions at Stalag Luft IV, and the even harsher conditions of the long march west across Germany near the end of the war. Oral historian Aaron Elson interviewed John over the course of two days in 2010, after the French historian Christian Levaufre brought artifacts from the remains of Johns plane to the United States to present to family members of its crew. During the Great Depression, John grew up on a farm with 3, 000 chickens. He felt so guilty about taking a hearty meal...



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