

Unit Citation

Three Lansing men, now serving with the veteran 455th Bombardment Group of the Fifteenth Air Force, were recently authorized to wear the first Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster to the Distinguished Unit badge, when their Group was cited “for outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy.” The men are Pfc. Louis W. Grams, 1126 High Street, Corp. Francis J. Hayes, 723 Britten Avenue, and Staff Sgt. Victor P. Jones. 1416 North Genesee Drive. According to the citation, the Group formation, while leading its Wing on a mission against the vital enemy oil refinery at Moosebierbaum, Austria, June 26, 1944, was intercepted by approximately 20 twin-engine fighters and 60 single-engine fighters, which pressed suicidal, head-on attacks. Despite this seemingly overwhelming opposition, the Group fought its way over the target, inflicting heavy damage to the installations below. During the unequal battle, the Group’s gunners destroyed 34 enemy fighters and held their own losses to 10 Liberators. The Group received its first citation for the destruction of the Steyr Walzlagerwerke, Austria, April 2, 1944, despite fierce enemy fighter opposition.

