

Thunderbolts Give Yanks Great Backing at Cherbourg

BY ROBERT WILSON.

A NINTH AIR FORCE FIGHTER BASE IN FRANCE, June 23 (Delayed).—(AP)—If American troops assaulting Cherbourg are to get any closer air support than that they are now enjoying from this Thunderbolt base, they'll have to widen their foxholes and move the planes right in with them.

Today seven Thunderbolts roared off from a steel carpet and disappeared into the mid-day haze.

Just 15 minutes later they flashed in for a landing.

Maj. Harvey Case Jr. of Hous-

ton, Tex., reported to the colonel:

"We knocked out a bridge, cut a rail line and hit a German bivouac area near St. Lo, and smashed that strongpoint near Cherbourg that has been holding up our troops."

Another said:

"We're here to scramble off for any target they ask for."

Fighter-Bombers Now Toting Half a Ton Under Each Wing

Ninth Air Force has doubled the bomb-carrying capacity of Thunderbolts and Lightnings, it was disclosed yesterday, and each now hauls a 1,000-pound bomb under each wing—a load equal to that of light bombers and half as great as medium bombers.

Every Ninth fighter is now a fighter-bomber, it was disclosed at the same time. Planes that once found their principal use as heavy bomber escorts now are themselves bombing Nazi railway yards, bridges, power stations, dumps, trains and trucks.

Airmen said the P38 and P47 pilots had found their increased bomb loads

most effective when delivered with a combination of low-level and dive-bombing techniques.

One flight of fighter-bombers dive-bombs the protecting ack-ack batteries under this system while the other goes in at low level to "buzz-bomb" the primary objective.

Hundreds of fighter-bombers have been sent out in recent weeks carrying 1,000-pounders under each wing instead of the 500-pounders that hung there before.

In one of the most effective of these attacks, a railroad bridge over the Seine at Vernon, France, was completely knocked out with 1,000-pounders dropped by P47s.

Did not see from England