

# Victor Smith

Compiled by Judy Hansen  
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Victor Smith was born Aug 9, 1920 in Blackfoot, Idaho to George Henry and Christie Isabel Sharp Smith. He was the second youngest of six children, Nora, Leo, Lewis, William, Victor and then Beth. They raised sugar beets in Idaho. During WW1 they got a good price for their crop but shortly afterwards the price dropped way down. In the fall of 1925 the family moved back to Lehi, Utah. This is where his parents were raised and they had family farm land and could start over. They liked the climate in Utah much better than Idaho and felt they would be more successful.

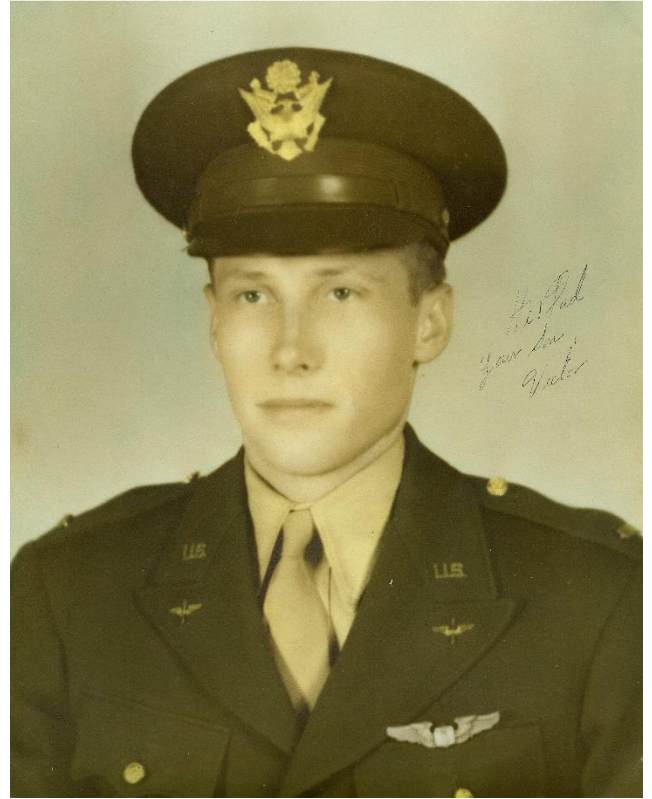
Victor attended schools in Lehi, Utah where he graduated from Lehi High. His mother was quite invalid for a long period of time and she passed away when Victor was 19. Victor attended Dixie Junior College at St. George, then the Brigham Young University at Provo. He was a junior at the University of Utah when our country was attacked by the Japanese. He joined the Army Air Force as a Lieutenant in Dec 1941.

He left Morrison Field February 27, 1943, stopping at Puerto Rico, Trinidad Island, Brazil. He crossed the North Africa and Arabia, and reached India March 22, 1943. He passed over several convoys during his flight and was attacked by Zeros on two occasions.

The Associated Press dated New Delhi, India, Dec 20 1943 noted that Lieutenant Victor Smith of Lehi, Utah was one of five medium bombardment group pilots to receive the distinguished flying cross for 'extra ordinary achievement' while participating in combat missions totaling more than 200 hours during which exposure to enemy fire was probable and expected. The medal was authorized by General Order No. 30, Headquarters Intelligence Bureau India-Burmese Sector.

Victor served with the 10<sup>th</sup> Air Force, 341<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group, 491<sup>st</sup> Bomb Squadron. The group entered combat early in 1943 and operated chiefly against enemy transportation in central Burma until 1944. It bombed bridges, locomotives, railroad yards, and other targets to delay movement of supplies to the Japanese troop's fighting in Northern Burma.

Victor was the pilot of the B-25C Mitchell Serial Number 41-12966 and on October 30, 1943 took off from Chakulia Airfield in India. The weather was rain with poor visibility. The rest of the crew was co-pilot Flt. Officer Frank W Majesky, Bombardier 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Daniel J O'Connor, New York; Radio Operator S/Sgt Donald R Muntzinger, Ohio; Gunner S/Sgt Joe A Ayoub,



Texas; and Gunner S/Sgt Stanley A Penkul, Ohio. They were returning from a bombing mission over Burma. The plane crashed and the entire crew was officially declared dead the day of the mission. This was Victor's 53<sup>rd</sup> mission in eight months. He was originally buried at the site of his death, then his body was removed to the U.S. Military cemetery near Barrackpore, India and then to Schofield barracks T.H. His remains and the remains of the crew was transported to the United States for permanent burial.

Victor's sister Beth was in the Cadet Nurse Corp and she wrote, "At this time I learned that my brother, my childhood companion, was missing in action over the Himalaya Mountain while on a bombing mission into China. I mourned deeply, but I remembered his admonitions: *"You have been taught the right way to live. It is your fault if you do not learn. Always ask questions if you don't understand something."*

In Oct of 1943, his father George received that telegram all parents, with children at war dread. It told of the missing bomber airplane Victor was piloting over the Himalaya Mountain in India.

General H.H. Arnold, Commanding General of the Army Air Forces wrote to Victor's father and said, "Victor graduated from the advanced Flying School at Moore Field with a commendable record. He rapidly developed into an able officer, largely due to a strength of purpose and a diligent application to duty. He possessed many fine qualities that made him a credit to the military, he faithfully did his share as a pilot in the Army Air Forces."

Initially the family was told Victor was missing in action (MIA) but later declared dead and his body returned to Lehi for burial in 1949. His military ID #0663103

This story is a combined effort of the Lehi Historical Society and the Stories Behind the Stars project, a national effort of volunteers to write the stories of all 400,000+ of the US WW2 fallen on Fold3. Related to this, there will be a smart phone app that will allow people to visit any war memorial or cemetery, scan the fallen's name and read his/her story.

References:

Life History of George Henry Smith Jr.

341<sup>st</sup> Missile Wing [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/341st\\_Missile\\_Wing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/341st_Missile_Wing)

HonorStates.org <https://www.honorstates.org/index.php?id=388482>

Beth's Nursing Story <https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/memories/LFST-PXV>

Pacific Wrecks - B-25C Mitchell Serial Number 41-12966

Source: <https://pacificwrecks.com/aircraft/b-25/41-12966.html>

HonorStates.org <https://www.honorstates.org/index.php?id=388482&fbclid=IwAR2qj2MLFn-Pmb7wtxo378vxcOUF7r4-A8hDuavoJwn2EpiYuT-d4jOg7RU>