

Friends from Enemies



One remarkable story shows how friendship is a powerful human force that can happen even in war. On December 20, 1943, 2nd Lieutenant Charlie Brown was piloting a B-17 bomber named *Ye Old Pub*. Brown and his fellow American flight crew were returning to England from a bombing mission over Germany. Unfortunately, *Ye Old Pub's* engines had been damaged on the approach to its target.

The bomber was forced to leave the safety of its formation with the other American bombers. It was soon flying alone over Germany. *Ye Old Pub* was **vulnerable** to attacks from enemy fighter planes. German aircraft soon tried to shoot down the crippled bomber and hit many of its vital systems. The plane was heavily damaged. Most of the American crewmen were injured from the fighter attacks.

A German pilot named Franz Stigler spotted the damaged American bomber from the ground. He **departed** in his fighter plane. Flying alongside *Ye Old Pub*, he spotted the wounded Americans in their plane. Instead of shooting down the enemy bomber, however, Stigler tried to help them. Using hand signals to communicate, he told them to land in Germany. Brown **turned down** the idea. Finally, Stigler decided to fly with the bomber and protect it until it got near home. Brown and his men landed in England. Stigler flew back to Germany. He didn't tell his superiors about what had happened because he might be arrested or killed.

After the war, the two men met again in peacetime. Stigler had moved to Canada in the 1950s and Brown was in America. Over the years, Mr. Brown wrote many letters, hoping to **locate** Stigler. Brown finally received a reply from him in 1990. They soon met and became best friends. It was a true friendship made in the skies.



1. According to the article, what was Charlie Brown doing on December 20, 1943?
 - a) fixing a plane
 - b) going on vacation
 - c) sending a letter
 - d) fighting a war

2. The word “vulnerable” in paragraph 2 could be replaced with:
 - a) exposed
 - b) safe
 - c) going
 - d) strong

3. According to the article, why did American bombers fly in formation?
 - a) so they could communicate
 - b) so they could hit targets
 - c) so they would be safer
 - d) so they would fly faster

4. The word “departed” in paragraph 3 could be replaced with:
 - a) stopped
 - b) arrived
 - c) stole
 - d) left

5. How did Stigler try to help the American crew of *Ye Old Pub*?
 - a) he landed in Germany
 - b) he spotted the Americans
 - c) he used hand signals
 - d) he flew beside them

6. The phrase “turned down” in paragraph 3 could be replaced with:
 - a) rejected
 - b) lowered
 - c) started
 - d) agreed

7. The word “locate” in paragraph 4 could be replaced with:
 - a) read
 - b) find
 - c) fly
 - d) show

8. According to the article, Stigler and Brown:
 - a) were best friends during the war
 - b) never met each other after the war
 - c) were enemies long after the war ended
 - d) became good friends long after the war

Answers: 1. (d) 2. (a) 3. (c) 4. (d) 5. (d) 6. (a) 7. (b) 8. (d)

