

**WAR DEPARTMENT  
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES  
WASHINGTON**

**The MISSING AIR CREW REPORT**

**6808**

IMPORTANT: This report will be compiled in triplicate by each Army Air Forces organization within 48 hours of the time an aircraft is officially reported missing.

1. ORGANIZATION: Location Torretta, Italy Command or Air Force 15<sup>th</sup> AF  
Group 461<sup>st</sup> Bomb Gp (H) Squadron 766<sup>th</sup> Bomb Sq (H)
2. SPECIFY: Place of departure Torretta, Italy Course 295°  
Target Nimes, France Type of mission Combat
3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED:  
CAVU
4. GIVE: [a] Date 12 July 1944 Time Unknown Last known position Mediterranean 18 miles off the coast of France  
[b] Specify whether:  Last sighted,  Forced down,  Seen to crash,  
 Last contacted by radio,  No information
5. AIRCRAFT [LOST] [BELIEVED LOST] AS A RESULT OF: [Check one only]  
 Enemy aircraft,  Enemy anti-aircraft,  Other **Ship crashed into Mediterranean Sea**
6. AIRCRAFT: Type, model & series B-24 H AAF Serial Number 41-29337
7. NICKNAME OF AIRCRAFT: \_\_\_\_\_
8. ENGINES: Type, model & series R 1830-65 AAF serial Number [a] BP 425317  
[b] BP 426009 [c] BP 426016 [d] BP 426144
9. INSTALLED WEAPONS: [Make, type and serial number] **All Browning Cal. 50**  
[a] 965228 [e] 400716 [i] 973559  
[b] 634393 [f] 973756 [j] 974082  
[c] 973865 [g] 634257  
[d] 973647 [h] 974503
10. PERSONNEL LISTED BELOW REPORTED AS:  Battle Casualty,  Non Battle Casualty
11. NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew 10; Passengers 0; Total 10  
[If more than 12 persons aboard aircraft, use separate sheet]

CREW POSITION	FULL NAME [Last, First, Initial] RANK, SERIAL NUMBER	CURRENT STATUS	NEXT OF KIN, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS
[1] Pilot	Barnes, William L., Jr. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. 0-813911		Dr. William J. Barnes, Father 146 Maple St., Englewood, New Jersey
[2] CP	Larson, Hilmer W. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. 0-750800		Ide Larson, Mother 301 Central Ave., Hopkins, Minnesota
[3] Bomb	Brennan, Edward H. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. 0-752802		Mrs. Edward H. Brennan, Wife 2349 Constance St., New Orleans, Louisiana
[4] Nav	Layton, John W. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. 0-692031		Mary Layton, Wife 2107 Wroxton Rd., Houston, Texas
[5] TTG	Steles, Jack G. T/Sgt. 18004992		Nellie Steles, Mother 212 W 12 St., Tulsa, Oklahoma
[6] LWG	Agee, Loyd T/Sgt. 39691490		Mary Agee, Wife 2205 Lake St., Bakersfield, California
[7] NTG	Hoch, Daniel R. S/Sgt. 33618777		Joyce Hoch, Mother 1328 Buttonwood St., Reading, Pennsylvania
[8] TTG	Botin, Benjamin B. S/Sgt. 33420659		Ethel Botha, Mother 1142 Lapish Rd, N.S. Pittsburg, Pennsylvania
[9] RWG	Anderson, Robert E. T/Sgt.		Marjorie O. Anderson, Mother

12152648

219 St. Queens Village, Long Island,  
New York

[10] BTG Sievers, Henry H. S/Sgt.  
39256913

Betty Jeanne Sievers, Wife  
1701 Steele St., Rosemead, California

[11]

[12]

12. IDENTIFY BELOW THOSE PERSONS WHO ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE LAST KNOWLEDGE OF AIRCRAFT AND CHECK APPROPRAITE [one only] COLUMN TO INDICATE BASIS FOR SAME:

NAME IN FULL	RANK	SERIAL No.	CONTACTED BY RADIO	LAST SIGHTED	SAW CRASH	SAW FORCED LANDING
[1] Campbell, James H.	Cpl.	34036830		X		
[2] Coles, John W, Jr.	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt.	0-678689	X			
[3]						
[4]						

13. IF PERSONNEL ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE SURVIVED, CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

Parachutes were used,  Persons were seen walking away from the scene of the crash,

Other reasons [specify] **Mae Wests were seen near wreckage.**

14. ATTACH PHOTOGRAPH, MAP OR SKETCH SHOWING LAST KNOWN LOCATION OF AIRCRAFT.

15. ATTACH EYEWITNESS DESCRIPTIONS OF CRASH, FORCED LANDING, OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES.

16. ATTACH A DESCRIPTION OF EXTENT OF SEARCH, IF ANY, AND GIVE NAME, RANK AND SERIAL NUMBER OF OFFICER IN CHARGE OF SEARCH HERE: **None.**

Date: 15 July 1944

/s/ Robert A. Preciado

767TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)  
461ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP  
APO 520 US ARMY

STATEMENT

Ship number fifty three looked to be alright, but peeled off right after we hit the target. I lost sight of it after that.

/s/ Col. James H. Campbell  
ASN 34036830

After leaving the target, Captain Walters, our pilot, asked the crew to look back for stragglers. The crew reported none at the time, but several minutes later on we were crossing the French coast. At that time the crew spotted a ship which later turned out to be #53, low and quite far back of the formation. We made a circle and got over on top of the ship. I called Captain Walters and told him I thought the ship was preparing to ditch. He called the ship while I computed our position. The ship said he was ditching but couldn't get in touch with air-sea rescue and would we call them. We called them and circled the ship to let them get a fix. Air-sea rescue had already sent someone out after them. The ship hit the water at 42 degrees N 06 degrees 10 minutes east at 11:51 AM. The ship broke in half and both halves floated for approximately 1 ½ minutes, and then sank. We saw no life rafts but were reasonably sure we saw one or two men in Mae Wests in the water.

/s/ John W. Coles, Jr.  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt., Air Corps

767 Bomb Sq

<b>Second Lieutenant William J. Barnes, Jr.</b>	<b>Dr. William J. Barnes (Father)</b> <b>155 Engle Street</b> <b>Englewood, New Jersey</b>
<b>Second Lieutenant Hilmar W. Larson</b>	<b>Mrs. Ida M. Larson (Mother)</b> <b>301 Central Avenue</b> <b>Hopkins, Minnesota</b>
<b>Second Lieutenant John W. Layton</b>	<b>Mrs. Mary F. Layton (Wife)</b> <b>2107 Wroxton Road</b> <b>Houston, Texas</b>
<b>First Lieutenant Edward H. Brennan</b>	<b>Mrs. Katherine P. Brennan (Wife)</b> <b>2349 Constance Street</b> <b>New Orleans, Louisiana</b>
<b>Staff Sergeant Daniel R. Hoch</b>	<b>Mrs. Joyce S. Hoch (Mother)</b> <b>1328 Buttonwood Street</b> <b>Reading, Pennsylvania</b>
<b>Technical Sergeant Loyd Agee</b>	<b>Mr. L. A. Agee (Father)</b> <b>398 Poplar Avenue</b> <b>Bakersfield, California</b>
<b>Staff Sergeant Robert E. Anderson</b>	<b>Mr. George E. Anderson (Father)</b> <b>1060 East Second</b> <b>Brooklyn, New York</b>
<b>Technical Sergeant Jack G. Steles</b>	<b>Mrs. Nellie L. Steles (Mother)</b> <b>212 West 12<sup>th</sup> Street</b> <b>Tulsa, Oklahoma</b>
<b>Staff Sergeant Henry H. Sievers</b>	<b>Mrs. Betty J. Sievers (Wife)</b> <b>1701 Steele Street</b> <b>Rosemead, California</b>
<b>Staff Sergeant Benjamin B. Botha</b>	<b>Mrs. Ethel G. Botha (Mother)</b> <b>1142 Lapiash Road</b> <b>Pittsburg, Pennsylvania</b>