

**WAR DEPARTMENT
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON**

The MISSING AIR CREW REPORT

10000

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 15th AF
Group 461st Bomb Gp (H) Squadron 766th Bomb Sq (H)
2. SPECIFY: Place of departure Torretta, Italy Course 260°
Target Linz, Austria Type of mission Combat
3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED:
2/10 cumulus 15,000 feet
4. GIVE: [a] Date 25 July 1944 Time 1114 Last known position Linz, Austria
[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 .
6. AIRCRAFT: Type, model & series B-24 H AAF Serial Number 41-28850
7. NICKNAME OF AIRCRAFT: _____
8. ENGINES: Type, model & series P&W R-1830-43 AAF serial Number [a] BP 400266
[b] BP 4242306 [c] BP 4240424 [d] BP 4240468
9. INSTALLED WEAPONS: [Make, type and serial number] All Browning Cal. 50

[a]	[e]	[i]
[b]	[f]	[j]
[c]	[g]	
[d]	[h]	

10. PERSONNEL LISTED BELOW REPORTED AS: Battle Casualty, Non Battle Casualty

11. NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew 11; Passengers 0; Total 11

[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	Hesser, Joseph B., 1 st Lt. 0-682863		Alice Hesser (Mother) RFD 5, xxxx, Indiana
[2] Co-pilot	Burke, William., Major 0-409947		XXXXXX, XXXXXX(Mother) Xxx xxxxx St., xxxxxx, Penn.
[3] Bomb	Logue, William H., 1 st Lt. 0-671458		XXXXX xxxxxx Logue (Mother) Xxx xxxxx St., Shelbyville, Tenn.
[4] Nav	Lowe, Samuel F., Jr., 1stLt. 0-805308		Dr. Samuel F. Lowe, Sr. (Father) XXXXXX St., N.E., Atlanta, Ga.
[5] Radar	Pagoto, Joseph., 2 nd Lt. 0-709960		XXXXXX Pagoto (xxxxxx) Xxxx xxxxxxxx, Detroit, Michigan
[6] NTG	Sullivan, Joseph A., 1 st Lt. 0-749799		Xxxx M. Sullivan (Mother) Xxxx S. xxxxxx St., Chicago, Ill.
[7] LWG	Proud, David E., S/Sgt. 36458929		Richard Proud (Father) 519 xxxxxx xxx, xxxxxx, Michigan
[8] RWG	Kimble, Robert H., S/Sgt. 33080791		Alfred Kimble (Father) Xxxx xxx xxx, Williamsport, Penn.
[9] TTG	Westfall, Coy, Jr., S/Sgt. 15337761		Coy Westfall, Sr. (Father) Harmony, W. Va.
[10] TG	Tyler, George T., Cpl. 18056723		XXXXX x. xxxxx Tyler (xxxxxx) Xxx xxx xxxxx, xxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxx
[11] BTG	Lotendre, Paul L., S/Sgt. 18056723		Marie Ann Letendre (Mother) 9 Maple St., xxxxx, New Hampshire
[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] Calandrillo, Gerald R.	S/Sgt.	32798379		X		
[2] Weeks, Grady M.	Sgt.	14114882		X		
[3] Wisley, R. C.	2 nd Lt.	0-668122		X		

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

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

Other reasons [specify].

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: **Plane not seen to have gone down.**

Date: 28 July 1944

/s/ Robert A. Preciado
Maj., AC

STATEMENT

25 July 1944

While going over the target I heard the members of the crew stating that the lead ship #444 was hit in the rear bomb bay. When I first saw the plane it was about seven thirty and had its belly up and covered with flames. As the plane fell towards six o'clock I sighted three chutes that came from the plane. Then it blew up and fell all to pieces.

/s/ Gerald R. Calandrillo
32798379.

Plane 444 was ahead of our aircraft in flight and from my position in the turret I saw flames gush from the rear bomb bay in high volume. 444 turned to the left out of formation still holding his altitude. He was out about nine o'clock when he slipped over and started in a spin. I saw three chutes leave the aircraft. The plane continued in spin towards six o'clock and about five thousand feet below formation the plane exploded, the fuselage broke in two and the wings fell off.

/s/ Sgt. Grady W. Weeks
14114882

I saw five men come from ship 444. Right after this I saw the fire in the left rear bomb bay. I saw two men come out of the right front bomb bay, one out of the waist window, and one from the camera hatch. After that, ship 444 peeled to the left and seemed to be in perfect control. Other duties prevented me from making further observations.

Robert C. Wiseley
2nd Lt., AC

Over the target the lead ship was apparently hit by flak. As I saw the fire burning in the left rear bomb bay the ship continued on level for some time. I saw six chutes leave the plane. The ship then went into a right bank and continued this way until it was out of my sight.

S/Sgt. Lee C. xxxxxx
37554415

I was flying as navigator in the #4 plane xxx flight behind the lead plane piloted by Lieutenant Hesser. It appeared to me that the lead plane was hit by flak in the bomb bay where it caught on fire. Several men started to bail out. The plane dropped its bombs prematurely, went down, leveled off after several thousand feet.

Joseph Cherman
1st Lt., AC

	Rank	U.S.A. Name	ASN	ME-925
DATE: July 25 44 at	Major	Burke, William	0-409947	
1100	1st Lt.	Hesser	0-682863	
PLACE: near xxxxxxx	2nd Lt.	Pagoto, Joseph	0-709960	
TYPE: Liberator	1st Lt.	Lowe, Samuel Franklin	0-805308	
766 Sqd	1st Lt.	Sullivan, Joseph A.	0-749799	
461 Group	1st Lt.	Logue, William H.	0-671458	
BASE: Torretta	Sgt.	Lotendre, Paul L.	18056723	
TARGET: Hq.	S/Sgt.	Proud, David Eugene	36458929	
Hoersching				

REPORT ON SHOT-DOWN AIRCRAFT

DATE AND TIME AIRCRAFT WAS SHOT DOWN **25 July 1944,** CASUALTY NO. **ME-1701**
PLACE OF CRASH **xxxxxxx**
TYPE OF AIRCRAFT **Liberator**
REPORTING OFFICE **Air Base Hq Hoersching**

NAME	RANK	SERIAL NUMBER	CAPT'D WOUNDED DEAD	PLACE OF INTERNMENT
Logue, William H. 21 Sept xx	1st Lt.	0-671458	Captured	Dulag Luft
Lowe, Samuel F 9 Nov xx	1st Lt.	0-805308	Captured	Dulag Luft
XXXXXX, XXXX X	S/Sgt.	xxxxxxx	Captured	Dulag Luft
Pagoto, Joseph 6 May 21 Detroit, Mich.	2nd Lt.	0-709960	Captured	Dulag Luft
Sullivan, Josph A. 1 July 19	1st Lt.	0-749799	Captured	Dulag Luft
Burke, William	Major	0-409947	Captured	Dulag Luft

Casualty No: ME-1952 **First supplemental report, dated xx August 1944**

Proud, David Eugene 19 Sept 22	S/Sgt.	36458929	Captured	Dulag Luft
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REMARKS:
Dulag Luft: 7 August 1944. Wo.

CASUALTY NO.
KSU-1701

REPORT ON SHOT-DOWN AIRCRAFT

DATE AND TIME AIRCRAFT
WAS SHOT DOWN: **25 July 44**

PLACE OF CRASH:

TYPE OF AIRCRAFT: **Liberaider**

REPORTING OFFICE: **Air Base Command Hoersching near Linz on
Danube 3 Aug 44**

CREW

SURNAME, AND **Proud**
FIRST NAME: **David E.**

DATE OF BIRTH:

RANK: **S/Sgt.**

SERIAL NUMBER: **36458929**

CAPTURED: **Captured** WOUNDED: DEAD:

DISTRIBUTION: WHICH CAMP: TYPE OF INJURY:

GRAVE LOCATION:

REMARKS: 1 Id tag

CASUALTY NO.
KSU-1701

REPORT ON SHOT-DOWN AIRCRAFT

DATE AND TIME AIRCRAFT
WAS SHOT DOWN: **25 July 44**

PLACE OF CRASH:

TYPE OF AIRCRAFT: **Liberaider**

REPORTING OFFICE: **Air Base Command Hoersching near Linz 27 July
44**

CREW

SURNAME, AND **Logue**
FIRST NAME: **William H.**

DATE OF BIRTH:

RANK: **Lt.**

SERIAL NUMBER: **0-671458 T43**

CAPTURED: **Captured** WOUNDED: DEAD:

DISTRIBUTION: WHICH CAMP: TYPE OF INJURY:

GRAVE LOCATION:

REMARKS:

CASUALTY NO.
KSU-1701

REPORT ON SHOT-DOWN AIRCRAFT

DATE AND TIME AIRCRAFT
WAS SHOT DOWN: **25 July 44**

PLACE OF CRASH:

TYPE OF AIRCRAFT: **Liberaider**

REPORTING OFFICE: **Air Base Command Hoersching near Linz on
Danube 27 July 44**

CREW

SURNAME, AND **Lotendre**
FIRST NAME: **Paul L.**

DATE OF BIRTH:

RANK: **S/Sgt.**

SERIAL NUMBER: **31266273 T43**

CAPTURED: **Captured** WOUNDED: DEAD:

DISTRIBUTION: WHICH CAMP: TYPE OF INJURY:

GRAVE LOCATION:

REMARKS:

CASUALTY NO.
KSU-1701

REPORT ON SHOT-DOWN AIRCRAFT

DATE AND TIME AIRCRAFT

WAS SHOT DOWN: **25 July 44**

PLACE OF CRASH:

TYPE OF AIRCRAFT: **Liberaider**

REPORTING OFFICE: **Air Base Command Hoersching near Linz on
Danube 27 July 44**

CREW

SURNAME, AND **Burke**
FIRST NAME: **William**

DATE OF BIRTH:

RANK: **Major**

SERIAL NUMBER: **0-409947 T41-43 AB**

CAPTURED: **Captured** WOUNDED: DEAD:

DISTRIBUTION: WHICH CAMP: TYPE OF INJURY:

GRAVE LOCATION:

REMARKS:

CASUALTY NO.
KSU-1701

REPORT ON SHOT-DOWN AIRCRAFT

DATE AND TIME AIRCRAFT

WAS SHOT DOWN: **25 July 44**

PLACE OF CRASH:

TYPE OF AIRCRAFT: **Liberaider**

REPORTING OFFICE: **Air Base Command Hoersching near Linz on
Danube 27 July 44**

CREW

SURNAME, AND **Lowe, Jr.**
FIRST NAME: **Samuel**

DATE OF BIRTH:

RANK: **Lt.**

SERIAL NUMBER: **0-805308 T-43-42**

CAPTURED: **Captured** WOUNDED: DEAD:

DISTRIBUTION: WHICH CAMP: TYPE OF INJURY:

GRAVE LOCATION:

REMARKS:

CASUALTY NO.
KSU-1701

REPORT ON SHOT-DOWN AIRCRAFT

DATE AND TIME AIRCRAFT

WAS SHOT DOWN: **25 July 44**

PLACE OF CRASH:

TYPE OF AIRCRAFT: **Liberaider**

REPORTING OFFICE: **Air Base Command Hoersching near Linz on
Danube 27 July 44**

CREW

SURNAME, AND **Pagoto**
FIRST NAME: **Joseph**

DATE OF BIRTH:

RANK: **2nd Lt.**

SERIAL NUMBER: **0-709960 T42-44**

CAPTURED: **Captured** WOUNDED: DEAD:

DISTRIBUTION: WHICH CAMP: TYPE OF INJURY:

GRAVE LOCATION:

REMARKS:

AG 201-Westfall, Coy, Jr., (Enl)-C
(9 Nov 44)

2nd Ind.

JKR/on

HQ., MTOUSA, APO 512, U. S. Army, 26 November 1944.

TO: Commanding General, Fifteenth Air Force, APO 520, U. S. Army

1. Records this office and the War Department indicate MACR was never received.
2. Request true copy be submitted in duplicate with least practicable delay.

By command of Lieutenant General McNarney:

/s/ Jack K. Roberts
1st Lt., AGD
Asst. Adjutant General.

AG 201 – WESTFALL, Coy, Jr. (EM) 3rd Ind.
HQ, FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE, APO, US ARMY, 1 December 1944.

GP:B:rb

TO: CG, MTOUSA, APO 512. ATTN: Casualty Branch.

1. Complied with.

For the Commanding General:

/s/ Windle D. Reel
Major, Air Corps
Assistant AG.

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name David E. Proud Rank S/Sgt. Serial No. 36458729
 2. Organization 461st Gp Commander Glantzberg Rank Col Sqn CO Dooley Rank Major.
 3. What year 1944 month July day 25 did you go down?
 4. What was the mission, bombing tank works, target, Linz, Austria, target time, 1110, altitude, 24,000 ft route scheduled, no knowledge, route flown some deviation dur to flak.
 5. Where were you when you left formation? Lead ship of group.
 6. Did you bail out? Yes.
 7. Did other members of crew bail out? Yes.
 8. Tell all you know about when, where, how each person in your aircraft for whom no individual questionnaire is attached bailed out. A crew list is attached. Please give facts. If you don't know, say: "No knowledge". I saw an unidentified crew member jump out from the forward bomb bay. Also saw Sgt. Lotendre, the tail gunner, dive out the camera (escape) hatch head first. I followed him. This was perhaps two minutes after we were hit & set afire.
 9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? Vicinity of Linz.
 10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) No knowledge.
 11. Where were they in aircraft? No knowledge.
 12. What was their condition? No knowledge.
 13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? .
 - 14 Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. I had never met the crew members before this mission, so I know nothing about their number of missions, etc.
- I was captured a week later, Aug 1, 1944, and subsequently met only Sgt. Lotendre, our tail gunner. At that time he said he thought all except the pilot, and possibly the top turret gunner had safely cleared the plane. /s/ David E. Proud

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **KIMBLE, Robert H.**

Rank: **S/Sgt.**

Serial number: **33080791**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Right Waist Gunner**

Did he bail out? **No knowledge.**

Where? **No knowledge.**

If not, why not? **No knowledge.**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Routine check in on interphone about 15 minutes before loss of plane.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen? **On the ground just before we took off.**

Any hearsay information: **At the time of bailing out, Sgt. Kimble was seen removing his flak suit preparatory to bailing out. He was not injured and appeared ready to leave ship.**

Source: **S/Sgt. P. L. Lotendre, crew-member and tail gunner that day.**

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **None.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **About 44.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **No knowledge.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **WESTFALL, Coy Jr.**

Rank: **S/Sgt.**

Serial number: **15337761**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Top Turret Gunner**

Did he bail out? **No knowledge.**

Where? **No knowledge.**

If not, why not? **No accurate knowledge.**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Routine check in on interphone about 15 minutes before loss of plane.**

Was he injured? **No personal knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen? **In ship at time of take off.**

Any hearsay information: **Yes: According to hearsay he was limp in his top turret at the time we bailed out. Fire from enemy A/C had hit that portion of the plane in which he was stationed. I heard from fellow prisoners who were in ships behind us in formation that our plane exploded less than a minute after survivors bailed out.**

Source: **Lt. Sam F. Lowe, navigator and Lt. Joseph Pagoto, radar.**

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **I presume that he stayed in the ship.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **Approx 44.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **No detail knowledge.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **TYLER, George T.**

Rank: **Cpl.**

Serial number: **18056723**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Tail Turret Gunner**

Did he bail out? **No knowledge.**

Where? **No knowledge.**

If not, why not? **See above.**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Routine check in on interphone about 15 minutes before loss of plane.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen? **On the ground just before take off.**

Any hearsay information: **I heard from S/Sgt. P. L. Lotendre that he was alive in the ship at the time Lotendre bailed out.**

Source: **P. L. Lotendre, S/Sgt., crewmember, tail gunner that day.**

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **No knowledge.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **No knowledge.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **No knowledge.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **HESSER, Joseph B.**

Rank: **2nd Lt.**

Serial number: **0-682863**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Pilot**

Did he bail out? **No knowledge.**

Where? **No knowledge.**

If not, why not?.

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Interphone contact with him within 15 minutes before loss of plane.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen? **I saw his feet on the deck from where I was in nose just before I bailed out.**

Any hearsay information: **He was preparing to leave ship but was still in pilot's seat when navigator and radar operator left. He apparently was not injured. He did keep the ship under control enabling all of us to bail out.**

Source: **Lt. Sam Lowe, nav. & Lt. Joe Pagoto, radar.**

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **Knowing the man very well, I presume he stayed in the ship too long to see whether he could do anything for Sgt. Westfall who was still in the top turret. Sgt. Westfall was our (Lt. Hesser's) original crew. He was always deeply concerned about the welfare of his crew and I know would try to do all in his power for any of them at any time. I personally feel I owe my life to him.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **Approximately 40.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **No knowledge of all of them.**

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name Joseph A. Sullivan Rank 1st Lt. Serial No. 0-749799.
2. Organization 461st Gp Commander Glantzberg Rank Col Sqn CO Dooley Rank Major.
3. What year 1944 month July day 25 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, Linz, Austria, target, H. Goehring Tank Works, target time, 1100, altitude, 23,800 ft route scheduled, as briefed, route flown as briefed.
5. Where were you when you left formation? Just beyond I.P. about 13 mi. S.E. of Linz.
6. Did you bail out? Yes.
7. Did other members of crew bail out? Maj. Burke, Lts. Lowe, Pagoto and Sgt. Lotendre. I personally saw these men on ground after I was captured.
8. Tell all you know about when, where, how each person in your aircraft for whom no individual questionnaire is attached bailed out. A crew list is attached. Please give facts. If you don't know, say: "No knowledge". All of the above (7) bailed out at same location I did. See item #5.
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? No knowledge.
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) No knowledge.
11. Where were they in aircraft? No knowledge.
12. What was their condition? No knowledge.
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? Sgt. Lotendre, Dulag Luft Frankfurt Ger. & at LeHavre Fr.; Lt. Sam Lowe, Stalag Luft I and LeHavre, Fr.; Maj. Wm Burke Stalag Luft I & LeHavre and in this country, Miami Bch.; Lt. Pagoto, Stalag Luft I; Lt. Logue, Stalag Luft I.
- 14 Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. No additional information.

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **TYLER, George T.**

Rank: **Cpl.**

Serial number: **18056723**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Tail Turret Gunner**

Did he bail out? **No knowledge of Tyler.**

Where?;

If not, why not?;

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Interphone talks before reaching Initial Point.**

Was he injured?;

Where was he when last seen?;

Any hearsay information?;

Source?;

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **I believe Cpl. Tyler failed to clear the plane before it exploded, and was killed at that time.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **No knowledge.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **No knowledge.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **WESTFALL, Coy, Jr.**

Rank: **S/Sgt.**

Serial number: **15337761**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Top Turret Gunner**

Did he bail out? **No knowledge.**

Where?;

If not, why not?;

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Before reaching IP.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen?;

Any hearsay information?;

Source?;

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **I think Sgt. Westfall was injured or killed when our plane was hit by fighter fire near the forward side of the bomb bay.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **No knowledge.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **No knowledge.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Kimble, Robert H.**

Rank: **S/Sgt.**

Serial number: **33080791**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Right Waist Gunner**

Did he bail out? **No knowledge although I thought he had.**

Where?;

If not, why not? **Explosion might have occurred too soon.**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **I tapped the right waist gunner (Kimble) and pointed to the fire in bomb bay.**

Was he injured? **No.**

Where was he when last seen? **At his position – preparing to bail out.**

Any hearsay information:;

Source:;

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **I think his chute might have failed to open or he was killed by Germans on the ground. He was behind me ready to jump when I bailed out through the camera (escape) hatch.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **No knowledge.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **No knowledge.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **HESSER, Joseph B.**

Rank: **1st Lt.**

Serial number: **0-682863**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Pilot**

Did he bail out? **No knowledge.**

Where?;

If not, why not?;

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Over interphone before reaching IP.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen?;

Any hearsay information: **Sgt. Lotendre expressed doubt if the pilot had time to clear the ship when I met the Sgt. At Dulag Luft several days later.**

Source: **Sgt. Paul Lotendre.**

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **I believe he stayed with the ship getting it out of the formation and then had no time to bail out before the explosion.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **No knowledge.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **No knowledge.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **HESSER, Joseph B.**

Rank: **1st Lt.**

Serial number: **0-682863**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Pilot**

Did he bail out? **Unknown.**

Where?;

If not, why not?;

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Continuous conversation during bomb run between pilot and myself, radar operator.**

Was he injured? **No.**

Where was he when last seen? **Entering flight deck from pilot's compartment.**

Any hearsay information: **None.**

Source:;

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **None.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **Approx. 45.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **Unknown.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **WESTFALL, Coy, Jr.**

Rank: **S/Sgt.**

Serial number: **15337761**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Top Turret Gunner**

Did he bail out? **No.**

Where?:

If not, why not? **Killed instantly by neck and head wounds.**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Refilled oxygen tanks on his turret 30 minutes before I.P.**

Was he injured? **Killed.**

Where was he when last seen? **In top turret.**

Any hearsay information:.

Source:.

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **Dead due to neck and head wounds.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **Unknown.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **Unknown.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **TYLER, George T.**
Rank: **Cpl.**
Serial number: **18056723**
Position: Crew (Bomber) **Tail Turret Gunner/Left Waist Gunner**

Did he bail out? **Yes (Tail Gunner information).**

Where? **13 miles east of Linz, Austria.**

If not, why not?.

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **None.**

Was he injured? **No (tail gunner information).**

Where was he when last seen? **Bailing out of rear escape hatch (seen by tail gunner).**

Any hearsay information: **First two parachutes to leave ship were seen burning after they were opened. Cpl. Tyle's was probably one of them.**

Source: **Lead bombardier of 'B' Flight.**

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **Probably dead because of burning parachute.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **Unknown.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **Unknown.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **KIMBLE, Robert H.**

Rank: **S/Sgt.**

Serial number: **33080791**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Right Waist Gunner**

Did he bail out? **Yes (Tail Gunner information).**

Where? **13 miles east of Linz, Austria.**

If not, why not?.

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **None.**

Was he injured? **No (tail gunner information).**

Where was he when last seen? **Bailing out of rear escape hatch (seen by tail gunner).**

Any hearsay information: **First two parachutes to leave ship were seen burning after they were opened. S/Sgt. Kimble's was probably one of them.**

Source: **Lead bombardier of 'B' Flight.**

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **Probably dead because of burning parachute.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **Unknown.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **Unknown.**

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name **Joseph Pagoto** Rank **1st Lt.** Serial No. **0-709960.**
2. Organization **461st Gp** Commander **Glantzberg** Rank **Col** Sqn CO **Burke** Rank **Major.**
3. What year **1944** month **July** day **25** did you go down?
4. What was the mission, **Linz, Austria,** target, **Goehring Tank Works,** target time, **1140,** altitude, **24,500 ft** route scheduled, , route flown.
5. Where were you when you left formation? **Lead ship.**
6. Did you bail out? **Yes.**
7. Did other members of crew bail out? **Yes – co-pilot; navigator; bombardier; nose gunner; tail gunner; radio operator.**
8. Tell all you know about when, where, how each person in your aircraft for whom no individual questionnaire is attached bailed out. A crew list is attached. Please give facts. If you don't know, say: "No knowledge". **Co-pilot, out bomb bay; navigator, out nose hatch; bombardier, out nose hatch; nose gunner, out nose hatch; tail gunner, out tail hatch; radio operator, out tail hatch; I went out through bomb bay.**
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? **Unknown.**
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) **Top turret gunner.**
11. Where were they in aircraft? **Top turret.**
12. What was their condition? **Dead.**
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above?.
- 14 Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. **None.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Tyler, George T.**

Rank: **Cpl.**

Serial number: **18056723**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Tail Turret Gunner**

Did he bail out? **No knowledge of this man. Sgt. Lotendre.**

Where? **Was tail turret gunner – I saw Sgt. Lotendre at the transient camp in Wetzlar, Germany about the 1st of Aug. 1944.**

If not, why not?;

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **None Radio operator shot away.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen? **No knowledge.**

Any hearsay information: **None.**

Source:;

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **None.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **No knowledge.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **No knowledge.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **WESTFALL, Coy, Jr.**

Rank: **S/Sgt.**

Serial number: **15337761**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Top Turret Gunner**

Did he bail out? **No definite knowledge.**

Where? **Vicinity of Linz, Austria.**

If not, why not? **Sgt. Westfall was not in turret at time of bail out.**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **None.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen? **In top turret at beginning of fighter attacks.**

Any hearsay information: **None.**

Source:.

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **None. I assume he had left because he was no longer in his turret and not on command deck.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **No knowledge.**

Dates and destinations if possible: .

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **KIMBLE, Robert H.**

Rank: **S/Sgt.**

Serial number: **33080791**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Right Waist Gunner**

Did he bail out? **No knowledge.**

Where?;

If not, why not? **No knowledge – alarm bell warned and was rung.**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **None.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen?;

Any hearsay information: **Sgt. Lotendre, tail turret gunner, thought men in waist had bailed out.**

Source:;

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **None.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **No knowledge.**

Dates and destinations if possible:;

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **HESSER, Joseph B.**

Rank: **1st Lt.**

Serial number: **0-682863**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Pilot**

Did he bail out? **No knowledge.**

Where?;

If not, why not? **No idea. He was ready to leave.**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **None. Radio equipment shot away.**

Was he injured? **Not when last seen.**

Where was he when last seen? **Ready to leave pilot's seat.**

Any hearsay information: **None, except that all exits were blocked by fire. Top hatch was only means of escape, unless jumping through fire in bomb bay.**

Source: **Personal observation.**

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **See above. Aircraft was on auto pilot, Lt. Hesser was ready to leave. He had unbuckled safety belt. I had no radio contact with him. He had rung alarm bell for bail out.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **About 40.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **No knowledge.**

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name William Burke Rank Lt. Col. Serial No. 0-409947.
2. Organization 461st Gp Commander Glantzberg Rank Col Sqn CO Burke Rank Major.
3. What year 1944 month July day 25 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, Linz, Austria, target, Herman Goehring Tank Works, target time, 1130, altitude, 25,500 ft route scheduled, Up Adriatic, across Alps, on to Linz to IP, route flown Same.
5. Where were you when you left formation? 1 min. from bombs away.
6. Did you bail out? Yes.
7. Did other members of crew bail out? Yes.
8. Tell all you know about when, where, how each person in your aircraft for whom no individual questionnaire is attached bailed out. A crew list is attached. Please give facts. If you don't know, say: "No knowledge". No knowledge.
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? No knowledge.
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) No knowledge.
11. Where were they in aircraft? No knowledge.
12. What was their condition? No knowledge.
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? Lt. Hesser, in good condition, unbuckling safety belt.
- 14 Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. No knowledge.

Hq AAF, Pentagon Building
AC/AS-S Rm: 30-133 Ex.6018

Lt. Col. J. J. Smith
Chief, Notification Section
Personal Affairs Branch
Personnel Services Division

1. Enclosed are completed missing air crew forms.
2. Cpl. Tyler, was not a crew member to my knowledge. However, the enlisted personnel were new to me. I did not know any of them except Sgt. Lotendre (acted tail turret gunner). He had flown with me before and had special briefings on formation flying and reporting stragglers, etc. He was in the tail turret before fighter attacks started, informing me of the condition and number of the formation. Later in the transient camp at Wetzlar, Germany he further stated that all crew members had heard the alarm and was preparing to bail out. Smoke and fire grew intense and he did not ascertain the exact number bailing out.
3. Lt. Hesser and I were definitely the only personnel left on the command deck. Intense fire and smoke filled the bomb bay so observation was made of the rear of the ship.
4. I would appreciate any information on missing crew members. Above is my present address. Any help I can be to you while you work will be most willing and prompt.

William Burke
Lt. Col., AC

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Tyler, George T.**

Rank: **Cpl.**

Serial number: **18056723**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Tail Turret Gunner**

Did he bail out? **No information.**

Where?;

If not, why not? **No information.**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **No contact.**

Was he injured? **No information.**

Where was he when last seen? **In waist position.**

Any hearsay information: **None.**

Source:;

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **None.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **Unknown.**

Dates and destinations if possible:;

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **WESTFALL, Coy, Jr.**

Rank: **S/Sgt.**

Serial number: **15337761**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Top Turret Gunner**

Did he bail out? **No.**

Where?;

If not, why not? **Killed by 22 mm from fighters (enemy).**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **None.**

Was he injured?;

Where was he when last seen? **In his turret.**

Any hearsay information:;

Source:;

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition:;

Total number of missions of above crew member: **Approx. 45.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **Not known.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **KIMBLE, Robert H.**

Rank: **S/Sgt.**

Serial number: **33080791**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Right Waist Gunner**

Did he bail out? **No information.**

Where?:

If not, why not? **No information.**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **None.**

Was he injured? **No information.**

Where was he when last seen? **In waist.**

Any hearsay information: **None.**

Source:.

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **None.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **Unknown.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **Unknown.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **HESSER, Joseph B.**

Rank: **1st Lt.**

Serial number: **0-682863**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Pilot**

Did he bail out? **I do not think so.**

Where?;

If not, why not? **Delayed – to assure crew a chance to leave.**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **I informed him to follow P.D.J. He replied “Roger”.**

Was he injured? **I do not think so.**

Where was he when last seen? **In his seat.**

Any hearsay information: **I believe that Lt. Hesser (a very competent officer) while keeping the plane in a flying attitude to assure crew members a chance to bail out delayed too long and lost his life when the aircraft exploded.**

Source: **Major Burke, Lt. Lowe, Lt. Pagoto, Lt. Sullivan.**

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **See above.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **About 45.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **Unknown.**

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name William Theodore Logue Rank Capt. Serial No. 0-671458.
2. Organization 461st Gp Commander Glantzberg Rank Col Sqn CO Burke Rank Major.
3. What year 1944 month July day 25 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, Linz, Austria, target, Herman Goehring Tank Works, target time, 1107, altitude, 23,500 ft route scheduled, Up Adriatic, across Alps, on to Linz to IP, route flown Same.
5. Where were you when you left formation? Half distance from IP to target.
6. Did you bail out? Yes.
7. Did other members of crew bail out? Six – to my knowledge.
8. Tell all you know about when, where, how each person in your aircraft for whom no individual questionnaire is attached bailed out. A crew list is attached. Please give facts. If you don't know, say: "No knowledge". Unreadable.
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? Unreadable.
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) Sgt. Westfall & possibly Lt. Hesser.
11. Where were they in aircraft? Sgt. Westfall in his turret. Lt. Hesser in his seat.
12. What was their condition? Sgt. Westfall dead; Lt. Hesser alive.
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? All officers in Stalag Luft I at Berth, Germany.
- 14 Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. None.

11 December 1945

AFPPA-8-FE

SUBJECT: Staff Sergeant Coy Westfall, Jr., 15337761

TO: Lt. Col. John J. Smith, Air Corps
Chief, Notification Section
Personal Affairs Branch
Personnel Services Division, AC/AS-1

Sir:

To the best of my knowledge the following is an accurate report of the July 25, 1944 mission of the 461st Bomb Group (H) objective – the Hermann Goering Tank Works at Linz, Austria:

1. Take off time was approx. 0600 hrs. and was uneventful as was the wing and Air Force line rendezvous. Our group consisted of twenty seven (27) aircraft as we crossed the Italian coast seemed in line behind the 484th Bomb Group, the Air Force lead. The 451st Bomb Group followed the 461st to complete the wing.

We passed Zagreb, Yugoslavia at approx. 0800 hrs. flying at an estimated altitude of 18,000 ft. We passed to the left going north and attracted light inaccurate flak from a four gun battery. The bursts were out right and low. The flight went according to plan until we reached the Initial Point. Here it seemed that the 484th swung too wide and out back sharply in order to hit the I.P. and start their bomb run from the briefed heading. This was largely responsible for the 461st being three minutes late at the I.P. (briefed E.T.A. 11:04 – actual time of arrival 11:07). It is possible that we swung too wide here because Major William Burke (Command Pilot) kept urging the pilot, Lt. Hesser, to close the gap between the 484th and 461st by cutting short and applying more power. Lt. Hesser tried to do this but refused to place the group in a position where we would be in the prop wash of the 484th. As we crossed the I.P. we were trailing the 484th by ½ mile or more. It is my belief that this was largely responsible for the Luftwaffe's decision to attack our group, also responsible was the fact that the formation was very loose at this time, whereas before the I.P. it had been very good. This in part was due to inexperienced flight leaders and abortions. The group at this time consisted of twenty-two (22) aircraft flying a diamond formation. I am uncertain about the distribution of these aircraft except for "A" Flight which contained six (6) planes.

At the start of the bomb run Lt. Samuel F. Lowe, the lead navigator, gave Lt. Hesser a course correction that would eliminate as much course correction on my part as lead bombardier as was possible. At this point he told me to take over and asked if I could take over. I replied that I was ready and that I could see the target. I then called Lt. Joseph (NMI) Pagoto, the radar operator, and told him that this would be a visual run but would like for him to follow through in case the target became obscured. (The smoke pots had just started as we reached the I.P. and very thin streamers of smoke were drifting across the

target.) It seemed at this time that the first three groups would be able to make visual runs before the smoke screen became effective.

As soon as my conversation with Lt. Pagoto ended I started my first course correction and Lt. Hesser began to follow P.D.I. (the bomb run was flown manually). It was at this time Major Burke started asking all officers if they were sure we were lined up with the target. Lt. Lowe was asked first and his reply was in the affirmative. Lt. Sullivan, nose turret navigator, was asked second and his reply was also in the affirmative. Before he could ask me I assured him my cross-hair lay across the M.P.I. and that very little correction remained to be made. That was the last time I was able to break in on the interphone. Major Burke insisted that the target was to the right and tried to convince Lt. Hesser to make a correction. Lt. Hesser could not possibly have replied vocally due to the fact Major Burke was holding his mike button down, Lt. Hesser continued to follow my corrections. Major Burke seemed overly excited and especially when he began to see flak bursting near us. Now he was thoroughly convinced we should correct to the right. He thought this to be 88 millimeter flak but actually it was 20 millimeter from fighters which were attacking us at the time. No announcement was made over the interphone of this attack due to the fact that the gunners could not break in on the interphone. None of the officers knew there were fighters in the vicinity until we had opened our parachutes. I knew we were outside the flak some but could not make this known to Major Burke.

As near as I can estimate, we received our first hits at approx. 11:08/50 and the second hits at 11:08/55. It was apparent from the vibration that we had suffered direct hits. Simultaneously with the first hits Lt. Pagoto called out, "Fire in the bomb bays!" This was the last time any conversation was heard over the interphone. It is possible that the second hits or the fire that followed severed the interphone system and possibly the electrical system as no bail-out bell was heard by any members of the crew.

Lt. Pagoto's attention was attracted to the bomb bays due to a piece of hrapnel. This may have been the burst that killed Sergeant Westfall. It was immediately after this that, Lt. Pagoto and Lt. Lowe told me later, Sergeant Westfall's feet were seen to be hanging limply and his top turret continued to track slowly around. The fire Lt. Pagoto reported had started in the vicinity of the pottcocks in the front left hand bomb bay (Note: To my knowledge the pottcocks were not drained before flight). As I heard Lt. Pagoto's warning, I had just made a course correction and while Lt. Hesser was compensating for this I looked back into the bomb bay. My field of vision was limited by the nose wheel gear but I could see flames in the left front bomb bay, I also saw Lt. Lowe step down from the flight deck and assumed that he was going to make an effort to extinguish the flames. (I did not know at this time that the flames were beyond control and Lt. Lowe was in search of his parachute.) By this time Lt. Hesser had compensated for my correction and as I had heard no order to bail out I returned to the bomb sight and made another correction. During this time we received our second hits and I looked into the bomb bays again. (Lt. Hesser continued to follow P.D.I.) By now the bomb bays were a raging inferno. I observed Lt. Pagoto standing on the cat walk adjusting his parachute as Major Burke rushed by Lt. Pagoto and jumped from the bomb bay.

It now became evident that it was unfeasible to continue the bomb run and that we would be unable to save the ship. It was also apparent that we were very slowly losing altitude and had begun a very slight turn to the left. I salvoed my bombs (we were carrying the 1000 lb. bombs with two smoke grenades attached) and then opened the nose turret door and signaled to Lt. Sullivan to bail out. It was then that I noticed the 1000 lb. bomb in the left front bomb bay had not released so I pushed my salvo lever down again but the bomb refused to release. Apparently the bomb release mechanism had been fouled by the 20 millimeter or the flames.

Lt. Sullivan and I then removed our flak suits, adjusted our parachutes and prepared to abandon the ship. I left first by the nose wheel door and as I did so observed Lt. Lowe coming forward through the tunnel to follow Lt. Sullivan. When I was out in the air I was in a position to observe the damage to the ship. The left wing tip had been shot off for eight feet, the left wing had been perforated by numerous hits, the left landing gear was down as were the left flaps, the number two engine was seventy degrees to its usual position and flames had burned out the entire bomb bays and were sweeping the length of the ship. I opened my parachute soon after bailing out at approx. 23,000 ft. because I expected the ship to explode any second and believed I might be rendered unconscious by the explosion. My parachute had just opened when the ship broke into two pieces, the left wing breaking away from the fuselage and exploding, followed by the explosion of the remainder of the plane. I then turned my attention to ascertain how many of the crew had escaped. Below me I counted three chutes but was unable to identify them and two chutes above me I knew to be Lt. Lowe and Lt. Sullivan. Looking back toward the remainder of the group, I could see that except for our ship "A" flight remained intact and Lt. Robert Arbuthnot, leader and only remaining ship of "D" flight, coming up to take our place in "A" flight. I could not see any ships in "C" flight and only one ship remained in "B" flight. This lone plane belonged to Lt. Olson and was later shot down by fighters after passing over the target. I also observed that the bombs from the 484th were landing squarely on the target.

The air was filled with burning B-24's and B-17's, P-38's and Fw-190's were engaged in dog fights over a large area. As I neared 18,000 ft. a lone Fw-190 coming out of a steep turning dive to the left saw us and turned in our direction. It is impossible to say with any degree of accuracy whether he intended to strafe us or take pictures with his gun camera. Regardless of his intentions, his turn was too tight and he skidded out of range and continued by us approx. 150 ft. away looking in our direction with his left wing low. Unobserved to him a lone P-38 below and behind saw him and gave chase catching the Fw-190 as he reached the lower man and started a climbing turn to the right, the Fw-190 exploded.

The remainder of the descent was uneventful until I neared 200 ft. when some unseen to me fired three shots from a high-powered rifle in my direction. At the first shot I held my hands above my head in the position of surrender. I never saw this person nor was I fired on again. I landed in a large tree and was momentarily winded. As soon as I recovered I removed my harness and made my way to the ground. I hid my Mae West but was unable to remove my parachute from the tree. For the next three days I marched south meeting numerous people on mountain paths, rural roads and highways. On meeting those

people, I would nod and smile and encountered no trouble. Those people only looked at me with surprise and passed on. It is possible that most of those people knew that I was an Allied flier. I was dressed in a green electric flying suit (pants & pocket from which I had removed all labels and wires) and still wore my flying boots and electric liners. I did not have shoes. When I wore my boots out I walked in my liners with my boots over my shoulder. Once during my march I walked beside three girls for approx. one mile. They seemed to ignore my presence and did not speak. Another time as I neared the outskirts of the town of Perg, I passed a party of four Luftwaffe men and one Navy man. I passed down the main street of Perg at approx. 1700 hrs. apparently unnoticed. I was captured while asleep the next morning approx. five miles south of Perg. The capturing party consisted of four civilians, one Luftwaffe soldier, and one police constable. The police constable and two civilians escorted me to the local jail where I was booked as a criminal to the Riech. It was here that I met Major Burke who had been captured twelve hours previous. Following a brief interrogation by an English speaking secretary, we were taken by rail to a Gestapo Concentration camp north of Linz, Austria. After a fourteen hour stay there in solitaire cells (ten men to a cell), the eighty or more men confined here were taken to Wells Airdrome, south and west of Linz, and from there proceeded through regular Luftwaffe interrogation channels.

2. Enclosed will be found a clipping from Star & Stripes of an account by Lt. Robert Arbuthnot of the attack on our plane. If possible, I desire to have this clipping returned.
3. To the best of my knowledge, Sergeant Westfall was killed by the first burst. For the most accurate information concerning Sergeant Westfall, I advise writing Lt. Samuel F. Lowe, and Lt. Joseph (NMI) Pagoto.
4. It is my belief that Lt. Hesser stopped on his way to bail out to see what was wrong with Sergeant Westfall and this in large part was responsible for his being still in the plane when it exploded.

The fact that Lt. Hesser was able to keep his aircraft in a flying attitude is a lasting tribute to his superb flying ability. Pilots inform me that this was impossible with a ship as badly damaged as ours was.

To my knowledge, Lt. Hesser has not been recommended for any award.

/s/ William H. Logue
Capt., 0-671458
323 South Brittain Street
Shelbyville, Tennessee

LAW OFFICES
SAMUEL F. LOWE, JR.
830 Grant Building Walnut Road
Atlanta 3, Georgia

November 29, 1945

Lt. Col. John J. Smith
Chief, Notification Section
Personal Affairs Branch
Personnel Services Division, AC/AS-1
HQ, AAF, Washington, D.C.

Re: AFPPA-8-EH

Dear Sir:

I have recently received from you a letter regarding a certain S/Sgt. Coy Westfall, Jr., the second copy of which I return herewith.

On July 25, 1944, I was Squadron Navigator Officer for the 766th Squadron, 461 Group. I was assigned on that date to act as group lead navigator on the mission to which you seem to refer. As a staff officer, I was acquainted with all of the officers with whom I flew that day, but I had never met any of the enlisted men who were assigned to the aircraft. The enlisted man who acted as engineer also was top turret gunner. After the plane had been shot down, and when several of the officers were in prison camp together, I was informed by 1st Lt. Joseph Sullivan that the name of the top turret gunner was Westfall. I do not, however, have any personal knowledge regarding this fact. Some persons who represented themselves as being parents or relatives of a Sgt. Westfall have communicated with me through my wife with respect to him. I reported to them that I was unable to give any information and that I had made a full report on the matter to proper authorities.

Between May 15 and June 6, 1945, while I was at Camp Lucky Strike in France, I am under the impression that I made a written report of this mission. I also think that I made such a report before I went to Miami Beach for reclassification. These reports were made at a time when I had recently talked with the other officers who were in the plane, and might well be more relevant than what I can tell you now.

The extremely sweeping request made in your letter makes necessary, in my opinion, these preliminary statements. You must understand that what I can now tell you is primarily my own recollection of events which happened very quickly, more than a year ago. I shall, however, indicate where I give impressions and where statements are, as nearly as I know, facts.

At 1109 Baker Time (as used in 15th AAF Missions), on the date referred to, the group had just reached the initial point and was turning on the bomb run toward the target, the Tank Works at Linz, Austria. At that time, I was in my place, directly behind the pilot,

Lt. Hesser, and across from the radar operator, Lt. Pagoto. Shortly before the time referred to, I had noticed that the upper turret gunner had faced his turret to the rear of the plane, so that I could not see the upper part of his body at all. Very soon after we had completed the turn at the I.P., and while I was working with the radar operator and the bombardier, I felt the sort of ripping in the fuselage which I had thought some experience associated with flak, etc. Being accustomed to this sort of thing, I did not stop working. Shortly, the radar operator notified us over the interphone that there was a fire in the bomb bay. It was on my side of the bomb bay, and I could not see it. At about the same time, there was another shock as if shell fragments striking the plane. It was at this time, as best I can say, that a piece of metal struck me on the head, just below my flak helmet and another piece struck my left leg. I believe, but am not at all certain, that the radar operator sustained very slight wounds at that time. It was during the portion of the attack on us when I was hurt that the upper turret gunner was struck. The shells that struck me were apparently merely tiny pieces of those which struck him.

After the second attack on us, the radar operator rose from his seat to survey the damage, taking his chute with him. Almost at the same moment, Major Wm. Burke, co-pilot and air commander for the group, rose from his seat. Both went to the entrance to the bomb bay. Later, Pagoto informed me that Burke had attempted to push him out of the plane, but as Pagoto did not have on his chute, he moved aside and first Burke jumped while Pagoto put on his chute. During this time, neither of them had looked toward the upper turret. However, from my seat, I could tell that there was something wrong with the gunner. The pilot had not made a signal to abandon ship, but at about the time Burke jumped, Hesser made an effort to talk over the interphone and pushed the red button. I saw these motions. I then got up, ducked under the turret and looked up. I saw the body of the gunner at that time. The upper part of his chest was out into two parts just at the top of the flak suit. I immediately concluded that the gunner was dead, as I had already supposed. It is now my opinion and my best recollection of the circumstances that he was dead.

I then went through the tunnel toward the nose, intending because of the now fierce fire in the bomb bay to leave through the nose wheel door. When I reached the nose, I stood erect and looked back through the pilot's compartment to see if Hesser was gone. I could not then see him. I then bailed out through the nose wheel door.

I regret that since I have not been informed of the purpose of this statement that I cannot be more clear in content or in form. I feel, however, that this is substantially what happened, so far as my personal knowledge is concerned. I do not comment on damage to the plane, though I have been informed that the left wing and the tail surfaces were almost completely shot off.

The letter to me comes at a time when I have been wondering for several months whether or not those of us who were on that mission will ever be informed as to whether our personnel records have returned to the United States. I received a certificate of service without having any sort of efficiency record or rating placed on it. While I feel sure that your office has no connection with such matters, I wanted to mention this for what it is worth.

I will be happy to make other and further statements with reference to this matter when ordered.

Respectfully,
/s/ Samuel F. Lowe, Jr.

23 November 1945

SUBJECT: Staff Sergeant Coy Westfall, Jr., 15337761

TO: First Lieutenant Samuel F. Lowe, Jr.
432 Candler Street, Northwest
Atlanta, Georgia

1. Records of this headquarters indicate that you were the navigator of the air crew of which subject enlisted man was the top turret gunner on the date that he was reported missing in action, 25 July 1944.
2. It is requested that you furnish this headquarters with all information which you may have concerning the mission in which you participated on 25 July 1944.

BY COMMAND OF GENERAL ARNOLD,

John J. Smith
Lt. Col., Air Corps
Personal Affairs Branch
Personnel Services Division, AC/AS-1

SQUADRON "K"
1060TH AAF BASE UNIT (ORD)
GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

3 December 1945

SUBJECT: Staff Sergeant Coy Westfall, Jr., 15337761

TO: Chief, Notification Section, Personal Affairs Branch,
Personnel Services Division, Washington 25, D.C.

1. In reference to your letter dated 23 November 1945 the following information is submitted: I was the radio operator on the aircraft in question. As the ship was in lead position of the group I stayed at the radio. The crew according to a list furnished me by the War Dept consisted of:

1st Lt. Joseph B. Hesser – Pilot
Maj. William Burke – Co-Pilot
1st Lt. Samuel F. Lowe, Jr.
1st Lt. William H. Logue
2nd Lt. Joseph Pagoto – Radar Navigator
1st Lt. Joseph A. Sullivan
S/Sgt. Davis E. Proud – Radio Operator
S/Sgt. Robert H. Kimble
S/Sgt. Coy Westfall, Jr. – Top Turret Gunner
S/Sgt. Paul L. Lotendre
Cpl. George T. Tyler

2. On July 25, 1944, our target was Linz, Austria. While on our bomb run our ship was hit and caught fire with no warning. Fighters had attacked our Group. I left the ship from the Camera Hatch (B-24) following Sgt. Lotendre, the tail gunner, after I had warned the two (2) waist gunners. I had already observed one man bail out from the front of the plane. After my chute opened I observed six parachutes in the vicinity, and saw some flaming wreckage falling which probably was our ship.

I was made prisoner seven days later and arrived at a German Transit camp at Wetllar, near Frankfurt, on 5 August 1944. While there I met Sgt. Paul L. Lotendre who told me the other surviving crew members had already been sent on to permanent prison camps. It was his opinion at that time that one, possibly two crewmen had failed to get out of the ship.

3. I had never met any of the crew prior to that mission so I did not even know their names. As the ship was hit towards the forward part of the bomb bay, it is possible that Sgt. Westfall was also hit. I have already written Mrs. Westfall concerning her son.
4. I hope this information may be of some help to you.

Respectfully yours,

/s/ T/Sgt. David E. Proud, 36458929

23 November 1945

SUBJECT: Staff Sergeant Coy Westfall, Jr., 15337761

TO: Major William Burke
Xxxx xxxxxxxx Street
XXXXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX

1. Records of this headquarters indicate that you were the navigator of the air crew of which subject enlisted man was the top turret gunner on the date that he was reported missing in action, 25 July 1944.
2. It is requested that you furnish this headquarters with all information which you may have concerning the mission in which you participated on 25 July 1944.

BY COMMAND OF GENERAL ARNOLD,

John J. Smith
Lt. Col., Air Corps
Personal Affairs Branch
Personnel Services Division, AC/AS-1

SECTOR CENTER 0, 475 BU
HAMILTON FIELD
CALIFORNIA

12 December 1945

SUBJECT: Information regarding mission 25 July 1944 regarding
Staff Sergeant Coy Westfall, Jr. 15337761

TO: Lt. Col. John J. Smith, Chief, Notification Section
Personal Affairs Branch, Personnel Services Division, AC/AS-1

1. On the 25th of July, 1944 I was co-pilot aboard B-24 No. 44.4 leading the 461st Bombardment Group on a raid to Linz, Austria. The mission proceeded with little flak and no fighter opposition until the time we turned on the bomb run, which started about 25 miles north of Linz on an approximate south-southwest heading.
2. At this point our formation was hit by approximately 170 enemy fighters, attacking in waves of 7 to 14 from the rear and below the formation. At the moment of attack S/Sgt. Westfall was in the top turret.
3. We received some 20mm incendiary burst along the wing, in the rear of the ship and through the bomb bay. A large fire started. A second wave of fighters pumped more 20 mm's into us. At the time of the first attack I was on VHF controlling the formation and later switched to another channel to call our fighters. The alarm bell had been sounded and bail out ordered by the pilot. When I looked around after the second burst of shells, there was no longer anyone on the command deck and apparently the last person on the deck was diving through the bomb bay flames. At this time S/Sgt. Westfall was not on the command deck or in the top turret. There was no interphone, it had been shot out, but I believe that all were either out or getting out except Lt. Hesser, the pilot, and me.
4. As I left the command deck, there was no one in the top turret. Some time later I questioned Sgt. Lotendre, the tail gunner, who had no knowledge of S/Sgt. Westfall. At a later date I saw Lt. Sullivan, Lt. Lowe, Lt. Pagoto and our bombardier, none of whom had any knowledge of S/Sgt. Westfall or Lt. Hesser.
5. My address is at the top of this letter. I would appreciate any information on either Lt. Hesser or S/Sgt. Westfall. Any further information that I may be able to supply will be sent to you.

/s/ William Burke
Maj., AC

23 November 1945

SUBJECT: Staff Sergeant Coy Westfall, Jr., 15337761

TO: First Lieutenant William H. Logue
605 Jefferson Street
Shelbyville, Tennessee

1. Records of this headquarters indicate that you were the navigator of the air crew of which subject enlisted man was the top turret gunner on the date that he was reported missing in action, 25 July 1944.
2. It is requested that you furnish this headquarters with all information which you may have concerning the mission in which you participated on 25 July 1944.

BY COMMAND OF GENERAL ARNOLD,

John J. Smith
Lt. Col., Air Corps
Personal Affairs Branch
Personnel Services Division, AC/AS-1

November 29, 1945

Lt. Col. John J. Smith
Chief, Notification Section
Personal Affairs Branch
Personnel Services Division, AC/AS-1
HQ, AAF, Washington, D.C.

Re: AFPPA-8-EH

Dear Sir:

I have recently received from you a letter regarding a certain S/Sgt. Coy Westfall, Jr., the carbon copy of which I return herewith.

On July 25, 1944, I was Squadron Navigation Officer for the 766th Squadron, 461 Group. I was assigned on that date to act as group lead navigator on the mission to which you seem to refer. As a staff officer, I was acquainted with all of the officers with whom I flew that day, but I had never met all of the enlisted men who were assigned to the aircraft. The enlisted man who acted as engineer also was top turret gunner. After the plane had been shot down, and when several of the officers were in prison camp together, I was informed by 1st Lt. Joseph Sullivan that the name of the top turret gunner was Westfall. I did not, however, have any personal knowledge regarding this fact. Some persons who represented themselves as being parents or relatives of a Sgt. Westfall have communicated with me through my wife with respect to him. I reported to them that I was unable to give any information and that I had made a full report on the matter to proper authorities.

Between May 15 and June x, 1945, while I was at Camp Lucky Strike in France, I was under the impression that xx I made a written report of this mission. I also think that I made such a report before I went to Miami Beach for reclassification. More reports were made at a time when I had recently talked with the other officers who were in the plane, and might well be more relevant than what I can tell you now.

The extremely sweeping request made in your letter makes necessary, in my opinion, these preliminary statements. You must understand that what I can now tell you is primarily my own recollection of events which happened very quickly, more than a year ago. I shall, however, indicate where I give impressions and where statements are, as nearly as I know, facts.

As 1109 Baker Time (as used in 15th AAF Mission), on the date referred to, the group had just reached the initial point and was turning on the bomb run toward the target, the Tank Works at Linz, Austria. At that time, I was in my place, directly behind the pilot, Lt. Hesser, and across from the radar operator, Lt. Pagoto. Shortly before the time referred to, I had noticed that the upper turret gunner had faced his turret to the rear of the plane, so that I could not see the upper part of his body at all. Very soon after we had completed the turn at the I.P., and while I was watching with the radar operator and the bombardier, I felt the sort of ripping in the fuselage which I had thought some experience associated with flak, etc. Being accustomed to this sort of thing, I did not stop working. Shortly, the radar

operator notified us over the interphone that there was a fire in the bomb bay. It was on my side of the bomb bay, and I could not see it. At about the same time, there was another shock as of shell fragments striking the plane. It was at this time, as best I can say, that a piece of metal struck me on the head, just below my flak helmet and another piece struck my left leg. I believe, but am not at all certain, that the radar operator sustained very slight wounds at that time. It was during the portion of the attack on us when I was hurt that the upper turret gunner was struck. The shells that struck me were apparently merely tiny pieces of those which struck him.

After the second attack on us, the radar operator rose from his seat to survey the damage, taking his chute with him. Almost at the same moment, Major Wm. Burke, co-pilot and air commander for the group, rose from his seat. Both went to the entrance to the bomb bay. Later, Pagoto informed me that Burke had attempted to push him out of the plane, but as Pagoto did not have on his chute, he moved aside and first Burke jumped while Pagoto put on his chute. During this time, neither of them had looked toward the upper turret. However, from my seat, I could tell that there was something wrong with the gunner. The pilot had not made a signal to abandon ship, but at about the time Burke jumped, Hesser made an effort to talk over the interphone and pushed the red button. I saw these motions. I then got up, ducked under the turret and looked up. I saw the body of the gunner at that time. The upper part of his chest was out into two parts just at the top of the flak suit. I immediately concluded that the gunner was dead, as I had already supposed. It is now my opinion and my best recollection of the circumstances that he was dead.

I then went through the tunnel toward the nose, intending because of the now fierce fire in the bomb bay to leave through the nose wheel door. When I reached the nose, I stood erect and looked back through the pilot's compartment to see if Hesser was gone. I could not then see him. I then bailed out through the nose wheel door.

I regret that since I have not been informed of the purpose of this statement that I cannot be more clear in content or in form. I feel, however, that this is substantially what happened, so far as my personal knowledge is concerned. I do not comment on damage to the plane, though I have been informed that the left wing and the tail surfaces were almost completely shot off.

The letter to me comes at a time when I have been wondering for several months whether or not those of us who were on that mission will ever be informed as to whether our personnel records have returned to the United States. I received a certificate of service without having any sort of efficiency record or rating placed on it. While I feel sure that your office has no connection with such matters, I wanted to mention this for what it is worth.

I will be happy to make other and further statements with reference to this matter when ordered.

Respectfully,
/s/ Samuel F. Lowe, Jr.

HEADQUARTERS
Santa Rosa Army Air Field
Office of the Counter Intelligence Officer
Santa Rosa, California

14 November 1945

SUBJECT: Interrogation of Former POW's

THRU: Commanding General, Fourth Air Force, San Francisco 6, California.
Attn: AC of S, A-2
Commanding General, Continental Air Forces, Bolling Field,
Washington 20, D.C.

TO: Commanding General, Army Air Forces, Washington 25, D.C.
Attn: Personal Affairs Branch, Room 4315, Munitions Building.

1. The information below is submitted in compliance with the provisions of Letter from CG CAF to CU 4AF file 363.6 (2 Oct 45) dated 2 Oct 45 and 1st Indorsement thereto.

a. Name, Rank, and ASN of Casualty:

Lt. Hesser, J.

b. Crew Position:

Pilot

c. Unit:

461st Bomb Gp. 766th Sqdn.

d. Date last seen:

July 25, 1944

e. Place last seen:

In flight 20 mi North of Linz, Austria

f. Circumstances of loss of aircraft:

Approximately 18, 20mm incendiaries in wing and bomb bay were burning badly.

g. Known information (eyewitnesses):

Alarm and bail out order given, crew bailed, but do not know whether Lt. Hesser bailed out.

h. Hearsay information:

None

i. All other information with estimate of reliability:

None

j. Name, ASN, and unit of reporter:

William Burke /s/
Major, Air Corps
0-409947

REPORT ON SHOT-DOWN AIRCRAFT

DATE AND TIME AIRCRAFT WAS SHOT DOWN **25.7.44 – 11.00,** CASUALTY NO. **ME-1701**
PLACE OF CRASH **b. Mathausen**
TYPE OF AIRCRAFT **Liberator**
REPORTING OFFICE **Fl.R.Kdtr. Hoersching**

NAME	RANK	SERIAL NUMBER	CAPT'D WOUNDED DEAD	PLACE OF INTERNMENT
Logue, William Harrison 21.9.21 Shelbyville, Tenn.	1st Lt.	0-671458	Gef.	Dulag-Luft
Lowe, Samuel Franklin, Jr. 9.11.18	1st Lt.	0-805308	Gef.	Dulag-Luft
Lotendre, Paul S. Xxxxxxm N.H.	S/Sgt.	31266273	Gef.	Dulag-Luft
Pagoto, Joseph 5.5.21 Detroit, Mich.	2nd Lt.	0-709960	Gef	Dulag-Luft
Sullivan, Joseph A. 1.7.18	1st Lt.	0-749799	Gef.	Dulag-Luft
Burke, William	Maj.	0-409947	Gef.	Dulag-Luft

REMARKS:
Dulag Luft: 7.8.44. Wo.

Gefechtsbericht des Batteriechefs der 2./145 (E)
über Abschussvorgang vom 25.7.44 um 11.11 Uhr.

Die Batterie bekämpfte von 11,05 – 11,11 einen Pulk Liberator. Die Höhe des Verbandes lag bei 7000 s und die Vh betrug 100 m/sek.

Um 11.09⁵ Uhr zeigte sich bei einer Maschine Treffermerkmale und die Maschine scheuerte aus dem Verband heraus. Gegen 11,10 Uhr konnte die Batterie beobachten wie die Maschine in der Luft zerplatzte. Vorher hatte die Maschine einen Höhenverlust von ca. 600 m.

Die Absturzstelle liegt bei Schwertberg.

Von der Besatzung sind 3 Mann tot., dieselben sind in Schwertberg beigesetzt. Der Rest der Besatzung geriet in Gefangenschaft.

Der Verband wurde mit optischer Ortung mit Kdo.-Ger.40 bekämpft. Er wurde mit 3 Geschützen der 12,8 cm 40 beschossen.

Die Batterie hatte keine personellen noch materiellen Verluste. Der Munitionsverbrauch betrug 51 Schub 12,8 cm.

/s/ Hauptmann u.Battr.-Chef.

Abschrift

Auganseugenbericht von Abschun, einer Liberator in Winden bed Schwertberg.

Joh kan von einen Spaxiergang hein und sah einen Verband Feindnaschinen uber Winden fliegen. Sekunden darauf sah ish tiefliegenden Flakfeuer au Verband. In Bruchteilen von Sekunden kixurte ich wieder mehen, dab die Flak genau in den Verband schob und aus dancelberg ein Flugreug herauchoh. Es danerte nicht lange und es hagelton achon die Flugnaugteile im Unkrais von Winden und Josefetal ab. Die Haschine hat es echon in der Enft serrissen und Peile davon etursten orennard auf den Boden.

Gez.: Walkner, Peter,
Winden Kr. 24
Post Schwertberg

Abschrift

Augenzeugenbericht von Abschun, einer Liberator in Winden bei Schwertberg.

Kurz nach Fliegeralarm beobachtete ich einen feindlichen Verband über Winden. An dem Verband lag gut liegendes Flakfeuer und ich sah auch wie eine Maschine aus demselben herausgeschossen wurde. Die Maschine hat es gleich darauf zerrissen. Teile davon eintrouand auf den Boden gestürzt, wogegen wieder Teile davon erst beim Aufschlagen in Brand gerieten. Die abgestürzten Flugzeugteile liegen im Unkraut von Winden, Josefstal und Doppel. Die Teile wurden von den Gendarmerieposten Schwertberg neuacht.

Gez.: Johaan Kohourt
Gendnaramericanmister
Posteuflarer

German Reports on Crashed American Aircraft

Date	Time	Place	Height
25 Jul 44	1100.00	Schwertberg	7000 m.
Aircraft type	Identification markings	Serial No.	
Liberator	USA	B-29 H-16 DT No. 444 yellow AAF Serial No. 41,2885, NSP Stand 17 Bonbrak USA 2265/5	

How aircraft landed Airframe Destroyed
Crashed on fire, single parts came off. Exploded

Fate of the crewmembers
3 bodies buried in Schwertberg, rest captured

Cause of loss
The a/c was one of a formation. It was hit and the tail and wing came off. The a/c caught on fire and exploded in the air. It became detached from the formation and crashed. Parachutes were seen to emerge from the a/c. Another a/c of the same formation was hit and caught on fire. The a/c crashed, parachutes were seen to leave the a/c.

Major William Burke	Mrs. Phoebe xxxxxxxx (Mother) East Mifflin Street Xxxxxxxxxx, Pennsylvania
1 st Lt. Joseph B. Hesser	Mrs. W. J. Hesser (Mother) Rural Free Beltway Five North xxxxxx, Indiana
1 st Lt. Samuel F. Lowe, Jr.	Mrs. Xxxxxxx B. Lowe (Wife) 432 xxxxxxxx Street, Northeast Atlanta, Georgia
1 st Lt. William H. Logue	Mrs. Kittie M. xxxxxx (Mother) 685 Jefferson Street Shelbyville, Tennessee
2 nd Lt. Joseph Pagoto	Mrs. Frances Pagoto (Mother) 3835 Crane Avenue xxxxxxx, Michigan
1 st Lt. Joseph A. Sullivan	Mrs. Rose M. Sullivan (Mother) xxxx Scott Paulton Street Chicago, Illinois
S/Sgt. David E. Proud	Mr. Richard Proud (Father) 529 Walnut xxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx, Michigan
S/Sgt. Robert H. Kimble	Mr. Arlington A. Kimble (Father) 2653 West Third Street Williamsport, Pennsylvania
S/Sgt. Coy Westfall, Jr.	Mrs. Xxxxx J. Westfall (Mother) Harmony, West Virginia
S/Sgt. Paul L. Lotendre	Mrs. Xxxxx A. Lotendre (Mother) 9 Maple Street xxxxxx, New Hampshire
Cpl. George T. Tyler	Mr. Eugene B. Tyler (Father) 449 Van Clare Street Corpus Christie, Texas