

**WAR DEPARTMENT
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON**

The MISSING AIR CREW REPORT

11805

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 270°
Target Linz, Austria Type of mission Combat
3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED:
Scattered and low broken clouds
4. GIVE: [a] Date 20 January 1945 Time 1240 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 J AAF Serial Number 44-48761
7. NICKNAME OF AIRCRAFT: _____
8. ENGINES: Type, model & series P&W R1830-65 AAF serial Number [a] BP-327968
[b] BP-327949 [c] BP-328063 [d] BP-327969
9. INSTALLED WEAPONS: [Make, type and serial number] All Browning Cal. 50
- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| [a] <u>LN 1757889</u> | [e] <u>LB 1757660</u> | [i] <u>LT 1757360</u> |
| [b] <u>RN 1757886</u> | [f] <u>RB 1757321</u> | [j] <u>RT 1757485</u> |
| [c] <u>LU 1757973</u> | [g] <u>LW 1759714</u> | |
| [d] <u>RU 1757772</u> | [h] <u>RW 1757275</u> | |
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	O'Neal, Joseph M. 2nd Lt. 0-827039		Albert J. O'Neal (Father) J2 S Reservoir Rd., Buckley, West Virginia
[2] CP	Rothe, Roderick E. 2nd Lt. 0-827970		Clarence H. Rothe (Father) 1133 S. Quincy St., Green Bay, Wisconsin
[3] Bomb	Teller, Donald S. 1st Lt. 0-1184596		Louis Teller (Father) 1821 East 47 th St. Terrace, Kansas City, Missouri
[4] Nav	Knoke, Norman E. 2nd Lt. 0-723376		Ernest H. Knoke (Father) 2728 N. Sacramento Ave., Chicago, Illinois
[5] RWG	Martin, Donald M. T/Sgt. 16027324		Nola Martin (Mother) 1100 East Jefferson St., Effingham, Illinois
[6] LWG	Keenan, Francis T. Sgt. 36022335		Joseph Keenan (Father) 6720 South Bell Ave., Chicago, Illinois
[7] NTG	Rossini, Gino F. Cpl. 36778369		Elda Rossini (Mother) 352 Locust St., Chicago, Illinois
[8] TTG	Ellis, Thomas R. Cpl. 13187638		Jessie Ellis (Mother) 626 Wallis Ave., Farrell, Pennsylvania

[9] BTG Nowosilski, Harry Pfc
33788977

Rose Nowosilski (Mother)
2109 West 9th St., Chester
Pennsylvania

[10] TTG Mitchell, Burton F., Jr. Cpl.
14148527

Burton F. Mitchell (Father)
Arlington, Minnesota

[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] Francis X. Fink	2 nd Lt.	0-711629			X	
[2] Keith F. Ace	2 nd Lt.	0-558003			X	
[3] Jesse E. Pettey	2 nd Lt.	0-713545			X	
[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].

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: 20 January 1945

/s/ Robert A. Preciado
Capt., AC

766TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
461ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP
APO 520 US ARMY

20 January 1945

STATEMENT

We were flying no. 6 position. As we entered the bomb run the flak was very heavy. Ship no. 52 was leading C flight, 1st attack. Ship 52 was hit causing an explosion in the bomb bay. The ship then burst into flames. The bombs started to drop from the ship, then they turned over and the ship blew up. No parachutes were seen.

/s/ Francis X. Fink
2nd Lt., 0-711629

STATEMENT

Ship No. 52 was hit directly in the rear bomb bay by flak. It immediately caught fire, and after inverting itself, it exploded before reaching the ground. No parachutes were observed.

/s/ Keith F. Ace
2nd Lt., 0-558003

STATEMENT

Just as we released our bombs ship No. 52 was hit by flak. The ship burst into a mass of flames, turning over and to his right. At that time we had to pull out of formation to avoid being hit by ship No. 52. The ship then blew up and no parachutes were seen.

/s/ Jesse E. Pettey
2nd Lt., 0-713545

REPORT ON CAPTURE OF MEMBERS OF ENEMY AIR FORCE

POST: Hq of airfield

PLACE: Hoersching near Linz, Oberureal

REGARDING:

CRASHED: (Downed)

OF: one Liberator Nr. 44-48761

EM LANDING:

AT: 20 Jan 1945 at 1232

NAME (Last or Surname): O'Neal

FIRST NAME: Joseph M.

SERIAL NUMBER (USA): 0-821059 (according to notebook of Sgt. Martin)

RESULT (Dead or Captured): Dead

PLACE AND TIME OF CAPTURE:

NAME OF HOSPITAL:

PLACE, DATE AND TIME OF INTERNMENT:

REPORT ON CAPTURE OF MEMBERS OF ENEMY AIR FORCE

POST: Hq of airfield

PLACE: Hoersching near Linz, Oberureal

REGARDING:

CRASHED: (Downed)

OF: one Liberator Nr. 44-48761

EM LANDING:

AT: 20 Jan 1945 at 1232

NAME (Last or Surname): Rothe

FIRST NAME: Roderick R.

SERIAL NUMBER (USA): 0-821910 (according to notebook of Sgt. Martin)

RESULT (Dead or Captured): Dead

PLACE AND TIME OF CAPTURE:

NAME OF HOSPITAL:

PLACE, DATE AND TIME OF INTERNMENT:

REPORT ON CAPTURE OF MEMBERS OF ENEMY AIR FORCE

POST: Hq of airfield

PLACE: Hoersching near Linz, Oberureal

REGARDING:

CRASHED: (Downed)

OF: one Liberator Nr. 44-48761

EM LANDING:

AT: 20 Jan 1945 at 1232

NAME (Last or Surname): Rossini

FIRST NAME: Gino F.

SERIAL NUMBER (USA): 36778369 (according to notebook of Sgt. Martin)

RESULT (Dead or Captured): Dead

PLACE AND TIME OF CAPTURE:

NAME OF HOSPITAL:

PLACE, DATE AND TIME OF INTERNMENT:

REPORT ON CAPTURE OF MEMBERS OF ENEMY AIR FORCE

POST: Hq of airfield

PLACE: Hoersching near Linz, Oberureal

REGARDING:

CRASHED: (Downed)

OF: one Liberator Nr. 44-48761

EM LANDING:

AT: 20 Jan 1945 at 1232

NAME (Last or Surname): Knoke

FIRST NAME: N. E.

SERIAL NUMBER (USA): ?

RESULT (Dead or Captured): Dead

PLACE AND TIME OF CAPTURE:

NAME OF HOSPITAL:

PLACE, DATE AND TIME OF INTERNMENT:

REPORT ON CAPTURE OF MEMBERS OF ENEMY AIR FORCE

POST: Hq of airfield

PLACE: Hoersching near Linz, Oberureal

REGARDING:

CRASHED: (Downed)

OF: one Liberator Nr. 44-48761

EM LANDING:

AT: 20 Jan 1945 at 1232

NAME (Last or Surname): Ellis

FIRST NAME: T. R.

SERIAL NUMBER (USA): 13187638 (according to notebook of Sgt. Martin)

RESULT (Dead or Captured): Dead

PLACE AND TIME OF CAPTURE:

NAME OF HOSPITAL:

PLACE, DATE AND TIME OF INTERNMENT:

REPORT ON CAPTURE OF MEMBERS OF ENEMY AIR FORCE

POST: Hq of airfield

PLACE: Hoersching near Linz, Oberureal

REGARDING:

CRASHED: (Downed)

OF: one Liberator Nr. 44-48761

EM LANDING:

AT: 20 Jan 1945 at 1232

NAME (Last or Surname): Mitchell

FIRST NAME: Burton F.

SERIAL NUMBER (USA): 14148527 T 44 44 A

RESULT (Dead or Captured): Dead

PLACE AND TIME OF CAPTURE:

NAME OF HOSPITAL:

PLACE, DATE AND TIME OF INTERNMENT: in cemetery in Linz (further dates still unknown)

REPORT ON CAPTURE OF MEMBERS OF ENEMY AIR FORCE

POST: Hq of airfield

PLACE: Hoersching near Linz, Oberureal

REGARDING:

CRASHED: (Downed)

OF: one Liberator Nr. 44-48761

EM LANDING:

AT: 20 Jan 1945 at 1232

NAME (Last or Surname): Keenan

FIRST NAME: Francis T.

SERIAL NUMBER (USA): 36022335 T 41 43 O

RESULT (Dead or Captured): Dead

PLACE AND TIME OF CAPTURE:

NAME OF HOSPITAL:

PLACE, DATE AND TIME OF INTERNMENT: in cemetery in Linz (further dates still unknown)

ME KSU 2742

Liberator B-24

448 761

20 January 1945

Linz/Upper Danube

Anti Aircraft Artillery

Air For Base Command Fbl 1 for 20 January

P. 2nd Lt. O'Neal, Joseph M.

CP. 2nd Lt. Rothe, Roderick E.

N. 2nd Lt. Knoke, N. E.

B. ? ?

E. T/Sgt. Martin, Donald M.

G. Sgt. Keenan, Francis T.

G. Cpl. Mitchell, Burton F.

G. Cpl. Ellis, T. R.

G. Cpl. Rossini, Gino F.

G. Pfc. Nowosilski, Harry

German captured records Me KSU-2742 further show that Martin, D. M. ASN. 16027324 and Nowosilski, Harry ASN. 33183911 (according to notebook of Sgt. Martin) were captured near Linz.

Certified an accurate copy

/s/ C. E. Dreyfuss/ Transl

Hoersching – 22 January 1945

Air Force Base Command

Hoersching Transfer Command

Case: D (Luft) 2709

Ref. To: Shot down Liberator #44-48761 in Linz on Upper Danube on 20 January 1945

To: Evaluation Station, West Oberureal

The Transfer Command Hoersching transfers the following prisoner of way:

1. Sgt. Donald M. Martin and at the same time 1 letter pouch

Furthermore in Steyregg was captured a parachuted flyer G. F. Nowosilski, as yet not delivered.

Following a bomb explosion on account of crash of the plane, nothing more could be discovered, about the rest of the corpse. The identification of two of the crewmembers was made through identification tags. They were:

3. F. T. Keenan – 1 letter pouch
4. B. F. Mitchell – 1 letter pouch

Further the follow five crewmembers, according to Sgt. Martin statement, the tenth man's name is still unknown to him.

5. T. R. Ellis
6. N. E. Knoke
7. J. N. O'Neal
8. G. F. Rossini
9. H. E. Rothe

Because of restrictions, the cemetery in Linz would not bury the deceased.

Enclosure: 9 Form letters
3 letter pouches
1 package

Notice: Camp General Command XVII Air Forces Base Command 4/VIII Ic (with 9 form pages)

Certified an accurate copy

/s/ Claude E. Dreyfuss/ Trans.

REPORT ON SHOT-DOWN AIRCRAFT

DATE AND TIME AIRCRAFT
WAS SHOT DOWN **20 January 1945 - 1239,** CASUALTY NO. **ME-2742**
PLACE OF CRASH **Linz on the Danube**
TYPE OF AIRCRAFT **Liberator**
REPORTING OFFICE **Airbase HQ Hoersching**

NAME	RANK	SERIAL NUMBER	CAPT'D WOUNDED DEAD	PLACE OF INTERNMENT
Martin, Donald Max 25 Feb 22	T/Sgt.	16027324	Captured	Dulag-Luft West
Keenan, Francis T.	Sgt.	36022335	Dead	
Ellis, T. R.	Cpl.		Dead	
Rossini, Gino F.	Cpl.		Dead	
Mitchell, Burton F.	Cpl.	14148527	Dead	

REMARKS:
Dulag Luft: 9 Feb 45. Wo.

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **O'Neal, Joseph M.**
Rank: **2nd Lt.**
Serial number: **0-827039**
Position: Crew (Bomber) **Pilot**

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

Where? **No knowledge.**

If not, why not? **Not responsible (plane split in two, front part burning).**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Approaching target.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen? **Italy – air base.**

Any hearsay information: **All that were found were dead – some burned too bad to be recognized.**

Source: **German officers and prisoners of war who worked at ???? where ship dropped.**

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

Total number of missions of above crew member: **7.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **11/18/44, 11/19/44, Bleckhammer, Germany, North Italy, Linz, January.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Ellis, Thomas F.**
Rank: **Cpl.**
Serial number: **13187638**
Position: Crew (Bomber) **Top Turret 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: **No knowledge.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen? **Italy.**

Any hearsay information: **All members killed.**

Source: **German officer and Russian POW.**

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

Total number of missions of above crew member: **7.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **Bleckhammer, Villa Frana, Linz, Vienna, Northern Italy.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Mitchell, Burton F., Jr.**
Rank: **Cpl.**
Serial number: **14148527**
Position: Crew (Bomber) **Tail Turret 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: **No knowledge.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

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

Any hearsay information: **All members killed. Blonde haired boy burned to death.**

Source: **German officer and Russian POW.**

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

Total number of missions of above crew member: **8.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **Bleckhammer, Villa Frana, Linz, Vienna, Northern Italy.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Keenan, Francis T.**
Rank: **Sgt.**
Serial number: **36022335**
Position: Crew (Bomber) **Left 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: **No knowledge.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen? **Italy.**

Any hearsay information: **No knowledge.**

Source: **No knowledge.**

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

Total number of missions of above crew member: **9.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **11/18/44, 11/19/44 Bleckhammer, Germany, Linz, Austria, Villa Frana, Yugoslavia, Vienna, Austria.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Rothe, Roderick F.**
Rank: **2nd Lt.**
Serial number: **0-827970**
Position: Crew (Bomber) **Co-pilot**

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

Where? **No knowledge.**

If not, why not? **Not very possible.**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Checking oxygen at altitude.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen? **Italy Air base.**

Any hearsay information: **All members in front half of ship killed.**

Source: **Russian prisoners who worked around scene of landing.**

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

Total number of missions of above crew member: **6.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **11/18/44, 11/19/44 Bleckhammer, Germany, Linz, Austria, Villa Frana, Italy, Vienna, Austria.**

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name **Harry Nowosilski** Rank **Cpl.** Serial No. **33788977**
2. Organization **461th Gp Commander ?** Rank **Col** Sqn CO **Phillips** Rank **Capt.**
3. What year **1945** month **January** day **20** did you go down?
4. What was the mission, **bombing**, target, **marshalling yard, Linz Austria**, target time, **1230**, altitude, **23,000 ft** route scheduled, **No knowledge**, route flown **No knowledge**
5. Where were you when you left formation? **Floating down in rear part of ship.**
6. Did you bail out? **Yes.**
7. Did other members of crew bail out? **Yes, Engineer Donald M. Martin, T/Sgt.**
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 questionnaires answered for each member**
:
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) **Individual questionnaires.**
11. Where were they in aircraft? **Position designated.**
12. What was their condition? **No knowledge.**
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? **All members answered for. Did not see any members.**
- 14 Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. **No knowledge.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Rossini, Gino F.**
Rank: **Cpl.**
Serial number: **36778369**
Position: Crew (Bomber) **Nose Turret 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: **No knowledge.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen? **Italy.**

Any hearsay information: **All members killed.**

Source: **German officer and Russian POW.**

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

Total number of missions of above crew member: **8.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **Bleckhammer, Vienna, Villa Franca, Linz, Northern Italy.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Martin, Donald M.**
Rank: **T/Sgt.**
Serial number: **16027324**
Position: Crew (Bomber) **Right Waist Gunner**

Did he bail out? **Yes.**

Where? **Linz Austria.**

If not, why not?.

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

Was he injured? **Yes.**

Where was he when last seen? **After ship was hit.**

Any hearsay information: **Prisoner of war – returned to USA.**

Source: **Met him in France after liberation.**

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

Total number of missions of above crew member: **9 or 10.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **11/18/44, 11/19/44, Bleckhammer, Germany, Northern Italy, Vienna Austria, Linz, Austria.**

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Knoke, Norman T.**
Rank: **2nd Lt.**
Serial number: **0-723376**
Position: Crew (Bomber) **Navigator**

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: **No knowledge.**

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen? **Italy.**

Any hearsay information: **No knowledge.**

Source: **No knowledge.**

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: **Teller, Donald S.**
Rank: **1st Lt.**
Serial number: **0-1184596**
Position: Crew (Bomber) **Navigator**

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

Where? **No knowledge.**

If not, why not? **Not very possible.**

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

Was he injured? **No knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen? **Italy.**

Any hearsay information: **Killed from crash of plane – front half.**

Source: **Russian prisoners.**

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

Total number of missions of above crew member: **34.**

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

2nd Lt. Joseph M. O’Neal

**Mr. Albert J. O’Neal (Father)
128 Reservoir Road
Buckley, West Virginia**

2nd Lt. Roderick E. Rothe

**Mr. Clarence A. Rothe (Father)
1133 South Quincy
Green Bay, Wisconsin**

1st Lt. Donald S. Teller

**Mrs. Ester I. Teller (Mother)
1821 East 46th Terrace
Kansas City, Missouri**

2nd Lt. Norman E. Knoke

**Mr. Ernest H. Knoke (Father)
2827 North Sacramento Avenue
Chicago, Illinois**

T/Sgt. Donald M. Martin

**Mrs. Nola Martin (Mother)
1100 East Jefferson Street
Effingham, Illinois**

Sgt. Francis T. Keenan

**Mrs. Mable Keenan (Mother)
6720 South Bell Avenue
Chicago, Illinois**

Cpl. Thomas R. Ellis

**Mrs. Jessie Ellis (Mother)
626 Wallis Avenue
Chicago, Illinois**

Cpl. Gino F Rossini

**Mrs. Elda Rossini (Mother)
352 West Locust Street
Chicago, Illinois**

Pfc. Harry Nowosilski

**Mrs. Rose Nowosilski (Mother)
2109 West 9th Street
Chester Pennsylvania**

Cpl. Burton F. Mitchell, Jr.

**Mr. Burton F. Mitchell, Sr. (Father)
P.O. Box 306
Mount Holly, North Carolina**