

**WAR DEPARTMENT
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON**

The MISSING AIR CREW REPORT

13190

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 764th Bomb Sq (H)
2. SPECIFY: Place of departure Torretta, Italy Course straight to target
Target Vienna, Austria Type of mission Combat
3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED:
CAVU
4. GIVE: [a] Date 23 Mar 45 Time ____ Last known position 48°15'N, 16°35'E approx
[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-24J AAF Serial Number 44-41091
7. NICKNAME OF AIRCRAFT: None
8. ENGINES: Type, model & series R-1830-65A AAF serial Number [a] CP-325237
[b] BP-442706 [c] BP-447609 [d] BP-452799
9. INSTALLED WEAPONS: [Make, type and serial number] All Browning Cal. 50

[a] <u>1538276</u>	[e] <u>1537952</u>	[i] <u>1261239</u>
[b] <u>1203642</u>	[f] <u>1203487</u>	[j] <u>1261416</u>
[c] <u>1261547</u>	[g] <u>1261116</u>	
[d] <u>1539480</u>	[h] <u>1253733</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	Baird, William R., 1 st Lt. 0-825082	MIA	Mrs. Edna Baird (Mother) 708 So. First St., Dekalb, Illinois
[2] CP	Olson, Dwight B., 2 nd Lt. 0-2057382	MIA	Mr. Paul B Olson (Father) RR #7, Highland Sta, Minneapolis, Minn.
[3] Bomb	Wenslik, Edward T., 2 nd Lt. 0-773028	MIA	Mrs. Coralie L. Wenslik (Wife) 422 So. Sycamore Ave., Los Angeles, Cal.
[4] Nav	Davis, Richard C., 1 st Lt. 0-685555	MIA	Mr. Cedric W. Davis (Father) Essex Junction, Vermont
[5] RWG	Forster, John G., S/Sgt. 11081714	MIA	Mr. Thomas L. Forster (Father) 18 Townsend St., Waltham, Mass.
[6] LWG	Rice, John W., S/Sgt. 32976665	MIA	Mrs. Lucille M. Rice (Wife) 80 W. Grand St., Mt. Vernon, New York
[7] TTG	Sligar, Glenn A., S/Sgt. 39548073	MIA	Mrs. Mammie Sligar (Mother) 4923 Bell Ave., Bell, California
[8] NTG	Sanders, William F., S/Sgt. 33897008	MIA	Mrs. Lucille Sanders (Wife) Doncaster, Maryland
[9] BTG	Vaitkunas, William R., S/Sgt. 16080864	MIA	Mrs. Eva Zenkus (Mother) 2217 W. 23 rd St., Chicago, Illinois
[10] TTG	Smith, Marlin R., S/Sgt. 18009272	MIA	Mrs. Lillian Smith (Mother) Madisonville, Texas

[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] Wilbue L. Hughey	Cpl.	39468439		X		
[2] Sigmund L. Chestnut	Cpl.	35146194		X		

[3]

[4]

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

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

Other reasons [specify].

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: **No search made.**

Date: **26 March 1945**

/s/ Charles L. Summers
Major, Air Corps
Executive

764TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
461ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP
APO 520 US ARMY

STATEMENT

On the mission to Vienna on 23 March 1945, I was flying as tail gunner on our plane which was in no. 2 position and Lt. Baird in plane #7 was flying no. 3 position. Just about at bombs away Lt. Baird's number 2 engine was hiot by flak and knocked completely off the ship. He dropped back behind us with a fire in the wing of his plane. They made an unsuccessful attempt to put out the fire. Plane #7 lost altitude and dropped about 5,000 feet, crossed to our right below us and then I saw five (5) chutes come out and open. Lt. Baird's plane then went into a dive and exploded. I don't know for sure whether any more men were able to get out, but there is a slight possibility that while the plane was crossing under us some more men bailed out.

/s/ Wilbur L. Hughey
Cpl., 39468439
764th Bomb Sq (H)

STATEMENT

While flying on the mission to Vienna on 23 March 1945, I was ball turret gunner on our plane which was flying in no. 2 position. Lt. Baird's plane was flying in no. 3 position and just about at bombs away I heard on the interphone that the number 2 engine on his plane had been knocked completely off and his plane was afire. Lt. Baird's plane dropped down about 5,000 feet and crossed to our right and below us so that I got a good view of them all this time. I saw five (5) men bail out and their chutes open and saw one more which I can not be too certain of. The plane exploded almost as soon as this last man jumped. I cannot say for sure as to whether there were more men from Lt. Baird's plane who got out, but I am sure that five did successfully.

/s/ Sigmund L. Chestnut
Cpl., 35146194
764th Bomb Sq (H)

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY AIR FORCES

WASHINGTON

21 August 1945

SUBJECT: First Lieutenant William R. Baird, 0-825082

TO: Commanding General, Headquarters, OAF, A.P.O. 520
U. S. Army, Attention: N.A.A.C.C

1. This headquarters is in receipt of a request for details of death of First Lieutenant William R. Baird, 0-825082, 461st Bombardment Group (H), 764th Bombardment Squadron (H), missing in action on 23 March 1945, and subsequently reported killed in action on that date over Austria.

2. Request details of death be submitted to this headquarters with the least practical delay.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

/s/ N. W. Reed
Major, Air Corps
Chief, Notification Branch
Personal Affairs Division
Asst Chief of Air Staff-1

210

1st Ind.

C-JWC/rf

HEADQUARTERS OCCUPATIONAL AIR FORCE, AUSTRIA, APO 400, US ARMY,
30 August 1945

TO: Commanding General, AAF/MTO, APO 650, US Army

Information requested in basic correspondence is not available at this headquarters.
Subject officer was never a member of this organization.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

/s/ I. R. Stern
Capt, AGD
Adj Gen

3rd Ind.

HQ MTOUSA, APO 512, US Army, 3 October 1945.

TO: CG, Army Air Force, Washington 25, D.C.

1. The following statement made by 1st Lt. Richard C. Davis, 0-685555, a crew member of 1st Lt. William R. Baird's aircraft and now returned to military control, comprises all information available at this headquarters surrounding casualty status of subject officer:

"I was taken to a jail near an airfield near Vienna the day I was shot down. I met all of the crew, except the pilot, within the next few days. The German guard told us the pilot was found dead some distance from the wreck. We saw a very stained chute carried out with our flying equipment and taken away in a cart. We thought it must have been the pilot's. Some of the crew saw Baird's identification papers in the office where we turned ours in."

2. Casualty status of 1st Lt. Baird was changed to KIA 23 Mar 45 via MTO casualty card shipment # 151, cs.

FOR THE THEATER COMMANDER:

/s/ Charles N. Bourke
Major, AGD
Asst Adjutant General

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Baird, William R.**

Rank: **1st Lt.**

Serial number: **0-825082**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Pilot**

Did he bail out? **Yes according to Germans who captured me.**

Where? **Approx. 20 miles east of Vienna, Austria.**

If not, why not?

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Leaving pilot's seat as I was about to bail out.**

Was he injured? **No.**

Where was he when last seen? **Leaving pilot's seat.**

Any hearsay information: **Germans told me they found him dead a short distance from the plane.**

Source: **The Germans who captured me.**

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **Based entirely on what the Germans said.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **Approx. 33.**

Dates and destinations if possible: .

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name Dwight B. Olson Rank 2nd Lt. Serial No. 0-2057382
2. Organization 461st Gp Commander Rank Col Sqn CO Trommerhauser Rank Capt.
3. What year 1945 month March day 23 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, bombing, target, Vienna, target time, 1158, altitude, 26,000 ft
route scheduled, , route flown .
5. Where were you when you left formation? Over target.
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". All bailed out within vicinity of target. All prisoner at Mooseburg Stalag VII A.
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? Approx 20 miles east of Vienna.
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) None to my knowledge.
11. Where were they in aircraft?.
12. What was their condition?
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? In the plane as I was about to bail out. Lt. Baird was just leaving his seat.
- 14 Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information.

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Baird, William R.**

Rank: **1st Lt.**

Serial number: **0-825082**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Pilot**

Did he bail out? **As I heard from Germans he must have.**

Where? **About 35 km NE of Vienna in Wheatfield next to women labor camp.**

If not, why not? **If not because ship turned over and wing blew up.**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Last word was when he said bail out.**

Was he injured? **Not as far as I know. Could have been.**

Where was he when last seen? **Still in pilot's seat.**

Any hearsay information: **After a couple of days in Vienna our guards said he was found a short distance from the ship. His chute wasn't open. He might have hit the ship on leaving or it was too low to open.**

Source: **Most of the guards were Austrian and could speak English.**

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **I believe he must have struck the ship on leaving. It was turning over when I left it and I was out a while only the force opened mine since I had a hold of the rip cord.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **31.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **March 23 1945. Target was outside Vienna to the NE below the Danube River.**

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name Glenn A. Sligar Rank S/Sgt. Serial No. 39548073
2. Organization 461st Gp Commander Rank Sqn CO Parsonson Rank Capt.
3. What year 1945 month March day 23 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, Vienna, target, oil refinery, target time, 1200, altitude, 26,000 ft route scheduled, came in from NW, route flown Same.
5. Where were you when you left formation? Over the target.
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". All other eight bailed out – seven before me and one after.

For information concerning the pilot and a few things that happened at the time and after could be found out from some of the people around where we went down.

Two other members and myself landed about a mile from where the ship did. We did walk about a quarter of a mile to a wing that blew off. But we never got close to the ship.

We were taken to a camp of women that worked on radar and farms. It wasn't too large but seemed to be several hundred. This camp was next to a large open field of wheat. There was a small grove of trees in the middle of the field and that's where we landed then off about a mile was another grove where the ship hit and started a fire. Some of the officers at this camp should know what happened to the pilot and if dead when they buried him.

9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? 35 km NE of Vienna; 2 km NE of women's camp.
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) Not any as far as I know.
11. Where were they in aircraft?.
12. What was their condition?
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? The pilot was at the control and seemed to be OK. The radio mike switch was out and I did not talk to him. All he said was bail out.
- 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: **Baird, William R.**

Rank: **1st Lt.**

Serial number: **0-825082**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Pilot**

Did he bail out? **Not sure.**

Where?;

If not, why not?;

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Ordered us to bail out over interphone.**

Was he injured? **Not to my knowledge.**

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

Any hearsay information: **Found near airplane dead.**

Source: **German guards.**

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **The plane was in a bad spin and I believe he had trouble getting out and his chute didn't have time to open.**

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

Dates and destinations if possible:;

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name Richard C. Davis Rank 1st Lt. Serial No. 0-685555
2. Organization 461st Gp Commander Rank Sqn CO Rank.
3. What year 1945 month March day 23 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, bomb oil refinery, target, Plorsdorf refinery, Vienna, target time, 1250, altitude, 26,000 ft route scheduled, , route flown .
5. Where were you when you left formation? Leaving target.
6. Did you bail out? Yes.
7. Did other members of crew bail out? All but pilot.
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 but pilot and co-pilot bailed out at 20,000. Co-pilot couldn't have been over 5,000 ft high when he got out of the plane.
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? 15 miles east of Vienna.
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) None to my knowledge.
11. Where were they in aircraft?.
12. What was their condition?
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.

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Baird, William R.**

Rank: **1st Lt.**

Serial number: **0-825082**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Pilot**

Did he bail out? **Yes.**

Where? **Vienna, Austria.**

If not, why not?.

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **Gave the order to bail out.**

Was he injured? **No.**

Where was he when last seen? **In the ship.**

Any hearsay information: **German guards told me he was found dead on the ground.**

Source: **German guards.**

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

Total number of missions of above crew member: **33.**

Dates and destinations if possible:.

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name **Sanders, William T.** Rank **S/Sgt.** Serial No. **33897008**
2. Organization **461st Gp** Commander Rank Sqn CO Rank.
3. What year **1945** month **March** day **23** did you go down?
4. What was the mission, **33**, target, **Vienna**, target time, **1200**, altitude, **27,000 ft** route scheduled, , route flown .
5. Where were you when you left formation? **No 2 position.**
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? **10 miles east of Vienna.**
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) **None.**
11. Where were they in aircraft?.
12. What was their condition?
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.

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Baird, William R.**

Rank: **1st Lt.**

Serial number: **0-825082**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Pilot**

Did he bail out? **No.**

Where?;

If not, why not? **One reason why Lt. Baird didn't bail out – Just after we peeled off the target, after bombs away, our ship received a direct flak hit on #2 engine taking the whole engine completely off as far back as the leading edge of the left hand wing, which in turn set the left wing on fire. Part of the flak fragments came thru the nose directly over my head. These fragments came thru the nose at approximately 45' from #2 engine some hitting the bombardier's control panel and others knocking out my oxygen regulator high on my right hand side of the nose. This fact leads me to believe that Lt. Baird might have been hit by flak from this same burst of flak, seeing that it came 45' from #2 engine: or concussion of the bursting shell might have knocked him out, seeing that the shell burst was close enough to wipe off the complete engine. Lt. Olson, co-pilot, can furnish more accurate information on the concussion subject as he was sitting along side of Lt. Baird. Lt. Olson later told me in prison camp that the close proximidy of the exploding shell had momentarily knocked him out, meaning himself, Lt. Olson. Another reason whi I believe Lt. Baird didn't bail out – After the flak burst we dropped out of formation immediately started to go into a spin, but the ship straightened out for a few seconds thru the efforts of the pilot, at this point I bailed out, the ship then went into a spin. The centrifugal force of the spin might have prevented Lt. Baird from bailing.**

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **"Everyone OK" Said at the I.P..**

Was he injured? **As far as injury is concerned I believe statement #1 can answer this question and conclusions drawn there from. Lt. Olson, the co-pilot again would be the best man to answer this question.**

Where was he when last seen? **Lt. Baird was last seen by a German, an enlisted man who was a corporal in the Wermach (German Army) as he had a green uniform on. Upon being captured, two German enlisted men started to march myself and Lt. Davis (the navigator) across a field to the near vicinity of the fuselage; part of it as the ship blew up at approximately 5,000' it was to my right and below me when it blew up. Flying parts from the explosion passed me while I was still in the chute. As we approached the wreckage we were joined by my engineer, Sgt. Sligart and his one guard, and at this point one of the guards made a statement by motion of pointing to**

us was and then to the wreckage indicating that one of us was still in the ship, I started to brake away and go over to the wreckage, but one of the guards ran after me stuck a bayonet in my back and brought me back at the same time yelling Nix, Nix, Nix. The three of us were immediately taken away from the scene of the wreckage to Wiener Aspern Airfield just outside of Vienna. Another part of the fuselage fell in the Wiener Wald (Vienna Woods) and started a forest fire. A wing and part of the empennage laid in an open plowed field near where I landed.

Any hearsay information: As far as we all could figure it out, I was the third from the last out of the ship, Sgt. Sligart the next to the last and Lt. Olson the last one out. Lt. Olson later told us all in prison camp that the last time he saw Lt. Baird was the ship started to go into a spin as I bailed out thru the bomb bay, before I jumped Lt. Olson said, "I looked around and Lt. Baird had just raised his hands off the trim controls and was trying to raise himself out of the seat, then I jumped." Quote from Lt. Olson. This is all the hearsay information I have on Lt. Baird.

Source:;

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: A very important occurrence happened just by chance approximately four days later. Sixteen prisoners of war were placed upon a civilian train going from Vienna to Munich, among the sixteen of us were the nine members of the crew which lived. On this day I was sharing my seat with a Sgt. Of the Luftwaffe whom was one of my guards. He could speak English and had been at one time to America. This Sgt. Was in charge of the sixteen prisoners and had all our records and personal belongings which were taken from us at Wiener Aspern Airfield. This Sgt. Was so to speak a "pretty good egg" as he did all he could for us in the way of getting us food, and at times shared his own rations with us. On this particular day we were sitting along side of each other and he was sharing with me his bread and marge. Upon his lap he had his brief case with our records in it. During the course of conversation I became rather friendly with this Sgt. And in due time he opened up this brief case. In it was a number of brown envelops with our names typed upon the same, the rest of the typing was in German. In the course of going through these envelops I came upon one with the name of Lt. Baird typed upon it and underneath his name was the German word Tot which as I understand means dead or death in the German language. Under the word Tot was a place for listing belongings, all they had listed for Lt. Baird was his dog tags, upon seeing this I felt the envelop for the dog tags and felt them, but I did not open this envelope or see into it as it was sealed. On my envelope they had my name, under it was Kriegsgafangalin (prisoner of war) and under this a list of my belongings. Crash-tag (bracelet) and watch. I believe this to be the most accurate information possible to obtain to base the fate of my pilot, Lt. Baird, who went beyond the "call of duty" that day in fighting the ship to keep it from going into a spin, and then momentarily leveling it out with the trim tabs giving us all, the nine of us, time to jump.

Total number of missions of above crew member: 33.

Dates and destinations if possible: **Capt Parsonson CO of the 461 Bomb Gp, 764 Bomb Sq could furnish this information.**

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name Wenslik, Edward Theodore. Rank 2nd Lt. Serial No. 0-773028
2. Organization 461st Gp Commander Lawhon Rank Col Sqn CO Mixon Rank Maj.
3. What year 1945 month March day 23 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, Vienna, target, Floresdorf Oil Refinery, target time, 1200, altitude, 26,600 ft route scheduled, 286' from IP to target, route flown same.
5. Where were you when you left formation? Position #3 of A Flight. I was in the nose of the ship.
6. Did you bail out? Yes.
7. Did other members of crew bail out? Nine of us bailed out of a crew of 10. Lt. Baird, the pilot, didn't jump.
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 crew list attached.
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? 32 kilometers due east of Vienna. The ship blew up and landed in pieces in the Wiener Wald (Vienna Woods).
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) Lt. Baird, the pilot.
11. Where were they in aircraft? Pilot's seat.
12. What was their condition? Dead as I explained in attached form AFPPA-11.
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? Stalag Luft 7A Mooseburg at this time all my crew members except Lt. Baird were in fairly good shape, this was April 29, 1945 the day of our liberation, I later saw all eight of them in Camp Lucky Strike, La Harve, France.
- 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: **Baird, William R.**

Rank: **1st Lt.**

Serial number: **0-825082**

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: **About 30 minutes from target.**

Was he injured?.

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

Any hearsay information: **Information from German interrogator is that his parachute did not open when he bailed out and that he is buried in a cemetery near Vienna, Austria.**

Source: **German interrogator.**

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **He may have been wounded because he was closest to the engine that was hit and on fire.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **32 sorties.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **From about Sept 10 to March 23 flew combat.**

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name William R. Vaitkunas Rank S/Sgt. Serial No. 16080864
2. Organization 461st Gp Commander Glantzberg Rank Col Sqn CO Parsonson Rank Capt.
3. What year 1945 month March day 23 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, combat, target, Vienna, target time, 1200, altitude, 27,000 ft route scheduled, no knowledge, route flown.
5. Where were you when you left formation? One minute after 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". We all left in the waist aircraft about 20 or 30 miles from the target through the escape hatch in the waist – about the nose and pilots I have 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? On April 29 1945 I saw all of the crew except the pilot, co-pilot, engineer and bombardier at Mooseburg, Germany. The co-pilot and bombardier I last saw at Mooseburg on April 14. Engineer the same place April 20. Didn't see pilot after mission. Engineer was taken to hospital in Stalag 7A at Mooseburg on about April 20 with an infected throat. Co-pilot was taken there also on about April 14 with an injured hip. Engineer and armorer had injured ankles.
- 14 Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. .

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: **Baird, William R.**

Rank: **1st Lt.**

Serial number: **0-825082**

Position: Crew (Bomber) **Pilot**

Did he bail out?;

Where?;

If not, why not?;

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: **When I called him on the interphone to report #3 engine blown off.**

Was he injured? **Not to my knowledge.**

Where was he when last seen?;

Any hearsay information: **Reported by other crew members to have seen leaving his seat to go back to the bomb bay to bail out. Seen either by engineer or co-pilot.**

Source:;

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: **Saw what we thought was his chute – bloody and with bullet holes – at the first prison, Aspren Field, outside Vienna.**

Total number of missions of above crew member: **33.**

Dates and destinations if possible: **Available in records 461st B.G.**

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name John W. Rice Rank S/Sgt. Serial No. 32976665
2. Organization 461st Gp Commander Rank Sqn CO Rank.
3. What year 1945 month March day 23 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, Vienna, target, Floresdorf Refinery, target time, 1200, altitude, 26,000 ft route scheduled, , route flown.
5. Where were you when you left formation? Waist.
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) None.
11. Where were they in aircraft?.
12. What was their condition?.
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. .

1st Lt. William R. Baird	Mrs. Edna M. Baird (Mother) 708 South 1st Street Dekalb, Illinois
2nd Lt. Dwight B. Olson	Mr. Paul B. Olson (Father) Route 7 Highland Station Minneapolis, Minnesota
1st Lt. Richard C. Davis	Mr. Cedric W. Davis (Father) Essex Junction, Vermont
2nd Lt. Edward T. Wenslik	Mr. Theodore Wenslik (Father) S. Sycamore Avenue Los Angeles, California
S/Sgt. John G. Forster	Mr. Thomas L. Forster (Father) 18 Townsend Street Walton, Massachusetts
S/Sgt. John W. Rice	Mrs. Lucille M. Rice (Wife) 80 West Grand Street Mt. Vernon, New York
S/Sgt. Glenn A. Sligar	Mrs. Mannie Sligar (Mother) 4923 Bell Avenue Bell, California
S/Sgt. William F. Sanders	Mrs. Lucille Sanders (Mother) Doncaster, Maryland
S/Sgt. William R. Vaitkunas	Mrs. Eva Zenkus (Mother) 2217 West 23rd Street Chicago, Illinois
S/Sgt. Marlin R. Smith	Mrs. Lillian E. Smith (Mother) Madisonville, Texas