

**WAR DEPARTMENT  
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES  
WASHINGTON**

**The MISSING AIR CREW REPORT**

**13198**

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

1. ORGANIZATION: Location Torretta, Italy Command or Air Force 15<sup>th</sup> AF  
Group 461<sup>st</sup> Bomb Gp (H) Squadron 767<sup>th</sup> Bomb Sq (H)
2. SPECIFY: Place of departure Torretta, Italy Course fr Fld over Pecs to Nartvan, Hungary to target Target Strasshof, Austria Type of mission Combat
3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED: CAVU
4. GIVE: [a] Date 26 Mar 45 Time 1130 Last known position Pecs, Hungary  
[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 **Acft Mechanical Failure (Acft believed safe).**
6. AIRCRAFT: Type, model & series B-24 J AAF Serial Number 42-51918
7. NICKNAME OF AIRCRAFT: None
8. ENGINES: Type, model & series P&W R-1830-65 AAF serial Number [a] CP-328814  
[b] CP-327798 [c] CP-327820 [d] BP-435097
9. INSTALLED WEAPONS: [Make, type and serial number] **All Browning Cal. 50**  
[a] LN 1034747 [e] LB 1027820 [i] LT 1038086  
[b] RN 1034910 [f] RB 1033767 [j] RT 1038118  
[c] LU 1034139 [g] LW 1759082  
[d] RU 1034126 [h] RW 1759067
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	Webb, Randall L., 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. 0-771851		Gladys G. Webb (Wife) Fayette, Iowa
[2] Co-pilot	Reil, Walter O., 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. 0-1302196		Mary Reil (Mother) Beacon Road, Bethany, Connecticut
[3] Bomb	Milby, Michael H., Jr., 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. 0-780404		Virginia A. Milby (Wife) Box 553, Edna, Texas
[4] Nav	Strauss, Edwin F., 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lt. 0-2064673		Leon Strauss (Father) 1895 Harrison Ave., Bronx 53, New York
[5] RWG	Jones, William T., S/Sgt. 34354387		Maria E. Jones (Mother) Marshallville, Georgia
[6] LWG	Meyers, Roy G., S/Sgt. 16083741		Durja F. Meyers (Wife) 2967 Monteray Ave., Detroit, Michigan
[7] TTG	Reiland, Thomas J., S/Sgt. 32780874		Margaret M. Reiland (Mother) 50 Sutton St., Brooklyn, New York
[8] BTG	Hall, Donald R., Cpl. 17092185		Edna Hall (Mother) 1217 Greenwood St., Pueblo, Colorado
[9] TTG	McGrath, Frederick J., Jr., S/Sgt. 32914310		Frederick J. McGrath, Sr. (Father) 23 Norwood St., Newark, New Jersey

[10] NTG Erwin, James G., S/Sgt.  
36767696

Bessie G. Erwin (Mother)  
5471 Ellis Ave., Chicago, Illinois

[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] Robert R. Friedersdorf	1 <sup>st</sup> Lt.	0-711639	X			

[2]

[3]

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] **Acft believed landed safely at Pecs airfield.**

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.:

Date: **30 Mar 45**

/s/ Robert A. Preciado  
Capt., AC

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

STATEMENT

30 March 1945

The tail gunner on my crew reported Lt. Webb's ship falling back from the formation. On hearing this I immediately contacted Lt. Webb. He reported that number 4 engine had been feathered because of an oil leak and that one other engine was having trouble, and that he would attempt to stay with the formation until they reached the field at Pecs, Hungary. When we reached the field Lt. Webb dropped from the formation and I heard him attempting to contact the tower. None of the crew saw him land.

/s/ Robert R. Friedersdorf  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt., Air Corps.

## CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name **Edwin F. Strauss** Rank **1<sup>st</sup> Lt.** Serial No. **0-2064673**
2. Organization **461<sup>th</sup> Gp Commander Rogers** Rank **Col** Sqn CO **Phillips** Rank **Major.**
3. What year **1945** month **March** day **26** did you go down?
4. What was the mission, **Bombing**, target, **Marshalling yard approx 15 miles NE Vienna**, target time, , altitude, route scheduled, , route flown
5. Where were you when you left formation?.
6. Did you bail out? **No.**
7. Did other members of crew bail out? **No.**
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". .
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? **Landed at Pecs airfield, Pecs, Hungary.**
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) **All crewmembers.**
11. Where were they in aircraft? **Emergency landing stations.**
12. What was their condition? **Uninjured.**
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? **All crewmembers safely returned to base.**
- 14 Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. **All members of other crews encountered while MIA were returned to bases – all crews traveled together.**

## CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name **Michael Hunt Milby** Rank **1<sup>st</sup> Lt.** Serial No. **0-780404**
2. Organization **461<sup>th</sup> Gp** Commander **Hawes** Rank **Col** Sqn CO **Phillips** Rank **Major.**
3. What year **1945** month **March** day **26** did you go down?
4. What was the mission, **Bombing**, target, **Vienna, Austria**, target time, , altitude, **24,000**, route scheduled, **Over western edge of Hungary**, route flown **Same**
5. Where were you when you left formation? **South of Hungarian border.**
6. Did you bail out? **No.**
7. Did other members of crew bail out? **No.**
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". **Made an emergency landing at Pecs, Hungary. B-24 type aircraft – engine failure.**
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? **Pecs, Hungary.**
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) **All ten members were aboard.**
11. Where were they in aircraft? **Landing positions.**
12. What was their condition? **Good.**
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? **At 766 Bomb Sqdn and Sioux Falls, S. Dak. In good condition.**
- 14 Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. **No knowledge.**

<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Cleone C. Connor, Jr.</b>	<b>Mrs. Ruth E. Connor (Mother) 5520 Fishburn Avenue Maywood, California</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Robert W. Jennings</b>	<b>Mrs. Suzy S. Jennings (Mother) 1901 Eas Superior Street Duluth, Minnesota</b>
<b>F/O Richard J. Meng</b>	<b>Mrs. Verna Alice Meng (Mother) 705 West Breckenridge Ferndale, Michigan</b>
<b>T/Sgt. Russell R. Heller</b>	<b>Mrs. Stella Heller (Mother) 29 37<sup>th</sup> Street Wheeling, West Virginia</b>
<b>Sgt. Raymond J. Nelson</b>	<b>Mrs. Mary J. Nelson (Wife) 1620 South Arch Street Hannibal, Missouri</b>
<b>Sgt. John D. Staniszewski</b>	<b>Mrs. Genevieve Staniszewski (Mother) 4546 Mercer Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania</b>
<b>Sgt. Donald A. Bevilacqua</b>	<b>Mrs. Matilda Bevilacqua (Mother) 1523 Walnut Street Erie, Pennsylvania</b>
<b>Cpl. Milford J. Rodgers</b>	<b>Mrs. Irene L. Rodgers (Mother) 312 ½ Juniper Street Quakertown, Pennsylvania</b>
<b>Cpl. Richard W. Black</b>	<b>Mr. Flaval A. Black (Father) 984 Francis Road Bexley, Ohio</b>
<b>Cpl. Bobbie J. Purvis</b>	<b>Mr. Lafayette M. Purvis (Father) Cottonwood, Texas</b>