

**WAR DEPARTMENT
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON**

The MISSING AIR CREW REPORT

5841

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 Ploesti, Rumania Type of mission Combat

3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED:
CAVU

4. GIVE: [a] Date 31 May 44 Time 1300 Last known position 43°2'N, 16°25'E
[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-24G AAF Serial Number 42-78103

7. NICKNAME OF AIRCRAFT: _____

8. ENGINES: Type, model & series R 1830-65 AAF serial Number [a] 42-58634
[b] 42-57655 [c] 42-58783 [d] 42-58910

9. INSTALLED WEAPONS: [Make, type and serial number] All Browning Cal. 50

[a] <u>406460</u>	[e] <u>406510</u>	[i] <u>238717</u>
[b] <u>231398</u>	[f] <u>391791</u>	[j] <u>976311</u>
[c] <u>406678</u>	[g] <u>406558</u>	
[d] <u>368775</u>	[h] <u>967599</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	Ryder, Jr., George N., 1st Lt. 0-747328		Mrs. Mary A. Ryder (Wife) 326 Nelson Ferry Rd., Decatur, Georgia
[2] CP	Kretschmar, Wayne A., 2nd Lt. 0-693998		Otto B. Kretschmar (Father) Venturia, North Dakota
[3] Nav	Isbell, Billy K., 2nd Lt. 0-684970		Ray E. Isbell (Father) 406 Buchanan St., Charleston, Illinois
[4] Bomb	Duval, Jr., Easton W., 2nd Lt. 0-688517		W.E. Duval (Father) 1611 Canterbury St., Austin, Texas
[5] RWG	McIntire, Robert D., T/Sgt. 17107768		Ella McIntire (Mother) 4240 Brookside Ave., St. Louis Park, Minn.
[6] TTG	Deane, Charles E., T/Sgt. 19164865		Mrs. Katie Deane (Mother) 4420 Estrella Ave., San Diego, California
[7] BTG	Armstrong, Jr., Bud W., S/Sgt. 38398720		Mrs. Ima M. Armstrong (Mother) Rt. 3, Shattuck, Oklahoma
[8] LWG	Bourgeois, Raymond H., S/Sgt. 18150432		Mrs. Josephine Bourgeois (Mother) Gramercy, Louisiana
[9] TTG	Bryson, Jr., Julius J., S/Sgt.		Mrs. Eva Marie Bryson (Mother)

	34601908	Rt. 5, Box 495, Greensboro, N.C.
[10] NTG	Williams, James H., S/Sgt. 18166957	Mrs. Loretta Williams (Mother) Kingsland, Arkansas
[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] Roger D. Egger	2nd Lt.	0-752709		X		
[2] Harold D. Brown	2nd Lt.	0-1683532		X		
[3] Garvis O. Fowler	2nd Lt.	0-691978		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: **No search made by this organization. Position and time crew bailed out was radioed to the Air Sea Rescue by one of our planes standing by the now missing aircraft.**

Date: 6 June 1944

/s/ John P. Joyce
Maj., Air Corps
Executive

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

STATEMENT

May 31, 1944. While returning from the raid on Ploesti on May 31, our plane covered number 17, Lt. Ryder's plane, from about the eastern coast of Yugoslavia to five miles off the coast of Vis where it crashed in the Adriatic. While covering the plane, I noticed the bomb doors hanging down. The bombs must have gone through the bomb bay doors. Not long after we dropped back to cover, they feathered number four engine, I don't know why. When we neared the coast of Yugoslavia, they changed course to a heading toward Vis. We tried to contact by radio but it was impossible. They lost altitude and about ten miles south, southeast of Vis the crew began to bail out. I saw ten chutes open and drop into the water. The pilot contacted Topsail (with difficulty because of a faulty transmitter) and gave them the position of the men that bailed out.

/s/ Harold D. Brown
0-1683532
2nd Lt, Air Corps

STATEMENT

Lt. Ryder's plane had dropped their bombs through their bomb bay doors and the doors were flapping along the side of his ship. He then feathered #3 engine and we dropped out of the formation and covered him. He maintained flying speed (about 150) and the crew started to throw out their guns, ammunition and equipment. One of the bomb bay doors (left rear) was torn loose from the ship. We tried to contact him by radio but couldn't get him to answer. We then followed him toward Vis and we started calling the Air Sea Rescue. Ryder's crew then motioned to us to get out of the way so we went up to about 8000 or 9000 feet and Ryder's crew started bailing out (they were about 5000 or 6000 feet). Anywhere from 5 to 10 miles SE of the island I saw 8 chutes open almost together and then the plane made a 90° turn to the right and two more chutes opened. The plane crashed into the water; all the crew landed in the water. The Air Sea Rescue called us and said they had received our message giving the position and time Lt. Ryder and his crew had bailed out.

/s/ Roger D. Egger
0-752709
2nd Lt, Air Corps

STATEMENT

I was in ship 459, navigator on Lt. Burton's crew on 31 May 1944. At about the Danube River, we fell back to cover Lt. Ryder's plane which had #3 engine feathered. Aside from the feathered engine, the plane seemed to be all right and he was maintaining altitude, losing only as much as we usually do on return from a target. About 15 minutes before reaching the Yugoslav coast, the crippled plane began to jettison equipment and

began to lose altitude rapidly. The plane headed for Vis Island, our ship following close behind. About 15 miles from Vis, his altitude was dangerously low and the crew bailed out; eight chutes opened in rapid succession, there was a pause then two more chutes opened. I saw one of the last two men's chute hit the water but due to low fuel supply we could not stay in the area any longer.

/s/ Garvis O. Fowler
0-691978
2nd Lt., Air Corps

764TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON
461ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) AAF

APO #520, c/o PM
New York, New York
6 June 1944

AG 360.33

SUBJECT: Missing Air Crew Report.

TO: Commanding Officer, 461st Bombardment Group,
APO #520, c/o PM, New York, New York.

1. In compliance with Letter, 15th Air Force, file AG 360.33 dtd. 5 January 1944, subject: Preparation of Missing Air Crew Reports, submitted herewith is Missing Air Crew Report for B-24 **42-78103, Lt. George N. Ryder, Jr.** and crew.
2. Subject crew personnel are battle casualties as defined by Paragraph 2, Section II, Circular No. 10, Headquarters, NATOUSA.
3. Battle Casualty Report forwarded your headquarters **31 May 1944.**

For the Squadron Commander:

/s/ William L. Hallauer
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Adjutant

AG 360.33
Headquarters, 461st Bomb Group, APO 520, U.S. Army, 7 June 1944.

1st Ind.

LCP/rfq

TO: Commanding General, 49th Bombardment Wing, APO 520, U.S. Army.

/s/ L. C. P.,

AG 360.33 2nd Ind.
Hq, 49th Bomb Wing (H), APO 520, 8 June 44.

C-WRT-58

TO: C.G., Fifteenth Air Force, APO 520

/s/ J. E. M.

360.33 3rd Ind.
HQ, FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE, APO 520, 20 June 1944.

GP/hm/rcc

TO: CG, NATOUSA, APO 534. Attn: Casualty Branch, AGD.

1. Personnel included in attached MAC Report were processed on consolidated BCR#L-99 dated 4 June 1944 which was forwarded to the 30th MRU 4 June 1944.

For the Commanding General:

/s/ Harold B. Neely
Major, AGD
Assistant AG.

1st Lt. George N. Ryder, Jr.

**Mrs. Mary A. Ryder (Wife)
326 Nelson Ferry Road
Decatur, Georgia**

2nd Lt. Wayne A. Kretschmar

**Mr. Otto B. Kretschmar (Father)
Venturia, North Dakota**

2nd Lt. Billy K. Isbell

**Mr. Ray E. Isbell (Father)
406 Buchanan
Charleston, Illinois**

2nd Lt. Easton W. Duval, Jr.

**Mrs. Easton W. Duval, Sr. (Mother)
1811 Canterbury
Austin, Texas**

T/Sgt. Robert D. McIntire

**Mrs. Ella R. McIntire (Mother)
4340 Brookside Avenue
Minneapolis, Minnesota**

T/Sgt. Charles F. Deane

**Mrs. Katie Deane (Mother)
4420 Estrella Avenue
San Diego, California**

S/Sgt. Bud W. Armstrong, Jr.

**Mrs. Ima N. Armstrong (Mother)
Shattuck, Oklahoma**

S/Sgt. Raymond H. Bourgeois

**Mrs. Josephine Bourgeois (Mother)
Gramercy, Louisiana**

S/Sgt. Julius J. Bryson

**Mrs. Eva M. Bryson (Mother)
Route Number Five, Box 495
Greensboro, North Carolina**

S/Sgt. James N. Williams

**Mr. Charles H. Williams (Father)
General Delivery
Kingsland, Arkansas**