

CONFIDENTIAL

13912

Classification changed
to **RESTRICTED**
by E. A. BRADCOMB, Lt. Col., AF
by P. M. GUNNICK, Capt., AF
Date **2005**

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

WAR DEPARTMENT
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON

MISSING AIR CREW REPORT

Classification *OK*
to *CONFIDENTIAL*
by E. A. *WILSON, Lt. Col., AG*
by F. G. *MURPHY, Capt., AG*
Date *12.1.54*

52.25N
12.33E

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

- ORGANIZATION: Location, by Name England; Command or Air Force 8AF
Group 457th Bomb Gp (H); Squadron 748th; Detachment _____
- SPECIFY: Place of Departure Station 130; Course _____
Target or Intended Destination Oranienburg, Germany Type of Mission _____
Objective Bombing
- WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED: _____
Good *88 mi WNW of Oranienburg*
- DATE: (a) Day 10 Month Apr Year 1945; Time 1455; and location of last known whereabouts of missing aircraft. 52-47N 12-20E
(b) Specify whether aircraft was last sighted (X); Last contacted by radio (); Forced down (); Seen to crash (); or Information Not Available ().
- AIRCRAFT WAS LOST, OR IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN LOST, AS A RESULT OF: (Check only one) Enemy Aircraft (X); Enemy anti-aircraft (); Other circumstances as follows: _____
- AIRCRAFT: Type, Model and Series B17G; AAF Serial Number 43-38606
- REMARKS OF AIRCRAFT, if any "Moonlight Mission"
- ENGINES: Type, Model and Series R-1820-97; AAF Serial Number _____
(a) SW-008610; (b) SW-020723; (c) SW-012245; (d) 42-80403
- INSTALLED WEAPONS (Furnish below make, type and serial number):
(a) 1315288; (b) 1315027; (c) 1314977; (d) 115058
(e) 1315103; (f) 1315163; (g) 1315294; (h) 1314951
(i) 1477607; (j) 1476834; (k) 1314515; (l) 1314769
(m) _____; (n) _____; (o) _____; (p) _____
- THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW WERE REPORTED AS: (a) Battle Casualty X
or (b) Non-Battle Casualty _____
- FURTHER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew 9; Passengers 0; Total 9
(Starting with Pilot, furnish the following particulars: If more than 11 persons were aboard aircraft, list similar particulars on separate sheet and attach original to this form.)

| | Crew Position | Name in Full (Last Name First) | Rank | Serial Number | Current Status | |
|-------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|---------|---------------|----------------|------------|
| <i>TRMC</i> | 1. Pilot | <i>Rmc</i> Thompson, Thomas P. Jr. | 2nd Lt. | 0829104 | MIA | <i>RTD</i> |
| <i>KIA</i> | 2. CP | <i>371</i> Felder, Max E | F/O | T6263 | MIA | <i>RTD</i> |
| <i>EUS</i> | 3. B | <i>EUS</i> Keith, Charles P. | F/O | T8150 | MIA | <i>RTD</i> |
| <i>EUS</i> | 4. RO | <i>Rmc</i> Shinault, Keith E. | S/Sgt | 34820125 | MIA | <i>RTD</i> |
| <i>KIA</i> | 5. TTG | <i>EUS</i> Waichunas, Alfred F. Jr. | S/Sgt | 32740321 | MIA | |
| <i>KIA</i> | 6. CTG | Smith, Thomas E. | S/Sgt | 34881137 | MIA | |
| <i>TRMC</i> | 7. WG | <i>EUS</i> Peltoma, William A. | S/Sgt | 35912601 | MIA | <i>RTD</i> |
| <i>KIA</i> | 8. BTG | Basara, Walter J. <i>371</i> | S/Sgt | 13028833 | MIA | |
| <i>EUS</i> | 9. TG | <i>Rmc</i> Lewis, John W. | S/Sgt | 38584499 | MIA | <i>RTD</i> |
| | 10. | | | | | |
| | 11. | | | | | |

- IDENTIFY BELOW THOSE PERSONS WHO ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE LAST KNOWLEDGE OF AIRCRAFT, AND CHECK APPROPRIATE COLUMN TO INDICATE BASIS FOR SALES:
Check Only One Column
- | Name in Full
(Last Name First) | Rank | Serial Number | Contacted by | Last Sighted | Saw Crash | Forced Landing |
|-----------------------------------|--------|---------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1. <u>Brower, Orion C.</u> | 2nd Lt | 02073038 | Radio | X | | |
| 2. <u>Ice, Ralph D.</u> | S/sgt | 35847959 | Radio | X | | |
| 3. <u>Fuehler, Kenneth J.</u> | S/Sgt | 36686490 | Radio | | | |

- 14. ATTACH AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH, MAP, CHART, OR SKETCH, SHOWING APPROXIMATE LOCATION WHERE AIRCRAFT WAS LAST SEEN OR HEARD FROM.
- 15. ATTACH WITNESS DESCRIPTION OF CRASH, FORCED LANDING, OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES PERTAINING TO MISSING AIRCRAFT.
- 16. GIVE NAME, RANK AND SERIAL NUMBER OF OFFICER IN CHARGE OF SEARCH, IF ANY, INCLUDING DESCRIPTION AND EXTENT _____

Date of Report 19 April 1945

Gerald H. Galligan
 (Signature of Preparing Officer)
 GERALD H. GALLIGAN,
 Captain, Air Corps
 Air Statistical Officer

17. REFERENCE TO WITNESS STATEMENTS:



CONFIDENTIAL

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 02 0 0
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INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: WAICHUNAS, Alfred F., Jr.

File # 13912

Rank: S/Sgt.

Serial number: 32740321

Position: Crew (Bomber ~~Y//107/FA/AM/VA/EA/ST~~) Top Turret Gunner

Did he bail out? No

Where? L

If not, why not? REASON NOT KNOWN

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: SOME JOKING REMARK JUST BEFORE REACHING TGT.

Was he injured? APPARENTLY KILLED ONLY BY IMPACT WHEN PLANE HIT GROUND

Where was he when last seen? AT SMALL GERMAN CEMETERY

Any hearsay information: NAVIGATOR & TAIL-GUNNER TAKEN BY GERMAN'S TO SCENE OF CRASH, FORCED TO CARRY BODY OF ENGINEER TO NEARBY CEMETERY, MANNER OF DISPOSAL UNKNOWN

Source: DIRECT FROM NAVIGATOR & TAIL-GUNNER

Any explanation of his fate based in part or wholly on supposition: NO KNOWLEDGE OTHER THAN ABOVE

Total number of missions of above crew member: EIGHT

Dates and destinations if possible: NO COPY IN MY POSSESSION

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: SMITH, Thomas E.
 Rank: S/Sgt.
 Serial number: 34881137
 Position: Crew (Bomber) or Flight/((Fighter)): CTG

File # 13912

Did he bail out? NoWhere? ✓If not, why not? REASON UNKNOWNLast contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: ASKE

QUESTION CONCERNING IDENTITY OF PLANE JUST
 OFF NOSE OF SHIP ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH LOSS OF SHIP,
 Was he injured? APPARENTLY KILLED BY IMPACT WHEN SHIP STRUCK

Where was he when last seen? AT SMALL GERMAN CEMETERYAny hearsay information: NAVIGATOR & TAIL-GUNNER TAKEN
BY GERMANS TO SCENE OF CRASH, FORCED TO CARRY
BODY OF FORWARD-GUNNER TO NEARBY CEMETERY,
MANNER OF DISPOSAL UNKNOWN,Source: DIRECT FROM NAVIGATOR & TAIL-GUNNER

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

NO KNOWLEDGE OTHER THAN ABOVE.Total number of missions of above crew member: EIGHTDates and destinations if possible: NO COPY IN MY POSSESSION,

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: BASARA, Walter J.
 Rank: S/Sgt.
 Serial number: 13028833
 Position: Crew (Bomber) or Flight (Fighter): Ball Turret Gunner

File # 13912

Did he bail out? NoWhere? ✓If not, why not? REASON UNKNOWN

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: _____

NO CONTACT RECALLED JUST PRIOR TO LOSS OF SHIPWas he injured? APPARENTLY KILLED BY IMPACT WHEN SHIP STRUCKWhere was he when last seen? AT SMALL GERMAN CEMETERY

Any hearsay information: NAVIGATOR & TAIL-GUNNER WERE TAKEN
 BY GERMANS TO SCENE OF CRASH, FORCED TO CARRY
 BODY OF BALL TURRET GUNNER TO NEARBY CEMETERY
 MANNER OF DISPOSAL OF BODY UNKNOWN

Source: DIRECT FROM NAVIGATOR & TAIL-GUNNER

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

NO KNOWLEDGE OTHER THAN ABOVETotal number of missions of above crew member: EIGHTDates and destinations if possible: NO COPY IN MY POSSESSION

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name SHINAVULT, Keith E/60 Rank S/SGT. Serial No. 34820125
2. Organization 457th Gp Commander ROGNER Rank COL. Sqd CO SNOW Rank MAJOR
(full name) (full name)
3. What year 1945 month APRIL day 10 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, _____, target DRENBURG OR ORRANNIANBURG, target
time, 1455 GMT, altitude, 26,500 route scheduled, UNKNOWN
UNKNOWN, route flown _____
5. Where were you when you left formation? JUST OUT OF TARGET AREA
6. Did you bail out? BLOWN OUT
7. Did other members of crew bail out? PILOT, NAVIGATOR, ASST. ENGR-
INEER, TAIL-GUNNER.
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". PILOT BLOWN OUT, NAVIGATOR BAILED OUT NOSE HATCH, ASST. ENGINEER BAILED OUT WAIST DOOR, TAIL-GUNNER BAILED OUT OF TAIL AFTER IT HAD BROKEN OFF FUSELAGE.
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? TO BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE
SOMEWHERE IN VICINITY OF ORRANNIANBURG
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) CO-PILOT, ENGINEER, ARMORER-GUNNER, BAIL-TORRET GUNNER.
11. Where were they in aircraft? CO-PILOT IN COCKPIT, ENGINEER,
& ARMORER-GUNNER JUST OUT OF SHIP-BALL TORRET GUNNER
12. What was their condition? COPILOT BURNED, ENGINEER, ARMORER,
GUNNER AND BAIL TORRET GUNNER UNBURNED, APP. KILLED BY AIR
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? WAIST GUNNER REITOMA LAST SEEN AT HOSPITAL
OF STALACI TER, LAKENWALDE, GERMANY WITH
LEG SPRAIN BUT IN GOOD CONDITION. NAVIGATOR
AND TAIL-GUNNER AT LUCKY STRIKE, ST. VULERY,
FRANCE IN GOOD HEALTH, PILOT IN LONDON
ENGLAND IN GOOD HEALTH
14. Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. NO ACCURATE
KNOWLEDGE.

(Any additional information may be written on the back)

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME OF CREW MEMBER: FELDER, MAX E. File # 13912
 RANK: F/O.
 SERIAL NUMBER: T-6263
 POSITION: CREW (BOMBER) ~~PILOT~~ Co-Pilot

Did he bail out ? No

Where? L

If not, way not? APPARENTLY KILLED BY FLAMES FROM EXPLOSION

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of Plane: _____

NO CONTACT RECALLED JUST PRIOR TO OR AT TIME OF LOSS

Was he injured? FATALLY BURNED

Where was he when last seen? IN AT SMALL GERMAN CEMETERY

Any hearsay information: NAVIGATOR & TAIL-GUNNER TAKEN BY GERMANS TO SCENE OF CRASH, FORCED TO CARRY BODY OF CO-PILOT TO A CEMETERY. MANNER OF DISPOSAL OF BODY UNKNOWN

Source: DIRECT FROM NAVIGATOR & TAIL-GUNNER.

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

NO KNOWLEDGE OTHER THAN ABOVE

Total number of missions of above crew member: NINE

Dates and destinations if possible: NO COPY IN MY POSSESSION

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: FELDER, Max E.
 Rank: F/O.
 Serial number: T-6263
 Position: Crew (Bomber) or Flight/Flighter: Co-Pilot

File # 13912

Did he bail out? No

Where? _____

If not, why not? Trapped inside of plane

Last contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: Pilot or

co-pilot informed entire crew to be on lookout for fighters as the plane went down in front of us.

Was he injured? unknown

Where was he when last seen? Pilot's escape hatch

Any hearsay information: None

Source: None

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

Total number of missions of above crew member: Nine

Dates and destinations if possible: (1) unknown (2) Mobilis - March 17, (3) Berlin - March 18 (4) Hopsten - March 21 (5) Recklinghausen March 23 (6) Hopsten - March 24 (7) Rotenburg - April 4 (8) Ingolstadt April 5 (9) Oranienburg April 10.

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: WAICHUNAS, Alfred F., Jr.
 Rank: S/Sgt.
 Serial number: 32740321
 Position: Crew (Bomber) or Flight ~~Fighter~~: Top Turret Gunner

File # 13912

Did he bail out? No

Where? _____

If not, why not? Trapped inside planeLast contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: None with
WAICHUNAS After oxygen check he was OK. AT THAT TIME.Was he injured? NoWhere was he when last seen? IN TOP-TURRET POSITIONAny hearsay information: NoneSource: None

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

Total number of missions of above crew member: Eight

Dates and destinations if possible: (1) MARCH 17 - MOBLIS (2) MARCH 18 - BERLIN
 (3) MARCH 21 - HOPSTEN (4) MARCH 23 - RECKLINGHAUSEN (5) MARCH 24 -
 HOPSTEN (6) APRIL 4 - ROTENBURG (7) APRIL 5 - INGOLSTADT
 (8) APRIL 10 - ORANIENBURG.

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: SMITH, Thomas E.
 Rank: S/Sgt.
 Serial number: 34881137
 Position: Crew (Bomber) or Flight/Engineer: CTG

File # 13912

Did he bail out? No

Where? _____

If not, why not? TRAPPED INSIDE PLANELast contact or conversation just prior to or at time of loss of plane: NoneEXCEPT OXYGEN CHECK AND HE WAS OKWas he injured? NoWhere was he when last seen? PERMANENT POSITION AS CTG.Any hearsay information: NoneSource: None

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

Total number of missions of above crew member: Eight

Dates and destinations if possible: (1) MARCH 17 - MOBLIS (2) MARCH 18 - BERLIN
 (3) MARCH 21 - HOPSTEN (4) MARCH 23 - RECKLINGHAUSEN (5) MARCH 24 - HOPSTEN
 (6) APRIL 4 - ROTENBURG (7) APRIL 5 - INGO/STADT
 (8) APRIL 10 - ORANIENBURG.

INDIVIDUAL CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name of crew member: BASARA, Walter J. File # 13912
 Rank: S/Sgt.
 Serial number: 13028833
 Position: Crew (Bomber) or Flight/((Fighter)) Ball Turret Gunner

Did he bail out? No

Where? _____

If not, why not? Trapped inside of PLANE

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

except oxygen check, and he was O.K.

Was he injured? No

Where was he when last seen? Inside of BALL Turret POSITION

Any hearsay information: None

Source: None

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

Total number of missions of above crew member: Eight

Dates and destinations if possible: ① March 17 - Mablis ② March 18 - Berlin
③ March 21 - Hopsten ④ March 23 - Reekling hausen ⑤ March 24 -
Hopsten ⑥ April 4 - Rotenburg ⑦ April 5 - Ingolstadt
⑧ April, 10 Oranienburg.

CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Your name John Wesley Lewis Rank S/Sgt Serial No. 38584499
2. Organization 4570p ^{748 B. Sqd.} Gp Commander _____ Rank _____ Sqn CO _____ Rank _____
(full name) (full name)
3. What year 1945 month April day 10 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, _____, target, Oranienburg, target time, 2:59 P.M., altitude, 22,000 route scheduled, _____, route flown _____
5. Where were you when you left formation? LAST plane in right wing of high formation
6. Did you bail out? yes
7. Did other members of crew bail out? yes, Four other members
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". Aircraft blew
Crew members were blown out as aircraft exploded
and parachuted to safety
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? North of Oranienburg NEARER TO BERNEAU (?)
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) F/O Max E. Felder
S/Sgt Alfred E. Waichunas, Jr. S/Sgt. Thomas E. Smith
S/Sgt Walter J. Basala
11. Where were they in aircraft? Positions assigned to them. Co-pilot was at escape Hatch.
12. What was their condition? Co-pilot burned beyond recognition except for dog tags + personal belongings - others were recognizable.
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. ONE BALL TURRET GUNNER (NAME OR CREW UNKNOWN) LEFT IN Berlin due to left arm being blown off AND other injuries. He was with us until they took him to hospital.

(Any additional information may be written on the back)

HEADQUARTERS
ROSWELL ARMY AIR FIELD
ROSWELL, NEW MEXICO

13912

SUBJECT: Interrogation of Former Prisoners of War

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

1. In compliance with your TWX AFPPS 3909, 28 Sep 45, the following information is submitted:

a. Name of casualty Max E. Felder

b. Rank F/O c. Crew Position Co-Pilot

d. Date last seen 10 April 1945 e. Place last seen

Oranienburg, Germany. (Target).

f. Circumstances of loss of aircraft Hit by fighter, ship exploded in mid-air.

g. Known information Body was recovered by S/Sgt. John W. Lewis and turned over to Germans who handled burial. Body was identified by dog tags. Deceased's emergency address is 2019 No. Shartel, Oklahoma City, Okla.

h. Heresay information. The following officers and men were interned in prisoner of war camp, recognized by undersigned reporter: 2nd Lt. Thompson, pilot; F/O Charles Keith, Navigator, Emergency Addressee, Mrs. Charles C. Keith, 215 Fowler Avenue, Clarksburg, West Virginia, Mother; S/Sgt. E. Shinault, Radio Operator; S/Sgt. William A. Peltoma, Waist Gunner, Emergency Address, 617 Plum Street, Fairport Hbr., Ohio. Reporter saw S/Sgt. Peltoma on or about 5 May 1945 in hospital at prisoner of war camp. 2nd Lt. Thompson went to England. Doesn't know if other members of crew got out but is sure of two. Deputy CO, Lt-Col. Francis went down same day. Checked with Camp Lucky Strike, Le Haine, France and he had gotten back to France.

111 79

1356 9483

3803

John J Lewis S/Sgt
Rank and name of reporter

38584499457th Bomb Group-Sqdn 748
ASN Unit

HEADQUARTERS
ROSWELL ARMY AIR FIELD
ROSWELL, NEW MEXICO

SUBJECT: Interrogation of Former Prisoners of War

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

1. In compliance with your TWX AFPPS 3909, 28 Sep 45, the following information is submitted:

a. Name of casualty Thomas E. Smith

b. Rank S/Sgt. c. Crew Position Armor Nose Gunner

d. Date last seen 10 April 1945. Place last seen Oranienburg,

Germany. (Target)

f. Circumstances of loss of aircraft Hit by fighter, ship exploded in mid-air.

g. Known information Visual identification of body was made by Sgt. Lewis. Body in good condition. Body of deceased was turned over to the Germans for burial.

h. Hearsay information. The following officers and men were interned in prisoner of war camp, recognized by undersigned reporter: 2nd Lt. Thompson, pilot; F/O Charles Keith, Navigator, Emergency Addressee; Mrs. Charles C. Keith, 215 Fowler Avenue, Clarksburg, West Virginia, Mother; S/Sgt. E. Shinault, Radio Operator; S/Sgt. William A Peltoma, Waist Gunner, Emergency Address, 617 Plum Street, Fairport Hbr., Ohio. Reporter saw S/Sgt. Peltoma on or about 5 May 1945 in hospital at prisoner of war camp. 2nd Lt. Thompson went to England. Doesn't know if other members of crew got out but is sure of two. Deputy CO, Lt-Col. Francis went down same day. Checked with Camp Lucky Strike, Le Haine, France and he had gotten back to France.

John J Lewis S, Sgt
Rank and name of reporter

38584799457th Bomb Group-Sqdn. 748
ASN Unit

HEADQUARTERS
ROSWELL ARMY AIR FIELD
ROSWELL, NEW MEXICO

SUBJECT: Interrogation of Former Prisoners of War

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

1. In compliance with your TWX AFPPS 3909, 28 Sep 45, the following information is submitted:

- a. Name of casualty Walter J. Basara
- b. Rank S/Sgt . c. Crew Position Ball Turret Gunner
- d. Date last seen 10 April 1945 . Place last seen Oranienburg, Germany. (Target).
- f. Circumstances of loss of aircraft Hit by fighter, ship exploded in mid-air.
- g. Known information Body was recovered by S/Sgt. John W. Lewis and turned over to Germans who handled burial. Body was identified by dog tags. Deceased's emergency address is 166 Grape Street, Myk, Philadelphia, Penna.
- h. Hearsay information. The following officers and men were interned in prisoner of war camp, recognized by undersigned reporter: 2nd Lt. Thompson, pilot; F/O Charles Keith, Navigator, Emergency Addressee, Mrs. Charles C. Keith 215 Fowler Avenue, Clarksburg, West Virginia, Mother; S/Sgt. E. Shinault, Radio Operator; S/Sgt. William A. Peltoma, Waist Gunner, Emergency Address, 617 Plum Street, Fairport Hbr., Ohio. Reporter saw S/Sgt. Peltoma on or about 5 May 1945 in hospital at prisoner of war camp. 2nd Lt. Thompson went to England. Doesn't know if other members of crew got out but is sure of two. Deputy CO, Lt-Col. Francis went down same day. Checked with Camp Lucky Strike, Le Haine, France and he had gotten back to France.

John J. Lewis S/Sgt
Rank and name of reporter

88584499 457th Bomb Group-Sqdn 748
ASN Unit

HEADQUARTERS
ROSWELL ARMY AIR FIELD
ROSWELL, NEW MEXICO

SUBJECT: Interrogation of Former Prisoners of War

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

1. In compliance with your TWX AFPPS 3909, 28 Sep 45, the following information is submitted:

a. Name of casualty Alfred F. Waichunas

b. Rank S/Sgt. . c. Crew Position Ball Turret Gunner

d. Date last seen 10 April 1945. Place last seen Oranienburg,

Germany. (Target)

f. Circumstances of loss of aircraft Hit by fighter, ship explo-
ded in mid-air.

g. Known information Visual identification of body was made by
Sgt. Lewis. Body in good condition. Body of deceased was turned over to the
Germans for burial.

h. Hearsay information. The following officers and men were in-
terned in prisoner of war camp, recognized by undersigned reporter: 2nd Lt.
Thompson, pilot; F/O Charles Keith, Navigator, Emergency Addressee; Mrs. Charles
C. Keith, 215 Fowler Avenue, Clarksburg, West Virginia, Mother; S/Sgt. E.
Shinault, Radio Operator; S/Sgt. William A. Peltoma, Waist Gunner, Emergency
Address, 617 Plum Street, Fairport Hbr., Ohio. Reporter saw S/Sgt. Peltoma on
or about 5 May 1945 in hospital at prisoner of war camp. 2nd Lt. Thompson
went to England. Doesn't know if other members of crew got out but is sure of
two. Deputy CO, Lt-Col. Francis went down same day. Checked with Camp Lucky
Strike, Le Haine, France and he had gotten back to France.

John J Lewis S/Sgt
Rank and name of reporter

38581499
ASN

457th Bomb Group-Sqdn 748
Unit

(S-2 Summary of
Eye-Witness Accounts)

C O N F I D E N T I A L

(S-2 Summary of
Eye-Witness Accounts)

Instructions: 1. If aircraft returned, only questions 6 and 7 are applicable. 2. Question number 5 not applicable to Fighter Groups. 3. Summary will be prepared in five copies, four of which will be forwarded. 4. Interrogating Officer will sign original and second copy.

GROUP 457th Sqdn. 748th A/C No. 43-38606

MISSION DATE 10 April 1945 FIRST PILOT Thomas P. Thompson, Jr.
(Name)

2nd Lt. 0-829104 DESTINATION Oranienburg
(Rank) (Serial No.)

1. Position of missing aircraft when last sighted or contacted:

(a) By coordinates 5247-1320

(b) Approximate altitude 15,000 feet

(c) Last noted heading Straight down

(d) If out of formation, approximate distance from formation 10,000 feet below formation

2. Describe enemy opposition (intensity of flak, intensity and method of enemy fighter attack, etc., with particular reference to missing A/C):

Three to four Me-262's attacked the group from the tail at 1455 hours just after the turn off the target. One attacked A/C 606. No flak was encountered.

3. Description of extent of damage to missing aircraft (including fires, explosions, etc):

When A/C 606 was attacked, it immediately nosed over and went straight down. No damage to the aircraft was seen as it left the formation. After it had fallen for some distance, it burst into flames, one wing came off and the rest of the ship exploded at 15,000 feet.

4. If aircraft was out of control describe appearance:

A/C 606 was in a vertical dive.

(Over)

C O N F I D E N T I A L

C O N F I D E N T I A L

5. If distressed aircraft was out of formation, was it last seen with escort? No If so, give distinguishing markings of Fighter Group if noted (Group number, color and/or fighter aircraft numbers, nicknames, etc.): _____

6. Number of parachutes seen and description of jumps (approximate altitude, time between jumps, etc.):
Zero to two chutes were seen. No one was seen bailing out. The two chutes that were reported were said to have opened at a very low altitude.

7. Any other remarks not covered by above:
A/C 606 was flying number 2, high flight, high squadron. It and several other A/C were straggling at the tail end of the group at the time of the attack.

8. Date of report 19 April 1945

| EYE-WITNESSES: | <u>NAME</u> | <u>RANK</u> | <u>A.S.N.</u> | <u>A/C No.</u> |
|----------------|----------------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | <u>Robert D. Whiteaker</u> | <u>S/Sgt.</u> | <u>33655330</u> | <u>43-37694</u> |
| 2. | <u>Kenneth J. Kuchler</u> | <u>S/Sgt.</u> | <u>36686490</u> | <u>43-38540</u> |
| 3. | <u>Ralph D. Ice</u> | <u>S/Sgt.</u> | <u>35847959</u> | <u>43-38506</u> |
| 4. | <u>Orion C. Brower</u> | <u>2nd Lt.</u> | <u>0-2073038</u> | <u>43-38528</u> |

INTERROGATING OFFICER (Sign Original and One Copy):

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| <u>Hugh M. Hamill</u> HUGH M. HAMILL (Name) | <u>1st Lt.</u> (Rank) | <u>0-571919</u> A.S.N. | <u>Asst Gp S-2</u> July |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|

NOTE: Supplemental information developing subsequent to this account will be forwarded in manner prescribed in par 6, letter WD, AG, 704 (5 July 44) OB-S-44F-M, subject "Missing Air Crew Report", 7 July 44.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

mlw 5/25/45

| | |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2nd. Lt. Thomas P. Thompson, Jr. | Mrs. Thelma E. Thompson (mother) 209 South Solomon Street New Orleans, Louisiana |
| F/O Max E. Felder | Mr. Emil J. Felder (father) 2019 North Shartel Oklahoma City, Oklahoma |
| F/O Charles P. Keith | Mr. Charles C. Keith (father) 215 Fowler Avenue Clarksburg, West Virginia |
| S/Sgt. John W. Lewis | Mrs. Sylvia L. Lewis (wife) 620 West Fourth Street Clovis, New Mexico |
| S/Sgt. Walter J. Basara | Mrs. Vera Basara (mother) 166 Grape Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania |
| S/Sgt. William A. Feltom | Mrs. Lorena E. Feltom (wife) 617 Plum Street Fairport Harbor, Ohio |
| S/Sgt. Thomas E. Smith | Mrs. Betty D. Smith (mother) 2377 La Rose Memphis, Tennessee |
| S/Sgt. Alfred F. Waichunas, Jr. | Miss Nellie Waichunas (sister) 500 24th Street Watervliet, New York |
| S/Sgt. Keith E. Shinault | Mrs. Vivian R. Shinault (mother) General Delivery Rooseville, Georgia |

S T A T E M E N T S

EXTRACTED FROM THE ORIGINAL M A C R