

**DECLASSIFIED**

Authority: NND 735001

By: NARA NARA Date: 1973

5477

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

RESTRICTED

Classification changed

to

by E. A. ~~RESTRICTED~~ Col., AO

by F. M. WILSON, Capt., AO

Date: MAR 15 1948

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By: NARA NARA Date: 1973

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WAR DEPARTMENT  
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON

**RESTRICTED**

IMPORTANT: This report will be compiled by each Army Air Force Organization within 48 hours of the time personnel was officially reported missing.

- ORGANIZATION: Location Castelluccio, Italy Command or AF 15th AF  
Group 451st Bomb Gp (H) Squadron 724th Bomb Sq (H)  
Base 4228N 1825E
- SPECIFY: Point of Departure Castelluccio, Italy Course 4242N 1830E-4452N  
Target Ploesti Type of Mission Bombing 2225E-7451N 2318E  
4516N 2601E - Target
- WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED:  
Heavy, scattered clouds 4/10 to 6/10 cloud coverage.
- GIVE: (a) Date 6 June 1944 Time 1056 Location 44°08'N - 21°03'E  
of last known whereabouts of missing aircraft.  
(b) Specify whether: (x) Last sighted ( ) 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 & Series B-24 H AF Serial No. 42-7757
- ENGINES: Type, Model & Series PW B-1830-43 AF Serial No. (a) 41-14834  
(b) 42-64861 (c) CP - 305154 (d) 42-64644
- INSTALLED WEAPONS: (Furnish below Make, Type, and Serial Number)  
(a) 684599 Cal. 50 Browning Auto. (b) 463355 Cal. 50 Browning Auto.  
(c) 1149775 " " (d) 1149800 " "  
(e) 1150110 " " (f) 218682 " "  
(g) 687740 " " (h) 687139 " "  
(i) 1149786 " " (j) 1149411 " "
- PERSONNEL LISTED BELOW REPORTED AS: (x) Battle Casualty ( ) Non-Battle Cas.
- NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew 10 Passengers 0 Total 10  
(Starting with "Pilot" furnish the following particulars; if more than 12 persons were aboard list similar particulars on a separate sheet and attach to this form)

CREW POSITION (Last name first)	NAME IN FULL	ARMY SERIAL NO.	NEXT OF KIN, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS
1. Pilot	Harris, William R., Jr.	2nd Lt 0-690220	Lavina A. Harris, (mother) 207 S. 7th St., Plymouth, Ind.
2. Co-Pilot	Smith, Donald J.	2nd Lt 0-695779	John C. Smith (father) 5921 Emerald Ave., Chicago, Ill.
3. Nav.	Pedersen, Floyd C.	2nd Lt 0-700142	Olive T. Pedersen (mother) 30 Elmore Ave., Elizabeth, N. J.
4. Bomb.	Cheabowits, Alex	2nd Lt 0-547839	Rose Cheabowits, (mother) 114 McKibben St., Brooklyn, N.Y.
5. Rt. Wing Gunner	Gilson, Richard D.	1st Sgt 37470822	Berniece M. Gilson, (wife) 3520 W. Broadway St., Council Bluffs, Iowa.
6. Lt. Wing Gunner	Card, Clell M.	1st Sgt 39271625	Margaret Card, (wife) 556 Clifton, L. A., Calif.
7. Turret	Gantt, Willie L.	8/Sgt 7005522	Maybell Padgett, (mother) RFD#1, Leesville, S. C.
8. Tail Gunner	Koffel, Frederick S.	5/Sgt 32188750	Maudie E. Koffel, (wife) North Wales Rd., Skippack Pike, Bel Air, Pa.
9. Nose Gunner	Knowlton, Robert H.	8/Sgt 32582179	Betty Lou Knowlton, (wife) 209 East W. St., Casper, Wyo.
10. Turret	Radabaugh, Densil D.	8/Sgt 32752154	Erva B. Radabaugh, (mother) Box 210, Masontown, West Virginia.
11.			
12.			

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11. IDENTIFY BELOW THOSE PERSONS WHO ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE LAST KNOWLEDGE OF AIRCRAFT AND CHECK APPROPRIATE (only one) COLUMN TO INDICATE BASIS FOR SIGHTING

NAME IN FULL	RANK SERIAL NO	Contacted	Last	Saw
		by Radio	Sighted	Crash
1. Stuenke, Harold A.,	S/Sgt 16110286		X	
2. Runkle, William J.,	S/Sgt 12138172		X	
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

12. IF PERSONNEL ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE SURVIVED, CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:  
 ( ) Parachutes were used ( ) Persons seen walking away from scene of crash  
 ( ) Any other reason (specify) Unknown.
13. ATTACH, AS AN INCLOSURE TO THIS REPORT, EITHER AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH, MAP, CHART OR SKETCH, SHOWING APPROXIMATE LOCATION WHERE AIRCRAFT WAS LAST SEEN.
14. ATTACH, AS INCLOSURES TO THIS REPORT, EYEWITNESS DESCRIPTIONS OF CRASH, FORCED LANDING, OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES PERTAINING TO MISSING AIRCRAFT.
15. ATTACH, AS AN INCLOSURE TO THIS REPORT, A DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTENT OF SEARCH, IF ANY, AND GIVE NAME, RANK, AND SERIAL NUMBER OF OFFICER IN CHARGE HERE: (if no search, so state giving reason, No search made, reasons: plane last sighted over enemy territory.

Date of this report 8 June 1944

3 Incls:

- Incl 1 - Statement, S/Sgt Stuenke (8 copies)  
 Incl 2 - Statement, S/Sgt Runkle (8 copies)  
 Incl 3 - Sketch (8 copies)

(Signature of Preparing Officer)

Norman W. Moehel  
 NORMAN W. MOEHEL,  
 1st Lt., A.C.,  
 Adj.

RECEIVED



JUN 7 - 1944

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By: NARA NARA Date: 1973

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724TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)  
451ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)  
APO 520 US ARMY

8 June 1944

360.33

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Missing Air Crew Report.

TO : Commanding Officer, 451st Bombardment Group (H), APO 520,  
US Army.

1. Transmitted herewith Missing Air Crew Report of Crew assigned to this Squadron, reported missing in action as of 6 June 1944, on mission over Yugoslavia.

<u>RANK</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>ASN</u>
2nd Lt.	Harris, William R. Jr.	0-690220
2nd Lt.	Smith, Donald J.	0-695779
2nd Lt.	Pedersen, Floyd C.	0-700142
2nd Lt.	Chesbowitz, Alex	0-547839
T/Sgt.	Gilson, Richard D.	37470825
T/Sgt.	Card, Clell M.	39271625
S/Sgt.	Gantt, Willie L.	7005522
S/Sgt.	Koffel, Frederick S.	33488759
S/Sgt.	Knowlton, Robert H.	32582179
S/Sgt.	Radabaugh, Dengil D.	35752154

2. Subject personnel are battle casualties as defined by paragraph 2, Section III, Circular 10, NATOUSA, dated 24 January 1944.

3. Battle Casualty Report forwarded your headquarters 7 June 1944.

For the Squadron Commander:

*Norman W. Moghel*  
NORMAN W. MOGHEL,  
1st Lt., Air Corps,  
Adjutant.

1 Incl:

Incl - MAC Rpt, Harris, William R. Jr., & Crew  
8 June 1944, w/3 Incl.

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By: NARA NARA Date: 1973

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360.33 1st Ind.  
HEADQUARTERS, 451st Bomb Gp (H), APO 520, US Army, 10 June 1944.

C: CEC/ru

TO: C. G., 49th Wing, APO 520.

5477

Battle Casualty Report forwarded to Fifteenth Air Force 7 June 1944.

For the Commanding Officer:

*DE Campbell Jr*  
C. E. CAMPBELL, JR.,  
WO JG US Army,  
Asst. Adj.

1 Incl:  
Incl 1 - MACR, Lt. Harris & Crew,  
8 June 44, w/3 Incls (7 copies) ☐

(23)

360.33 2nd Ind.  
Hq 49th Bomb Wing (H), APO 520, 11 June 44.

C-INT-57

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

1 Incl:  
n/c

*JEM*  
J.E.M.

AG 360.33 3rd Ind.  
HQ, FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE, APO 520, 13 June 1944.

GP-hm/gos

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

(606)

Personnel included in attached MAC Report were processed on consolidated BCR L-102, dated 9 June 1944, which was forwarded to the 30th MRU, 9 June 1944.

For the Commanding General:

*Harold B. Neely*  
HAROLD B. NEELY,  
Major, AGD,  
Assistant AG.

1 Incl:  
Incl 1 (trip).

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COPY

000JUNE 16-44

1. ITEM JU 3 JUGOSLAVIA 120/110 15 1630 USGOVT

2. USWARMINISTRY WASH

3. TO COMMANDING OFFICER FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE COMMA FORTYNINTH WING COMMA

FOUR HUNDRED FIFTYFIRST BOMB GROUP COMMA SEVEN HUNDRED TWENTYFOURTH

SQUADRON COMMA PLANE 27757 COMMA CREW 30 QUOTE LT MM R HARRIS

O/690220 LT DONALD J SMITH O/695779 LT ALEX CHESBOWITZ O/547839 LT FLOYD

C PEDERSEN O/700142 T/SGT RICHARD GILSON 37470625 T/SGT GLELL CARD

39271625 S/SGT ROBERT KNOWITON 32582179 S/SGT WILLIE GANTT 7085522

S/SGT FREDERICK KOFFEL 33468769 S/SGT DENZIL RADABOUGH 35752154

UNQUOTE ALL SAFE STOP THREE SPRAINED ANKLES STOP BY JUNE NINETEENTH

WILL BE FORTY AMERICAN AND ENGLISH FLYERS HERE STOP WE ARE NEAR AIRPORT

AND WILL WAIT FOR PLANES

4. WILLIAM R HARRIS JR SECOND LT A C USA

5 MM PASSED FWDD FYI AND INCOMING FROM TTG BY RADIO X NOT FLASHED GOVT MS

7. RCAC

PILE-UP ITEM 5 "MSG" X

0012 CRY 140361 PSW

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

1519

June

AFPM/P

FROM SMI BRANCH, CG, HQ

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Authority: NND 735001

By: NARA NARA Date: 1973

5477

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HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

ALLY NO. ☐

FILE NO. ☐ 3

SUBJECT: Dissemination of Information Received from National and Military Censorship

TO: AC/AS Personnel Attention: Military Personnel Division and Personal Affairs Division - Casualty Branch

FROM: Counter Intelligence Div, AC/AS, Intelligence

DATE 6 July 1944

COMMENT NO. 1

AFICI-TC

NHG/mch - 71444

Inclosed ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> one submission slip containing information received from censorship operations, which is believed to be of interest to your office.

pc-5732

1 Incl

As stated above

THOMAS D. CRAIG  
Lt. Colonel, Air Corps  
Chief, Counter Intelligence Div

DATE 11 July 1944

COMMENT NO. 2

(3)JLB:hh 2798

Noted.

1 Incl.

n/c.

JOHN H. IVES  
Colonel, GSC  
Acting Chief, Military Personnel Division

all safe  
now records  
as per 13 July  
1944

4-9010, AF

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By: NARA NARA Date: 1973

✓ 2nd Lt., Alan Chabowitch

Mrs. Anne Chabowitch, (mother)  
114 Madison Street,  
Brooklyn, New York.

✓ 2nd Lt., William E. Harris Jr.

Mrs. Irving E. Harris, (mother)  
217 South 7th Street,  
Vigorville, Indiana.

✓ 2nd Lt., Floyd C. Pedersen

Mrs. Olive Pedersen, (mother)  
20 Kharma Avenue,  
Elizabeth, New Jersey.

✓ 2nd Lt., Donald J. Smith

Mr. John E. Smith, (father)  
924 Marshall Avenue,  
Chicago, Illinois.

✓ \*\*T/Sergeant Clell M. Card

Mrs. Margaret Card, (wife)  
554 Clifton Street,  
Los Angeles, California.

✓ T/Sergeant Richard D. Gilson

Mrs. Barbara E. Gilson, (wife)  
1900 East Broadway,  
Gainesville, Texas.

✓ S/Sergeant Willie L. Smith

Mrs. Myrnell Padgett, (mother)  
Rural Free Delivery Route No.  
Leesville, South Carolina.

✓ S/Sergeant Robert E. Knodtson

Mrs. Betty L. Knodtson, (wife)  
209 East H Street,  
Casper, Wyoming.

✓ S/Sergeant Frederick E. Koffel

Mrs. Maude E. Koffel, (wife)  
North Wales Road,  
Shippack Pike, Pennsylvania.

✓ S/Sergeant Darrell Rodabaugh

Mrs. Nora E. Rodabaugh, (mother)  
Box 215, Mountain, West Virginia.

\*\*T/Sgt. Clell M. Card

Mrs. Joseph Allen, (sister)  
2624 Sichel Street,  
Los Angeles, California.



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~~SECRET~~

CASUALTY REPORT FOR AGO

ARMY SERVICE FORCES  
NEW YORK PORT OF EMBARKATION  
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

INTELLIGENCE & SECURITY DIVISION

Auth: C.G. I.Y.P.E.  
Initials: *Pen*  
Date: *SEP 15 1944*

DATE: *9-27-44*

NAVIGATOR	: <i>1ST LT. DAN V. SMITH</i>	SQUADRON	: <i>729TH B.S.</i>
ARMY SERIAL NO.	: <i>0-655779</i>	GROUP	: <i>451ST</i>
HOME ADDRESS	: <i>5921 EMERALD AVE. CHICAGO, ILL.</i>	TYPE AIRCRAFT	: <i>B-24</i>
EX-REPORT NO.	:	DATE OF MISSION	: <i>6-6-44</i>

POSITION	MEMBERS OF CREW	PRIB RECORDS
PILOT	<i>LT. W.R. HARRIS</i>	<i>EVADER</i>
CO-PILOT	<i>LT. D.J. SMITH</i>	<i>EVADER</i>
NAVIGATOR	<i>LT. F.E. PEDERSEN</i>	<i>"</i>
BARBICHER	<i>LT. A. CHESNITZ</i>	<i>"</i>
RADIO-OP.	<i>SS. CARD</i>	<i>"</i>
ENGINEER	<i>SS. R. GILSON</i>	<i>"</i>
WING GUNNER	<i>SGT. KIMWILTON</i>	<i>"</i>
GUNNER	<i>SGT. GRANT</i>	<i>"</i>
GUNNER	<i>SGT. KOFFEL</i>	<i>"</i>
GUNNER	<i>SGT. RADA BAUGH</i>	<i>"</i>

KNOWN INFORMATION: *ALL ABOVE NAMED MEN RETURNED SAFELY TO ALLIED CONTROL. AUG. 11, 1944 HQS. 15TH AAF BARI, ITALY.*

HEARSAY INFORMATION:

GIA 84 (18 Sept 44)

~~SECRET~~

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CONFIDENTIALSTATEMENT

8 June 1944.

On 6 June 1944, I was flying as tail gunner on aircraft #630, which was in the #2 position in the low flight of the 1st attack unit. After we left Ploesti I was able to observe aircraft #757, which was a straggler from the flight our ship was in. The ship was to the left rear of the 2nd attack unit and slightly below the formation at approximately 1037, at this time the ship was still under control and in level flight. This was the last I saw of aircraft #757 as it was blocked from my view by the 2nd attack unit. I did not see any of the men parachute nor did I see the ship crash.

*Harold A. Stuenkel*Harold A. Stuenkel,  
S/Sgt. 16110286*Inst-1*  
CONFIDENTIAL

**DECLASSIFIED****Authority: NND 735001****By: NARA NARA Date: 1973**STATEMENT

8 June 1944.

On 6 June 1944, I was flying as tail gunner in aircraft #188, which was the lead ship in the low flight of the 1st attack unit. I observed aircraft #757 when it aborted from the #3 position and I watched it from that time until 1056. When I last saw aircraft #757 it was below and to the left rear of the second attack unit and had the No. 1 propeller feathered. It did not seem to be out of control and was not losing altitude noticeably. I lost sight of the ship in the haze when the second attack unit obscured my view.

*William J. Runkle*  
William J. Runkle,  
S/Sgt. 12138172.

*Incl 2'*  
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By: NARA NARA Date: 1973

AFPPA-12

## CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

5477

1. Your name SMITH DONALD J. Rank 1<sup>ST</sup> LT. AC. Serial No. 0-695779
2. Organization 15<sup>TH</sup> AAF 44<sup>TH</sup> WG 729<sup>TH</sup> SQDN. Cp Commander LEE Rank Col. SqN CO ANDERSON Rank MRJ.  
(full name) (full name)
3. What year 1944 month JUNE day 6 did you go down? YES
4. What was the mission, PODESTI RAVIN, OIL REFINERIES, target  
time, APPROX 1000, altitude, 21,000' route scheduled, FOGGIA ITALY  
TO PODESTI - DIRECT, route flown
5. Where were you when you left formation? TEN MILES WEST OF PODESTIA, ON RETURN TRIP.
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 CREW MEMBERS BAILED OUT & LANDED SAFELY.
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? 45 MILES S.W. BELGRADE, YUGOSLAVIA.
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? NONE
14. Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. NONE

(Any additional information may be written on the back)

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By: NARA NARA Date: 1973

AFPPA-12

## CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

2477

1. Your name Pedersen, Floyd C. Rank I ST LT Serial No. 0-700142
2. Organization 451 Gp Commander (full name) Rank Col. Sqn CO Anderson Rank Maj. (full name)
3. What year 1944 month June day 6 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, Bombing, target, Ploesti Oil Field, target time, 10:30 A.M., altitude, 20,000 ft. route scheduled Foggia, Italy  
18:00 E-42:44N to 21:40E-44:40N to 26:02E-45:12N to target as scheduled
5. Where were you when you left formation? Approx. 22:30E-44:50N
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". At approximately 11:30 A.M. at 20:00E-43:55N The pilot, co-pilot, and bombardier went out the bombays, the nose-gunner and navigator went out the nose escape and the rest of the crew went out the camera hatch from about 8,000 ft. indicated alt.
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? Approx. 19:52E-43:52N
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, all ten members of the crew bailed out.
11. Where were they in aircraft? quest. #8 above
12. What was their condition? None wounded
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? All ten members of the crew were assembled within six hours of bailing out; the entire crew was alright except for sprained ankles suffered by the co-pilot, engineer, and navigator which occurred upon striking the ground.
14. Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. None

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AFPPA-12

## CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

8477

1. Your name ALEX CHESBOWITZ Rank 1ST LT Serial No. O-547839
2. Organization 451 Gp Commander Eaton Rank COL Sqn CO \_\_\_\_\_ Rank MAJ  
(full name) (full name)
3. What year 1944 month JUNE day 6 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, PLESTI, target, OIL REFINERIES, target  
time, 1000, altitude, 20,000 ft, route scheduled, from Italy  
To Romania, route flown Same
5. Where were you when you left formation? Over Yugoslavia
6. Did you bail out? Yes!
7. Did other members of crew bail out? Yes! ALL TEN.
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". About 1200 the plane caught on fire we were 50 miles south of Belgrade. All crew members bailed at 10,000 ft altitude. We were then brought together and given food and shelter. We got back to Allied controls near a town in Yugoslavia - CAZAC
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? VEAT - a town in Yugoslavia - CAZAC
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. THE CHETNIKS HAD PHOTOGRAPHS AND KNOWLEDGE OF AMERICAN AIRMEN AND PLANES WHO WENT DOWN IN THEIR AREA, WHICH WOULD PROBABLY CLEAR UP THE FATE OF MANY WHO WERE MISSING.

(Any additional information may be written on the back)