

FIFTEENTH SPECIAL GROUP (PROV)
Office of the Operations Officer
APO 520 U.S. Army

11 February 1945

S T A T E M E N T

1. B-24 42-7563 departed its base at 1019 hours on 9 February 1945 on a day operational mission. No W/T or radio telephone contact was ever established with the A/C.

2. Interrogation of other crews of the group who had returned from the mission revealed that two crews had seen what they thought to be an explosion in mid-air at approximately 44°46'N and 14°56'E. The crews also reported seeing a large fire on the ground a moment or two later at the same coordinates. Cloud conditions at the time prevented the crew members of either a/c to determine whether or not the explosion was actually an a/c in fire. The observations mentioned were made en-route to the target and accordingly to the time and place of the observations the missing a/c could have very well been in the same vicinity at the time the explosions were seen. Parachutes were observed. The pilots on the two crews sighting the explosion were Lt. James E. Mulligan ASN O-695763 and Lt. Alfred H. Hunter, Jr., ASN O-70614 from 859th Bomb Sqdn (H).

3. On return from a mission to approximately the same target area on the next day, 10 February 1945, it was reported by one crew that they had sighted what appeared to be a black B-24 in a valley approximately 44°35'N and 16°05'E. The pilot was unable to descend through the clouds to an altitude suitable for close observation but from what he could determine the plane had crash-landed since the last snow and was intact. There were what appeared to be tracks leading from the a/c. The pilot of the a/c reporting these observations was Lt. Edward F. Reilly, ASN O-675290 from the 859th Bomb Sqdn (H).

4. In view of the reports received relative to the missing a/c, it is the opinion of this headquarters that the a/c either crashed in mountainous country or was forced down.

5. The members of the crew of the missing a/c are as follows:

Pilot	Maxwell, Robert W.	1st. Lt.	ASN O-823426
Co-pilot	Marcus, Frank E., Jr.	2nd. Lt.	ASN O-823411
Navigator	Cervantes, Francis I.	2nd. Lt.	ASN O-703606
bombardier	Jackson, Robert G.	2nd. Lt.	ASN O-718102
Engineer	Tetzloff, Lionel A.	S/Sgt.	ASN 17109621
Radio Operator	Kavanaugh, William P.	S/Sgt.	ASN 14201481
Tail Gunner	Elliot, William W.	Pvt.	ASN 33686693
Head Gunner	Jones, Kyle B.	S/Sgt.	ASN 34728758

JAMES A. SECCAFICO,
Capt, Air Corps,
Operations Officer.

TRUE COPY:
Ed Murdock
E. A. MURDOCK, Jr.,
1st. Lt., Air Corps.

HEADQUARTERS
EIGHT HUNDRED FIFTY-NINTH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
APO 520 US ARMY

MISSING IN ACTION

January 1945 - Missing In Action over Yugoslavia on Operational Flight.

1st Lt.	Robert W. Maxwell	0-823426	1092
1st Lt.	Frank E. Marcus, Jr.	0-823411	1092
1st Lt.	Francis I. Cervantes	0-703606	1034
1st Lt.	Robert C. Jackson	0-718102	1035
1st Lt.	Lionel A. Tetzloff	17109621	748
1st Lt.	William P. Kavanaugh	14201481	757
1st Lt.	Kyle B. Jones	34728758	612
1st Lt.	William W. Elliott	33686693	611

RETURNED TO ZONE OF INTERIOR ON TD

1st Lt.	Harry M. Bland	19080673	824
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