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To: "Leslie Gooch" <Itgooch@bellsouth.net>
Cc: "Tom Ensminger" <defactohistorian@attbi.com>; "Si Sizemore" <sisizemore@juno.com>
Subject: J.O. Mellotte
Date: Saturday, May 04, 2002 9:17 AM

Dear Larry,

Yes, I can tell you a lot about the unfortunate crash near Lyon-Bron airfield in which James Mellotte was killed. We even have a few remains of the plane at our local historical aviation society HQ.

The crash occurred when the pilot attempted to land in very poor weather conditions. It took me years to find out what the unit was (in fact a unit for which I am the French representative, unbelievable !).

I wrote a short article in French a few years ago and I will be happy to send a copy as soon as I have your snailmail address. Will also add a file sheet giving all the details. Strangely, all documents I have had from the US archives mention the name as Mellotte, which seems to be the usual spelling. Can you confirm from the family official documents ?

I remember someone told me Lt. Burt was heard of after the war but I never had confirmation. There never was any service or commemorative ceremony for them after the war but I think there is a possibility something might be planned in 2005 for the 50th anniversary of the event.

Many thanks for the very good picture I received from Tom Ensminger. One of the best in the group archives.

All the best,

Serge Blandin

French Representative 801st/492nd B.G. Association

Lyon - France

Sgt. James D. Matthews Killed Overseas



Sgt. James Dale Matthews, son of Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Matthews, was killed over Lyon, France, in a night training flight on February 6, according to a message received from the War Department.

Sgt. Matthews entered service May 7, 1943, and took his basic training at Sneyd Field, Texas. He graduated from mechanic school at Keesler Field, Miss., He attended gunnery school at Tyndall Field, Fla., and received his wings there. He went to Westover Field, Mass., and from there to Chatham Field, Ga., for crew training as flight engineer on a B-24 bomber. He arrived overseas the first week in December, 1944.

He was 21 years of age, was born and reared in Prairie Grove and attended the local schools, graduating from high school in 1941.

Matthews attended vocational school at the Tulsa fair ground and was employed at the Harvey Young airport in Tulsa.

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Matthews and
Mr. and
of this
by his
Mrs.





KILLED—Sergeant James Dale Matthews, 21 years old, nephew of M. B. Matthews of Springdale and son of Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Matthews of Prairie Grove, was killed Feb. 4 in an aircraft crash during a night training flight over Lyon, France. Sergeant Matthews was born and reared in Prairie Grove where he finished high school, then received vocational training in Tulsa and was employed there when he entered service in May, 1943. He was a flight engineer on a B-24 bomber and had been overseas only about two months when his death occurred.

June 13, 2002

Dear Mr. Ensminger,

My sincere appreciation for the information about my cousin, James D. Matthews, which you have forwarded to me through my good friend, John Hildebran. I am happy to share with you these few pictures and records. I hope that you will find them helpful. In the picture of the crew; my cousin is on the front row: first one on your left. I'm sorry but I don't know any of the other crew members.

Gratefully yours,
Mrs. Sally D. Shannon