

490TH BG MACR'S

To aid clarity we have produce an abbreviated typescript of the MACR's pertinent to the 490th BG - plus details of all other crashes and incidents that occurred. Any important information that has been omitted can be submitted to this website via the contact details. A full copy of a specific MACR can be obtain from the 490th BG archives, Fold 3 and the U.S National Archives.

12 March 1944 - Buttler

B24 42 7239

Training Accident: Research report:

Circumstance: While on a formation and gunnery training mission. A gasoline leak developed in No. 3 engine and it caught fire. The aircraft gained about 300ft of altitude and began to veer right while flames came inside through the right waist gun window. The control tower and three gunners in the rear of the bomber tried to warn the pilot via radio but there was no response from the cockpit. Fire damage to the right wing rendered it uncontrollable and it made a hard belly landing in the desert several miles south of the runway. The B24 rolled over, broke apart and burned. The five men in the front of the aircraft were killed.

KLD

Capt H J Philips. Instructor Pilot

2nd Lt R C Buttler

S/Sgt S N Millholen

T/Sgt C M Morris

Sgt J H Suttle

6 June 1944: McAUSLAND

MACR 6299

B24 42-94885: Maxwell House

Returning from enemy coast. Pilot ordered bail out when losing altitude and determined he could not reach Warmwell's air field prior to glide into the English Channel. All bailed out except pilot and 2 other crew members. Pilot noted short gravel beach and decided to crash land. There was a Coast Guard station about one-half mile along the beach.

KIA.

Sgt. Glen Larson

Lt. P. G. Pokrificzak

7 June 1944: HEATH.

B24 42-50294 Madame Shoo Shoo

in collision with

7 June 1944: W. M. Brown

B24 42-94894 Flying Ginny

Location: RAF Feltwell.

Eye witness detail: It was about 11:30pm when we returned to the base area and found that there were enemy fighters waiting to shoot us down as we approached to land. We received orders to fly west and land at the first field we could find that was a reasonable distance from here. We were very low on gas and weren't anxious to make another single engined landing, especially at night. Another thing on our minds was the "Q" sites that had been set up to look like airfields to fool the enemy. At night these looked like lit runways but in reality they were dumps meant to wreck an enemy plane attempting to land.

We were fortunate that the runway we picked was an RAF field with a grass runway, which made the landing pretty rough, but it wasn't a "Q" site and we got down without a problem. As soon as we got off the end of the runway, Lt Brown sent Cooper out to guide us off, (it was pitch black out there). We had no way of knowing, but Lt. Heath had landed just behind us and just as we were starting to taxi we heard and felt a terrific crash. Heath's plane, (Named Madam Shoo Shoo), ploughed through ours and the nose ended up between our number 3 and 4 engines. Lt. Brown ordered everyone out and we didn't stick around to talk thing over. I fully expected an explosion. I cut the switches and got out of my seat the fastest ever. The crew gathered on the runway, all except Brown, Robarge and Meek. Bill Brown stayed in the plane to check on the crew and found Robarge and Meek pinned in the wreckage. There was no explosion or fire and we got the two men out in about 15 minutes, all cut and bleeding.

NB. Full Eye witness report in "Eye Witness reports" on web site.

20 June 1944: DODD

B24 42-94844 Leave me Bee

MACR: N/A

Crashed on take off

KIA.

S/Sgt Walter Case

S/Sgt Oral Pritchett

22 June 1944: KILPATRICK

B24 42-94784:

MACR 6243

Plane hit by flak in Paris area s/e of the city. Pilot decided to return. More flak encountered at Rouen. Multiple fighters appeared. Kilpatrick was badly wounded and unconscious. Allardt took over plane, ordered crew to bail out. Kilpatrick regained consciousness and bailed out. All bail outs were between Rouen and LeHavre. Plane limped back to U.K. by co pilot crash landed near Beachy Head. Except Lt Kilpatrick, all crew survived

KIA .

1st Lt Kilpatrick

Reference "A border man in Normandy" by John Dugdale Vallely. Author got separated from his regiment at Dunkirk and lived with Resistance for the intervening 4 years between 40 and 44

NB. Full Eye witness report in "Eye Witness reports" on web site.

22 June 1944: FELLOWS:

B24 44-20664:

MACR 5936

Witness: Saw direct hit by flak and plane began descent toward earth. Ball turret gunner saw plane break up in the air in flames. Chutes seen.

Eye witness report (1)- French Gendarmery

On 22 June 1944 around 20:00h an American bomber was shot down by flak and came down in flames into the Elbeuf Forest 1200m south of Saint Pierre Les Elbeuf station. The crew did not survive. 6 did not get out and two who did landed down 500 meters to the East. The plane was completely destroyed, a wing falling in 500 meters from the wreck of the aircraft and the rudder fell down on to the town of Saint Cyr la Campagne at the place called "Le Valengier"

The site was attended by both the French Gendarmerie and the German Armed Force. it was thought the two crew found were Fellows and Sumray.

Location: near ST. PIERRE LES ELBEUF, FRANCE (5 Km s/o Elbeuf/Seine). 1 body found in forest of Elbeuf.

Eye Witness report (2) Edison R Edwards - Engineer - Waldorf Crew - Lt. Fellows and crew took a direct hit in the right wing between the fuselage and #3 engine. The wing broke right off and the plane exploded, falling straight down. He was in formation with us and most of the crew saw it as it happened. I looked out the right waist window and saw it falling about a thousand feet under us. My bombardier and ball turret gunner followed it to the ground and no parachutes opened. When I saw it the tail and left wing had already broken off. The only man on Lt. Fellows' crew that I knew was Linderman, his radio operator. We logged 6:55 minutes, and saw no enemy fighters, altitude 22,000.

Eye witness report (3) Raymond P Cox Ball Gunner and Togglier, - After we left the Paris area on our course home, we crossed Rouen, France, encountered heavy flak from 155mm guns. Lt. Fellows was flying off our left wing. His plane received a direct hit in no 3 engine and main fuel cells. Ship blew up in air. None of the crew got out. The remainder of the group got home safe*

Eye Witness report (4) Pilot George Reeves -"I was in the flight when Fellows ship was shot down. He was in the flight above and sustained a hit in the right wing main spar, and the whole wing just folded over the top of the fuselage. As the plane fell below and behind us crew members saw (as I recall) it engulfed in flames and three members of the crew bail out. One evidently did not have time to properly buckle his harness and went through the leg straps when the chute opened. The second jumped with breast pack in hand and dropped it when he attempted to hook it to the harness. The third either jumped or was thrown out without a chute."

KIA.

2nd Lt. R W. Fellows. Pilot

2nd Lt. R L Ambrose

2nd Lt. G I Gorham

2nd Lt. W G Comer

Sgt. B O Boxberger

Sgt. D G Couchman

S/Sgt R L Lemanski.

Sgt J E Lindeman.

Sgt. E T Sumrell.

Sgt. L C Lynn.

21 July 1944: SMITH

B24 42-94821: Pete the Pelican

MACR 7843

Location last seen/heard: 49.00 N - 0830 E

Crash Aircraft landed near Dubendorf, Switzerland.

All crew survived

NB. Full Eye witness report in "Eye Witness reports" on web site.

29 July 1944 - UK Collision: BRUNKEN

B17 44-40442 'Short Bier' crashed taking off followed by explosion, near Yaxley Village South of the Airfield

MACR N/A

KIA

S/Sgt C. F. Pooler

Sgt G. E. Staggs

with

29 July 1944 - UK Collision: JOHNSON/DAVIS :

B24 42 94955 Mama Done Told Me.

MACR N/A

Crashed outside of the Swan inn/A140 Road Brome coming into land on the northern end of the airfield. Two severely injured casualties 1 died later in hospital.

KIA.

1st Lt P Davis

3 August 1944 - BEACH

B24 43 38324

MACR

KIA

13 August 1944 - UK Collision: COSBY

B17 43 - 38051

MACR n/a

with

13 August 1944 - UK Collision: KETAS

B17 43 - 37618

MACR N/A

Eye witness report - The collision took place during a training flight while converting from B24's to B17's. Reaching 8,000ft Capt Cosby eased into a gentle left turn and I saw their right wingman, Lt Ketas arrive below as was normal in for forming process. Over the intercom I informed my pilot of the sighting and of the other bomber's position - it would be the first to ascend and form on them. I was apprehensive as their speed and rising altitude was increasing quickly. Before Cosby could respond, the other B-17 struck them, shearing away the right wing at the inboard engine. We immediately nosed over and went into a spin in a clockwise direction. I forced myself into a standing position from my seat trying to buckle my parachute in place. As I watched the altimeter spin I knew I had to bail out.

KIA - B17 43 - 38051

S/Sgt L. Barnett

T/Sgt K. T. Bagnell

2nd Lt D. A Pulli

T/Sgt M. Rayberg

KIA - B17 43 37618

S/Sgt P Bowling

2nd Lt A Bright

T/Sgt Noblin

2nd Lt R Ransom

2nd Lt C Ratliff

S/Sgt P Terling

T/Sgt Weaver

1 September 1944: KIRKLIN: (Haas as command pilot)

MACR 8857

B17 43-38184:

Location given as 49.17N - 00.18W.

First outing in a B17 and 3 crew survived

Aircraft had just left coast of France when it collided with B17 43-38324. Both went down.

Coordinates given are "LA DUNANERIE 14100 SAINT-DESIR, FRANCE"

KIA

Maj. L Haas

2nd Lt. R Russell

1st Lt G. Kunz

2nd Lt. C Crofts

T.Sgt J Ripple

S/Sgt L Hudson

S/Sgt R Weber

1st September 1944. FREY:

MACR 8854

B17 43-37941 Miss Anna Abortion

Same coordinates given: 49.17N - 00.18W

Transcript of eye witness report:-

We were just leaving the French Coast, I was leading the high element. I saw the deputy lead ship under the lead and about a half a plane length ahead, after a few seconds it seemed the deputy had pulled up and the two collided. The two ships then tore up and went down.

My tail gunner saw four (4) chutes close on and also several other bodies falling free of the wreckage, however he lost sight of the latter in the clouds.

Altitude was about 18,000 feet

Coordinates given are "LA DUNANERIE 14100 SAINT-DESIR, FRANCE"

KIA.

2nd Lt. Chas Frey, (Pilot)

Maj. Francis Dresser,

2nd Lt. George Hixson,

F/O Lowell Shuman,

2nd Lt. Don Hoeffler,

S/Sgt. Floyd Hall,

S/Sgt. Tom Gossett,

Sgt. Ed Schanhaar,

Sgt. Don Russell,

Sgt. Calvin Pulver.

9 September 1944: BEACH

B17 43-38324:

MACR 8929

Coordinates 51.05N - 06.56E

Just after bombs dropped. Hit by Flak (7th Flak Division)

Having peeled away after dropping its bombs on a factory on the east bank of the Rhine at Dusseldorf. the Pilot put the plane into a steep left dive in an attempt to put out the fire caused by the flak then levelled out allowing his crew to bail out. the pilot and co pilot were both injured by flak and subsequently died in the plane. the Tail Gunner was hit by the tail plane of the aircraft as he attempted to bail out and his chute never opened. His body was later found by a farm house and hidden by the other captured crew members

The 6 surviving crew members were all captured and held prisoners of war. Enduring the harsh winter of '44-45 and in January the forced march through the snow into deeper Germany as the Russians advanced.

One crew member captured at Cologne.

One crew member said crew bailed out over Cologne and plane struck ground at Cologne.

Coordinates give location as "AM PIELSBUSCH, 41517 GREVENBROICH, GERMANY (location pretty much coincides with one crew member's drawing.)

KIA.

1st Lt Beach

2nd Lt John Terlecky

Sgt. Jim Vogt

12 September 1944: SPERONIS

B17 43 37995 BABY ANN

Speronis crew crash landed at Sutton Valence, Maidstone

13 September 1944: FUNK

MACR 8856

B17 43-38128: Bombo

Coordinates 50.45N - 08.00E

Direct hit between nose and engine. Aircraft still flying

One notation stapled to document: location Fuerth/Saar in area of Frankfurt

Bail out near Frankfurt

Two crew members captured near Buerstadt.

The plane left formation at the target (Ludwigshafen)

The coordinates given are just southeast of the town of HUNDSANGEN which is northwest of LIMBURG.

The crew landed in the vicinity of ST. WENDEL and the plane apparently found in that area, @ 6Km. east of OTTWEILER in the SAAR.

Eye witness reports

Bombo Crew B17 - Funk Crew

Charlie Fowlkes Jr Cpl - tail gunner

Eye witness report - The plane was spinning out of control, on fire, then there was an explosion in the right wing and the wing tip was hurled away in this explosion. People on the ground saw how this plane part hit him as he was hanging in his chute in the air they then saw the empty parachute floating to the ground. Cpl. Fowlkes's body was discovered he had made a 50 - 60 cm hole in the soft soil. His chest was bloody and squashed. He had no parachute or clothing apart for underwear and socks. The wing of the 'plane fell nearby. It suggests that the wing hit him after the explosion blew it off and the force tore his 'chute and clothing off.

2nd Lt Frank R Hedeem - co pilot

Bailing with other crew members Lt Hedeem landed unhurt in a field in the district of Altenkirchen. He was taken captive by SS soldiers of the "Das Reich" Division. Lt Hedeem was interrogated by the SS. He gave his serial number as 0768090-T-43-44. in the afternoon of the same day, the SS soldiers brought Lt. Hedeem beyond the Kiefernwald forest and shot him dead. (one shot to the head)

The SS officer was identified as Ss-Obersfurmfuhrer Hans R. The soldier who reportedly participated was identified as SS-soldier Paul P. from Hamburg. Defying orders from the SS not to bury Lt Hedeem in the village cemetery, the mayor of Altenkirchen, Otto Bohnlein accompanied by villagers Friedrich Karl B, Wilhelm J, Ludwig S and Emil S. Moved the body of the dead pilot that evening on an oxcart and buried him in the old part of the village cemetery. There was no time to place the body in a coffin.

Robert Lincoln Cpl - top gunner - stayed with aircraft died on impact

2nd Lt Rae Stokes - Bombardier - MIA. However Eyewitness reports state that two men were executed (see above) so it seems possible that Lt Stokes may have been the second. Doubt can be cast on this possibility as villagers buried one person, why not the second? Remains unconfirmed

2nd Lt. Frank Hedeem, Executed
Cpl Bob Lincoln,
Sgt. Steve Andrews,
Cpl. Chas Fowlkes

Bob Funk, (Pilot) Allan Quinn, Rae Stokes, Bob Lawrence, Tom Dobson (5 POW)

13 September 1944: DAVIS A

B17 43-38009

Place of Crash: Hochheim County Worms / Rhein

Date of Crash: 13 Feb 1944 at 11.50

Pilot Albert Davis 1st Lt, Captured and transferred to Investigation Center West, Oberursel

Bomb Richard F. H. Wessel 2nd Lt, Captured and transferred to Investigation Center West, Oberursel

KIA

2nd Lt. Fred Ostler(Co-pilot),

2nd Lt. Jenner De Santis,

Sgt. John Godfrey,

Sgt. Teofilio Crixel,

Sgt. Larry Rooney,

Sgt. Don Garry,

Sgt. Oscar Jensen”

13th September 1944 - MULHOLLAND: Major Cmd Pilot -

B17 42 - 97993

MACR 8842

As part of the 93rd Combat Wing, attack on the chemical plants at Ludwigshafen, Germany.

The 95th BG provided 3 PFF B17s to 3 BD wings, one of these being the Lead A/c for the 490th BG. Maj. Mitchell J Mulholland from the 490th BG was the command pilot the rest of the crew were from the 413rd BS, 96th BG

The aircraft was hit by flak and crashed at Saargermund. Records are kept with the 95th BG Archive.

Major Mulholland was captured after bail out and after questioning transferred to Stalag Luft 2

27th September 1944 - PRIMUS

B17 43 37776

Night Navigation Training crash. research report:-

Time and circumstances: At 20:45 on 27th September 1944 while undertaking supervised training on night navigation with the new B17.

The B17 had taken off at 19:00 and red distress flares were signalled at this time. No radio contact of any sort was received.

Local workers from a nearby colliery reported that they noted the aircraft approach from a north easterly direction appearing to lose height. It was seen to turn left and nose dived to the ground with a resulting explosion. Debris was spread over a large area and the plane and entire field appeared to be engulfed in flames while ammunition was exploding and flying in all directions.

The aircraft had been carrying 2300 gallons of gasoline. The aircraft was carrying a crew of nine and three members of a mobile training unit. There were no survivors.

KIA

1st Lt M H Primus

1st Lt L J Deputy

2nd Lt R C Simmons

2nd Lt R J Hermann

T/Sgt C F Keele

S?Sgt A Vergili

T/Sgt R E Griswold

S/Sgt H Stoever

S/Sgt L I Richter

Training Unit: S/Sgt J C Barry, S/Sgt R W Franke, S/Sgt E Shively, Jr

6 October 1944: MCLELLAN

B17 43-38180

MACR 5929

Location: Berlin (Spandau)

Just after bombs away, plane left formation and began losing altitude rapidly. At about 22,000 feet, left wing broke off and plane was seen to further disintegrate. Only one chute seen.

Place of crash: Berlin - Haselhorst Parking Area BMW plant. (Report apparently made at Berlin-Staaken)
Aircraft exploded mid air over the target.

KIA

Lt. Art Bubendorf,

Lt. Larry Grubisich,

Sgt. Bob Moyer,

Sgt. Bob Dittmer,

Sgt. Santi Trimarchi

1st Lt. W Mclellan, 2nd Lt J S Bingham, , S/Sgt M Chakansky, S/Sgt L Smith

28 October 1944: McAusland - Capt H C Allan

B17 43 37928

MACR N/A

Single casualty killed by flak

KIA

Sgt W Shiflett

5 November 1944: JACKSON

B17 43-38087

MACR 10326

Location: Mannheim, Germany

Mid air collision with B17 43-37884

KIA

Lt. R. L Jackson

Sgt. D. Golden

S/Sgt. H. Pines

Sgt. I Norsoph

POW

Remaining crew - Stalag Luft 4

5 November 1944: BRIDWELL

B17 43-37884 Pennsy Bell

MACR 10325/10326

Mid air collision with

5 November 1944: JACKSON.

B17 43 38087 -

Location: Mannheim, Germany:

half of ship from lead struck just back of ball turret, aircraft struck ground, crashing onto the wreckage of a burned house.

KIA

1st Lt. C Bridwell

2nd Lt. F. Norman

2nd Lt. J. Provolt

T/Sgt. E. Longer

S/Sgt. J. H. Porterfield.

S/Sgt. W. E. Cole

S/Sgt. R. E. Joyce

25 November 1944: DELMERICO

B17 43 37886 Pennsy-Belle

MACR 10759

Location: Apolda, Germany

Witness Report: Initially a "chaff" mission we had volunteered, the youngest crew in the BG with an average age of 19.2 Years. The mission went as brief but they shot the hell out of us. We lost one engine and one turbo super charger over the target. On return we lost two good engines on the right side, leaving us with 1/2 an engine with no working turbo. Our altitude dropped to 8000ft and even with three P51's flying escort who maintained contact we were very exposed as we were in a straggler position. We were making no headway and as there was an extreme headwind I made the decision to bail. I asked the escorts to count the 'chutes thanked them. told them I'd see them after the war, opened the bomb bay doors, engaged auto pilot walked back to the bomb bay and jumped.

When I reached the ground I was soon captured by two German soldiers who rescued me from local villagers who were very angry at the bombing of their town. In due course and after questioning I was made a prisoner of war in Stalag Luft I, where I soon met up with most of the crew.. One thing worth noting is when travelling to the interrogation centre with the two German soldiers they opened their packed lunch to eat - and shared it with me.

Only Bob Newsome did not survive, He landed in a lake and drowned.

KIA

Cpl. R Newsome

5 December 1944: KERMODE

B17 44-8140

MACR 11066

Location: 53.09N - 13.15E - Gross Zerlang.

Immediately after bombs away aircraft left formation and called for fighter support. At the location above contact was lost with the aircraft.

One engine lost before target but continued on bombing run. Second engine out at bombs away. Attacked by a FW190. Right wing severely damaged and fire in the gas tank. As the ship was about to explode the order to bail was given.

MIA

Cpt. R. E. Gregory

1st Lt W. F. Wood

2nd Lt. M. F. Upshaw

1st Lt. C. T. Hillweg

T/Sgt. C. T. Mayer

T/Sgt. J. L. Bruce

S/Sgt. J. T. Caldwell

S/Sgt. E. L. Dorr

1st Lt. M. F. Meadows

POW

Cpt. D. J. Kermode

5 January 1945: ADELMAN

B17 43 38050

MACR N/A

In mid air collision with

5 January 1945: WOOD

B17 43 38111

MACR N/A

Location: Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk,UK

Report: While undertaking a practice training formation both aircraft manned by new crews above Bury St Edmunds

Eye Witness Report: 2nd Lt. E F Langhulz - We were flying along smoothly when suddenly there was a bump and a "bucking" of the aircraft. I somehow sensed it was time to get out and tried to get to the forward escape hatch; however, before I could make it, a ball of flame came out of the bomb bay area. The next thing I was aware of was falling through the air with pieces of wreckage going by me. Fortunately, I had obtained a back pack type parachute which came through the wreck intact but when I put my right hand up to get the rip cord handle on the left shoulder, all I had was a thumb. Four fingers had been rather neatly amputated, probably by a prop or heavy piece of metal. I got the 'chute open with my left hand and floated down into the middle of a beet field where two elderly men working there came up to me and escorted me out to the road. Some people at the base near Bury St. Edmunds had seen the incident and had a jeep on the road waiting to take me to the base clinic. From there it was the 65th General Hospital near Diss for skin graft, etc and then to Walter Reed Hospital in Washington.

KIA (1)

2nd Lt H Adelman

2nd Lt C S Elder

2nd Lt A A Saye

Cpl. D N Tuttle

Cpl. V W Walton

T/Sgt H C Smetzer

T/Sgt H S Bennett

KIA (2)

2nd Lt. D L Wood

1st Lt. P E McGee

2nd Lt. J J Smith

2nd Lt. F M Redman

F/O W J Allen

T/Sgt C A Kwasigroh

Sgt C L Todt

S/Sgt E A Sarazewski

T/Sgt E R Hammond

(Full story available in Bomber Stories by Ian McLachlan)

10 January 1945: WARD

B17 43 - 38157

MACR 11548

Location: 50.50N - 06.10E

En Route Cologne

Ship damaged by flak went into a glide and disappeared into undercast. 9 crew bailed

KIA

Sgt. M. Schutt

10 January 1945: McGRATH

B17 43-38132

MACR 11588

Location: 50.50 - 06.10E

En Route Cologne

Witness: Plane suffered direct flak hit and outboard end of left wing broke off as plane went into a spin and headed in a dive for undercast below. No chutes seen.

Shot out of formation about one minute after bombs away on a due west heading for Aachen

KIA

1st Lt. W. McGrath

1st Lt. E. Wiltshire

T/Sgt. S. Elliott

S/Sgt. G. Pugh

POW

2nd Lt. D. Shapiro. S/Sgt. P. Walker, T/Sgt. M. Chambers, S/Sgt. R. Lynde

3 February 1945 - SPIEGEL

B17 43-38150 Giddy

MACR 12238

Location: 52.35N - 14.15E Reczyn, Poland

Eye Witness Report (1) 8 minutes after target, 11:47, saw plane continue east towards Russia. No sign of trouble.

Eye Witness Report (Radio records) (2)

Crew: Engine out, landing in Poland

Ground: What is position?

Crew: 52.38N - 16.14E

Ground: Request condition of aircraft and crew.

Crew: Landing Warsaw, crew OK, engine out, petrol low.

Ground: Guard aircraft. Contact American authorities, Reczyn.

Aircraft struck ground Reczyn, Poland

Eye Witness (3) Polish villager

I could hear engines roaring somewhere behind trees of a nearby copse... then I saw a massive silver 4 engine plane flying over my father's fields. I thought it was an American plane because I could see a massive star. He was coming in low his plane flying toward the ground and he started to take a deep right turn towards Reczyn fields. His final landing was in a potato field.

No casualties. Full report on "Eye Witness Reports" on website.

6 February 1945, SCHOENFELD

B17 43 38167 Worry Bird

MACR 12371

Location: Near Pont Neuf, Mittersheim, France,

KIA (1)

2nd Lt. G. L. Leonard

F/O L. A. Braddell

Cpl. H. Mehlman

Cpl. D.P. Mannies

2nd. Lt J. R. Owen

POW: 1st Lt W. S. Schoenfeld, 2nd Lt. R D Schar, Sgt F M Alexander, Sgt. I H Wrampe

Mid air collision with

6 February 1945: DUNN

B-17 G 43-38699

MACR 12426

KIA (2)

S/Sgt E J Mulvihill

Pfc D R Mayhew

2nd Lt M C Dunn

2nd Lt J R Philley

2nd Lt H O Baland

S/Sgt C H McKinney

Cpl F H Horton

6 February 1945, HEDGECOCK

B17 43-37894 Big Poison

MACR missing

In collision over Newmarket, Cambs, with 388th BG B17 43-37806 Big Poison. Crashed Prickwillow, Cambs.

Witness (1) Lt. Al Elias - Bombadier - The fog was very thick and the two bombers had a simple collision with the wings which sent them off course. I asked the navigator, John Roschen to watch the nose and sides of the plane and went to remove pins from ten of the bombs. Suddenly, there was a loud noise and I saw No. 1 engine had stopped and the cowling was loose. The Pilot sounded the bail out alarm then called over the intercom "stand by". I immediately began putting the pins back and had completed 8 when the alarm went again. I joined the gunners who were parachuting clear and landed unharmed in a farm field. Art Fleischer (Radio Operator) landed some yards away but suffered a compound fracture of the leg. Pete Nicoliasen landed in a tree and suffered a broken hip. We all met up in hospital except for Ed Tijan (Tail gunner) who was first out. We later learned he was dead, either ran out of room to open his 'chute' or was hit by the tail assembly

(Full Story available in "Bomber Stories" by I McLachlan)

KIA

Sgt. E Tijan

6th February 1945, FLANNELLY

B17 43-38054 Lil Edie

MACR nil

Location. Darsham, Suffolk

Witness - Sgt. G W Irwin - Waist Gunner. We took off ok but when we reached 11,000 ft and went on oxygen the plane gave a great shudder and started to go into a dive. Sparks and flames were rushing past the window and we tried to get the pilot or someone to find out what was wrong. There was no response from anyone the intercom had failed in some way. I shouted "let's get out of here". I struggled to get the door open but finally did bailed and pulled the 'chute release. Shortly after the plane went into a spiral and passed right below me. I could see into the cockpit and it looked like it was melting. Guns were "cooking off" sending bullets and tracer everywhere. As the plane got lower the bombs fell out. Suddenly I noticed the ground coming up faster and knew i was going to land bad. I came down with a smack but I wasn't hurt and kissed the ground thanking God.

We were all picked up and taken to a nearby US air base, we made short work of a bottle of spirits.

We later were told that the crash had been caused by a faulty upper turret base, where the oxygen and hydraulic oil entered the turret allowing the mixture to combine when the valves were turned on.

ALL CREW SURVIVED ONLY ONE SEVERELY INJURED

9th March. FAUST

B17 43 38068

MACR 12947

Location: 50:27 - 06:66 Gusterhian/Herborn/Mullheim

Witness -

Immediately after target and prior to Rally Point East of Frankfurt, plane called for leader saying one engine shot out, some injuries aboard and requested QDM to nearest friendly landing field. Unable to stay with group. Given heading of 305 degrees, 150 miles to emergency field as briefed. Called for fighter cover; fighters had already picked him up, witness lost contact.

Crew stayed with ship for crash landing.

KIA

S/Sgt G. K. Bryant

Sgt. R. E. Caver

POW - Stalag VIIA - Moosburg

2nd Lt. C. J. Faust Jr, 2nd Lt. O. O. Hirst 2nd Lt. H. R. Pardue, 2nd Lt. L. G. Fierstos. Sgt. R. L. Greene.
Cpl. L. K. Wells Jr, Cpl. P W. Winkel

17 March 1945. TENNENBERG

B17 43-38071

MACR nil

Mid air collision Kamberg with Stern B17 43-38046

Eye Witness (48th Fighter Group): Emergency landing in Brustem, Belgium.

Air Base A-92

Crew survived, the impact was so violent that the Radio Operator from the other aircraft was found inside 43-38071

17 March 1945. STERN:

MACR 13080

B17 43-38046

Location: 50.18 and **.15 (Illegible) Kamberg

Destination: Bitterfeld, Germany

Mid air collision with 43-38071 Tennenberg

Witness (48th Fighter Group): Occurred a few minutes before we reached the front lines. One plane crashed down, the other losing altitude.

KIA

2nd Lt. A. Stern

F/O C. Nippert,

2nd Lt. E. De Wahl,

Cpl . W. Fay,
Cpl. J. Rivers,
Cpl. G. Devlin,
Cpl. J. Terry,
Cpl. J. Heathman,
Cpl. E. Holdren

21 March 1945: AUDETTE

MACR 13555

B17 43-39430

Location: 5120N - 1310E Strehia

Destination: Plauen

Eye Witness (1): Enemy Flak Attack, dropped behind and was attacked by Me262's.

Large hole in the side of the ship. exploded

Eye Witness (2): Shot down near Leipzig, Germany

Eye Witness (3): Thinks they were south of Dresden, Germany

KIA

William Audette (Pilot)

Ray Ankeny,

Bob Neuenschwander,

Ted Chapin,

Roy McGhee

Virgil Dupler

POW - Stalag 4 -Lew Harvard, George Gilbert, Chas Johnston, Bill Shipp

21 March 1945, SCHULTZ:

MACR 13566

B17 43-38072

Location: Illegible. 5140 - 13** Falkenburg, Germany

Eye witness: Sgt. Bennett :

“On our way to the target, over Wienbulla, Germany, we were attacked by ME-262's. On their first pass we became separated from the pilots evidently lost control of the ME-262 and collided with our plane. The resulting collision exploded both aircraft immediately. I was in the tail-gunner position of the ship and the tail section was blown off intact, all else was debris. I saw these three pieces of the ship hit the ground, but I did not see any other parachutes open. This is the last I have seen or heard of the remainder of the crew. Upon landing I asked all Germans I encountered, both civilian and military, how many parachutes came out. All replied they had seen only one chute. The remainder of my crew were never heard of at any of the POW camps I went through. A report which I later received from a friend of mine, who was on another ship, was to the effect that they witnessed no parachutes opening at all. The action was over so quickly that it is my opinion none of the remainder of the crew survived”

Primary target Rurhland, Germany. On way to target, over Wienbulla, Germany, rammed by ME-262's. Collided with one of them. Both aircraft exploded.

The B17 was cut in half with the tail section relatively intact, allowing the rear gunner, Sgt Bennett to parachute to the ground (POW)

KIA

2nd. Lt. J. Schultz

2nd. Lt. F. Black

Cpl J. Butterfield

Cpl. C. Lennon

Sgt. J. Ellis

2nd. Lt. J. Farkas

Cpl. L. Kennedy

Pvt. C. J. Sten

POW

Pvt. C. Bennett

21 March 1945: BALLARD

MACR 13557

B17 43-38575

Location: 5130N - 1300 Elsterwerda, Germany

Destination: Plauen

Witness: Numerous Flak attacks, aircraft dived and exploded. No chutes seen.

Coordinates place plane n/e of the town of Wermsdorf which is east of Leipzig which is north of target Plauen.

Eye witness (2) T/Sgt. G. C Wright. Before we reached our target, jet fighter planes attacked us. On the first pass the fighters made on us, the ship was set on fire and wrecked, the inter phone system in the plane. Then a fire set in the radio room and the bomb bars. As I was in the back of the plane, I did not know whether the men in the front of the plane knew that the ship was on fire.

There was machine gun fire in the area of the ball turrets and our ball turret was never fired. After this firing began, I did not see S/Sgt. James C Price, the Ball turret gunner and I assumed that he was killed or wounded by the machine gun fire.

The wings then caught on fire; the ship got so hot, that no one could get out of it as we couldn't open the doors. The waist gunner, Cpl. Henry Bennett and the tail gunner, S/Sgt. Alfred Cole were still alive last time I saw them. The tail gunner S/Sgt Cole was trying to get out of the plane and Cpl. Bennett, the waist gunner had become very confused and upset and seemed in a daze. I do not know whether or not they ever got out of the plane. Then the plane blew up. I was thrown out of the plane (it was 24,000 feet up) and came down to about 10,000 feet when I had gained consciousness and pulled the ripcord of my parachute. I landed on enemy territory in the centre of Germany and I was conscious when I landed. Several German soldiers captured me immediately and I was taken to a hospital there. The German guards who took me to the hospital told me that mine was the only parachute that had come down in this area. They also told me the next day that they had found the remnants of a plane that had five burned bodies in it and there were in addition three piles of ashes near by that might have been bodies. I do not know how authentic this information is > I do not know the names of the Germans who gave me this information.

As far as I know, the members of the crew of my plane were alive up until it blew up. I do not know what happened to them after that.

KIA

2nd Lt H. Ballard (Pilot)

2nd Lt. G. Brown,

F/O G. Kumm,

Cpl. J. Huddy,

Cpl A Jenkins

Cpl. J Price

Cpl. H Bennett

Cpl. A Cole

POW: T/Sgt G Wright

5 April 1945: ROUFS

B17 43 38131

MACR 13854

Police Report: (translated) On Thursday 5 April 1945 at 1325 hrs some planes flew past Middleharnis and Sommelsdijk, flying from a westerly direction. One of the planes was hit by the anti aircraft guns of one of the German Navy boats which were lying in the outer Harbour of Middleharnis. The plane was burning when it crashed. It came down in a meadow in the Westplaatpolder at Sommelsdijk.

The plane burnt up almost completely, The nine members of the crew were flung out of the plane and were very badly burnt. The bodies were taken to the Morgue of the Municipal Cemetery of Sommelsdijk by member of the Red Cross and buried the 7th of April

KIA

D F Roufs

W E Barnard

J L Emmons

D C Grant

P O Hartkopf

B W Koutz

L D Pickens, Jr

W J B Plein

W E Watson

5 April 1945: BATES

B17 43 38103

MACR 13854

Report: (translated) - At around 01:30pm on the 5th of April 1945 when a number of low flying aircraft appear above the Grevelingen in the vicinity of Ouddorp. A group of B17 bombers are flying low under hanging clouds. . It seems they did not realise they were not flying above liberated Dutch ground for immediately they come under heavy fire. The B-17 serial number 43-38103 is hit several time and three engines stop running, a fire breaking out in the cockpit. Pilot Bates recognises the seriousness of the situation and over the intercom orders the crew to bail out. Bates himself moves towards the bomb bay in order to jump when at that moment the aircraft explodes and the pilot is blown out of the plane. His parachute opens only partly at a height of about 100 meters. Heavily wounded he lands on the mud flats of the Grevelingen where no notices that his co pilot Ellis Smith and his navigator John Ewald have already been taken prisoner by the German Army. It ws not until Saturday the 7th of April that the inhabitants of Ouddorp get permission to recover the other airmen. what they find at the wreckage is beyond words. Five crew members are

eventually buried in three coffins at the public cemetery of Ouddorp. On the 20th of April and the 7th of May the bodies of James Ireland and Alfred Aulicino are found near the Kilhaven.

KIA

S/Sgt A Aulicino

Sgt J Hamilton

Sgt R Conroy

Sgt C Anderson

S/Sgt C Plotner

Sgt J Ireland

Sgt J Till

5 April 1945: MARTINSON

B17 43 39297

MACR 13741

Location: Klm, Germany

KIA

1st Lt. H J Martinson

F/O N Beletzky

Sgt D Garbiero

T/Sgt D Lockstead

Cpl T Price

Crash landed in friendly territory in Germany.

Eye Witness: After assembly over France, we started on a course with 4 aircraft of the low squadron at an altitude of 25,000 feet. Soon after starting off we ran into high clouds and lost our formation. We continued on the briefed course looking for our formation or another one to bomb with. Very near the I.P. we decided to start back toward France as we couldn't find a formation

The nose gunner called out a formation, which was not identified, at 12 o'clock level and close. The pilot put the plane in a steep bank and dived to the left to avoid colliding with this group. It was approximately a 70 degree bank. I felt something give or break and to the best of my knowledge the elevators or stabilizers must have come off. I had my parachute hooked on one side when the airplane began to spin so that I couldn't move. The next thing I knew I was out of my seat and behind the pilot's seat. I noticed the plane crumble up and everything from the upper turret back was gone. The suction or something else pulled the engineer and myself out of the plane.

At the time of the trouble we were at about 26,500 or 27,000 feet and trying to climb above the clouds. After my parachute opened I counted three of our crew who had parachuted below me. We landed at Klm, Germany and were picked up by the 3rd Army M.P.'s. Before leaving Klm I was told that they had found three bodies but had not identified them. I feel sure that only four of us got out safely as I would have seen anyone else had they opened their parachute. It would have been impossible for anyone to have been above me as the bodies of the other three men in the forward section of the plane have been identified. The men in the rear section that are listed as missing would have had to be below me.

April 1945: CAGLE

Reference "Mighty Eighth War Diary - Freeman"

On the 7th April the Luftwaffe unit specially formed to ram enemy bombers, flew its only known operation against the 8th Air Force.

1st Lt. Cagle flying B-17 43-38058 with the 490th BG was seen to be rammed by a ME109 smashing its right wing into the Fortress against the waist gun position. The impact knocked the waist gunner over although he was not hurt. The Messerschmitt's wing, however, disintegrated twisting the fighter down and under the B17's fuselage, leaving a six foot gash and mangling the ball turret before cartwheeling across the lower surface of the right wing, knocking the supercharger off the inboard engine and part of the propeller from the outer, before finally disintegrating entirely. The 490th aircraft managed to land in a liberated airfield.

1 Casualty only.

7 April 1945, DRUHOT

MACR: 14294

B17 43 38082 Lady Helene

Location: Celle, Germany

Destination: Parchim

Eye Witness - S/Sgt Ralph Hogan - About 75 Miles short of our destination (airfields near Berlin) we were attacked by Messerschmitt 109 fighters. One of the German planes came in so close he couldn't miss us. We couldn't miss him either. We shot him down but our plane had been hit and was on fire forcing us to bail out. I jumped with the lower ball gunner, Eddie Plaeger and the tail gunner Jim Kyser. It was the first jump for all of us but we all reached the ground except our navigator, Jack Knox. Years later we were told that Jack went down with the plane.

The three airmen were captured and sent to a holding camp but because of the approaching Allied forces they were moved on until eventually on April 19, the British Second Army took the town and freed every one. S/Sgt Hogan eventually returned to Eye via a short stay in Paris.

KIA

2nd Lt. J. Knox

POW: 2nd Lt. R. Druhota, Cpl. R. Campbell, S/Sgt. E. Plaeger, S/Sgt R. Hogan, S/Sgt. J. Kyser. jr,

Evaded: 2nd Lt. C. Bowers, Cpl. C. Francis, Cpl. J. Bobo

9 April 1945, SCHOENFELD

MACR 13909

B17 44 6303 The Lucky Strike

Location: Schlessheim, Germany

Eye witness (1) : On the breakaway from the target Lt. Schoenfeld's a/c was called in by gunners as having taken a hit and starting to burn. He was burning in 2 engine and between 1 and 2 engine. The plane was gaining altitude and was on the right side of the formation as reforming in normal formation had not been completed. It started to swing to the left, passing out of my view, practically at the same time that gunners reported 3 men out. The plane went out, turning left and down and gunners reported four more men out and then one more before the plane passed from their view.

Eye Witness (2) - 1st Lt. W. Schoenfeld - Plane was on fire when I bailed out. I did not see Smith jump but other planes in the formation reported either eight or nine chutes from our plane. I know of seven besides myself who parachuted successfully. The Ball Turret Gunner reported that Smith was last seen at the door preparing to jump but faltering. None of us ever saw him either in the air or on the ground. The Germans told us that Smith was killed but later in the prison camp a man who represented himself as a British Intelligence Officer told the Engineer that he had seen Smith alive in a German Hospital. We have not been able to verify either of these stories.

KIA

S/Sgt D. Smith

S/Sgt D. Bereck

POW: Stalag 7 : F/O R. Fraser, jr, 1st Lt. W. Schoenfeld, 2nd Lt. R. Schar, Sgt. F. Alexander,

Sgt. E. Malmstedt, Sgt. I. Wrampe, Sgt. R. Swallow

19 April 1945, McCALLISTER

MACR 14193

B17 43-38135

Location: 50.40 - 13.30, area of Aussig

Eye Witness (1): Lt Larry J Bellarts: On this, my last combat mission, I was flying lead of the third V, with Lt Burford E Stovall on my right wing and Lt William E McCallister on my left. The fourth element in the

squadron was a diamond led by Robert A Norvell, who was below and behind me. Near the target, a ME262 came in from “two o’clock high” and McAllister on my left wing, was hit and went down.

Witness (2): Shortly after bombs away, plane went into a steep glide, levelled off 2,000 to 3,000 feet below us. Plane began a wide circle; crashed and exploded

KIA

1st Lt. W McCallister

2nd Lt. W Swearengin,

2nd Lt. J Cook,

T/Sgt S Iglitzen,

Cpl. W Weales,

Cpl. L Boekeloo,

Sgt. R Gripne

POW: Dresden:

1st Lt. G Howard, Cpl. P Webb, 1st Lt G Howard

19 April 1945, SNYDER

MACR 14192

B17 43 38701

Location: 50:57 - 13:54, 120 miles south of Frankfurt

Eye Witness: 2nd Lt. F. W. Harding, 848th BS, 490th BG : We were just south of Dresden after bombs away when a plane in the lead squadron left the formation and made a long circle to the left. At first we thought he was aborting but then i saw 3 chutes open up. I kept watching the plane to see if anyone else got out but soon after it exploded either when it hit the ground or just before. It seems to me that the man in the plan should have had at least 3 minutes to get out so it is possible the other bailed out without my seeing them. We were at 19,000 feet when he went down.

KIA

2nd Lt. P. Snyder

2nd Lt. R. Stewart

Sgt. C. Zuendel

F/O W. Wilson

Sgt. W. Stauffer

Sgt. G. Langley

Sgt. R. Phillips

POW - Executed

2nd Lt. J. Trojanowski, Sgt. L. Dole, S/Sgt W. Lesh

19 April 1945, STOVALL

MACR 14195

B17 43-38048

Location: 15.40 - 13.40, area of Aussig.

Eye Witness : S/Sgt G. E. Patterson: I saw what I believed to be the lead plane of our element (43-38048) flying at 1.00 o'clock, very low, after being hit by enemy fighters. This plane exploded in mid air and broke into several pieces. I did not see any chutes.

KIA

S/Sgt F. Mateyka

POW: 1st Lt E. Nilsson, F/O H. Shelgren, S/Sgt R. Rivenburg, S/Sgt. J. Mullins, S/Sgt D. Richardson, T/Sgt D. McGinnis, S/Sgt H. Turk, Sgt R. Bernery

19 April 1945, NORVELL

MACR 14194

B17 43-38078

Eye Witness: S/Sgt R. W. Merkel: I saw the fighters hit this plane (43-38078) and no. 1 and No. 2 engine caught on fire. I saw 4 chutes open from the plane. My Belief is that one was from the tail, one from the waist, although 2 could have come from the waist. One came out before bombs were jettisoned. Right after the third chute opened I saw the bombs jettisoned, one man fell out with the bombs. They all opened their chutes as soon as they had cleared the plane. I then saw the plane make a turn to the right and it disappeared from sight.

KIA - Executed

2nd Lt. L Borden

1st Lt. L. G. Smith

2nd Lt. G. P. Lake

Sgt. C.P. Johnson. Jr

Sgt. R. A. Johnson

Sgt. P. Malires

POW. 1st Lt. R. Norvell, T/Sgt. W. Snyder,

Evaded: S/Sgt. N. B. Parker

19 April 1945 was possibly the worst day in the short history of the 490th BG. The web site has some fuller eye witness reports available as well as for many other occasions on other dates.