

13907

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
RESTRICTED

Classification changed  
to **RESTRICTED**  
by E. A. BRADUNAS, Lt. Col., AC  
by F. M. MUENCH, Capt., AC  
Date **MAR 15 1946**

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WAR DEPARTMENT  
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES

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 Nuthampstead, England Group 398th Bomb Gp(Hv)  
Squadron 601st Bomb Squadron Detachment None  
Command or Air Force 8th Air Force
- SPECIFY: Place of Departure Nuthampstead Course \_\_\_\_\_  
Target or Intended Destination Munster, Germany  
Type of Mission Operational Bombing
- WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED:  
2/10 tops 5,000. 2/10 base 28,000. Vertical visibility 20 miles.  
Unrestricted aloft. No contrails at any time.
- GIVE: (a) Day 13 Month April Year 1945; Time 1531 Hrs (Approx) and Location  
Approx 5405N - 0959E of last known whereabouts of missing Aircraft.  
(b) Specify whether aircraft was 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 (); Enemy Anti-aircraft (); Other Circumstances as  
follows: Bomb load exploded about 400 feet below Aircraft.
- AIRCRAFT: Type, Model and Series B-17G AAF Serial No. 44-8636 ✓
- NICKNAME OF AIRCRAFT: None
- ENGINES: Type, Model and Series R-1820-97 AAF Serial No. (a) SW-029477  
(b) SW-021534 (c) SW-029516 (d) SW-029524
- INSTALLED WEAPONS, 50 Cal Aircraft Machine Guns as follows:

Make	Serial Number	Make	Serial Number
(a) Buffalo	1328089	(b) Buffalo	1327308
(c) Buffalo	1328208	(d) Buffalo	1326579
(e) Buffalo	1326647	(f) Buffalo	1326900
(g) Buffalo	1328677	(h) Buffalo	1328594
(i) Buffalo	1327300	(j) Buffalo	1329063
(k) Buffalo	1329922	(l) Buffalo	1328583

- THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW WERE REPORTED AS: (a) Battle Casualty X  
or Non Battle Casualty \_\_\_\_\_
- NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew 10 Passengers \_\_\_\_\_ Total 10

Following information listed for personnel aboard Aircraft:

Crew Position	Name in Full	Rank	Serial Number	Current Status
1. Pilot	Samuel H. Palant	1st Lt	0-684543	RTD <i>BMM RTD</i>
2. Co-Pilot	Robert R. Taylor	2nd Lt	0-928953	MIA <i>RMC RTD</i>
3. Navigator	Mason E. Dick	F/O	T-134888	MIA <i>EOR RTD</i>
4. Bombardier	Nick Marabeas	1st Lt	0-2068037	MIA <i>RMC RTD</i>
5. Engineer	Wilbur M. Withrow	T/Sgt	34609933	MIA <i>RMC RTD</i>
6. Radio Operator	Paul W. Brown	T/Sgt	37570764	MIA <i>RMC RTD</i>
7. Waist Gunner	Robert R. Stanford	S/Sgt	38536774	MIA <i>RMC RTD</i>
8. Waist Gunner	Orie J. Hedges	2nd Lt	0-585568	MIA <i>RMC RTD</i>
9. B. Tur Gunner	Thomas A. Coleman	S/Sgt	34729306	MIA <i>RMC RTD</i>
10. Tail Gunner	Byron B. Cunningham	S/Sgt	19138844	MIA <i>RMC RTD</i>
11.				

(Over)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

*File 13*

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

12. IDENTIFY BELOW THOSE PERSONS WHO ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE LAST KNOWLEDGE OF AIRCRAFT, AND CHECK APPROPRIATE COLUMN TO INDICATE BASIS FOR SAME:

<u>Name in Full</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Serial No.</u>	<u>Contacted by Radio</u>	<u>Last sighted</u>	<u>Saw Crash</u>	<u>Saw Forced Landing</u>
1. <u>Frank M. Mackey</u>	<u>Sgt</u>	<u>33273887</u>		<u>X</u>		
2. <u>Clarence E. Cropp</u>	<u>Sgt</u>	<u>36042028</u>		<u>X</u>		
3. <u>Hadley J. Oien</u>	<u>Sgt</u>	<u>37574627</u>		<u>X</u>		
4. <u>Samuel H. Palant</u>	<u>1st Lt</u>	<u>O-684543</u> <sup>MC</sup> <u>(Pilot of Missing Aircraft)</u>				

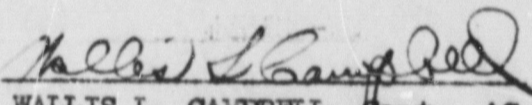
13. IF PERSONNEL ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE SURVIVED, ANSWER YES TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS: (a) Parachutes were used yes; (b) Persons were seen walking away from scene of crash \_\_\_\_\_; or (c) any other Reason, (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

14. ATTACH AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH, MAP CHART, OR SKETCH, SHOWING APPROXIMATE LOCATION WHERE AIRCRAFT WAS LAST SEEN OR HEARD FROM.

15. ATTACH EYEWITNESS 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 21 April, 1945

  
WALLIS L. CAMPBELL, Capt., AC.

17. REMARKS OR EYEWITNESS STATEMENTS:



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

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 398 Bomb Group <sup>SC</sup> 601 B. S. A/C # 44-8636 Y MISSION DATE 13 April 1945

FIRST PILOT Palant, Samuel H. 1st. Lt. C-68454 DESTINATION Neumunster, Ger.  
NAME RANK SER #

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

- (a) By coordinates see report of Lt. Palant
- (b) Approximate altitude see report
- (c) Last noted heading see report
- (d) If out of formation, approximate distance from formation see report

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

**No flak or enemy fighters.**

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

**See report of Lt. Palant**

4. If aircraft was out of control describe appearance:

**See report.**

(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? None If so, give distinguishing markings of Fighter Group if noted (Group number, color and/or fighter aircraft numbers, nicknames, etc.). None

6. Number of parachutes seen and description of jumps (approximate altitude, time between jumps, etc.):

See statement of Lt. Palant

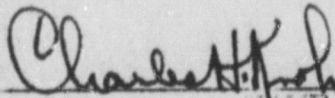
7. Any other remarks not covered by above:

Eye witnesses were very uncertain as to exactly what happened to this Aircraft or crew and since Lt. Palant (Pilot) has returned, it was thought best to use his statement of fact rather than take suppositions of observing crews.

8. Date of report 21 April 1945

<u>EYE-WITNESSES:</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>SER #</u>	<u>A/C #</u>
1.	<u>NONE</u>			
2.				
3.				
4.				

INTERROGATING OFFICER (Sign Original and one copy):

  
CHARLES H. KROH

Captain 0-568990 Asst. Intel. O.  
RANK SER # DUTY

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-AA P-M, subject "Missing Air Crew Report", 7 July 1944.

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

HE ADQUARTERS  
AAF STATION 131

Office of the Intelligence Officer

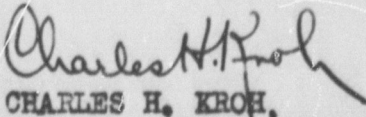
18 April 1945

REPORT OF INTERROGATION

Upon interrogation, Lt. Palant, Pilot of Aircraft Number 44-8636X made the following statement:

" On the Mission of April 13 to Neamunster, Lt. Palant and crew flying Deputy Lead of Group, at time of bombs away, Bombardier thought bombs had fallen, however Engineer on checking notified Pilot (Lt. Palant) that bombs had not gone away. Pilot told Bombardier not to release bombs until after target, however by the time Pilot had finished speaking bombs had already dropped. About one minute after bombs dropped, there was a terrific explosion underneath plane ( Pilot thought ship had been hit by enemy Jet A/C) and entire ship peppered with bomb fragments. Tail Gunner (Lt. Hedges) called that he had been hit either in the stomach or arm. By the time Pilot could send anyone back to check on Tail Gunner, Engineer reported entire right wing on fire.

Crew discipline was excellent. Pilot requested all to remain at stations until notified, then dove plane from 25,000 feet to 20,000 feet hoping to put out fire - however gas leakage increased blaze. At 20,000 feet Pilot notified crew what the situation was and called Navigator asking which direction to head toward our lines after bailing out. Pilot explained he was going to stay with ship as long as possible in order to get as near friendly territory and asked crew what they wished to do. They wished to bail out so he told them to go out. After they bailed out Pilot dove to 12,000 feet and leveled out - wing burning worse than ever and entire sections falling off. Pilot realized he couldn't stay with ship much longer so set the C-1 up and then looked through nose and radio compartment to see that everyone was out, also called each position and recieved no answers so knew everyone was out. Decided to jump from Pilot hatch but Bomb-bay doors open so closed Bomb bay doors but they would not remain shut so decided to jump from Bomb bay. Straddled Bomb Bay and waited until heat from fires became unbearable and then jumped. Made a delayed jump of about 8,000 feet and landed along edge of forest. Pilot does not know what happened to rest of crew."

  
CHARLES H. KROH,  
Captain, Air Corps,  
Assistant Intelligence Officer

FORMATION PLAN OVER TARGET

0/a/22  
13 April 1945

Lead Squadron

		<b>B-5</b> MARCHBANKS <u>Taylor</u> A-8654-M		
	D-3 <u>Herndon</u> N-8658-A SJ (Norris) Clan. 2. Monitor		D-3 <u>Palant</u> N-8636-X	D-5 <u>Merritt</u> N-8708-T "C" Monitor
I-5 <u>Starkey</u> N-8064-H Camera		D-2 <u>Martineck</u> N-9184-U Camera		
	D-4 <u>Green</u> N-8517-J SJ (McIntyre)		D-1 <u>Traeder</u> N-8121-Q "D" Monitor	
D-6 <u>Bornstedt</u> N-6821-Y "B" Monitor				D-8 <u>Adams</u> N-9227-S Ret. at E.C.

Low Squadron

		<b>C-8</b> HETTUS <u>Maudsley</u> M-8373-K		
	C-6 <u>Klasele</u> M-7249-P		C-5 <u>Sheffer</u> M-6933-H	C-4 <u>Shinek</u> M-2519-A
C-6 <u>Nolan</u> M-6896-M Camera		C-4 <u>Runnion</u> SJ (Edwards) Camera E-8627-Z		
	C-1 <u>Idao</u> M-8654-X		C-7 <u>Hultman</u> M-8805-X SJ (Allegreive)	C-9 <u>Woodmansee</u> M-6157-W Ret. at E.C. Camera
C-2 <u>Hoelzel</u> M-2487-B				

High Squadron

		<b>D-10</b> GUICE <u>Beckstrom</u> N-8771-B		
	B-1 <u>Swift</u> A-9038-Q		B-2 <u>Worley</u> A-7982-K	B-8 <u>King</u> A-9101-C SJ (Dunham)
B-3 <u>Swain</u> A-8630-U Camera		B-6 <u>Aniello</u> A-9242-F Camera		
	B-7 <u>Rosenberg</u> A-8631-T		B-2 <u>Alwood</u> A-8951-B	
B-3 <u>Keenan</u> A-8669-G "B" Monitor				B-1 <u>Donovan</u> A-9146-N SJ (Dolbe) Ret. at E.C.

Statement concerning missing aircraft B17G 44-8636, Pilot 1st Lt Samuel H. Palant, O-684543, 601st Bomb Sq, 398th Bomb Group (IV), on combat mission to Numunster, Germany, on 13 April, 1945.

On the 13th of April I was on the raid over Numunster, and right after bombs away someone called out flak at 11 o' clock. I was in the ball turret, so I turned my turret around and seen a B17 on fire. He started down to the right, I watched him for a few minutes. One man bailed out. He dropped a long ways before he opened his chute, then one more came out. When the plane got to about 10,000 feet four (4) more bailed out. It kept on going down when almost to the ground, two more came out, making a total of eight. Then the plane went into a spin and crashed into the ground. I then turned to 12 o'clock and saw another one <sup>← Lt Palant's</sup> going down at 12 o'clock low. I could see some smoke coming out of it, but no fire. Five men bailed out of it. I watched the plane till it got around to 5 o'clock then it went out of sight. I didn't see anyone else come out. The plane was still in the air the last I saw of it.

*Frank M. Mackey*

Frank M. Mackey, 33273887  
Sgt - 600th Bomb Squadron  
Btg, B17G 44-6896



Statement concerning missing Aircraft B-17G 44-8636, Pilot 1st Lt Samuel H. Palant, O-684543, 601st Bomb Sq, 398th Bomb Group (Hv), on combat mission to Numanster, Germany, on 13 April, 1945.

During the raid over Numanster on 13 April while flying No. 3 of the lead element the low squadron, about a minute after bombs away, I heard F/O Basco call over the interphone to watch out for a burning ship. I picked this plane up at 3 o'clock and followed it down. One chute from the aft part of the ship came out and opened immediately. Then the tail surfaces blew off. Shortly after that I saw two more chutes open, one of which was a delayed jump. The No. 3 engine was on fire, flames seemed to consume the fuselage of the plane, from the engine back to the radio room. I lost it below the cloud layers a little later. I saw no more chutes.

The bombardier, Lt McCarty, said to count the number of chutes from the second plane. I picked the ship up at 1 or 2 o'clock and counted 5 chutes. The plane was on fire, but seemed to be making wide spirals under control. Two more chutes opened and the fire on the ship went out, but one engine was trailing black smoke. I lost the plane under some clouds but picked it up again, a minute later, through a break in the clouds only to lose it again completely.

*Clarence E. Cropp*

Clarence E. Cropp, 36042028  
Sgt 600th Bomb Squadron  
BTG B-17G 44-7249.

Statement concerning missing Aircraft B17G 44-8636, Pilot 1st Lt Samuel H. Palant, O-684543, 601st Bomb Sq, 398th Bomb Group (Hv), on combat mission to Numunster, Germany, on 13 April, 1945.

During the raid over Numunster on 13 April after bombs away and the explosion of two colliding bombs, I looked to the left of our ship and saw a plane peeling off on fire. His radio room and No. 3 engine were on fire. He made a wide circle to the right and loosing altitude at the same time. When they started to bail out I counted eight chutes, the eighth chute caught fire when the man bailed out. Just after the last chute came out, the bomber went into a spin and after about two turns, broke up. The second ship came from 6 o'clock and went underneath us to 9 o'clock after we turned off the target. He was loosing altitude fast, but apparently under control. After he lost quite a little altitude he apparently levelled out and moved over to two o'clock. The crew started to bail out, as smoke started coming from No. 3 engine and I saw seven chutes. I watched them fall to the ground. The plane continued to fly straight ahead and later I lost it in the clouds. Our navigator said that we were over enemy territory at the time.

*Hadley J. Oien*

Hadley J. Oien, 37574627  
Sgt - 600th Bomb Squadron  
Tail Runner, B17G 44-8627

## CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

13707

1. Your name ROBERT R. TAYLOR Rank 2ND LT Serial No. 0-928953
2. Organization 398<sup>th</sup> Gp Commander LOUIS P. ENSIGN Rank LT. COL. Sqn CO SCHO FIELD Rank MAJ.  
Bomb, Gp (full name) (full name)
3. What year 1945 month APRIL day 13 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, NEW MUNSTER, target, RAIL YARDS, target time, NO KNOWLEDGE, altitude, 12,000 route scheduled, ENGLAND-DENMARK-GERMANY, route flown SAME
5. Where were you when you left formation? OVER NEW MUNSTER
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 MEMBERS OF CREW BAILED OUT.
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? NO KNOWLEDGE
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? NONE
12. What was their condition? NONE
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? TAIL GUNNER SERIOUSLY WOUNDED, WAS TAKEN TO HOSPITAL NEAR ZARRENTIN GERMANY
14. Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. NO KNOWLEDGE

(Any additional information may be written on the back)

NO CREW LIST ATTACHED.