

10595

AG 704/1843 1st Ind.
HEADQUARTERS CPBC, APO 958, 26 December 1944.

To: Commanding General, Army Air Forces, Washington, D.C.
(Attention: Statistical Control Division).

//s//
PAUL E. BAKER,
1st Lt, AGD
Asst Adjutant General

4 Incls:

- Incl 1 - Statement of Sgt. Merrill.
- Incl 2 - Statement of Sgt. Pepperman.
- Incl 3 - Statement of Sgt. Bragg.
- Incl 4 - Statement of Sgt. Coggin.

REPORT NO. 1

HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCE

MACR-10595

MISSING AIR CREW REPORT

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.

1. ORGANIZATION: Location, by name Angaur Isl.; Command or Air Force 7th AF
Group 494th BG; Squadron 865th BS; Detachment _____
2. SPECIFY: Place of Departure Angaur Isl.; Course 291 degrees out/ 111 degrees return
Target of Intended Destination Lahug A/D Cebu Type of Mission Combat Strike
3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED:
10/10 coverage – rain showers – visibility in showers ½ mi.
4. GIVE: (a) Day 13 Month 12 Year 1944; Time 1650; and Location 07-05N 133-13E
of last known whereabouts of missing aircraft.
(b) Specify whether aircraft was last sighted (); Last contacted by radio ();
Forced down (); Seen to Crash (XX); or Information not available ()
5. 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:
Failure of two engines on same side.
6. AIRCRAFT: Type, Model and Serial B-24 J-175CO; AAF Serial Number 44-40688
7. NICKNAME OF AIRCRAFT, if any THE BULL
8. ENGINES: Type, Model and Series R-1830-65 P&W; AAF SERIAL _____
Number (a) BP-445934; (b) BP-445834; (c) BP-445829; (d) BP-446135
9. INSTALLED WEAPONS: (Furnish below Make, Type and Serial Number);
(a) 10 Browning .50; (b) Cal. Machine Guns; (c) Type – M-2; (d) _____
(e) 2 Browning .30; (f) Cal. Machine Guns; (g) Type – M-2; (h) _____
(i) 1 Winchester; (j) .30 Cal. Carbine; (k) _____; (l) _____
(m) _____; (n) _____; (o) _____; (p) _____
10. THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW WERE REPORTED AS: (a) Battle Casualty XX
or (b) Nonbattle Casualty _____
11. NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew 10; Passengers 1; Total 11
(Starting with Pilot, furnish the following particulars: If more than 11
persons were aboard aircraft, list similar particulars on separate sheet
and attach original to this form.)

Crew Position	Name in Full (Last Name First)	Rank	Serial Number	Current Status
1. Pilot	<u>Richards, Earl M.</u>	<u>Capt</u>	<u>O-429444</u>	<u>Hospital RTD</u>
2. Co-Pilot	<u>Phillips, Walter E.</u>	<u>2nd Lt</u>	<u>O-706071</u>	<u>Missing RTD</u>
3. Navigator	<u>Bauer Jr., George W.</u>	<u>2nd Lt</u>	<u>O-709255</u>	<u>Missing KIA</u>
4. Bombardier	<u>Hass, Melvin G.</u>	<u>1st Lt</u>	<u>O-690561</u>	<u>Missing No Rec.</u>
5. Engineer	<u>Anderson, Leonard J.</u>	<u>T/Sgt</u>	<u>32444599</u>	<u>Missing KIA</u>
6. Radio Operator	<u>Mott, Eugene</u>	<u>Cpl</u>	<u>36477122</u>	<u>Hospital RTD</u>
7. U/Turret G.	<u>Spooner, Arthur E.</u>	<u>S/Sgt</u>	<u>34623680</u>	<u>Hospital EVS</u>
8. B/Turret G.	<u>Devlin, William J.</u>	<u>Sgt</u>	<u>35648085</u>	<u>Hospital No Rec.</u>
9. N/Turret G.	<u>Rumbolz, Eugene F.</u>	<u>S/Sgt</u>	<u>37473851</u>	<u>Missing KIA</u>
10. T/Turret G.	<u>Flynn Jr., Henry L.</u>	<u>Sgt</u>	<u>33056564</u>	<u>Missing KIA</u>
11. Passenger	<u>Henry, Howard</u>	<u>1st Lt</u>	<u>O-865975</u>	<u>Missing KIA</u>

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

Check only one Column

(Last Name First)	Rank	Serial Number	Contacted by Radio	Last Sighted	Saw Crash	Saw Forced Landing
1. Coggin, Alfred L.	Sgt	38430552			XX	
2. Morrill, Leslie E.	Sgt	37474625			XX	
3. Pepperman, Wm. A.	S/Sgt	3093988			XX	

13. IF PERSONNEL ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE SURVIVED, ANSWER YES TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS: (a) Parachutes were used No; (b) Persons were seen walking away from scene of crash No; (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 Lt. Col. Lyle E. Halstead, O-276747 Group Operations Officer. Comsubarea Western Carolines also participated (see below).

17. REMARKS OR EYEWITNESS STATEMENTS:

In addition to the above listed Eyewitnesses, S/Sgt Harry F. Bragg, 33540811, also witnessed crash.

Date of Report 15 December 1944

//s//

(Signature of Preparing Officer)
EDWARD J. HUNTER
1st Lieut., Air Corps
Asst. Operations Officer
865th Bomb Sq. (H)

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865th Bombardment Squadron (H)
494th Bombardment Group (H)
APO #264
c/o Postmaster, San Francisco, Cal.

15 December 1944.

S T A T E M E N T

I, Sgt Leslie E. Morrill, 37474625, 865th Bombardment Sq. (H) 494th Bomb. Gp. (H), do hereby make the following unsworn statement with reference to missing aircraft piloted by Captain EARL M. RICHARDS, O-429444, 865th Bomb. Sq. (H), 494th Bomb. Gp. (H), which crashed 13 December 1944.

I was riding as top turret gunner on crew 27 on 13 December 1944. I was riding in the waist of Lt. Tanner's plane on the right wing of Captain Richards. It looked to me as if he made a dip to the left to clear himself from the formation and then peeled off to the left. It looked like his props slowed up. He peeled off and just about leveled out, and sort of pancaked in. I saw a splash and that was all there was. I never could see the airplane after it hit the water. One of the gunners was on the interphone, and I asked him if Lt. Tanner knew it, and he called Lt. Tanner. After the plane hit the water, the rudder blocked out my view. So after that I just sat in the waist and looked out of the window until we got back to the field. Sgt. Flynn, tail gunner of Capt. Edwards crew, was still in the tail gun position when he peeled off.

//s//

Leslie E. Morrill,
Sgt., 37474625,
865th Bomb Sq. (H)

Item 15, Missing Air Crew Report
15 December 1944

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865th Bombardment Squadron (H)
494th Bombardment Group (H)
APO #264
c/o Postmaster, San Francisco, Cal.

15 December 1944.

S T A T E M E N T

I, S/Sgt Harry F. Bragg, 33540811, 865th Bombardment Sq. (H) 494th Bomb. Gp. (H), do hereby make the following unsworn statement with reference to missing aircraft piloted by Captain EARL M. RICHARDS, O-429444, 865th Bomb. Sq. (H), 494th Bomb. Gp. (H), which crashed 13 December 1944.

I am the nose turret gunner on crew 27. I was Looking out the windows just aft of the Bomb Bay and had been following the formation for about fifteen (15) minutes before the accident. The planes began to spread out, and Capt. Richards' right wing dipped and then straightened out, and he peeled off, steep, to the left over the top of the other planes. He straightened up, but went down at a straight angle to the water. And it looked like he hit, wings and all, right into the water because there was a big splash. I asked S/Sgt Moore what was wrong with Capt. Richards when I saw him peel off, because he seemed to be heading in the opposite direction from what we were when he peeled off. When he crashed I went back to the waist window, and asked S/Sgt Pepperman if he had notified Lt. Tanner that Capt. Richards had crashed. He said that Lt. Tanner knew it, and immediately I went up to the flight deck, and told the engineer that Capt. Richards had crashed, and he said he knew it. I went back to the waist and continued to look out of the window, but couldn't see anything as we hit some more weather right after the crash. That's about all that happened, and we sighted the field shortly and landed.

//s//

Harry F. Bragg,
S/Sgt., 33540811,
865th Bomb Sq. (H)

Item 15, Missing Air Crew Report
15 December 1944

Electronic Transcription of MACR 10595, page 6

865th Bombardment Squadron (H)
494th Bombardment Group (H)
APO #264
c/o Postmaster, San Francisco, Cal.

15 December 1944.

S T A T E M E N T

I, S/Sgt William A. Pepperman, 13093988, 865th Bombardment Sq. (H) 494th Bomb. Gp. (H), do hereby make the following unsworn statement with reference to missing aircraft piloted by Captain EARL M. RICHARDS, O-429444, 865th Bomb. Sq. (H), 494th Bomb. Gp. (H), which crashed 13 December 1944.

I am the ball turret gunner on crew 27. We were flying formation and, all of a sudden, Capt. Richards seemed to jockey around and peeled off to the left over the top of the plane behind him. He seemed to level off to the left at about a 90 degree turn from the direction we were heading. He seemed to hit the water flat, and looked like the wings hit the same time the fuselage hit because it made a wide wake. Our rudder came into view and blocked my view of the plane. I didn't see anything else after our rudders came into view, but I called the pilot of my plane and asked him if he knew that Capt. Richards was down. The radio operator received me and said the pilot knew. Meanwhile the nose gunner, S/Sgt Bragg, went up the cat-walk and told the engineer at the same time. I don't know what happened after that, but in a few minutes we were over our home base.

//s//

William A. Pepperman,
S/Sgt., 13093988,
865th Bomb Sq. (H)

Item 15, Missing Air Crew Report
15 December 1944

865th Bombardment Squadron (H)
494th Bombardment Group (H)
APO #264
c/o Postmaster, San Francisco, Cal.

15 December 1944.

S T A T E M E N T

I, Sgt Alfred L. Coggin, 36430552, 865th Bombardment Sq. (H) 494th Bomb. Gp. (H), do hereby make the following unsworn statement with reference to missing aircraft piloted by Captain EARL M. RICHARDS, O-429444, 865th Bomb. Sq. (H), 494th Bomb. Gp. (H), which crashed 13 December 1944.

I am the tail gunner on crew 30. I was riding in the tail gunners position in the plane leading the element on the left wing of Cap. Richards. We went down to miss him, and when I looked up he was beginning to peel off in a dive to the left. I thought at first that he was peeling off because of the weather. After Capt. Richards pulled out of the dive, he pancaked into the water. He was losing altitude as if in normal flight peel off, and just before hitting the water he leveled off and dropped straight into the water. It didn't look like to me as if he skimmed along the water, but just dropped right in. As soon as he hit the water, two (2) life rafts came out of the plane, and immediately the plane began to sink. The last thing I could see were the two rudders sticking out of the water. We then went into the overcast and lost sight of the wreck. The minute I saw him hit the water, I notified the pilot of my plane that our right wingman had crashed in the water. He told me that it was Capt. Richards, instead of our right wingman. A few minutes later my pilot called me again, and asked me if Capt. Richards' plane exploded or if I saw anyone get out of the plane. Then a few minutes later, (I don't know just when) our radio operator sent a message back to the field. As soon as I reported the accident to the pilot, the navigator plotted his position and the time. I did not notice anything wrong with Capt. Richards airplane. When Capt. Richards peeled off, his props were still turning, but I don't know if they were still burning when he hit the water. After that, we flew through the overcast and landed at our home base.

//s//

Alfred L. Coggin,
Sgt., 36430552,
865th Bomb Sq. (H)

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15 December 1944