

39th Bomb Group (VH) Association Pete Weiler, Historian

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Subject: MACR 14367 Crew 16 (Edwards Crew)

Missing Air Crew Report 14367 contains a total of 13 pages; 11 of these 13 pages are scanned and part of this file. The 2 pages that were omitted from this were done so because they were duplicate pages of the Air Sea Rescue Report No. 5 issued by 314th Bombardment Wing, HQ pg. 1 & pg. 2.

14367

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Original - Sapplements (Cross out one)

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REPORT NO. ___3 60TH BOMB SQ, 39TH BOMB GP

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1. A Betherington, Donald W. 2d Lt 0-771711 Rescued not present 2. A 7 Hetherington, Donald W. 2d Lt 0-771711 Rescued not present 3. B 6 Fields, Aldern B. F/O 1-120136 Seriously in bred i 4. A Sheholdt, Janes M. 1st Lt 0-1317770 Hissing in Action 5. A 1 Sheholdt, Janes M. 1st Lt 0-2056100 Hissing in Action 6. B 1 Anderson, Clode R. Sgt 3104545 Rescued not present 7. B 2 Clark Rarry M. 17Sgt 1600327 Hissing in Action 8. O 2 Arumale, Gerald M. S/Sgt 15137150 Hissing in Action 9. A 2-sooks Hitton 2. Old 3517801 Hissing in Action 10. K 7-Sheholm, Senset B. 4r. Sgt 2071379 Hissing in Action 11. A 7-O'Brien, Herbert J. Jr Sgt 3294270. Rescued art present 12. 13. 14. DENTIFY SECONT PHOSE PERSONS WHO ARE RELIEVED TO HAVE LAST KNOWLEDGE OF AIR— CRAYT, AND CHECK APPROPRIATE COLUMN TO INDICATE BASIS FOR SAME. Check only One Column Sew Porce. Name in Full (Last Name First) Bank ASN. by Redio Sighted Cresch Landing 1. Information not available. 2. 3. 4.	Cres			Serial	Ourrent
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wikin	g away from	scene of oran	A (e)	May other res	meon (Specity).	

- 14. ATTACH AIRIAL PHOTOGRAPH, MAP, CHART, OR SKETCH, SHOWING APPROXIMATE LOCATION WHERE AIRCRAFT WAS LAST SEEN OR HEARD FROM:
- 15. ATTACH SYSWITNESS DESCRIPTION OF CRASH, FORCED LANDING, Q. OTHER CHAUMSTANCES PROTAINING TO MISSING AIRCRAFT.
- 16. GIVE NAME, RANK AND SARIAL NUMBER OF OFFICER IN CHARGE OF SERICE, IF ANY, INCLUDING DESCRIPTION AND EXTENT: Search being conducted in accordance with provisions of XXI Bosher Command under Air Sea Rescue Unit, 314th Bosh Wing, 1st Lt Graham S. Campbell, 0-724288, in charge.

DATE OF REPORT 5 May 1945

(Signature of Propering Officer)

17. REMARES OR EXEMITMES STATEMENTS:

GEORGE W. MUNDY, Colonel, Air Corps, Commanding.

- l. According to latest word recalived at this headquarters, five (5) persons (?) were seen to have bailed out of ship.
- 2. F/O Fields, Aldmyn B., T-129136 reported seriously injured with second or third degree burns. Condition critical.

Note: On Supplemental reports, it is not necessary to repeat answers to questions previously answered, except questions 1 and 2. Additional statements may be attached here

XXI BC Casualty Form #5.

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HEADXHARTURS 31ATH BOMBARD ENT WING APO 246 Unit 2. c/o PM San Francisco, Calif



Air Sea Rescue Report No. 5 (Supplement to AAF Form 16, dated 12 May 1945).

- Squadron 60th B-29 Flame No. 44-7004. 1. Wing 314th Group 39th
- 2. Mission No. 14 & 15 (Oita), 4 May 1945.
- 3. Cause of Abandonment: Primary cause bad cabin fire, Sano: any cause complete loss of electrical power.
- 4. Time, location: 0345 GCT 4 May 1945; 24° 18'N 141° 22'E

5. Crews

	Pos:	ition			Name	<u>.</u>	Rank	Last S	Seer.
* //	1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11.	P CP N B RO FE RG LG TG CFC Radar	Or	D . Ja CHRHMG	W Het B Fie mes E R And W Cla W Cla E Nyt O'Bri Jacob W Ar	ingholdt lerson ich len.' len.' os	lst Lt 2nd Lt F/O 2nd Lt Sgt T/Sgt Sgt Sgt Cpl S/Sgt 2nd Lt	Missin Rescu Missin Rescu Missin Rescu Missi Missi Missi	ad ad a second and
6.	Nar	rative						9	14361

6. Narrative Report.

a. Prior to Abandoniant:

The emergency of the aircraft developed at 0345 on May 4th. The position of aircraft was approximately 20 miles south of Iwo Jima at 10,000 ft. There was no indication of any trouble before the fire started. No one in the plane smelled or saw any smoke before the fire broke out. The fire was first seen by the radio operator in the vicinity of the voltage regulators under the Limison Radio. The flames looked as if they were coming oif the floor.

The radio operator notified the crew in the nose by voice. Steps were immediately taken to put out the fire with the extinguisher. The flames were out for a moment but started again and the extinguisher was empty. The radio operator made attempts to smother the flames with flak curtains but could not get at it to do any good.

b. Preparation for Abandonment:

In state of emergency was declared by the pilot. There was no electrical power as soon as the fire started. The pilot hit the gear switch to get nose gear down and also hit the alarm bell. The alarm bell gave one very short ring, but the nose gear did not start down. The co-pilot tried to call tuddy ship but the radio was out and also the interphone became inoperative.

al .. C

The bomberdier, engineer and navigator were attempting to crank the nose gear by hand. There was a great deal of smoke in the nose of plane. It was a whitish grey smoke and very irritating. The windows in the pilots compartment were tried open and closed with no noticable changes in the smoke.

c. Abandonmen+:

. The co-pilot seeing that the efforts of the crew to get the nose gear down were not going to well, and as ne was coughing a great deal and couldn't see very well, left the co-pilots seat to go back to the bomb bay door to get some air. The co-pilot saw the CFC guinner going through the tunnel to tell the men in back to bail out. The radio operator jumped down in the bomb bay and pulled the emergency handle. The doors opened and he fell out. The co-pilot was standing on the cat walk and was just going back inside when he we navigator came out and jumped. He was so badly burned that he was hardly recognizable. The fire had increased in intensity a great deal in about 15 second .. When the co-pilet had come out, the flames were coming out under the top turret but when he started to go back in the flames were all over the turret, with intense heat; so he turned around and jumped. The navigator had tried to bring the engineer back with him but he wouldn't go through fire. The left gunner heard the alarm bell, fastened his parachute and started for the rear escape hatch, telling the right gamer to follow him. The right gunner had started to get a fire extinguisher to take up front. The radar sall, officer was in his chute and was fast ming on his dinghy when the left gunner got back to radar room. He told him some one had bailed out of the front and to Jump. Two men, the radar and right gunner, were standing hind the left gunner when he jumped. The co-pilot jumped and pulled the cord when he saw he was clear of the plane. The plane came back around in a circle and the whole nose was on fire, flames were coming out the top and right side of fuselage. After about a ninety degree turn more it blew up before hitting the water.

The co-pilot saw four other chutes below him and just before the explosion another one open quite low and close to the plane, therefore, the co-pilot was certain that six got out of the plane.

d. Escape:

The co-pilot, navigator, and radio operator bailed out through the front bomb bay. The left gunner bailed out through the rear escape hatch.

e. Weather:

Visibility was good. The swells were from ten to fifteen feet high. Wind velocity was unknown.

f. Survival:

Other B-29's which saw the men parachuting out radioed in their position. The survivors had been in the water ten minutes when they saw planes flying low over head.

A Navy PBY spotted the co-pilot and dropped sea marker dye and smoke bombs. The co-pilot was in his dingly approximately two minutes after contact with the water. He puddled about ten feet, got his parachute and dropped it over his dingly. It was very easily spotted from the air and worked well as a sea anchor. The co-pilot did not drift at all and stayed in the same position as the sea marker dye.

The Navigator had only his Mae West and had considerable trouble in inflating it. His hands were severely burned, also his head and arms. It took him about thirty minutes to inflate his Mae West. A PBY spotted him and dropped a five man dinghy near him, to which he swam and got into with quite a lot of trouble due to his weak condition.

The left gunner had his dinghy. He was spotted by rescue planes and smrke bombs and sea marker dye was dropped.

The radio operator did not have his dinghy as it was lost in the fire but he had his Mae Wost. He was not spotted by any rescue planes. Planes flew directly over him several times. No sea marker dye or smoke bombs were dropped near him.

g. Rescue:

A mine sweeper had been sent out immediately and a destroyer escort soon after. The mine sweeper arrived at the scene first. It picked up the navigator first who was about five miles from the co-pilot. It then came over and picked up the co-pilot. The radio operator was picked up about 15 minutes later by luck, some one saw something out quite a ways and it was he swimming. The destroyer escort was at the scene by this time and picked up the left gunner.

Although efforts were made until dark to pick up the other men, no one was found. There was considerable wreckage still floating where the plane went down. In the area near the wreckage a number of large sharks were seen.

The two ships stayed out until dark and then the survivors were transferred to the destroyer escort and taken into Iwo Jima so that the navigator could have better medical attention. The mine sweeper anchored in the vicinity of the wreckage and continued search the next day, but no further survivors were found.

h. Crew Recommendations:

(1). More coordination between the planes and ships.

(2). Modification of puncturing mechanism of CO₂ cylinders on Type P-/: life preservers.

(3). Use of clute canopy on raft after person bails out for purpose of easy identification by aircraft; also helps as an emergency sea-anchor.

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BY CONCIAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL POWER;

PIOYD COOLEY It Colonel, AGD Adjutant General

14367 7012

CPERC 704 /2485 1st Ind. HEADQUARTERS, CENTRAL PACIFIC BASE COMMAND, APO 956, 18 May 1945.

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

PAUL E. BAKER, let Lt., AGD, Amt Adjutant General.

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