

SECRET RESTRICTED

ACCIDENT No. 237

U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES

REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

5-2-45

(1) Place 1/2 miles south of Kettering (Walgrave) (2) Date 6 April 1945 (3) Time 0500

AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-17G (5) A. E. No. 44-6923 (6) Station AAF Station 106

Organization: (7) 8th (8) 384th Bomb (H) (9) 545th Bomb (H)
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL

DUTY (10)	NAME (Last name first) (11)	RATING (12)	SERIAL NO. (13)	RANK (14)	PERSONNEL CLASS (15)	BRANCH (16)	AIR FORCE OR COMMAND (17)	RESULT TO PERSONNEL (18)	USE OF PARACHUTE (19)
P	MacKeller, Donald A.	P	0-828474	1st Lt.	18	AC	8th	Fatal	Nil
CP	McLaughlin, Orland F.	P	T-7789	P/O	17	AC	8th	"	"
N	Cebulski, Leo C.	N	0-2068605	2nd Lt.	18	AC	8th	"	"
TG	Samuels, Robert H.		13154955	S/Sgt.	38	AC	8th	"	"
RO	Fruitt, David L.		37537164	Sgt.	38	AC	8th	"	"
TT	Connell, Harvey C.		36811845	S/Sgt.	38	AC	8th	"	"
BT	Courtney, Raymond F.		13172510	S/Sgt.	38	AC	8th	"	"
TG	Bronzetti, Warren J.		42060052	S/Sgt.	38	AC	8th	"	"

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED OR CHANGED.

BY AUTHORITY OF CG AAF

BY gpc DATE 2 May 1946

(20) MacKeller Donald A. (21) 0-828474 (22) 1st Lt. (23) 18 (24) AC
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)

Assigned (25) 8th (26) 384th Bomb (H) (27) 545th Bomb (H) (28) AAF Sta. 106
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)

Attached for flying (29) 8th (30) 384th Bomb (H) (31) 545th Bomb (H) (32) AAF Sta. 106
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)

Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 15 Apr. 44 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 15 Apr. 44 Instrument rating (37) 17 Oct. 44
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date)

FIRST PILOT HOURS:

(at the time of this accident)

(38) This type 511:50 (42) Instrument time last 6 months 48:30
(39) This model 428:20 (43) Instrument time last 30 days 18:15
(40) Last 90 days 278:40 (44) Night time last 6 months 12:30
(41) Total 511:50 (45) Night time last 30 days 2:00

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE

DAMAGE	(46) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft <u>Complete Destruction.</u>	
(47) Engine(s) <u>Complete Destruction.</u>	
(48) Propeller(s) <u>Complete Destruction.</u>	

(49) Weather at the time of accident No clouds, visibility 3 miles, wind WNW 9 MPH.

(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No.

(52) Cleared from AAF Station 106 (53) To Operational (54) Kind of clearance Operational

(55) Pilot's mission Operational

(56) Nature of accident Miscellaneous - A/C crashed after catching fire in the air at low altitude.

(57) Cause of accident Underlying causes unknown. Believed to be direct result of fire and loss of power of two engines.

(58) Has Form 54 been submitted? No.

DESCRIPTION OF ACCIDENT

(Brief narrative of accident. Include statement of responsibility and recommendations for action to prevent repetition)

The A/C took off from base in the early morning darkness on an operational mission to the Continent. After take-off a turn south was made to the first "on course" heading. Trouble apparently started about three or four minutes out, as the A/C was seen from the base tower, and from another airborne A/C, to be losing altitude in a right turn. After turning approximately 150° the A/C crashed into a road about 1½ miles SW of Kettering. The A/C blew up and several of the bombs followed exploding at frequent intervals. Wreckage was scattered over an area nearly ½ mile radius from the crash.

Investigation following the accident disclosed that: 1. The crew had been alerted to bail out too late for any one to escape, as the escape hatches were found about 500 yards from the scene of the crash; 2. Fire had started in the air a few minutes prior to the crash; 3. The two right hand engines (#3 & 4) were not developing as much power as No's. 1 & 2 when the crash occurred; 4. The A/C struck the ground in a shallow dive apparently out of control. The underlying causes have been undetermined beyond mere speculation.

Responsibility: None charged due to the nature of the accident and the absence of definite cause, it has been impossible to fix any responsibility.

Recommendations: None.



Alex C. Strickland
ALEX C. STRICKLAND,
Major, Air Corps,
Squadron Commander.

T. D. Hutchinson
T. D. HUTCHINSON,
Major, Air Corps,
Operations Officer.

Nicolai (NAT) Hansen
NICOLAI (NAT) HANSEN,
Major, Air Corps,
S-4 Officer.

Signature _____
(Investigating Officer)

Date: 16 April, 1945.

DATE 6 April 1945		STATION 106		GROUP NO. & TYPE 384th (H) Bomb		AIRCRAFT MODEL B-17G			
CREW CHIEF OR AERIAL ENGINEER S/Sgt Alfred Mariani		SQUADRON NO. & TYPE 545th (H) Bomb		AIRCRAFT SERIAL NO. 44-6923					
PERM. CLASS	-PRINT PLAINLY- NAME-ASN.-GRADE-ORGANIZATION	USE AS DIRECTED LOCALLY	ALWAYS ENTER DUTY SYMBOLS, WHEN APPLICABLE. ENTER N-RIGHT OR I-INSTRUMENT. ENTER TIME FLOWN THEREUNDER				FLIGHT DATA		
			DUTY N	DUTY I	DUTY H	DUTY R	TERMINALS AND MESSAGES		
18	MacKellar, D. A., 1st Lt, O-826474	545	P					FROM:	04 : 25
17	McLaughlin, O. R., P/O, T-7789	545	CP					TO:	
18	Cebulski, L. C., 2nd Lt, O-2068605	545	N					MISSION:	NO. OF LAUNCHES
38	Samuels, R. H., S/Sgt, 13154055	545	TOG					FROM:	
38	Connell, H. C., S/Sgt, 36811845	545	E					TO:	
38	Fruitt, D. L., Sgt, 37537164	545	R					MISSION:	NO. OF LAUNCHES
38	Courtney, R. F., S/Sgt, 13172510	545	LB					FROM:	
38	Bronzetti, W. J., S/Sgt, 42060052	545	TG					TO:	
								MISSION:	NO. OF LAUNCHES
								FROM:	
								TO:	
								MISSION:	NO. OF LAUNCHES
								FROM:	
								TO:	
								MISSION:	NO. OF LAUNCHES

A TRUE COPY:
Joseph S Laboda
 JOSEPH S LABODA
 Capt, Air Corps
 Operations Officer
 545 Bomb Sq, 384 Bomb Grp

WAR DEPARTMENT
A. A. F. FORM NO. 1
REV. (1 JAN. 44)

AIRPLANE FLIGHT REPORT - OPERATIONS

CHECKED:
LEGIBLE AND
CORRECT

OPER.
CLASS

TRANSCRIBED:
TOTAL FLIGHT
TIME ENTERED
ON FORM 1A

CREW
CHIEF

TOTAL
FLIGHT
TIME

16-5011-1 GPO

AIRPLANE FLIGHT REPORT - ENGINEERING

INSPECTION STATUS				SERVICING AT STATION OF TAKE-OFF (CHECK IMMEDIATELY BEFORE TAKE-OFF)												
	DATE OF OR HOURS DUE	INSPECTED TODAY		SERVICE	FUEL (GALLONS)		OIL (QUARTS)								RADIATOR CHECKED	
		BY	STATION		SERV. ICED	IN TANKS	NO. 1		NO. 2		NO. 3		NO. 4			
PREFLIGHT	6-4-45	M	106													
DAILY	6-4-45	M	106													
25 HOURS	349:45			1ST	2500		140		140		140		140			
50 HOURS	374:45			2ND												
100 HOURS	421:45			3RD												
				4TH												
				5TH												

INSPECTION OF AUXILIARY EQUIPMENT				STATUS TODAY		EXPLANATION
EQUIPMENT	SYMBOL	INSPECTED BY	STATION	1.	2.	
BOMBARDMENT						COMPASS SWING DUE NAV. AIRSPEED NEEDS CAL.
GUNNERY						
CHEMICAL						
COMMUNICATIONS	C	CHESTNUT	106			
PHOTOGRAPHIC						EXCEPTIONAL RELEASE WHEN THE "STATUS TODAY" IS INDICATED BY A RED SYMBOL, AND AN "EXCEPTIONAL RELEASE" HAS NOT BEEN GRANTED BY AN AUTHORIZED MAINTENANCE OFFICER, THE PILOT OF THE AIRCRAFT WILL SIGN THIS RELEASE BEFORE FLIGHT.
NAVIGATION	GEE	H	HUGERICH	106		
	02	M	MARIANI	106		

REMARKS: PILOTS AND MECHANICS - SEE INSTRUCTIONS INSIDE FRONT COVER.		AIRCRAFT AND ENGINE TIME RECORD (ENTER IN HOURS AND MINUTES)				
		ENGINE	NO. 1	NO. 2	NO. 3	NO. 4
		HOURS TO DATE	347:40	347:40	56:20	347:40
		HOURS TODAY				
		TOTAL				
		OIL CHANGE DUE	421:45	424:45	103:20	424:45
		CUMULATIVE CLEANING DUE				
		AIRCRAFT	HOURS TO DATE	347:40		
			HOURS TODAY			
			TOTAL			

A TRUE COPY

Thomas P. Davis
THOMAS P. DAVIS,
Captain, Air Corps,
Group Engineering Officer.

DATE	AIRCRAFT ENG. DATA	AIRCRAFT DATA	ENGINE DATA	
6-4-45	AIR FORCE VIIIth	COMPONENT BOMBARDMENT	ENGINE MODEL R-1820-97	
STATION 106	COMD., SERV. COMD. OR DEPT. 1st WING	AIRCRAFT MODEL B-17G	SERIAL NO. SW-036169	SERIAL NO. SW-033641
CREW CHIEF OR ENGINEER S/Sgt. MARIANI	GROUP NO. & TYPE 384th (H)	AIRCRAFT SERIAL NO. 44-6923	SERIAL NO. SW-019038	SERIAL NO. SW-033356
	SQUADRON NO. & TYPE 545th (H)	TOTAL FLIGHT TIME →		

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS
AAF STATION NO. 106
Office of the Intelligence Officer

D-J-3

APO 557,

16 April, 1945.

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident Report of B-17-C, #44-6923, 545th Bombardment Squadron, 384th Bombardment Group (H), AAF Station No. 106, APO 557, 6 April, 1945.

TO : Commanding General, Headquarters, First Air Division, APO 557, U. S. Army.

1. The following report on the above subject is hereby submitted:

FACTS: Aircraft Number 44-6923, 545th Bombardment Squadron, 384th Bombardment Group (H), AAF Station No. 106, APO 557, piloted by 1st Lt. Donald A MacKeller, O-828474, 545th Bombardment Squadron, 384th Bombardment Group (H), AAF Station No. 106, APO 557, had just taken off from this field for an operational mission. The aircraft was seen to be losing altitude three (3) or four (4) minutes out, both by the tower and another airborne aircraft, during a right turn. The aircraft turned approximately 150 degrees and then crashed into a road about four and one half (4½) miles SW of Kettering. The aircraft blew up and several of its bombs exploded at frequent intervals, causing wreckage to be scattered over an area of nearly one half (½) mile radius. All members of the crew were killed.

FINDINGS: It is the opinion of this officer from the evidence found at the scene of the crash by the investigating officer, Major Phillip I. Williams, that fire had started in the aircraft a few minutes prior to the crash, that the two (2) right hand engines (#3 and #4) were developing as much power as were No.'s 1 and 2 when the crash occurred, and that the aircraft struck the ground in a shallow dive apparently out of control, and that the definite cause of the accident is indeterminable. From the evidence and findings there is no evidence of sabotage to be pursued in this case.

Alexander L. Jones
ALEXANDER L. JONES,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Intelligence Officer Member.

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The following is a statement by P/O ALFRED D. HESKO, T-132935, on aircraft accident.

We followed aircraft #44-6923 down the runway and in the climb I was watching what we believed to be his signal lamp in the tail. It descended gradually until we saw a big explosion and after that we realized that the light we followed was too big to be his signal lamp, but in all probability some part of the aircraft was on fire. Didn't circle the scene of the accident for fear of exploding bombs.

Alfred D. Hesco

ALFRED D. HESKO,
P/O, Air Corps,

132935
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HEADQUARTERS
AAF STATION NO. 106
Office of the Flying Control Officer

R-D-1

14 April, 1945.

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accident of A/C No. 6923.

TO : COMMANDING OFFICER, AAF Station No. 106, APO No. 557, U. S. Army.

1. On 6 April, 1945 at 0455 hours aircraft No. 6923 pilot Lt. McKeller was airborne on operational mission.

2. At approximately 0500 hours I saw an aircraft with an aldis lamp flashing in the tail losing altitude and turning to the right of the QDM of the runway 24, several miles from the field. The light disappeared and a dull flash followed by several bright flashes then occurred.

3. An airborne aircraft from this station gave the approximate location of a crash as southwest of Kettering.

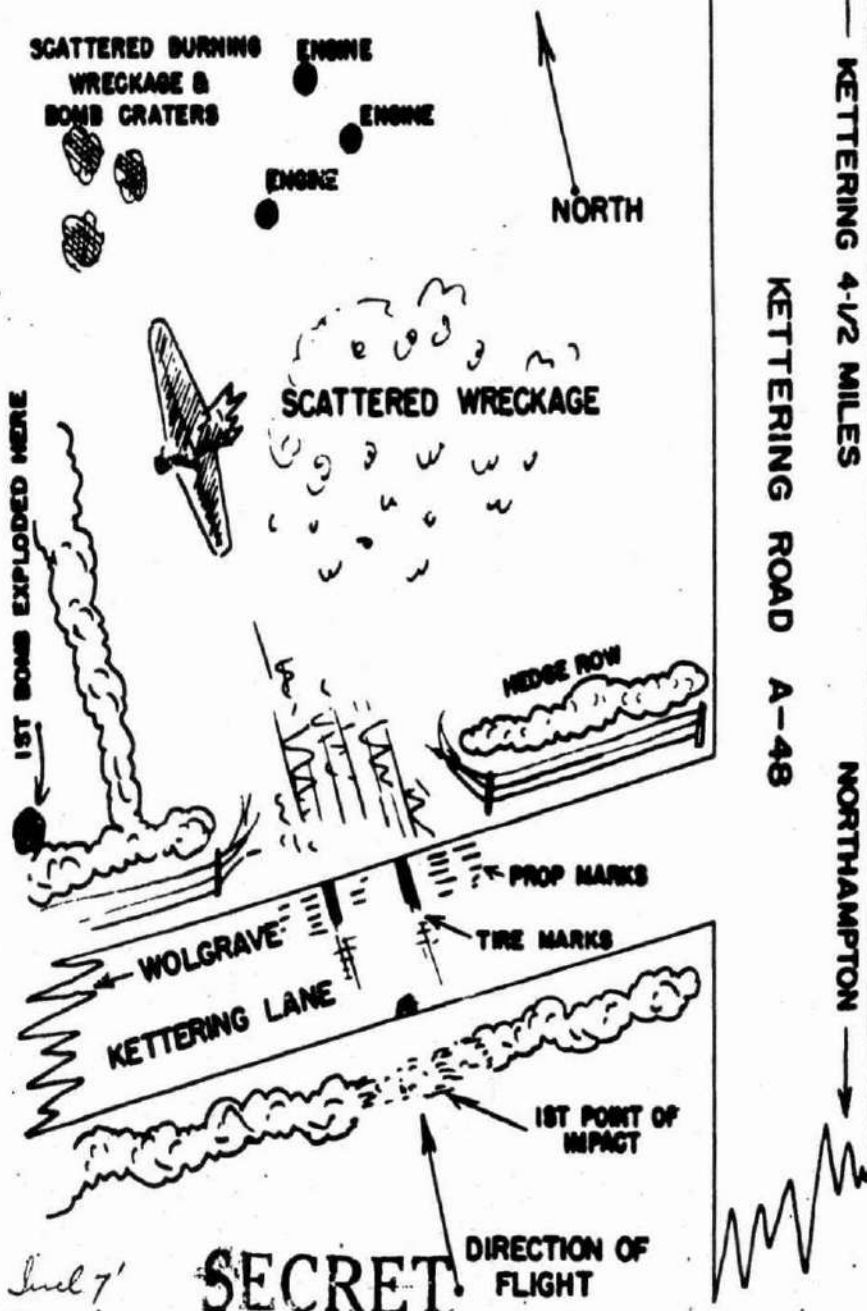
4. Crash Tender and Ambulance were dispatched immediately. All concerned were notified.

James M. Bills

JAMES M. BILLS,
1st Lt., A. C.,
Duty F. C. O.

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SECRET

Incl 7'

SECRET

SECRET
Auth. C. G. 8th AF
Init. <i>JS</i>
Date 24 APR 1945

360.33 1st Wrapper Ind.
Hq, Eighth Air Force, APO 634, c/o Postmaster, New York, N.Y.

24 APR 1945-U-4. (6)

AFS

TO: Chief, Flying Safety, AAF, Winston-Salem 1, N.C.

1. Transmitted herewith WD AAF Form No. 14 and allied papers on the following aircraft accidents:-



- a. 2nd Lt. Theodore G. Jordan, B-17G number 44-6109.
- b. 1st Lt. Donald A. MacKeller, B-17G number 44-6923.

2. Concur.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

Burnis Archer

BURNIS ARCHER.
Major, A.C.D.
Asst. Adjutant General.

2 Incls:

As above.

- 1 -

SECRET

40-74506

CONFIDENTIAL.

319.1 *D/S*.

1st Ind.

G-G-8

HEADQUARTERS EIGHTH AIR FORCE, AAF STATION 101, APO 634, US Army. JUN 11 1945

TO: Commanding General, 1st Air Division, APO 557, US Army.

For compliance with basic communication and return through this headquarters.

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL KEPNER:



H. S. Wilson, Jr.

H. S. WILSON, JR.,
Major. A.G.D.,
Asst. Adj. Gen.

BASIC: Ltr, Hq. AAF, Wash, DC, June 45, subj: F/O Orland F. McLaughlin,
T-007789, 545 BS, 384 BG, APO 557, NY, KIA 6 Apr 45.

312.1

2nd Ind.

(G/D/19)

HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AIR DIVISION, APO 557, 13 June 1945.

TO: Commanding Officer, 40th Combat Wing, APO 557.

For compliance with basic communication and return through this headquarters.

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL BEAMAN:

Charles E. Garvin

CHARLES E. GARVIN,
Capt., Air Corps,
Actg. Asst. Adj. Gen.

BASIC: F/O O.F. McLaughlin, T-007789, 384th BG, killed in action 6 Apr 45, dtd 2 Jun 45.

319.1

3rd Ind.

G-A-4

HEADQUARTERS 40TH COMBAT BOMB WING (Hv), APO 557, 14 JUNE 1945.

TO: Commanding Officer, 384th Bomb Group (Hv), APO 557, U. S. Army.

For compliance with basic communication and return through this Headquarters.

BY ORDER OF COLONEL MUSTON:

Norman P. Spicer

NORMAN P. SPICER,
1st. Lt., A.G.,
Adjutant.

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CONFIDENTIAL

4th Ind.

(C-A-18)

HEADQUARTERS, AAF STATION NO. 106, APO 557, 16 June 1945.

TO: Commanding Officer, 40th Combat Bomb Wing (H), APO 557.

1. F/O Orland F. McLaughlin, T-7789, was Killed in Action near Kettering, England, 6 April 1945, while serving as Co-Pilot of B-17 aircraft #44-6923

2. A/C #44-6923 crashed in the early morning darkness almost immediately after take-off for an operational mission over Germany. Entire crew was killed. No further information is available.

3. Complete crew list is as follows:

1st Lt.	Donald A. MacKellar	0-828474
F/O	Orland F. McLaughlin	T-7789
2nd Lt.	Leo C. Cebulski	0-2068605
S/Sgt.	Robert H. Samuels	13154055
Sgt.	David L. Fruit	37537164
S/Sgt.	Harvey C. Connell	36811845
S/Sgt.	Raymond F. Courtney	13172510
S/Sgt.	Warren J. Bronzatti	42060052

For the Station Commander:

J. R. Wyatt
J. R. WYATT,
Capt., Air Corps,
Adjutant.

BASIC: F/O O.F. McLaughlin, T-007789, 384th BG, killed in action 6 Apr 45. 2 Jun 45.
319.1 5th Ind. C-A-4
HEADQUARTERS 40TH BOMB WING (H), APO 557, 19 JUNE 1945.

TO: Commanding General, 1st Air Division, APO 557, U. S. Army.

Attention is invited to preceding indorsement.

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:



Norman P. Spicer
NORMAN P. SPICER,
1st Lt., A.C.,
Adjutant.

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BASIC: Ltr, Hq. AAF, Wash, DC, 2 June 45, subj: F/O Orland F. McLaughlin,
T-007789, 545 BS, 384 BG, APO 557, NY, KIA 6 Apr 45.

312.1

6th Ind.

(G/D/19)

HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AIR DIVISION, APO 557, 22 June 1945.

TO: Commanding General, Eighth Air Force, AAF Station 101, APO 634.

Attention is invited to 4th Indorsement.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:

Charles E. Garvin

CHARLES E. GARVIN,
Capt., Air Corps,
Actg. Asst. Adj. Gen.

319.1 *D/S*

7th Ind.

G-G-8

HEADQUARTERS EIGHTH AIR FORCE, AAF STATION 101, APO 634, US Army.

JUN 24 1945

TO: Commanding General, European Theater of Operations, APO 887, US Army.
(Attn: AG Casualty Section)

Attention invited to 4th indorsement.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:



H.S. Wilson, Jr.

H.S. WILSON, JR.,
Major, A.G.D.,
Asst. Adj. Gen.

PPA-8
22

8th Ind.

319

HQ. U. S. FORCES, EUROPEAN THEATER (REAR), APO 887, U S Army, 3 July 1945

JM/tw

TO: Commanding General, Army Air Forces, Washington 25, D. C.

Records this headquarters indicate status of subject officer as KIA
6 April 1945.

FOR THE THEATER COMMANDER:

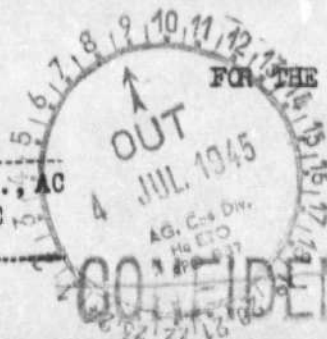
Classification changed

to **RESTRICTED**

by E. A. BRADUNAS, Lt. Col., AC

by F. M. MOENCH, Capt., AC

Date **FEB 25 1946**



H.M. Rund
H. M. RUND, *w*
Colonel, AGD
Asst. Adj. Gen.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ PAR-833 1047

CONFIDENTIAL.

319.1 8/9

7th Ind.

G-G-8

HEADQUARTERS EIGHTH AIR FORCE, AAF STATION 101, APO 634, US Army.

TO: Commanding General, European Theater of Operations, APO 887,
US Army. (Attn: AG Casualty Division)

JUN 19 1945

Information requested in basic communication is contained in
3rd, 4th and 5th Indorsements.

FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL:



H. S. WILSON, JR.,
Major. A.G.D.,
Asst. Adj. Gen.

1 Incl: n/c.

CONFIDENTIAL.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Classified by 100-1000000000
to **RESTRICTED**
by E. A. BRADY, Lt. Col., A1
by F. M. MOENCH, apt., A1
Date **FEB 25 1946**

AG 704 Cas

8th Ind.

GFF/lb

HEADQUARTERS EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS, APO 887, U. S. ARMY, 22 June 1945

TO: Commanding General, Army Air Force, Washington 25, D.C.

✓ Incl: n/c

VJH
V. J. H.

PPA-8
(22)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

1st Lt. Donald A. MacKellar

Mrs. Margaret MacKellar (mother)
1833 North Berendo
Hollywood, California

2nd Lt. Leo C. Cebulski

Mr. Tony J. Cebulski (father)
410 Stone Street
Georgetown, Illinois

F/O Orland F. McLaughlin

Mrs. P. E. McLaughlin (mother)
Medway, Maine

S/Sgt. Warren J. Bronzetti

Mrs. Gemma Bronzetti (mother)
645 Marcy Avenue
Brooklyn, New York

S/Sgt. Raymond F. Courtney

Mr. Charles J. Courtney (father)
R. F. D. Number One
Atlantic, Pennsylvania

S/Sgt. Harvey C. Connell

Mrs. Mary B. Connell (mother)
P. O. Box Number Sixteen
Genesee Depot, Wisconsin

S/Sgt. Robert H. Samuels

Mrs. Grace B. Samuels (mother)
1823 Dallas Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Sgt. David L. Fruit

Mrs. Doris K. Fruit (mother)
2508 Maryland
Topeka, Kansas

(211-01-5269-777 1/6) 754-004-9

5/11/68



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