

8613

CONFIDENTIAL

Classification changed
to **RESTRICTED**
by E. A. BRALUNAS, Lt. COLT, AD
by F. M. MOENCH, Capt., AC
Date MAR 15 1948

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WAR DEPARTMENT
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON

Classification changed

RESTRICTED

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

by F. M. MUENCH, Capt., AC

Date MAR 15 1946

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 aircraft is officially reported missing.

1. ORGANIZATION: Location A-15; Command or Air Force Ninth Bomber Comd Group 587th Bomb Gp; Squadron 558th Bomb Squadron
2. SPECIFY: Point of Departure A-15; Course On course
Intended Destination Querieu, France; Type of Mission Operational
3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED: 2/10 cumulus clouds tops at 4000, visibility 10 miles in light haze to
4. GIVE: (a) Date 28 August 1944; and Location 5 mls NNE Amie 8800ft
of last known whereabouts of missing aircraft Map coord. NO46049 TO NO66044
(b) Specify whether () Last Sighted; () Last contacted by Radio;
() Forces Down; (X) Seen to Crash; or () Information not available.
5. AIRCRAFT WAS LOST, OR IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN LOST, AS A RESULT OF (Check only one) () Enemy aircraft; (X) Enemy Anti-aircraft; () Other circumstances as follows _____
6. AIRCRAFT: Type, Model and Series B-26B55; A.A.F. Serial Number 48-96033
7. ENGINES: Type, Model and Series R-2800-43; A.A.F. Serial Number (a) LE FP-061032
(b) RE-060884 (c) Nick name of plane (d) "Little Itchy-Itchy"
8. INSTALLED WEAPONS (Furnish below Make, Type and Serial Number See Attached list.
(a) _____; (b) _____; (c) _____; (d) _____
(e) _____; (f) _____; (g) _____; (h) _____
9. THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW WERE REPORTED AS: (a) Battle Casualty
or (b) ~~Not Battle Casualty~~
10. NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew 6; Passengers 0; Total 6
(Starting with pilot, furnish the following particulars: If more than 10 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
1.	Pilot	<u>Jordan, Herbert A.</u>	<u>1st Lt</u>	<u>0-2045253 RTD</u>
2.	Co-Pilot	<u>Seagars, Earl J.</u>	<u>1st Lt</u>	<u>0-689095 RTD</u>
3.	Toggelier	<u>Powell, Benjamin F.</u>	<u>T/Sgt</u>	<u>17060315 RTD</u>
4.	Radio Gunner	<u>Nies, George E.</u>	<u>T/Sgt</u>	<u>33283528</u>
5.	Eng Gunner	<u>Michael, Howard E.</u>	<u>S/Sgt</u>	<u>39549959</u>
6.	Armour Gunner	<u>Ball, Donald R.</u>	<u>S/Sgt</u>	<u>59127851</u>
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				

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

Name in Full (Last Name First)	Rank	Number	Contacted			Saw Forced Landing
			By Radio	Last Sighted	Saw Crash	
1. <u>Kling, Philip M.</u>	<u>Sgt</u>	<u>33720342</u>			<u>X</u>	
2. <u>Miller, Hubert E.</u>	<u>T/Sgt</u>	<u>17011141</u>		<u>X</u>		
3.						

12. IF PERSONNEL ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE SURVIVED, ANSWER YES TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS: (a) Parachutes were used X; (b) Persons were seen walking away from scene of crash _____; or (c) Any other reason (Specify) _____
13. ATTACH AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH, MAP, CHART, or SKETCH, SHOWING APPROXIMATE LOCATION WHERE AIRCRAFT WAS LAST SEEN.
14. ATTACH EYEWITNESS DESCRIPTION OF CRASH, FORCED LANDING, OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES PERTAINING TO MISSING AIRCRAFT.
15. ATTACH A DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTENT OF SEARCH, IF ANY, AND GIVE NAME, RANK, AND SERIAL NUMBER OF OFFICER IN CHARGE HERE _____

4 Incl

Incl 1 Gun Serial Numbers

Incl 2 Eye witness Sgt Kling

Incl 3 Eye witness T/Sgt Miller

Incl 4 Sketch

Date of Report 29 August 1944

Lester K. Herman
LESTER K. HERMAN, Capt., Air Corps
(Signature of Preparing Officer)

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29 August 1944.

Machine Gun Serial Numbers on Airplane 033

Nose Gun, Flexible	1077621
Nose Gun, Fixed	none
Turret Gun, Right	409108
Turret Gun, Left	633256
Waist Gun, Right	1077006
Waist Gun, Left	1077070
Tail Gun, Right	633147
Tail Gun, Left	633352
Pack. Gun, Right Upper	633352
Pack. Gun, Right Lower	633290
Pack. Gun, Left Upper	633228
Pack. Gun, Left Lower	633024

EYE WITNESS ACCOUNT BY SGT PHILIP M. KLING

Flying as Radio gunner on Lt Millers crew. Just after we had reached the I.P. we were met with a heavy concentration of flack. I noticed that the right engine of Lt Jordans' ship was afire. The location of his ship at that time was low to the left behind us. Lt Jordan's plane continued on level flight but seemed to be losing speed and altitude. I then saw the plane dive, it appeared to be out of control. Just after the plane went into the dive I saw one chute open. I followed the plane down and saw it crash in a woods. There was a terrific flash and the entire plane was enveloped in flames.

Philip L. Kling

Philip M. Kling, SGT
ASN 33720342

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EYE WITNESS ACCOUNT BY T/SGT HUBERT MILLER

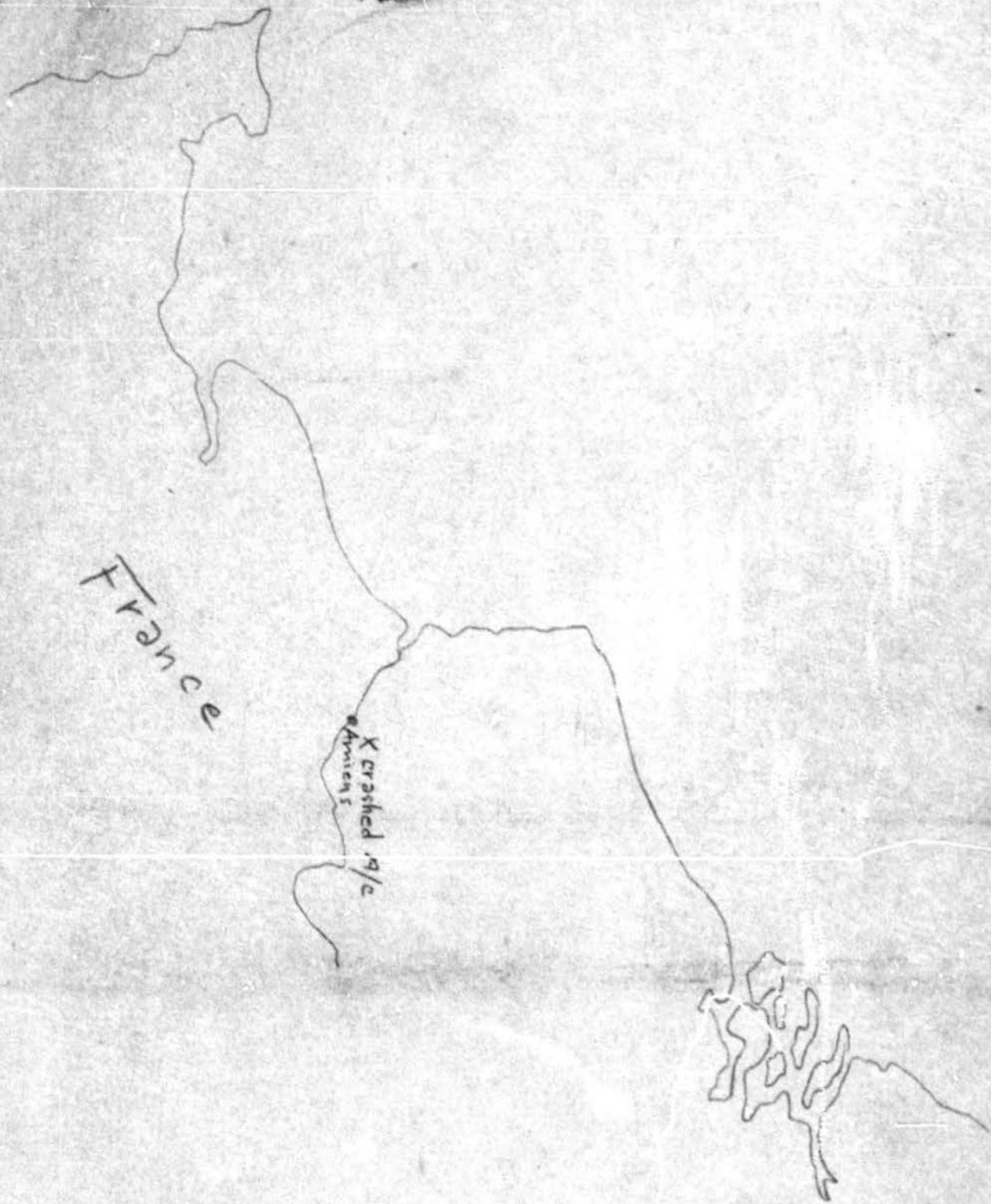
Flying as radio gunner with Lt Wilson's crew. Our plane, with that of Lt Jordan's, was located in the low box. We were off the right wing of Lt Jordan. Just as we reached the I.P. I noticed an object flash past my waist window. I then saw the right engine of Lt Jordan ship afire. The plane was in a shallow dive. I then noticed a chute open. Our altitude at that time was about 10500 ft. When I last saw that ship it was still in a shallow dive at about 8000 ft.

Hubert E. Miller

Hubert E. Miller, T/Sgt
ASN. 17011141

1-1-43

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HEADQUARTERS, ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON

IN REPLY REFER TO: AFPPA-8-MA

FILE



1 October 1945

SUBJECT: Staff Sergeant Donald R. Ball, 39127851

TO: Lieutenant Herbert A. Jordan, 02045253
1020 AAF Base Unit
Miami Beach, Florida

Gen Det, Camilla, Texas

1. This headquarters is in receipt of a request for the details of death and burial of Staff Sergeant Donald R. Ball, killed over France, 23 August 1944.

2. Request that all information in your possession, concerning subject, crash of plane, and entire crew, be forwarded this headquarters with least practicable delay.

BY COMMAND OF GENERAL ARNOLD:

N. W. Reed

N. W. REED
Major, Air Corps
Chief, Notification Section
Personal Affairs Branch
Personnel Services Division, AC/AS-1

Ref: AFPPA-8-MA

The below listed crew members were on that fateful mission, August 28, 1944, in a Martin Marauder B-26 (Model B-55) Army Air Forces Serial Number 42-96033 and named "Lil' Itchy Itchy". These crew members were attached to 558 Bombardment Squadron, 387 Bombardment Group (M) of the Ninth Air Force. A.P.O. 140.

1st Lt. Herbert A. Jordan
Pilot

Mrs. James A. Jordan (Mother)
General Delivery,
Camilla, Texas

1st Lt. Earl J. Seagars
O-689095
Co-Pilot

Mrs. Hilda G. Seagars, (Mother)
217 South Jaunita Avenue,
Redondo Beach, California

T/Sgt. Benjamin F. Powell
17060315
F-listed bombardier

Mrs. Nancy A. Powell, (Mother)
920 South 18th Street
Kansas City, Kansas

T/Sgt. George E. Ries
3328352A
Radioman-Gunner

Mrs. Marie A. Ries, (Mother)
604 South Mathilda Street,
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

S/Sgt. Howard E. Michael
39549959
Engineer-Gunner

Mrs. Thelma I. Michael, (Wife)
1226 South Rebecca Street,
Pomona, California.

S/Sgt. Donald R. Ball
39127851
Tailgunner

Mrs. Elizabeth R. Ball, (Mother)
1271 Louisiana Street,
Vallejo, California

Interrogation request

Ball, Donald R. 39127851 S/Sgt. MACR 8613

Letter written by Mabel Akins Sep. 28, 1945

Benjamin F. Powell
Earl J. Seagars
Herbert A. Jordan
E. H. Blakeley
Kenneth A. Brower

28 Crookery
death
Buried

Ref: AFPPA-8-MA

The below named officers were avadees who gave information to me in London as they were living in a farmhouse near the scene of the crash:

First Lieutenant Edwin Blakely, 0810298
48 Colchester Avenue
Burlington, Vt.

Formerly attached to:
513 Fighter Squadron
405 Fighter Group
England

First Lieutenant Kenneth A. Brower O-674129
Former navigator with 8th Air Force

(Home Address Unknown)

AFPPA-8-MA

SUBJECT: Staff Sergeant Donald R. Ball 39127851

Sergeant Ball joined our crew as aerial gunner in July, 1944, while stationed at Chipping Ongar, England. Towards the end of July, 1944, the 387 Bombardment Group moved to Stony Cross, near Bournemouth, England. On August 26, 1944 the Bombardment Group moved to Flight Strip A-15 at the town of St. Pierre-Englise, about five miles north of Cherbourg, France.

On August 28, 1944, at 5:00 the group took off on a mission to bombard a target north-east of Amiens, France.

As the group flew north of Amiens and started its turn toward the east, the formation was subjected to an approximate six-gun battery of accurate enemy anti-aircraft fire.

Our plane was shaken up by one near-miss close to the tail and seconds later received a burst of flak approximately under the bomb-bays. Both engines ran away and were unable to be controlled from the cockpit.

The co-pilot was flying and the pilot was trying to establish radio contact with the three gunners in the tail section when the right engine burst into flames. The ship then started to roll over onto its right side and both pilot and co-pilot attempted single engine trimming to prevent this. A call was given to abandon ship and the enlisted bombardier reported that they were leaving the aircraft.

The bombardier salvaged the bombs and proceeded to the navigators compartment. As co-pilot, I left my position and stepped in the navigators section, looked aft to the tail section and seeing no movement of the crew stationed there surmised that they had already left. Again I checked the pilot who was leaving his seat, stepped into the bomb-bay and fell free. The bombardier followed after me.

From later reports by our wing-man, First Lt. Morrill B. Wilson (whose address is; 204 Archway, Apt. #1, Austin, Texas) the plane was seen to nose-dive, roll over into an inverted spin and burn until it disappeared from sight.

Just before reaching the ground by parachute, I witnessed the crash of the burning plane into a wooded area, and while hiding out in a wooded section, I could hear the minor explosions and burning ammunition for several hours.

Ref: AFPPA-8-MA

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Lieutenant Jordan and Sergeant Powell who parachuted out safely were captured and taken prisoners of war. Their addresses will be found on a following page.

After evading and returning to U.S.S.T.A.F. in London, I met First Lieutenant Edwin Blakely and First Lieutenant Kenneth A. Brower who were hidden in a farmhouse near the scene of the crash. The French people that they were living with brought back three dog-tags from the wreckage. Lieutenant Blakely (as I was told) turned these dog tags into the Intelligence Section of Headquarters, United Kingdom, Central District, Base APO 413, U. S. Army.

Lieutenant Blakely had copied the names and addresses from these dog tags and I confirmed that they were members of our crew. Lieutenant Blakely stated that the bodies were buried in a church graveyard near the town of Bettencourt, (District of the Somme) France.

The three bodies were of:

Tech. Sergeant George E. Ries
Staff Sergeant Howard E. Michael
Staff Sergeant Donald R. Ball

217 South Jaunita Avenue
Redondo Beach, California

8 October 1945

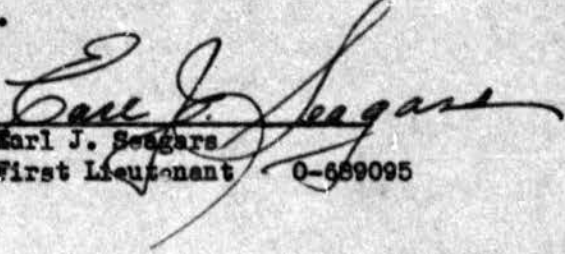
IN REF. TO: AFPPA-S-MA

SUBJECT: Staff Sergeant Donald R. Ball, 39127851

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

1. Attached hereto is the information requested regarding the crew and facts pertaining to the death of Staff Sergeant Ball.

2. If any further material assistance or information is needed, shall be happy to comply.


Earl J. Seegers
First Lieutenant 0-689095

Enclosures: 4



HEADQUARTERS, ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON



IN REPLY REFER TO: AFPPA-8-MA

1 October 1945

SUBJECT: Staff Sergeant Donald R. Ball, 39127851

TO: Lieutenant Kenneth A. Brower, 0674129
2517 AAF Base Unit
Ellington Field, Texas

1. This headquarters is in receipt of a request for the details of death and burial of Staff Sergeant Donald R. Ball, killed over France, 28 August 1944.

2. Request that all information in your possession, concerning subject, be forwarded this headquarters with least practicable delay.

BY COMMAND OF GENERAL ARNOLD:

N. W. Reed

N. W. REED
Major, Air Corps
Chief, Notification Section
Personal Affairs Branch
Personal Services Division, AC/AS-1



28 October 1945.

PPA-1
ENCLOSURE

Subject: Staff Sergeant Donald R Ball 39127857

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

1. I was a evacuee in France at the time subject's plane was shot down. I was living with Mr. Legry at Bettencourt St. Omer, Somme France. Mr. Legry was one of two men who went to the plane and extracted the bodies of three of the crew. They took them to the cemetery immediately, as the Germans wouldn't let them move them until the day following the crash. The cemetery is located half-way between Bettencourt-St. Omer and St Omer, Somme, France. The graves were to be marked, but hadn't been when we left there. The above happened during German occupation.

2. About Sept 4, 1944, the first Sunday after we were liberated, the people of Bettencourt St Omer held a funeral for the subject and the other two who were killed in the crash.

3. Lt Edwin Blakely and I turned the three men's dog tags over to
WAP

WAR DEPARTMENT
~~HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES~~
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

ATTN: AFPA-8

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

SAVY
JAN 5
3 PM
1946
GA

PENALTY FOR ILLEGITIMATE USE TO AVOID
PAYMENT OF POSTAGE. 9900
PMGC

PPA-8
22

29 December 1945

SUBJECT: Staff Sgt. Donald R. Ball 39127851

TO : Chief, Notification Section
Personal Affair Branch
Personnel Services Division, AC/AS-1

1. In reply to letter, Subject same as above, Hdqrs Army Air Forces, dated 3 December 1945, reference AFPPA-8-MA, the following statement is submitted:

2. On August 28, 1944, I was flying as pilot on a B-26 (medium) bomber, on the crew of which S/Sgt. Donald R. Ball was gunner. At approximately 2030 hours we reached the Initial Point, and turned for our run on the target. This was located 15 to 20 miles north by northwest of Amiens, France. We encountered enemy ground fire ("Flak") at this point, which was moderately intense, and accurate. The plane received a direct hit in the right wing and right side of fuselage. This stopped the right engine and knocked out the controls, also the right wing and engine started burning. The plane started down in a spiral, out of control. I worked with trim tabs, but they were also knocked loose. I then cut off the power on the left engine and the plane quit spiraling and headed almost straight down. I gave the bail out order, and turned on the emergency bell. Lt. Seagars got out of his seat to check on the crewman in the rear of the plane. The bombardier opened the bomb bay doors and jettisoned the load of bombs. He then came out of the nose and bailed out through the bomb bay when I first gave the bailout order, one of the crewman in the rear of the plane acknowledged the order on the interphone, but immediately afterwards the interphone became inoperative. I remained in my position until the plane was down to approximately three or four thousand feet. The cockpit was then so full of smoke until breathing was difficult. I then tried to open the nose wheel escape hatch, but the hatch was jammed, and I bailed out through the bomb bay doors. I hit the ground within a few seconds of opening my parachute. I was captured immediately, and taken to the scene of the crash when the airplane had burned. I was loaded on a truck from there and was taken to a German S. S. Hdqrs. The German Officers that took me to the Headquarters were wearing black uniforms, and I learned later that they were members of the S. S. The treatment they gave was harsh and brutal. Three days later I was taken to Amiens, France and put in a temporary prisoner of war prison. There I met my bombardier, T/Sgt Benjamin F. Powell. He was the first member of my crew I had seen or heard from. Sgt. Powell likewise had no news of any of the crew. From Amiens we were taken to Germany where Sgt. Powell and I were separated. I was later sent to Stalag Luft 1 where I remained until the war was over.

After liberation I was sent back to France to await transportation to the United States. I visited the 387 Bomb Group and learned that Lt. Seagar had evaded and escaped, and had returned to the United States. I had no further information on the crew until I returned to my home. While there I received a letter from Mrs. Elizabeth Ball, mother of S/Sgt. D. R. Ball, in which she said S/Sgt Ball had been declared dead.

3. The German who captured the undersigned were very angry and displayed much contempt for Air Force prisoners. It is the opinion of the undersigned that they were probably responsible for the death of S/Sgt Ball.

Herbert A. Jordan
HERBERT A. JORDAN O-2045253
1st Lt., Air Corps
Training Squadron "T"
Turner Field, Georgia



MAIL 8 13th