

12101

[REDACTED]

Classification changes  
to ~~SECRET~~  
by E. A. BRAUNAS, Lt. Col., AC  
by F. W. MUENCH, Capt., AC  
Date MAR 15 1952

[REDACTED]

MISSING AIR CREW REPORT *2200*

1. ORGANIZATION: Location Bombardier Air Base, Italy Command or Air Force 15th AF  
 Group 15th Bomb Group (B) Squadron 77th Bomb Sq (B)  
 2. SPECIFY: Place of departure Bombardier Air Base, Italy Course Graz, Austria  
 Target Graz, Austria Type of mission Bombing  
 3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED:  
Clear. Visibility 20 miles in haze.  
 4. GIVE: (a) Date 19 Feb 45 Time 1205 Last known position Yugoslavia (46°30'N 15°45'E)  
 (b) Specify whether:  Last sighted,  Forced down,  Seen to crash,  
 Last contacted by radio,  No information.

5. AIRCRAFT [LOST] [BELIEVED LOST] AS A RESULT OF: [Check one only]  
 Enemy aircraft,  Enemy anti aircraft,  Other Loss of power due to inoperative engines.  
 6. AIRCRAFT: Type, model & series B-24 L AAF Serial Number 44-49751  
 7. NICKNAME OF AIRCRAFT No nickname - call name "Black Oboe".

8. ENGINES: Type, model & series I-1830-A1 AAF Serial Number (a) CP-319442  
 (b) CP-319456 (c) CP-319549 (d) CP-319350  
 9. INSTALLED WEAPONS: (Make, type and serial number) Proving 50 Cal MG  
 (a) 1720225 (c) 1720630 (d) 982644  
 (b) 1719390 (e) 1720767 (f) 983589  
 (g) 1720673 (h) 1721479 (i) 1720572 (j) 1721501 (k) 1721501

10. PERSONNEL LISTED BELOW REPORTED AS:  Battle Casualty,  Non Battle Casualty.  
 11. NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew 11; Passengers 0; Total 11  
 [If more than 12 persons aboard aircraft, use separate sheet]

CREW POSITION	FULL NAME (Last, first, initial) RANK, SERIAL NUMBER	CURRENT NEXT OF KIN, RELATIONSHIP STATUS AND ADDRESS
✓ 1) Pilot	<u>Damhorst, John C.</u>	<u>2d Lt 0721654 MIA</u> Father Mr <u>Alphons J. Damhorst, 101 E. Circle Drive, Jefferson City, Mo.</u>
✓ 2) Co-Pilot	<u>Rephen, Melvin M. (io) F/O</u>	<u>29069 MIA</u> Uncle Mr <u>Edward I. Rephen, Chinkapin &amp; Pecan St., Hot Springs, Ark.</u>
✓ 3) Nav	<u>Woods, Stanley S.</u>	<u>2d Lt 03071769 MIA</u> Father Mr <u>Taylor D. Woods, Fairfield, Nebraska</u>
✓ 4) Bomb	<u>Burt, Wallace J. Jr.</u>	<u>2d Lt 02001487 MIA</u> Father Mr <u>Wallace J. Burt Sr, 3703 Grand Ave, Des Moines, Iowa</u>
✓ 5) Eng Gnr	<u>Keszler, Jacob G.</u>	<u>Cpl 39390586 MIA</u> Wife Mrs <u>Doris L. Keszler, 3124 Octavia St, San Francisco, Calif.</u>
✓ 6) FO Gnr	<u>Gheen, Robert E.</u>	<u>Cpl 35579738 MIA</u> Mother Mrs <u>Mary M. Gheen, 1038 W. 33rd St., Indianapolis, Ind.</u>
✓ 7) Arm Gnr	<u>Bishop, Ralph T.</u>	<u>Cpl 15133926 MIA</u> Mother Mrs <u>Bertha F. Bishop, Box 55, Summerhill, Pa.</u>
✓ 8) Arm Gnr	<u>Bruder, Vernon F.</u>	<u>Cpl 35903232 MIA</u> Grand-father <u>Mr Jacob E. Bruder, 1312 Milburn St, Indianapolis, Ind.</u>
✓ 9) Arm Gnr	<u>Moraczewski, Thaddeus H.</u>	<u>Cpl 36729183 MIA</u> Mother Mrs <u>Frances Moraczewski, 4832 W. Eddy St, Chicago, Ill.</u>
✓ 10) Aerial Gnr	<u>McNemara, Francis J.</u>	<u>PFC 31452593 MIA</u> Wife Mrs <u>Ann F. McNemara, 9 Corona St, Dorchester 24, Mass.</u>
✓ 11) RO Gnr	<u>Ciehl, Alóysius H.</u>	<u>Cpl 12216764 MIA</u> Father Mr <u>Philip J. Ciehl, 313 Clifford Ave, Rochester, N. Y.</u>
(12)		

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

NAME IN FULL	RANK	SERIAL NO.	CONTACTED LAST BY (DD)	SAW SIGHTED	FORCED CRASH LANDING
(1) Joseph A. Shymanski	Capt	0737487		x	
(2) Donald N. Sherard	2d Lt	0782974			x
(3)					

13. IF PERSONNEL ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE SURVIVED, CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:  
 Parachutes were used.  Persons were seen walking away from the scene of the crash.  
 Other reasons (specify) No parachutes were used.  
 14. ATTACH PHOTOGRAPH, MAP OR SKETCH SHOWING LAST KNOWN LOCATION OF AIRCRAFT.  
 15. ATTACH EYEWITNESS DESCRIPTIONS OF CRASH, FORCED LANDING, OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES.  
 16. ATTACH A DESCRIPTION OF EXTENT OF SEARCH, IF ANY, AND GIVE NAME, RANK AND SERIAL NUMBER OF OFFICER IN CHARGE OF SEARCH HERE. No search made aircraft in trouble over enemy territory.

3. Inclosures.  
 Incl 1 - Statement Date 21 February 1945 of Capt Shymanski (septup) ALDERSON  
 Incl 2 - Statement of Lt Sherard (septup) Capt., Air Corps,  
 Incl 3 - Map of area plane last seen (septup) Adjutant

RESEARCHED BY: K. M. MOORE, CAPT, USAF  
 INDEXED  
 SERIALIZED  
 FILED

779TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)  
APO 520 U. S. ARMY

JAS/jed

21 February 1945

On 19 February 1945 we bombed a target in Graz, Austria. After the bomb run, at approximately 1305, "Black O", flown by Lt. Damhorst, called "Black N", the lead aircraft in the formation, and said that he had one engine feathered and lost one turbo on another engine, and the other two engines were smoking. He also said that he was low on fuel and wanted advice as to what to do. Altitude at that time was approximately 21,000 feet. I told him the nearest field was approximately 130 miles away in Yugoslavia on a heading of about 190°. My advice to him was to call for fighter cover and drop out of the formation; attempt to reduce power settings as low as possible and jettison as much equipment as might be necessary to maintain altitude at his chosen power settings. He then replied he would attempt to do the best he could and thanked me for the advice. This was the last I heard from him.

At no time did I see any parachutes come out of the aircraft.

*Joseph A. Shymanski*  
JOSEPH A. SHYMANSKI,  
Capt., 0737487  
779th Bomb Sq (H)  
464th Bomb Gp (H)

779TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)  
APO 520

U. S. ARMY

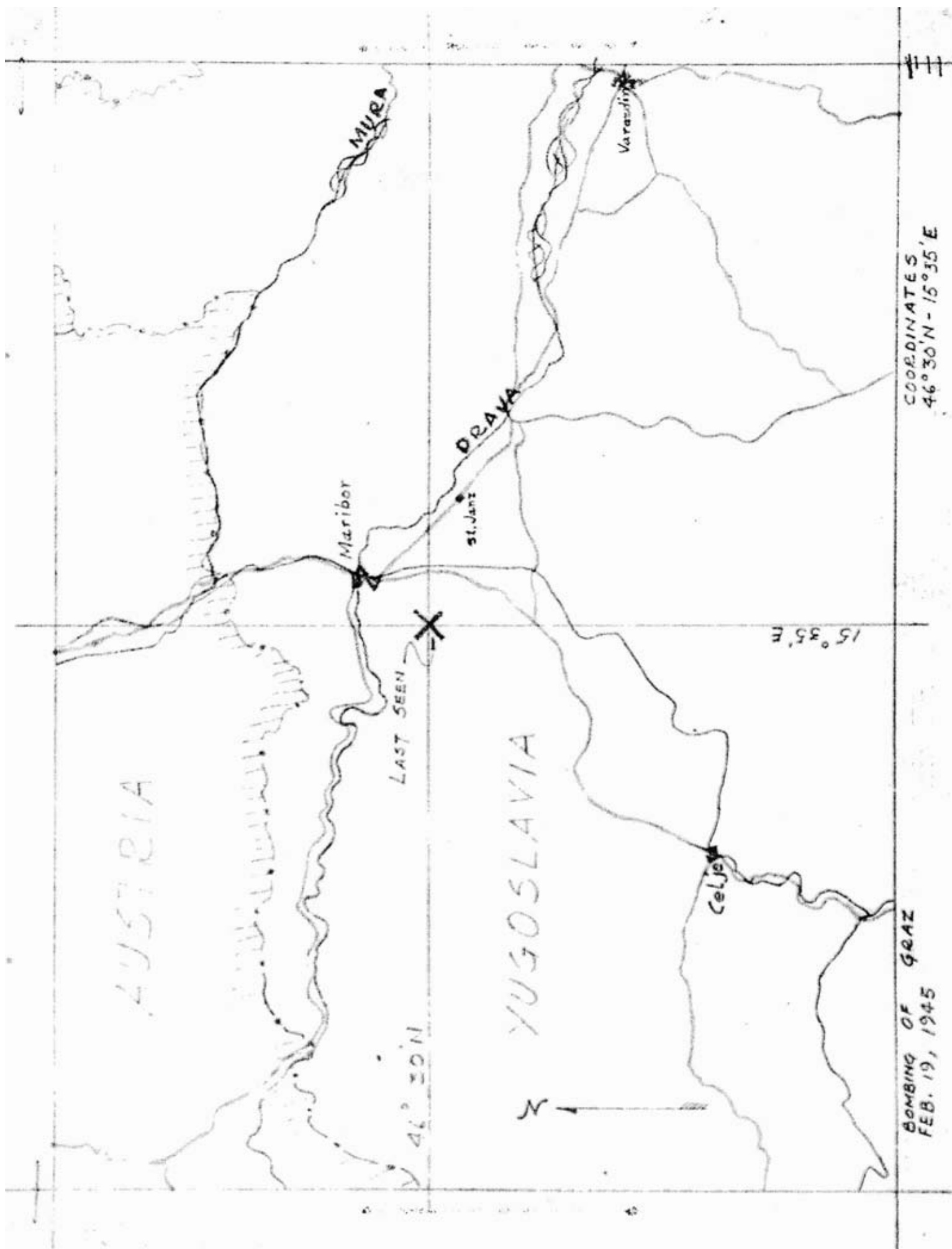
DNS/jed

21 February 1945

On the 19 February 1945, we bombed a target in Graz, Austria. After passing over the target at Graz "Black Oboe", flown by Lt Damhorst, turned off to the left with one engine feathered and we assumed that he headed toward the Russian lines. Apparently he was pulling quite a bit of power as his other engines were smoking some.

At no time did I see any parachutes come out of the aircraft.

*Donald N. Sherard*  
DONALD N. SHERARD,  
2d Lt., 0782974  
779th Bomb Sq (H)  
464th Bomb Gp (H)



AUSTRIA

YUGOSLAVIA

MURA

DRAVA

Maribor

st. Jant

Varasdin

Celje

LAST SEEN

46° 30' N

15° 35' E

COORDINATES  
46° 30' N - 15° 35' E

BOMBING OF GRAZ  
FEB. 19, 1945

2nd Lt. John G. Damhorst

Mr. Alphons J. Damhorst (father)  
101 East Circle Drive  
Jefferson City, Missouri

2nd Lt. Stanley S. Woods

Mr. Taylor D. Woods (father)  
Fairfield, Nebraska

2nd Lt. Wallace J. Burt Jr.,

Mr. Wallace J. Burt (father)  
3703 Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa

P/O Melvin M. Rephan

Mr. Ed I Rephan (uncle)  
Pecan and Chinkapin Street  
Hot Springs, Arkansas

Cpl. Jacob G. Keszler

Mrs. Doris L. Keszler (wife)  
3124 Octavia Street  
San Francisco, California

Cpl. Robert E. Gheen

Mrs. Mary M. Gheen (mother)  
1638 West 33rd Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana

Cpl. Ralph T. Bishop

Mrs. Bertha F. Bishop (mother)  
Box 55  
Summerville, Pennsylvania

Cpl. Aloysius H. Giehl

Mr. Philip J. Giehl (father)  
313 Clifford Avenue  
Rochester, New York

Cpl. Vernon F. Bruder

Mr. Jacob B. Bruder (grandfather)  
1312 Milburn Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana

Pfc. Francis J. Mc Namara

Mrs. Sarah A. Mc Namara (mother)  
13 Berry Street  
Quincy, Massachusetts

Cpl. Thaddeus H. Moraczewski

Mrs. Frances J. Moraczewski (mother)  
4832 West Eddy Street  
Chicago, Illinois

## CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

- 12701
1. Your name DAMHORST, John C Rank 1<sup>st</sup> LT. Serial No. 0-721654
  2. Organization 464<sup>th</sup> Bg Commander A.J. Bird Jr. Rank Col. Sqn CO E.E. Balzer Rank Major  
(full name) (full name)
  3. What year 1945 month Feb. day 19 did you go down?
  4. What was the mission, Graz, Austria, target, Marshalling Yard, target  
time, About 1300, altitude, 24,000 ft. route scheduled, Unknown  
route flown Unknown
  5. Where were you when you left formation? About 1 mile short of Target
  6. Did you bail out? No
  7. Did other members of crew bail out? No
  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".
  9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? Landed on partially completed Russian Strip at Pecs, Hungary
  10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) All members were in ship
  11. Where were they in aircraft? yes
  12. What was their condition? OK
  13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? F/O Melvin M. Rephan and Cpl. Jacob G. Kezler were left with the ship and were both wounded the following day when two F.W. 190 fighters strafed them. Both ultimately returned to the United States and recovered.
  14. Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information.  
All members of crew returned to the United States

(Any additional information may be written on the back)

## CASUALTY QUESTIONNAIRE

12161

1. Your name Wallace J. Burt Jr. Rank 1st Lt. Serial No. 0-2001487
2. Organization 464 Gp Commander Al Schuder, Rank Col. Sqn CO Gilson, Rank Lt. Col.  
(full name) (full name)
3. What year 1945 month Feb. day 19 did you go down?
4. What was the mission, Vicenza, target, \_\_\_\_\_, target  
time, around 12:00PM, altitude, 24,000' route scheduled, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, route flown \_\_\_\_\_
5. Where were you when you left formation? Bomb run on alternate target Graz
6. Did you bail out? No
7. Did other members of crew bail out? No
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". \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Where did your aircraft strike the ground? Pecs, Hungary
10. What members of your crew were in the aircraft when it struck the ground? (Should cross check with 8 above and individual questionnaires) entire crew of 11
11. Where were they in aircraft? regular positions for landing
12. What was their condition? Murphy had a broken arm
13. When, where, and in what condition did you last see any members not already described above? We left two members in Pecs in good condition, but they were both wounded after we left.
14. Please give any similar information on personnel of any other crew of which you have knowledge. Indicate source of information. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Any additional information may be written on the back)