



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO

QUARTER 293

Flood, William W.

SN 01 540 361

18 April 1949

Mrs. Patrick J. Flood  
11 Laidlaw Avenue  
Jersey City, New Jersey

Dear Mrs. Flood:

Your recent letter concerning your son, the late Second Lieutenant William W. Flood, has come to my attention.

I can readily appreciate your concern relative to the identification of the remains of your son, and in order that you may understand more fully the circumstances surrounding the recovery and identification of his remains, I will furnish you a brief history of this case.

In checking through the file for your son, I am greatly embarrassed to find you were informed that his remains were recovered from an isolated grave located near Lessach, Austria, when, in fact, they were recovered from a mountain lake near Lessach, where they had been for the two and one-half years since his death. I hope that you will accept my sincere apology for this error and I trust the following report of the evidence upon which the identification of his remains is based will alleviate any distress and anxiety this error may cause you.

According to our records, your son was a crew member aboard the PB-17B Aircraft Number 42-97728 which crashed near Lessach, Austria, on 15 November 1944, while returning from a bombing mission to Linz, Austria. Of the ten men manifested aboard, two survived and were captured by the Germans; the other eight, including your son, were killed as a result of the casualty. In June 1945, some Americans from Nurnberg, Germany, when informed of the plane crash, removed seven bodies from the wreckage and evacuated them to Nurnberg. The remains of these seven were later individually identified and reburied in the United States Military Cemetery St. Avold, France.

Inasmuch as there were eight men to be accounted for, a reinvestigation was conducted and, in August 1947, from information obtained from civilians, our American Graves Registration Service located the remains of the eighth person in the Ober-Landschitzsee Mountain Lake, approximately one-half mile south of the wrecked plane. Since identification could not be determined at that time, although a civilian stated that he had previously found an identification tag, bearing your son's name, on the edge of the lake, these

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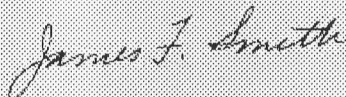
remains were designated "Unknown, believed to be William W. Flood" and were reburied in the United States Military Cemetery Neuville-en-Condroz, Belgium. At a later date, these remains were processed through a Central Identification Laboratory where they were positively identified as the remains of your son.

The identification of the remains of your son was established by finding a Second Lieutenant's bar on remnants of gabardine coveralls on the remains, which is in agreement with your son's rank. I might add, the only other Second Lieutenant to perish in this disaster was identified by identification tags. Your son's identification was further substantiated by the favorable comparison of the estimated height of the deceased with your son's recorded height. In addition, the remains identified as those of your son were recovered from the same vicinity as were the identified remains of his seven comrades.

Since the only clothing found with the remains of your son were remnants of gabardine coveralls, there were found no personal effects which could be forwarded to you as a memento. With respect to other personal effects, however, we are forwarding a copy of your letter to the Kansas City Quartermaster Depot, 601 Hardesty Avenue, Kansas City 1, Missouri, for direct reply.

May I again extend to you and your husband my deepest sympathy and understanding in the loss of your son and express the hope that you may receive some small measure of comfort from the information I have been able to furnish you.

Sincerely yours,



JAMES F. SMITH  
Major, QMC  
Memorial Division