



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

IN REPLY REFER TO

QMGMY 293
Eisenstein, Alex
SN 02 058 368

28 January 1949

Mr. Israel B. Eisenstein
3521 Roosevelt Road
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Mr. Eisenstein:

More than three years have elapsed since the cessation of hostilities of World War II which cost the life of your son, the late Second Lieutenant Alex Eisenstein.

Full consideration has been given to all available information pertaining to your son since he was listed as killed in action when the aircraft, of which he was a crew member, crashed into the Adriatic Sea on 24 August 1944. The records reveal that this aircraft was one of several bombers which departed from Foggia, Italy on a combat mission to Pardubice Airdrome, Poland. When the flight spread out to test their guns, a blast of fire from another ship hit one of the engines of your son's plane, and it burst into flames. The blaze could not be extinguished and orders were given to bail out. Of the ten members aboard the aircraft, five survived the crash and five, including your son, lost their lives. One of the survivors stated that he was the ninth man to leave the damaged aircraft, inasmuch as he counted eight other parachutes in the air before he hit the water, and the pilot was still in the plane when it crashed into the sea and exploded. The surviving crew members were later picked up by a British Air-Sea Rescue Launch; however, no trace was found of your son or the remaining personnel.

Subsequent to the crash of the plane, units of the American Graves Registration Service searched the east coastlines of Italy and the coastlines of Yugoslavia, including the adjacent islands; however, the remaining members of the crew could not be located. In addition, statements were obtained from town and church officials, local civilians of towns located along the Italian seacoasts and immediate interior, and from the fifteen districts comprising the Yugoslavian shore-line certifying that to their knowledge, no remains of American deceased were interred in the territory under their jurisdiction.

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In an effort to determine whether your son's remains had washed ashore and been recovered, identifying data pertaining to him was compared with all available identifying data for unidentified remains recovered from the Adriatic shores of Italy and Yugoslavia; however, this comparison failed to reveal any remains which could be identified as those of your son.

In a last endeavor to find a possible burial location for his remains, examinations were made of the files of unidentified deceased interred in United States Military Cemeteries in the general area in which he was last known to be. None of the unidentified remains could be associated with your son.

After a detailed study of the negative reports of the searching operations and the pertinent facts regarding this case, the Department of the Army has been forced to conclude that the remains of your son and the remains of his four comrades are not recoverable. Although we have amended our records to reflect this conclusion, you may rest assured that this does not forever end the possibility of future investigation should any credible evidence come to our attention.

Realizing the extent of your grief and anxiety, it is not easy to express condolence to you who gave your loved one under circumstances so difficult that there is no grave at which to pay homage. May the knowledge of your son's honorable service to his country be a source of sustaining comfort to you.

Sincerely yours,

James F. Smith

JAMES F. SMITH
Major, QMC
Memorial Division