

1. Bradley, 19 April 1946

CREW LIST

6	1st Lt. Robert E. Maher 0432084	Mrs. Robert E. Maher (wife) 1329 Idaho Avenue Santa Monica, Calif
1	2nd Lt. Lee H. Adkins 0724000	Mr. Wilson Adkins (father) Oak Hill, West Virginia
9	2nd Lt. Roy C. Tobey 0725380	Mr. Claud R. Tobey (father) Route #3 North Little Rock, Arkansas
5	2nd Lt. Fred J. Graf 0725429	Mrs. Fred E. Graf (mother) 842 Westwood Blvd Jackson, Michigan
8	M/Sgt. Edward C. Shackleton 13006589	Mrs. Mary E. Shackleton (mother) 3361 Easton Road Horsham, Pennsylvania
3	T/Sgt. Frank J. Conlon 13023449	Mrs. Frank J. Conlon, (mother) 923 S. Harlem Ave. Forest Park, Ill.
2	Sgt. Harry R. Alger 13008425	Mr. Morris Alger (father) 719 North Courtland St. East Stroudsburg, Penna.
7	Sgt. Max D. McNeil 17005244	Mrs. Fern LaVon Birdsell (mother) 222 East Hunter Nevada, Missouri
4	Sgt. Charles R. Goodwin 18053429	Mrs. Iva Goodwin (mother) 809 South Quaker Tulsa, Okla

AFPPA-8

AAF 201 - Graf, Fred J.

19 April 1946

Mrs. Fred E. Graf
842 Westwood Boulevard
Jackson, Michigan

Dear Mrs. Graf:

This is in reference to our recent letter, concerning your son, Second Lieutenant Fred J. Graf.

A careful check of the records available at this Headquarters reveals that your son was a crew member of a B-17 (Flying Fortress) bomber which participated in a mission near Bizerte, Tunisia, on 28 November 1942. The aircraft encountered enemy fighter planes and was seen to crash into the sea, and explode. No parachutes were observed.

During the latter part of November 1942 and the early part of December 1942, the Axis forces still had limited control of the land, sea and air in the area surrounding Bizerte, Tunisia. Therefore, had any members of the crew survived the crash and the ensuing explosion, and had they been rescued by friendly forces, managed to reach shore alive, or been captured by the enemy, it seems apparent that after a reasonable lapse of time, some report would have been received regarding their fate. It was on this information that The Adjutant General, who has jurisdiction over the status of our airmen, based the findings of death. All of your son's crew members have been presumed dead under Public Law 490, 77th Congress, as amended.

The German records are now located at this headquarters and I have made a thorough search of these records for your son's name but was unsuccessful in obtaining any information whatsoever concerning Lieutenant Graf.

In the event that you desire to visit Washington, for the purpose of speaking personally with some member of the Army Air Forces, I shall be pleased to show you the information contained in our files. My office is located in the Pentagon, Room 4E160.

Believing you may wish to communicate with the families of the others who were in the plane with your son, I am enclosing a list of these men and the names and addresses of their emergency addressees.

AAF 201 - Graf, Fred J.

In an effort to verify a dispatch by the United Press on 8 May 1943, that your son had allegedly been taken to Bizerte hospital, along with eleven other men, The Adjutant General sent a cable to the Theater of Operations. A reply was received on 21 July 1943, in which it was stated that your son's plane was seen to explode and fall into the sea and that the news item was believed to be erroneous and unfounded.

I realize that the presumption of death is most difficult to accept and that it would be of comfort to know the exact details. The Army Air Forces will not be contented until every possible source has been checked in the search for our brave airmen who are listed as casualties.

The Commanding General, European Theater of Operations, has recently informed me about the searches being conducted in an effort to clear up all cases of missing or presumed dead personnel. There are 75 Graves Registration teams and 150 identification teams working on this task, as well as special Air Force teams. These teams check every clue revealed by German records as well as interview town officials, priests and anyone else who might have knowledge concerning the fate of any American soldiers. It is expected that the task will be nearly completed by September 1946.

If I can be of any further assistance to you, please feel free to communicate with me. I extend my heartfelt sympathy to you in your great loss and the hope that you will be sustained by pride in the contribution made by your son to the cause of his country.

Sincerely yours,

1 Incl

LEON W. JOHNSON
Brigadier General, USA
Chief, Personnel Services Division

Information from AGO's files.

It is stated that the aircraft on which he was a crew member was observed to have been shot down by enemy fighter planes and seen to crash into the sea, where it exploded. No parachutes were seen and all crew members were believed to have been killed in action. This action was reported on the original Casualty message as having taken place near Bizerte, Tunisia.

During the later part of November 1942 and the early part of December 1942 the Axis forces still had limited control of the land, sea and air in the area surrounding Bizerte, Tunisia, where this aircraft was presumably forced down. Therefore, has any members of the crew survived the crash and the ensuing explosion, and had they been rescued by friendly forces, managed to reach shore alive, or been captured by the enemy, it seems apparent that after the lapse of twelve months, some report would have been received regarding their fate. Experience has shown the German and Italian Governments to be prompt in reporting prisoners of war. Considering all the circumstances there is a strong presumption that these officers and enlisted men are dead.

. Presumed dead under Public Law 490 77th Congress as amended. 28 Nov. 1943

By: I. Bradley
15 April 1946

