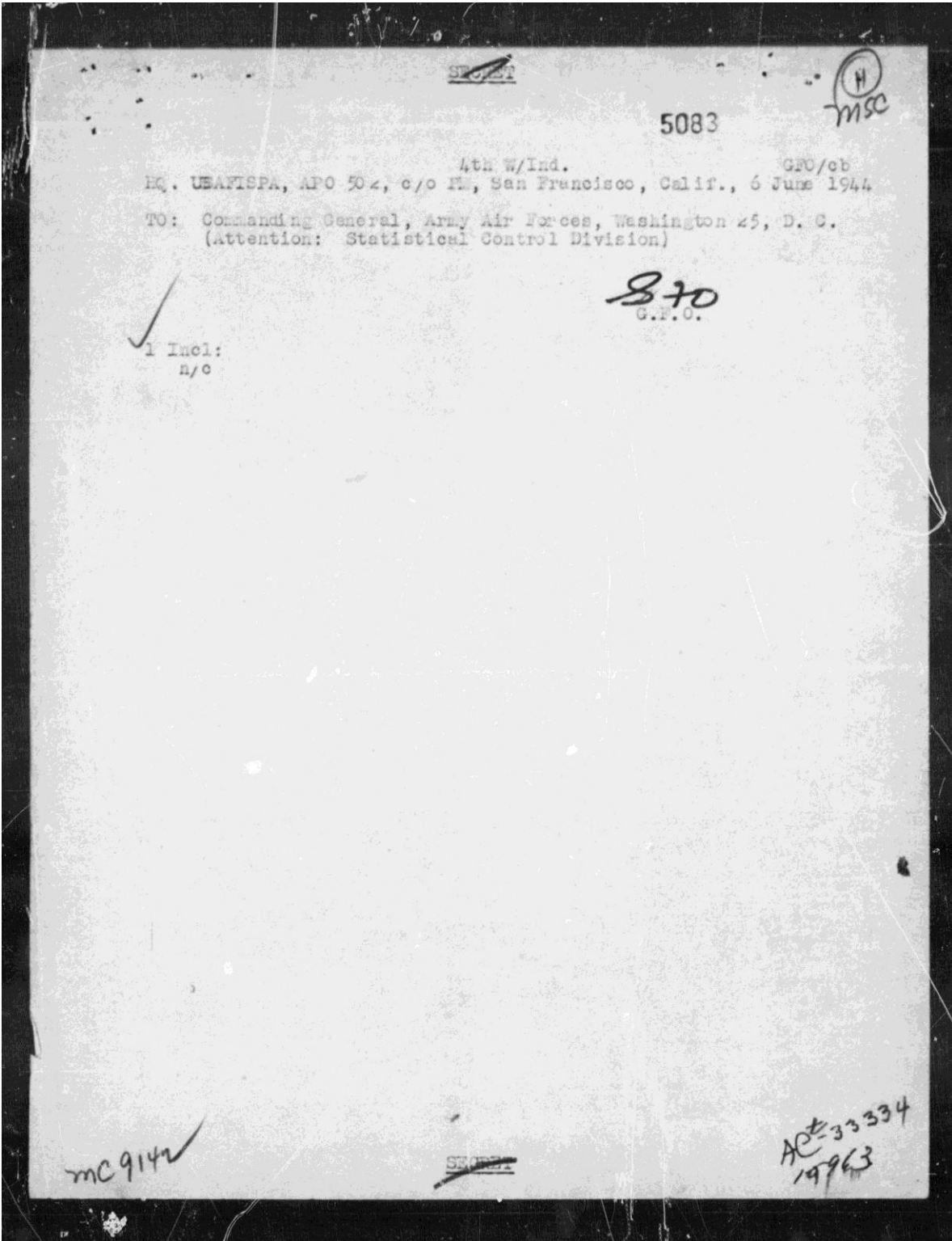


APPENDIX II

DECLASSIFIED MISSING AIR CREW REPORT # 5083



21117 Re BC
1300 5-29

~~SECRET~~

BASIC: Missing Air Crew Report w/ allied papers re: Maj. Cass, 72nd Sq. 5/11/44.

220.862 W/Ind. H-1
HEADQUARTERS 5TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H), THIRTEENTH AIR TASK FORCE, APO #324,
26 May 1944.

TO: Commanding General, XIII Bomber Command, APO #719.

Attached hereto Missing Air Crew Report for Major GERALD M. CASS, and 10 crew members listed as missing in action, 5 May 1944.

For the Group Commander:

H. J. Garbrecht
H. J. GARBRECHT,
Captain, Air Corps,
Adjutant.

1 Incl:
Missing Air Crew Report, 72nd Bomb Sq (H),
w/ allied papers.

360.33 2nd W/Ind. HHB/rpg
HEADQUARTERS, XIII BOMBER COMMAND, APO #719, 30 May 1944.

TO: Commanding General, Forward Area, APO #709.

For the Commanding General:

Howard H. Bergstrom
HOWARD H. BERGSTROM,
1st Lt., A.G.D.,
Asst. Adj. Gen.

1 Incl:
n/c

AG 360.33 (Y-S) 3rd W/Ind.
HEADQUARTERS FORWARD AREA, APO #709. 1 June 1944.

TO: Command' g General, USAFISPA, APO #502.

L. E. B.
L. E. B.

1 Incl:
n/c.

- 1 -

~~SECRET~~

SECRET

Classification changed to RESTRICTED

by E. A. BRADYAS, Lt. Col., AG
by F. M. MUEBCH, Capt., AG
Date MAF 15 1946

WAR DEPARTMENT
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON
72ND BOMB SQUADRON (H)
MISSING AIR CREW REPORT

13TH AIR TASK FORCE
APO #324
11 May 1944. 5083

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.

- ORGANIZATION: Location APO #324; Command or Air Force 13th; Group 5th Bomb (H); Squadron 72nd Bomb (H); Detachment -
- SPECIFI: Point of Departure APO #324; Course 275° T.; Intended Destination APO #324; Type of Mission Strike
- WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED 6/10 scattered cumulus 2-10,000 ft. Visibility sec.
- GIVE: (a) Date 5-5-44; Time 1152; and Location 1°17' S, 137°13' E. of last known whereabouts of missing aircraft.
(b) Specify whether () Last Sighted; () Last Contacted by Radio; () Forced Down; (x) Seen to Crash; or () Information not Available.
- AIRCRAFT WAS LOST, OR IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN LOST, AS A RESULT OF: (Check only one) () Enemy Aircraft; () Enemy Anti-Aircraft; () Other circumstances as Follows _____
- AIRCRAFT: Type, Model and Series B-24 J 110; A.A.F. Serial Number 42-110109
- ENGINES: Type, Model and Series B-1830-65; A.A.F. Serial Number EP-436368
(b) EP-436436; (c) EP-436398; (d) EP-436079
- INSTALLED WEAPONS (Furnish below Make, Type and Serial Number)
(a) 50 cal. Browning Machine Gun. Type M2; (c) _____; (d) _____
(e) Serial numbers unknown.; (g) _____; (h) _____
- THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW WERE REPORTED AS: (a) Battle Casualty X
or (b) Non-Battle Casualty _____
- NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew 11; Passengers 0; Total 11
(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
ded 1.	Pilot-Commander	Cass, Gerald W.	Major	3 0-663851
A.A.W. 2.	Pilot	Horn, Willard L.	1st Lt.	7 0-677635
A.A.W. 3.	Co-Pilot	Broncato, Joseph	F/O	1 7-61825
ded 4.	Navigator	Goods, Anthony J.	2nd Lt.	6 0-814295
ded 5.	Bombardier	Winnar, Oscar E.	Capt.	11 0-662328
ded 6.	Engineer	Fackard, Vernon E.	T/Sgt.	2 18001772
ded 7.	Asst Engineer	Sawner, Joshua B., Jr.	T/Sgt.	12 20367259
ded 8.	Radio Operator	Chapman, Robert	T/Sgt.	4 14051363
ded 9.	Asst Radio Oper.	Blumenthal, William D.	Col.	2 39247057
ded 10.	Gunner	Sleshinski, Joseph	S/Sgt.	9 11094913
ded 11.	Gunner	Colson, Melvin L.	Sgt.	3 39041776

- 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	Serial Number	Check only One Column			
			Contacted By Radio	Last Sighted	Saw Crash	Saw Forced Landing
1. Stuart, William J., Jr.	Capt.	0-680756			X	
2. Chase, Hollis E.	1st Lt.	0-800324		X		
3. Fimell, Arthur J.	1st Lt.	0-799923		X		

- 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) Seen in water.
- ATTACH AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH, MAP, CHART, OR SKETCH, SHOWING APPROXIMATE LOCATION WHERE AIRCRAFT WAS LAST SEEN. S-2 REPORT OF SEARCH ATTACHED.
- ATTACH EYEWITNESS DESCRIPTION OF CRASH, FORCED LANDING, OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES PERTAINING TO MISSING AIRCRAFT. LETTERS ATTACHED
- ATTACH A DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTENT OF SEARCH, IF ANY, AND GIVE NAME, RANK AND SERIAL NUMBER OF OFFICER IN CHARGE HERE See attached letters.

Date of Report 11 May 1944
Leo L. Hunt
 LEO L. HUNT, Captain, Air Corps.
 (Signature of Preparing Officer)
 Commanding.

SECRET

SEVENTY SECOND BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
Office of the Operations Officer
APO #324

5083
6

11 May 1944

SUBJECT: Eyewitness Description of Crash of Airplane #42-73149.

TO : Commanding Officer, Fifth Bombardment Group (H), APO #324.

At about 1148 a Zero using a split G attack hit Major Cass's ship in #2 engine and immediately that engine was feathered and within a few seconds the engine was on fire and the fire spread to the trailing edge of the wing within a few seconds. The plane at that time seemed under control but had slowed down. Shortly after the men were seen to bail out, two parachuted out of the waist window and chutes opened and two more followed but no chutes opened and they fell into the water, at an altitude of 1,700 feet, the wing was seen to crumple at the #2 engine and then the plane dove into the water. The plane hit the water at 1152. Immediately I called to the formation to fly top cover for me as I went down to circle the survivors and to give them the flotation box and life raft. Two Zeros were still above us and dropped phosphorous bombs on us while we were circling the survivors. My Navigator immediately gave the position of the survivors to the radio operator who in turn notified Dumbo, Hollandia and Les Negros. After we had done this I told the formation to get on my wing and then returned to base.

William J. Stuart, Jr.
WILLIAM J. STUART, JR.,
Captain, Air Corps,
Operations Officer.

5083
c

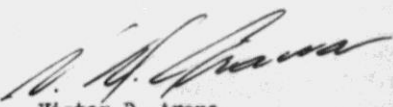
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

HEADQUARTERS SEVENTY-SECOND BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
Office of the Intelligence Officer
APO #324

7th May, 1944.

STANDARD MISSION REPORT

- A. Field Order no: 61, Annex #1. 127-M-13. 72nd Bomb Sq. (H). 6th May, 1944. Two B-24 type aircraft.
- B. Special search for missing crew members from strike of 5th May, 1944 last reported position of survivors $1^{\circ} 17' S.$, $137^{\circ} 23' E.$
- C. A/P #124 to 0601 K. Landed 1615 K. A/P #454 to 0612 K. Landed 1600 K.
- D. Nil.
- E. Nil.
- F. Nil.
- G. Nil.
- H. Nil.
- I. From base direct to $1^{\circ} 15' S.$, $137^{\circ} 15' E.$, cruising at 8,000 ft. at 160 MPH., at which point let down to 1,000 ft. and begin search as outlined on diagram attached to field order. 100% coverage of assigned area at altitude of 500-1,000 ft. Sightings negative. Mild frontal condition over entire route with few breaks. Visibility from $1/4$ to $1/2$ mile decreasing to nil in showers. On return scattered cumulus $5/10$, lessening to $3/10$ at 2,000 ft. with thunderstorms and showers at base.
- J. Included above.
- K. Nil.


Victor D. Arana
Captain, A.A.F.,
Squadron 3-2.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

TWENTY THIRD BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
APO #324

5083
2

9 May 1944

S T A T E M E N T

On May 7, 1944, Lt. Finnell and I went on search for the survivors of Major Cass' Crew. At 0945 we reached the area to be searched. At 1145 on the last leg of our search, at 800 feet altitude, Lt. Westray, my Co-Pilot, recognized the raft thru his field glasses. It is very hard to recognize a raft and the green sea marker even with glasses. The gold dust marker was easier to see but resembled some streaks of smudge which were very common in the area.

On finding the raft with two survivors I turned on the emergency IFF and called GARDENIA on 4475 kcs on voice, but was unable to receive an answer. While I circled low, Lt. Finnell circled several thousand feet above me, keeping me in sight, for better radio transmission. My Radio Operator tried to call MOMOTE on 6775 kcs and HOLLANDIA on 4930 (which station we found not to have been in operation by May 7th), and AITAPE on 6608 and also tried 7420. Reccon Day frequency but could receive no answer, probably due to our low altitude. We contacted our group leaving BIAK on strike and arranged for one of their planes to stop in at HOLLANDIA and make certain that GARDENIA was on it's way. This plane was given the latitude and longitude of the raft. These planes kept reporting that they were unable to contact GARDENIA until approximately 1400 at which time we heard GARDENIA had been given the story, but we did not know if GARDENIA were coming. At 1430 we were getting low in gas, were unable to get any further word from GARDENIA so we dropped the men an emergency radio; a wooden case and containing water, food, sea markers etc; and an additional raft all of which they picked up.

We landed at HOLLANDIA about 1630 and learned from the tower that two Cats had gone up for the survivors. In the morning I learned both cats had negative results and that the first had arrived at the raft area at 1530. The tower attempted to reach GARDENIA at 0900 but failed.

I went to CYCLOPS strip to speak to Col. Huchison, CO of the 310th Bomb Wing. He said GARDENIA had been two hours late to pick up a P-40 pilot 25 miles from HOLLANDIA on May 7th after which they had gone up to find Major Cass' survivors. I gave him full details as to the location of the raft and the emergency radio they had and also P-38 pilots who were to escort the GARDENIA that day. Major Johnson is in charge of the P-38's which are based at HOLLANDIA strip. They wanted me to go with them but I was unable on account of an engine which was running badly.

GARDENIA appeared above the field at 1145, which was the first time the tower was able to contact her. With the P-38 escort GARDENIA immediately set out to search for Major Cass' survivors.

An amphibious GARDENIA will operate from HOLLANDIA strip as soon as its nose strut is fixed, which should be by May 10th. Col. Huchison, who was very cooperative, said that he would be able to give much better service with the Amphibious GARDENIA. Since I had done everything I could think of, I returned to MOMOTE.

THIS IS A TRUE EXTRACT:

William J. Stuart, Jr.
WILLIAM J. STUART, JR.,
Captain, Air Corps,
Operations Officer.

/s/ Hollis H. Chase
HOLLIS H. CHASE
1st Lt., Air Corps,
Pilot.

TWENTY THIRD BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (H)
APO #324

6-083
2

8 May 1944

Radio Procedure After Survivors Were Sighted.

Purple 12 climbed to 6,000 feet and circled while radio operator sent position in clear on (CW). (Sent urgent message on recco. frequency 7420 kcs.) No answer. All this time pilot was calling Gardenia 10 on voice, (frequency 4475 kcs.) Emergency IFF was turned on immediately. Kept calling. No answer.

Later same message was transmitted on frequency 6775 kcs. Still received no answer. We then tried frequency 4475 kcs. on (CW), with no success.

After trying for an hour to contact ground stations on (CW), radio operator sent MO's until we left area at 1445K. Pilot was continuously trying to contact Gardenia 10 or Saloon on frequency 4475 kcs. Also tried VHF on channel "A" occasionally.

At 1220K when strike airplanes were returning from target, we were able to contact Purple 4A on VHF. Purple 4A (Lt. Davis), relayed position report to Hollandia.

Purple 12 and 13 left area at 1445K after dropping all emergency equipment. At this time we stopped sending MO's and turned off emergency IFF.

On route back to Hollandia, at about 1515K, we finally contacted Gardenia 10 on frequency 4475 kcs. We told them we had left search area and repeated position of survivors (1020' S - 137°10' E).

/s/ Arthur J. Finnell
ARTHUR J. FINNELL,
1st Lt., Air Corps.

THIS IS A TRUE EXTRACT:

William J. Stuart, Jr.
WILLIAM J. STUART, JR.,
Captain, Air Corps,
Operations Officer.

C O P Y

HEADQUARTERS FIFTH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)
Office of the Operations Officer
13th Air Task Force

5083
①

AFO #324

ROUTINE SECRET

10 MAY 1944

FROM: COMMANDING OFFICER FIFTH BOMB GROUP TEACUP
TO : COMMANDING GENERAL, XIII BOMCOM, BEVY

FOLLOWING SURVIVORS OF BAKER TWENTY FOUR NUMBER FOUR TWO DASH
ONE ONE ZERO ONE ZERO NINE SHOT DOWN BY ENEMY FIGHTERS ON FIVE MAY
WERE PICKED UP BY BLACK CAT ON EIGHT MAY X PILOT FIRST LIEUT
WILLARD LOVE HORN ZERO DASH SIX SEVEN SEVEN SIX FIVE THREE AND
COPILOT FLIGHT OFFICER JOSEPH BRONCATO TARE DASH SIX ONE EIGHT
TWO FIVE X COMMANDING OFFICER FIFTH BOMB GROUP HEAVY THIRTEENTH
AIR TASK FORCE TEACUP SENDS TO COMMANDING GENERAL THIRTEENTH
BOMCOM BEVY X REMAINDER OF CREW MIA X SEE OUR ZERO SIX ONE
ZERO TWO FIVE X SURVIVORS TAKEN TO HOLLANDIA BY CAT IN PAIR
CONDITION X

/s/ PAUL L. DRISCOLL,
/t/ PAUL L. DRISCOLL,
Captain, Air Corps,
Ass't. Oprns. Officer.

C O P Y

Present Status

11/4/44 prof

- ✓ Major Gerald M. Cass - *mi* Mrs. Marie L. Cass, (Wife)
1628 De La Vina,
Santa Barbara, California.
- ✓ Capt. Oscar E. Wisner - *mi* Mrs. Lauragene W. Wisner, (Wife)
Box 1285,
Kingsville, Texas.
- ✓ 2nd Lt. Anthony J. Goode - *mi* Mrs. Catherine A. Hassett, (Sister)
69 Myrtle Avenue,
Fitchburg, Massachusetts.
- ✓ T/Sgt. Robert Chapman - *mi* Mrs. Lida L. Chapman, (Mother)
Red Springs, North Carolina.
- ✓ T/Sgt. Vernon E. Packard - *mi* Mrs. Vernon E. Packard, (Mother)
1057 Olive Street,
Denver, Colorado.
- ✓ T/Sgt. Joshua E. Swanner Jr. - *mi* Mrs. Claudine E. Caspell, (Mother)
211-A South Stafford Avenue,
Richmond, Virginia.
- ✓ Cpl. William D. Blumenthal - *mi* Mr. Harold A. Blumenthal, (Father)
425 South Lorraine Boulevard,
Los Angeles, California.
- ✓ S/Sgt. Joseph Sleshinski - *mi* Mrs. Julia S. Boraski, (Mother)
12 Maple Street,
Shelton, Connecticut.
- ✓ Sgt. Melvin L. Colson - *mi* Mrs. Kathryn H. Colson, (Wife)
666 South 30th Street,
Richmond, California.
- ✓ 1st Lt. Willard L. Horn - *leave will* Addressee not known.
- ✓ P/O Joseph Brorcato - *leave will* Addressee not known.

5083

Classification changed

to **RESTRICTED**
by E. H. MASON, Lt. Col., AG
by P. H. MURPHY, Lt. Col., AG
Date **MAR 15 1948**

CIAC

DECLASSIFIED BY AUTHORITY OF NND DECLASSIFICATION PROJECT 785072,
H.D. MAYER, NARS, SEPTEMBER 10, 1982.