

SUPPLEMENT TO MACR 3631, TAKEN FROM CASUALTY CLEARANCE

PROGRESS REPORTS IN CUSTODY OF CAPT. JOHN MALPASS

ANTILLES DEPARTMENT
(Report dated 7 Mar 46)

CASE # 2

On 11 April 1944, airplane type B-24, Ser. # 42-95064, was enroute from Waller Field, Trinidad to Belem, Brazil. The pilot took off from Waller Field at 0609Q, all reports indicating ship was normal and in flying condition. Last definite contact was when the ship requested weather, which was given by Zandery radio at 0952Q, but the message was not receipted for. Cayenne radio contacted a plane which may have been this ship, but received no receipt for the message. Nothing further was heard from this plane. On 3 May 1944, information was obtained that a native Brazilian encountered the wreckage of a four-engine ship and six bodies on the river Pami about fifty miles northeast of Macopa. Caribbean Wing, Air Transport Command, authorized abandonment of search.

WD, Hq AAF, Washington, Missing Air Crew Report.

Name in Full (Last Name First)	Rank	Serial Number	Contacted by Radio	Last Sighted	Saw Crash	Saw Forced Landing
1. Msg received by WYRO,		Belem, 1516Z	by radio from plane		"QAA 17272"	
2.						
3.						

13. IF PERSONNEL ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE SURVIVED, ANSWER YES TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS: (a) Parachutes were used _____; (b) Persons were seen walking away from scene of crash _____; or (c) Any other reason (Specify) Unknown
14. ATTACH AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH, MAP, CHART, OR SKETCH, SHOWING APPROXIMATE LOCATION WHERE AIRCRAFT WAS LAST SEEN. Unknown
15. ATTACH EYEWITNESS DESCRIPTION OF CRASH, FORCED LANDING, OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES PERTAINING TO MISSING AIRCRAFT. None
16. ATTACH A DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTENT OF SEARCH, IF ANY, AND GIVEN NAME, RANK AND SERIAL NUMBER OF OFFICER IN CHARGE HERE See attached sheet

Date of Report 12 April 1944

-/s/ Walter D. MCDaniel
(Signature of Preparing Officer)

WALTER C. MCDANIEL
2nd Lt., Air Corps
Ast Base Operations Officer

REMARKS:



(PRESUMABLE?) AIRCRAFT, CREW & UNIT HISTORY

**B-24H LIBERATOR USAAF #42-95064
 BUILT BY - FORD MOTOR CO. - WILLOW RUN, MI - MAR. 1944
 2ND LT. EDWARD J. BARES - AIRCRAFT COMMANDER
 LOST IN BRAZIL - 11 APRIL 1944**

**THIS FOUR ENGINE B-24H (BLOCK-25) BOMBER AND CREW
 WERE ASSIGNED TO:**

778TH BOMBARDMENT SQUADRON (12 AIRCRAFT/427 MEN)

**UNIT LINEAGE: CONSTITUTED: 19 MAY 1943
 ACTIVATED: 1 AUG. 1943**

**778TH SQUADRON WAS ASSIGNED TO THE 464TH BOMBARDMENT
 GROUP (HEAVY) - 15TH U. S. ARMY AIR FORCE, ITALY
 (4 SQUADRONS = 48 AIRCRAFT WITH 1800 MEN)**

STATIONS: 8/1/43 WENDOVER FIELD, UTAH

8/22/43 GOWEN FIELD, IDAHO

10/2/43 POCATELLO AAF FIELD, IDAHO

3/20/44 (ITALY) PANATELLA AIRFIELD

>> 4/11/44 >> LT. BARES' CREW LOST IN ROUTE TO ITALY

4/20/44 GIOIA, ITALY

6/1/44 (ITALY) PANATELLA AIRFIELD

6/6/45 RETURNED TO NORTH AMERICA

INACTIVATED: 7/31/45; RE-ACTIVATED AS AIR TRANSPORT UNIT

OPERATIONS: COMBAT ; MEDITERRANEAN & EUROPEAN THEATER

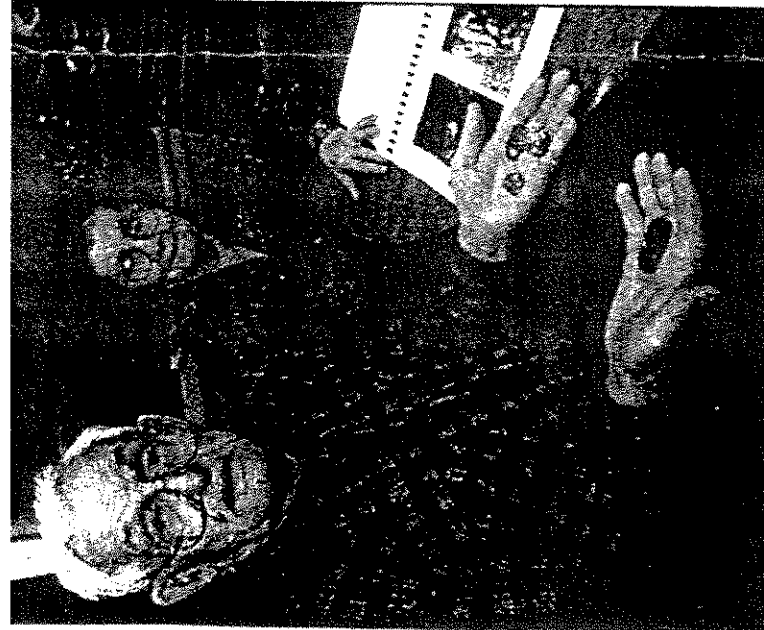
**CAMPAIGNS: AIR OFFENSIVE, EUROPE; ROME-ARNO; NORMANDY;
 NORTHERN FRANCE; SOUTHERN FRANCE; APENNINES;
 RHINELAND; CENTRAL EUROPE; PO VALLEY (ITALY)
AIR COMBAT, EUROPEAN-AFRICAN-MIDDLE EASTERN THEATER**

Sticker shock: High cost of office and industrial rents, FL

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STAFF PHOTO BY TOM HAWLEY

Remembering: Stanley and Ruth Rakoczy of Livonia show some of the mementos given to them by the federal government. They were owned by Stanley's brother, John Rocasey, who died in a fiery airplane crash in 1944.

Going to war

Fifty-four years ago, Ruth and Stanley Rakoczy were living in the Detroit area when they learned Stanley's brother, John, 26, was "missing in action."

With three sons, Stanley had resisted joining the war effort. But the news about John changed his mind.

"I was in the Army within a week," Rakoczy said. The Army eventually declared the 10 aviators dead. Rocasey's mother, Maryann Rakoczy, received a letter of appreciation for her son's service, signed by President Franklin Roosevelt.

The book recently given to the Rakoczy family details Rocasey's last flight.

On April 11, 1944, on a special project flight, the bomber left Waller Field, Trinidad, en route to Belem, Brazil, after refueling. The aircraft never arrived. Numerous searches were launched, but no wreckage was found.

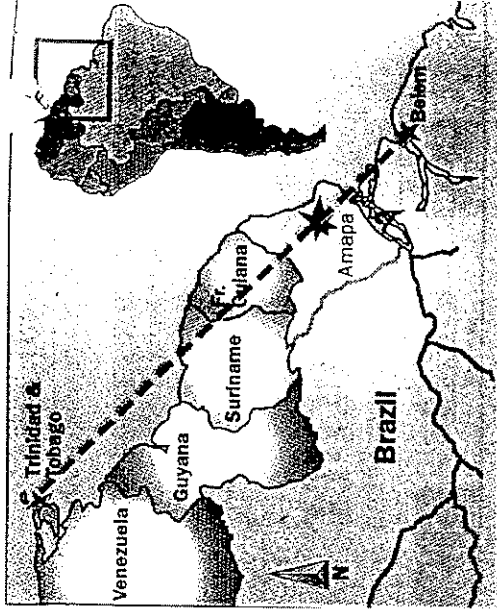
The mystery of the ill-fated flight remained until 1990, when an environmental engineer discovered the wreckage of an aircraft in the dense jungle about 200 miles north of Macapa, Brazil. The tail number of the aircraft matched that of the bomber Rocasey was on.

In August 1991, a Brazilian Army team retrieved human remains from the wreckage.

But, because vegetation was so dense, the site got lost again. In April 1995, the wreckage was found once more and pinpointed.

U.S. Army recovery operations took place in July 1995. Military investigators had to journey 250 miles through remote unexplored jungle to find the site.

The bone fragments and teeth were recovered



Bomber route: Sgt. John Rocasey, brother of Livonia resident Stanley Rakoczy, was one of 10 men lost in the Brazilian jungle in Amapa in 1944 when their bomber crashed enroute from Trinidad to Belem, Brazil. Their plane was discovered in the jungle in recent years.

after 16 days of digging and blasting the swampy soil with high-powered water hoses.

Memorial erected

Investigators concluded that in 1944 there was a "tremendous fire" that lasted for hours after the bomber crashed into the jungle.

When all personal effects and bone fragments that survived the fire were retrieved, a permanent memorial was erected on the site.

The Army arranged Friday's burial with full military honors after the next of kin of the four officers and six enlisted men had been notified.

John Rocasey was born in Poland in 1912. His family immigrated to Detroit in 1916. He was inducted in the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1942. As an adult, he changed his surname from "Rakoczy" to "Rocasey."

For years, his brother believed John Rocasey had crashed into the Atlantic Ocean.

"John and his fellow crewman will be recognized as heroes, and buried together," Rakoczy said.



Funeral tomorrow: Sgt. John Rocasey (highlighted at left) will be buried tomorrow with nine other men. The military group died in a 1944 air crash in Brazil. Above is a copy of a family photo which has been, for years, in the Rakoczy family album.. →