

7264

CONFIDENTIAL

Classification changed
to **RESTRICTED**
by **Z. A. BRADONAS, Lt. Colonel**
by **F. M. HORNOR, Capt., AD**
Date **MAR 15 1946**

CONFIDENTIAL

5. Pilot was unable to let down through overcast over home base due to the possibility of hitting a mountain. Fuel supply was very low.

RECEIVED

7264

~~SECRET~~

INDIVIDUAL REPORT OF DOWNED AIRCRAFT

(To be forwarded to A.G.A.S. immediately after incident)

Plane No. 43-24149 Type P-40 Unit 118 Tac Rcn Sq.

Date Lost 6 August 1944 Position, Lat. & Long. or other orientation
if known, enemy or friendly territory if known.

Last contacted by radio in vicinity of Kweilin

Bail-out, Crash, Forced-landing, Shot down or Missing; and any other known
circumstances surrounding the incident.

Unknown

Condition of crew when ship abandoned, if known.

Unknown

PARTICULARS OF PERSONNEL

<u>NAME (First & last with middle initial)</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>A.S.N.</u>	<u>DESIGNATION</u>
SWANSON, Ernest W.	2nd Lt.	0-689913	Pilot

Source: Battle Casualty report.

Additional information regarding this and/or its personnel has been
received:

Killed in action

~~SECRET~~

S T A T E M E N T

7 August 1944

On returning from a mission north of the Hengyang area on 6 August 1944, our position became uncertain due to darkness and weather.

A bearing was taken by CA-3 and we were told to fly a heading of 136 degrees. At this time the flight was being lead by Maj. Jones, Lt. Wegman on his wing, Capt. Gee, Lt. Swanson flying second element slightly to the rear and ~~XXX~~ right of Maj. Jones, Lt. O'Brien flying to the rear and left of Maj. Jones in the position of third element, and myself and Lt. Stutzman slightly to the rear and left of Capt. Gee in fourth element.

Upon hearing CA-3 say they were shooting ~~XXXX~~ over the field, a 180 degree turn was made and we let ~~XXXX~~ through one layer of overcast. I then heard Maj. Jones say, " ~~XXXX~~ take a heading of 136 degrees again." He then started, who ~~XXXX~~ to me, a descending turn to the left. At that time there were five ships ahead of me all in the aforementioned positions. Almost immediately after starting this descending turn, we were in the lower layer of the overcast. I continued my descent and left turn, and from time to time would catch the dim glow of the lights of two ships.

Upon coming out of the overcast, I was still in position on the wing of two ships, my airspeed indicator reading 300 mph, needle and ball indicating a three needle turn to the left, altimeter reading about 4000 feet. At this time I had a slight case of vertigo and called the two ships I could then see, thinking it was Capt. Gee, saying we were in a left spiral. I then went on instruments.

When I recovered, I could see no other ships in the area and upon looking around, I saw the field directly south of me, called CA-3 and landed.

Prior to heading for the field, I noticed a fire directly below me. A short time, one minute or so later, another fire started about a mile west of the first one. These were about 10 miles North of the Field and 7 to 10 miles west of town. The fires were bright yellow and were both out in three or four minutes.

Raymond V. Darby Jr.

RAYMOND V. DARBY JR.
Captain, Air Corps,

STATEMENT

7 August 1944

I was leading a flight of seven P-40's in Keeslin through bad weather and at night. I was headed by the GAB Directional Finder. At 10000' I circled over the field and told the flight to let down through the overcast, as the field was below us. I left it up to the individual as to whether he stayed in formation or went in trail. There were seven P-40's on Sep 21. I started down. One overcast was from 12000' to 6000', then another from 6500' to 5000'. I broke out over the city of Keeslin. I again called the flight to let down as the field was beneath them, and open. Four aircraft landed safely. The other three, (Capt. Cox, Lt. O'Brien and Lt. Swanson) aircraft, I did not see after my initial let through.

W. B. Jones III
W. B. JONES III
Major, Air Corps,
Commanding