

WAR DEPARTMENT

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE

IN REPLY REFER TO:

AGFC-S 201 Diederich, Anthony F.

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

(30 Mar 46) 0697342

30 March 1946

Mr. and Mrs. Tony J. Diederich

Monroe, Nebraska

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Diederich:

Since your son, Second Lieutenant Anthony F. Diederich, 0697342, Air Corps, was reported missing in action 15 July 1944, the War Department has entertained the hope that he survived and that information would be revealed dispelling the uncertainty surrounding his absence. However, as in many cases, the conditions of warfare deny us such information.

Public Law 490, 77th Congress, as amended, provides for a review and determination of the status of each person who has been missing in action for twelve months. Accordingly, your son's case was reviewed and he was continued in the status of missing in action as of 16 July 1945. The law further provides that a subsequent review shall be made whenever warranted. Upon such subsequent review the making of a finding of death is authorized.

All available records and reports concerning the absence of your son have been carefully investigated and are deemed to warrant a subsequent review of his case. Information in the hands of the War Department indicates that your son was a crew member of a B-24 (Liberator) aircraft which participated in a combat mission to Yap Island on 15 July 1944. As the formation of bombers was leaving the target area your son's plane was seen to collide with another bomber and the plane then burst into flames and fell to the water. Several parachutes were seen to open, but enemy aircraft made an attack at that time and further observation was impossible. No trace of your son has been found since that time.

Since no information has been received which would support a presumption of his continued survival the War Department must now terminate your son's absence by a presumptive finding of death. Accordingly, an official finding of death has been recorded. The finding does not establish an actual or probable date of death; however, as required by law, it includes a presumptive date of death for the purpose of termination of pay and allowances, settlement of accounts and payment of death gratuities. In the case of your son this date has been set as 30 March 1946.

*and no. 0697342 Please return this letter
to - Tony J. Diederich, Monroe, Neb.*

I regret the necessity for this message but trust that the ending of a long period of uncertainty may give at least some small measure of consolation. An appraisal of the sacrifice made by your son in the service of his country compels in us feelings of humility and respect. May Providence grant a measure of relief from the anguish and anxiety you have experienced during these many months.

Sincerely yours,



EDWARD F. WITSELL
Major General

The Adjutant General of the Army

1 Incl.