

Rock Springs, Wyoming
March 24, 1946

Dear Rev. Wahlen,

Received your letter a short while ago and I only wish I could be talking to you in person instead of having to convey my thoughts over to you on paper.

As I naently said, I was in the nose of the ship with Sam at the time we had to bail out.

On Aug. 1st we were on a bombing mission from Morotai, our home base, to the town of Macassar, which is located in the southern part of the Celebes. We flew our bomb run against very little resistance. To my knowledge we did not get hit. After the bomb run, we went down on the deck to do a little strafing. Sam came up in the nose to do his work. We didn't find much to strafe so we started for home.

I didn't know anything was wrong until I naently told us to stand by to bail out - gas running low. Sam went up on the flight deck to give the radio operator our position - meanwhile I figured out a position using well known

landmarks. I gave this position to Traendly who in turn called it over the V.H.F radio. This position was picked up by one of our wing ships. After that I started getting my equipment together. I got my chute and life-raft on. Just as I did that - Traendly buzzed the bail out bell, which meant to start abandoning ship. Sam came back up in the nose then. He didn't have his chute on so I stayed with him and helped him get his equipment and chute on. We left the chute together, but the difference in the time we pulled our rip-cords, we were quite away from each other. I could see a number of chutes on the water, but I didn't have enough alt. to slip my chute all the way over. I picked out the nearest one, but I hit the water before I got to it.

Upon hitting the water I did get tangled in my shroud lines, but I managed to cut myself loose and get my life-raft inflated. I got into it and began scanning the water, but I saw no one. I fired a few shots from my 45, but I received no answer. I knew then I was pretty far from the rest of the crew. I then settled

back and decided to take it easy. That
nite I lost my raft to some sort of fish.
Whatever kind it was it took an
enormous hunk out of the right side
of my raft. I then spent the rest of
the nite swimming and hanging onto
what was left of the raft. That's how
they picked me up the following day
and aprox 5 miles from the other
fellas.

Sam had all his emergency equipment
with him unless he lost some of it when his
chute opened. He shouldn't have had any
trouble after he landed. Sam was a
much better swimmer than I. That's why
I can't figure all this out. Something
went drastically wrong somewhere. What
actually happened to Sam we'll never know.

I got to know Sam pretty well. All
the while we were on the crew, we roomed
together and went to church together. You lost
a swell brother and we lost a swell crew
member, but make so a friend, I'll always
remember.

Sincerely,

Fredrick J. Saucher