

P6-2/DLH/wpb  
Serial: 265

WESTERN CAROLINES SUB AREA  
NAVY 3252  
FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

8 April 1947

From: Commander Western Carolines Sub Area  
To : Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet

Subject: Recovery of Isolated Burials.

Reference: (a) CinCPacFlt ltr, ser 1542 dtd 8 March 1947  
(b) ComMarianas ltr P6/FF12 (12-st) ser 5957 dtd 24 March 1947

Enclosure: (A) USNMGU Yap letter Serial 57 dated 14 February 1947

1. In compliance with reference (a) and (b), enclosure (A) is herewith forwarded.

2. All known remains of Americans on Yap have been exhumed and removed to Peleliu where they are awaiting burial in the U. S. Armed Forces Cemetery.

3. Thorough search by field trips and careful investigation among the natives on both Koror and Yap reveal no further graves.

4. It is believed that the consolidation of all isolated graves in the Western Carolines has been completed.

5. Notification will be given if any information concerning additional isolated graves reaches this Command.

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cc:  
ComMarianas

L. O. FOX.

WESTERN CAROLINES SUB AREA

Subject: Deaths of American Armed Forces Personnel on the Island of Yap in the years 1944 and 1945 - report of.

E-N-C-L-O-S-U-R-E "A"

1. The following compiled information of deaths of American aviators in the years 1944 and 1945 - is hereby forwarded for your information.

- (a) Four (4) teeth in part of mandible from Grave #1 & #2
- (b) Six (6) parts of mandible with twenty three (23) teeth from Grave #4
- (c) Complete lower mandible with teeth and upper mandible with four (4) central teeth missing from Grave #6.
- (d) Parts of mandible with nineteen (19) teeth from Grave #7.
- (e) Panel plate "BUAERO NO. 68526 from Grave #7.
- (f) Parts of mandible with fifteen (15) teeth from Grave #8.
- (g) Engine Starter plate serial no. 9232 - Type no. III from Grave #8.

GRAVE #1 (Double with #2)

Location Area Target Map (Yap) 226-Love

Date of Death: 7-27-44

Cause: Airplane crash

Identification: Type of plane: SB20-1C

No. of plane: Navy 18583

Markings: #57

Enclosure: "A"

Name of Deceased: George M. ARMERUSTER, Jr. (337536)  
Ensign USNR

GRAVE #2 (Double with #1):

Location Area Target Map (Yap) 226-Love

Date of Death: 7-27-44

Cause: Airplane crash

Identification: Same as Grave #1

Name of Deceased: Harold "C" BILLINGS

ARM3c - 312-15-69 USN

Remarks: Remains of Graves #1 and #2 located between the two marked graves. Remains are equivalent less than one complete skeleton with no duplication of parts.

GRAVE #3:

Location: Area Target Map (Yap) 175-Charlie

Identification: Only information available was body found in mangrove with "Mae West" jacket.

Name of Deceased: U N K N O W N

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WESTERN CAROLINES SUB AREA

Subject: Deaths of American Armed Forces Personnel on the Island of Yap in the years 1944 and 1945 - report of. (Continued)

GRAVE #4:

Location: Area Target Map (Yap) 173-Fox  
Date of Death: 10-30-44  
Cause of Death: Airplane crash  
Identification: Plane #279 Type of Plane: F6F-5  
Enclosure "B"  
Name of Deceased: From marker: "Ens. B. L. MARTIN"

GRAVE #5:

Location: Area Target Map (Yap) 173-Jig  
Identification: N O N E  
Name of Deceased: U N K N O W N

GRAVE #6:

Location: Area Target Map (Yap) 128-George  
Date of Death: 11-26-44  
Cause of Death: Airplane crash  
Identification: Enclosure "C"  
Previously identified by "dog tags"  
Name of Deceased: William M. CLAY, Jr. (07176)  
Major USMC Unit: MAG-11

GRAVE #7: (Double Grave):

Location: Area Target Map (Yap) 128-George  
Date of Death: 3-22-45  
Cause of Death: Airplane Crash  
Identification: Enclosure "D"  
Enclosure "E"  
Fuselage #526 Piece of airplane #1265  
Type of plane: TBF or SB2C  
Remarks: Remains found between the two marked graves  
Name of Deceased: U N K N O W N

GRAVE #8:

Location: Area Target Map (Yap) 127-Victor  
Date of Death: 10-18-44  
Cause of Death: Airplane crash  
Identification: Enclosure "F"  
Enclosure "G"  
Type of Plane: F6F  
Name of Deceased: U N K N O W N

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2. All available remains were exhumed during February 1947 and reburied in Area 156-Sugar on Air Target Map (Yap) Sheet #3, establishing a military cemetery.

3. All grave markers were removed.

Last Name

                      
First Name

To Clinical Records Branch

For disposition

The records show medical treatment as follows:

Hospital

From

To

Register Number

AGRAC 1-383 1-9-46

                      
Clerk

                      
Date

                      
Branch

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22 September 1948

MEMORANDUM TO: Officer in Charge, Casualty Section  
Personnel Actions Branch, AGO

SUBJECT: Reports of Death

1. The following-named Air Corps personnel were reported missing in action over Yap Island in the Caroline Islands, since 15 July 1944, by Casualty Shipment No. 137, while on flying pay status, and were presumed dead as of 30 March 1946, under the provisions of Section 5, Missing Persons Act:

CREW NO. 1, M.A.C.B. No. 6923, AC No. 44-40555

1st Lt	Ulan H. Sydor	0608106
1st Lt	Joseph S. Principe	0639581
1st Lt	Walter C. Rowan	0875904
2nd Lt	Sam Camp, Jr.	0896746
F O	Charles J. Harder	1124507
E Sgt	Michael G. Vetrone, Jr.	15320307
E Sgt	Francis R. Koefs	11116730
S Sgt	Ruben O. Miller	15273360
S Sgt	William W. Watson, Jr.	18168122
S Sgt	James M. Hitenow	1826030
S Sgt	Clarence W. Dickinson	33448185

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CREW NO. 2, M.A.C.B. No. 6924, AC No. 42-73119

2nd Lt	Anthony F. Diederich	0397542
2nd Lt	Robert W. Pomery	0768215
2nd Lt	Eugene W. Garrett	0703251
2nd Lt	Andrew Schenics	0703402
S Sgt	Kenneth W. Seiler	32762107
S Sgt	Robert F. Jacobs	35732013
Sgt	William E. Crowley	16004052
Sgt	William E. Moors	36647605
Cpl	Clint D. Hundley	38135303
Cpl	Charles F. Reynolds	37676296
Cpl	John C. Dunbar, Jr.	37540207

2. Missing Air Crew Reports, listed above, submitted in this case show that on 15 July 1944, B-24 aircraft, based in the Admiralty Islands were flown on a combat mission to Yap Island, which are located in the Caroline Islands. The following paragraphs summarize the information available in case of each crew involved.

SAN  
file

Identification Branch

3. Crew No. 1:

a. Missing Air Crew Report No. 8923, dated 17 July 1944, shows that B-24 plane No. 44-40555 of the 370th Bombardment Squadron, 307th Bombardment Group, was seen to crash as the result of a collision with B-24 plane No. 42-73119. The accident occurred at approximately 1220h at the position 09° 08' North, 138° 17' East. A flight strip map attached to the Report shows that the location of the crash was about 25 miles southeast of Yap Island.

b. The Missing Air Crew Report shows that Flight Officer Harder was aboard the plane in the capacity of Observer. The pertinent part of three eyewitness statements attached to the Report are quoted below:

Statement by Lieutenant James P. Hobstetter:

"The crash involving Lt. Sylor occurred shortly after our withdrawal from the target area, the exact distance from this area I cannot accurately say. The leader of our squadron was pulling up on the right of a seven ship formation lead by the group leader in an effort to present a group front to enemy interception. My position at the time was C-2. Lt. Sylor was approximately in a C-3 position with Lt. Diederich on his left wing.

" \* \* \* The ship piloted by Lt. Diederich crashed into Lt. Sylor striking him behind the flight deck. The left wing of Lt. Diederich's plane was torn away and Lt. Sylor's ship was severed in half just back of the flight deck. Both planes burst immediately into flames and went down. Although reports indicate that several men bailed out of the burning planes no parachutes were observed by the members of my crew. \* \* \*"

Statement by Corporal George W. Brun:

"The B-24's were in even a closer formation and all at once the B-24 in C-3 position banked steeply to the right and up and struck the plane flying C-1 position, with the first contact being made by the props of C-3 plane against the bottom of the fuselage just behind the wing section of C-1 plane, as it began chowing its way through the fuselage proper. C-3 plane then began exploding from both wings and the planes both went to pieces.

"The complete wing sections of both planes stuck together in sort of a 'X' design and fell separately. The wing section of C-3 plane broke out in flames and exploded as soon as it hit C-1 plane--it fell fairly well in pieces as it descended. C-1's wing section fell

ships, but from my position I could not see any parachutes open. This happened approximately ten minutes from target area. I was pilot of plane #863 flying in a formation to the right of and a short distance behind the two planes."

5. Under date of 29 October 1947, this office requested the Far East Commander-in-Chief, to furnish this office with any information available regarding the collision of the above mentioned aircraft over Yap Island. An investigation of the case was initiated in the field, and this office was advised periodically of the progress made in the case. A final report, dated 21 August 1948, from Headquarters, Philippines Command, was forwarded to this office, inclosing copies of Report of Investigation Division, Legal Section, General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, No. 2744. The synopsis of facts are quoted as follows:

"Statements of Satake Akaishi, and Masaichi Fujiwara, secured and set out. All undeveloped leads exhausted. Case closed. Reference: Report of William R. Gill, dated 26 February 1948.

DETAILS:

On 15 June 1948, Satake AKAISHI, and 21 June 1948, Masaichi FUJIWARA, reported to the Legal Section as directed. Sworn statements were obtained, reduced to writing, the originals of which will be transmitted to the files of the Criminal Registry Division with their copy of this report. The statements read in full as follows:

I, Satake AKAISHI, being duly sworn to speak the truth conscientiously, adding nothing and concealing nothing whatsoever, testified at the Meiji Building, Tokyo, Japan, on 15 June 1948, as follows:

My name is Satake AKAISHI. I am 34 years old. My present address is Gumma-ken, Isezaki-cho, Imaizumi, #1110.

I was in the Japanese Army from January 1946 until the end of the war. I was stationed at YAP Island from April 1944 until the end of the war with the 49th Independent Mixed Brigade Headquarters. The Commanding Officer was Col. Daihachi ETO. I was in the Ordnance Section of the Headquarters. I was Warrant Officer and my Commanding Officer of the Ordnance Section was 2nd Lt. MOROFUCHI (FRU).

My duties were to requisition and distribute arms and ammunition to the other units located on Yap.

I will tell you all I know about any American plane which crashed near the Island of Yap. Late in August 1944, a little after noon, a flight of about twenty B-24s came from the East and made a bombing run over the island, dropping their bombs. Our anti-aircraft batteries engaged the planes as they came over and I noticed one plane burst into flames and crash into the sea about 1000 meters south of the island. No effort was made by our unit to see if anyone survived the crash. I did not see any prisoners from the crash on the island.

\* \* \* \* \*

I am sure that it was only one plane which I saw burst into flames, and I am sure that no survivors were brought to the island. I did not see or hear of any of the bodies of crew members having washed ashore.

The next time I saw an American plane crash was in about September 1944. A Grumman Fighter made a bombing run over the island and bombed from such a low altitude that the force of the bomb explosion destroyed the plane and killed the pilot. The body was buried along side of the road leading to the East airfield, about 1000 meters from the field. This grave was pointed out to the Allied Forces when they took over the Island at the end of the war.

I have never seen or heard of any survivors from plane crashes at Yap.

\* \* \* \* \*

There were no fliers brought to our headquarters at any time. I would have seen them or would have heard about it if this had happened. I have told you all I know about plane crashes or prisoners of war on Yap.

/s/ (Japanese Characters)  
Satake AKAISHI

I, Masaichi FUJIWARA, after being duly sworn to speak the truth conscientiously, adding nothing or concealing nothing whatsoever, testified in Room 835, Meiji Building, Tokyo, Japan, on 21 June 1948, as follows:



- Q. State your name, present home address, age, marital status, and your religion?
- A. Masaichi FUJIMURA, Ehime-Ken, Matsuyama Shi, Gojin-Machi, I Chome, 48 Banchi; I am married but have no children; I am a Buddhist.

\* \* \* \* \*

- Q. Did you ever serve in the Japanese Armed Forces and if so what branch?
- A. Yes, I was 1st Lt. in the Japanese Army.
- Q. State your brief military history as of Dec. 1941.
- A. Dec. 1941 to Feb 1944, I was serving with the 7th Co., 2nd Bn., of the 894th Infantry Regiment in Manchuria. From Mar. 1944 to the termination of war, I served with the Headquarters of the 49th Independent Mixed Brigade on Yap Island of the Western Caroline Islands.
- Q. What were duties in the Headquarters of the 49th Independent Mixed Brigade?
- A. I was the personnel officer.
- Q. Who was your commanding officer?
- A. Colonel Daihachi HEC was my commanding officer.
- Q. While you were on Yap Island how many air raids were there?
- A. We had numerous air raids. From the beginning of June 1944, we had air raids. From the beginning of June 1944, we had air raids mostly every day.
- Q. During these raids, were there any planes shot down?
- A. Yes.
- Q. How many?
- A. I have heard that one plane was shot down.
- Q. Tell me about it.
- A. Sometime during the middle of June 1944 after an air raid 2nd Lt. Masanori MIURA, the Intelligence Officer of the 49th Independent Brigade, told me that the Engineer Unit of the 49th Brigade had rescued two flyers who had parachuted down into the ocean after their plane had crashed into the ocean south of Yap Island.
- Q. Who was the commanding officer of the Engineer unit?
- A. Capt. KATO GI (FNU) was the commanding officer.
- Q. Where were the two flyers brought?
- A. I don't know.
- Q. Were they brought to the 49th Independent Brigade Hdqs?
- A. I don't know for I have never seen the flyers.
- Q. Do you know what became of the flyers?
- A. I heard from Capt. Tanochika FURUKAWA, the Adjutant, that the flyers were kept at the Engineers Unit for a short while, about a week and they were sent to Palau Island.

- Q. Do you know who interrogated these two flyers?
- A. I do not know, but I believe Maj. MIEMO (FEU), was the one most likely to have interrogated the flyers for he was the Staff Officer.
- Q. Who was the interpreter of the 49th Independent Brigade?
- A. We had no special interpreter at the Brigade Ho. but there was a 1st Lt. in the 323rd Bn who could speak English, so I believe he acted as interpreter.
- Q. Was the 323rd Bn a part of the 49th Independent Mixed Brigade?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Who was the commanding officer of the 323rd Bn?
- A. Capt. Ito was the commanding officer of the 323rd Bn.
- Q. Do you know a Lt. HIYODO?
- A. Yes. He was the Intelligence Officer of the 49th Independent Mixed Brigade.
- Q. Do you know his first name or his present whereabouts?
- A. I do not know his first name. He was from Fukuoka Ken, in Kyushu.
- Q. Do you know 2nd Lt. KOGA?
- A. Yes. He was also an Intendence Officer and working under HIYODO.
- Q. Do you know his present whereabouts or his first name?
- A. I believe his first name was Isao but I am not sure. He is also from Fukuoka.
- Q. Do you know what type of plane the two flyers that the Engineers Unit rescued, came from?
- A. I believe it was a B-24 Bomber.
- Q. Were the flyers mistreated in anyway, after they were captured?
- A. I have never heard of their ever being mistreated.
- Q. Do you know of any other plane crashes from which American flyers were captured?
- A. No.
- Q. Was there any other Americans captured on Yap Island during the time you were stationed there?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Tell me about them.
- A. Sometime during the middle of June 1944, after the two flyers from the crashed B-24 were sent to Palau Island I heard from FURUKAWA that the 328th Bn of the 49th Independent Mixed Brigade had captured three (3) Americans who had come ashore from a submarine. It was believed that these three Americans had come to measure the reefs on the eastern side of Yap Island.
- Q. Were these POWs Army men or Navy men?

- A. I do not know.
- Q. What became of these three Americans?
- A. I believe that they were confined at the Engineers Unit and were sent to Palao Island either on the 29th or the 30th of June 1944.
- Q. Who interrogated these POWs?
- A. I don't know for sure but I believe it was Staff Officer MIENO.
- Q. Did you see these POWs?
- A. I saw them on two occasions. Once when I went to the Engineers Unit on business; and another time when the three POWs were being put on a boat to be taken to Palao Island.
- Q. What was the name of the boat that these three POWs boarded?
- A. I do not know the name of the boat, but it was a small Navy escort vessel.
- Q. Were these three POWs ever brought to the 49th Brigade Headquarters?
- A. I don't know for I have never seen them at the Headquarters nor heard about them being brought to the Headquarters.
- Q. Were these POWs ever mistreated by members of the 328th Bn or by the members of the 49th Brigade?
- A. I have never heard of such.
- Q. Who was the commanding officer of the 328th Bn?
- A. Maj. Kozakura (FNU) was the commanding officer of the 328th Bn?
- Q. Do you know Maj. Kozakura's first name or his present whereabouts?
- A. No.
- Q. Was there any order or printed matter distributed to all units concerning these three American POW's?
- A. No, not that I know.
- Q. Were there any other POWs outside of the two (2) B-24 flyers and the three (3) Americans that were captured by the 328th Bn, on Yap Island during the time you were there?
- A. Other than the five (5) that I have mentioned, I do not know of any others.
- Q. Do you know the names of any of the five POWs that you have mentioned?
- A. No, I do not.
- Q. Do you know of Col. ITO?
- A. I know of a Capt. ITO (fnu) who was the commanding officer of the 323rd Bn and a Col. ITO, Daihachi who was the commanding officer of the 49th Independent Mixed Brigade, but as far as I know, there was no Col. ITO on Yap Island during the time I was there.
- Q. Did you ever hear of a Vincente A. UNTALAN?
- A. No.
- Q. Are you sure that the five American POWs that you have mentioned were not mistreated by the members of the Japanese Forces during the time they were on Yap Island?

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- A. Yes.
- Q. Are you sure that they were all sent to Palao Island?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Do you know where they were sent on Palao Island?
- A. I do not know to what section of Palao they were sent, but I am sure that they were sent to the 14th Division Headquarters that was on Palao Island.
- Q. Who was the commanding officer of the 14th Division at the time?
- A. Lt. General INOUE (fnu) was the commanding officer of the Division.
- Q. Have you told me all you know concerning American plane crashes and of American POWs that were on Yap Island?
- A. Yes. I have told you everything I know of, concerning American plane crashes and of American POWs.
- Q. Then you maintain that what you have stated, is the truth?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Do you know the penalty for making a false statement and to conceal evidence?
- A. Yes, I do.
- Q. Do you have anything further to add to your statement?
- A. No.

/s/ (Japanese Characters)  
Masaichi FUJIWARA

\* \* \* \* \*

The United States Navy (Com-Marianas) has this case under investigation, and thus far, has met with negative results. It is highly impossible that any of the crew from the B-24's in question, was rescued, as the crash took place twenty-five miles offshore, and the planes seemed to explode in mid air and go down in flames. The two men captured from the American submarine were underwater demolition personnel, and were probably sent to Palau.

Inasmuch as the U.S. Navy is making an investigation of the Palau Island atrocities, the Investigation Division, Legal Section, contemplates no further investigative action and considers the case closed."

C L O S E D

6. The Commanding General, Headquarters, Philippine Command concludes the report as follows:

"In view of the fact that all efforts to determine the actual fate of the crew in question met with negative results, it is recommended that the casualty status of the entire members of the crew be redetermined, if deemed warranted."

7. The Air Corps personnel, listed in paragraph 1, comprised the crew members of two B-24 aircrafts, which departed its base, the Admiralty Islands on a combat mission to Yap Island in the Caroline Islands. Shortly after leaving the target area, the plane piloted by Lieutenant Diederich, Crew No. 2, collided with the plane piloted by Lieutenant Saylor, about twenty-five miles southeast of Yap Island. Lieutenant Saylor's plane broke in half just behind the wing section and a wing fell off Lieutenant Diederich's plane. Both planes caught on fire and fell into the water. One eyewitness reported seeing five parachutes open at about 8000 feet. Other persons on the same mission saw bodies fall but no parachutes open. An investigation made by the Theater in an effort to determine the actual fate of the crew members in question met with negative results. The information of record indicates that there were no survivors from crashed American planes during the month of July 1944 on Yap Island. Considering the distance from land where the planes collided; the burning of the plane in mid-air at the height of about 8000 feet, and the crashing into the ocean, it is logical to conclude that subject crew members met their death either as the result of the explosion, or by drowning in the ocean, where any chance of rescue was impossible due to Japanese Zeros making passes at the surrounding B-24's.

8. It is recommended, therefore, that pursuant to the provisions of Section 9, Missing Persons Act, the foregoing information be accepted as an official report of death, and that a casualty report be initiated stating that the Air Corps personnel, listed in paragraph 1, were killed in action, 15 July 1944, while in flying pay status, when their planes collided in mid-air and crashed off Yap Island of the Caroline Islands. The systemat will be processed in accordance with Paragraph 2b, Operations Bulletin 55, 1945. The casualty report and official report of death will include the following statement:

Finding of Death has been issued previously under Section 5, Public Law 490, 7 March 1943, as amended, showing presumed date of death as 30 March 1946. This "Report of Death" based on information received since that date, is

AGPO-CR 704 DEAD (22 Sep 48)

issued in accordance with Section 9 of said  
Act and its effect on prior payments and  
settlements is as provided in Section 9.

Station and place of death: Southwest Pacific Area

*A. L. O'Brien*  
A. L. O'BRIEN  
Investigator

CONCUR:

*O. Paulsen*  
O. PAULSEN  
Captain, AGD  
OIC, Determination Unit

APPROVED: Recommended action will be taken

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

*Sylvio L. Bousquin*  
SYLVIO L. BOUSQUIN  
Lt Col, AGD  
OIC, Casualty Section  
Personnel Actions Branch, AGO

COPY FOR:

AG 201 file of each person named in par 1  
Casualty Section file of each person named in par 1  
293 file (OQIG) of each person named in par 1

CASUALTY SECTION  
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

DEATH

AGPC-O 201 Crowley, William E.  
ASN 16,004,052

12 June 1946

PER GRANDUR FOR RECORD  
PERSON TO BE NOTIFIED IN LIST OF THE E.A.  
SUBJECT: CHANGE of Address of Emergency Addressee:

A communication has been received from the American Red Cross.

FORMER E.A. FROM (Remarried)  
Mrs. Mariam P. Crowley, Wife,  
Post Office Box 2061,  
West Palm Beach, Florida.

PRESENT E.A. TO  
Mr. Frank J. Crowley, Father,  
212 North Kenneth Avenue,  
Chicago 24, Illinois.

Adjutant General

Copies furnished:

Army Effects Bureau  
CG <sup>6th</sup> Service Command  
Decorations and Awards Branch  
Director, Bureau of Public Relations  
Director, Veterans Administration  
General Accounting Office  
Liaison Branch, Office of Special Settlement Accounts, Room 3025  
Munitions Building, Washington, D. C.  
Memorial Branch, Overseas Section, Office of the Quartermaster General  
Notification Branch, Personal Affairs, Division, Assistant Chief of the  
Air Staff Personnel, Room 4210, Munitions Building, (AAF personnel  
only)  
Prisoner of War Information Bureau (POW personnel only)  
AG 201 File

Non-Delivery Oper. Sec. 20 April 1946.  
(See Oper. Pul. No. 24, 1945)

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