

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

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"THE AIR OFFICER COMMANDING."

IN REPLY PLEASE REFER TO FILE NO. 1401/7144/P.4(63A).1079

8th February 1946

The Secretary,
Department of Air,
MELBOURNE.

RECEIVED AIR MAIL
FEB 12 1946
AIR MAIL ROOM

Aus. 418790 Flight Sergeant BLACK, S.K.

The enclosed report from Missing Research, France, concerning the above R. A. A. F. member and his crew is forwarded for your information.

*No action
nothing dependent*

Coxon
(E. J. COXON)
Flight Lieutenant
for Air Vice Marshal
Air Officer Commanding

Encls:

cabled to encl 47a

PH

Gene 57B

FROM: No. 1 Missing Research and Enquiry Unit, Royal Air Force,
c/o British Army of the Rhine.

TO: Air Ministry, (P.4. Cas.) 73, - 77 Oxford Street, London, W.1.

COPIES TO: R.A.A.F. Overseas Headquarters, Kodak House, 63 Kingsway, W.C.2.

DATE: 25th January, 1946.

YOUR FILE OR FOLDER REFERENCE: P.418139/44/P.4.B.4. dated 15th November, 1944.

YOUR CASUALTY ENQUIRY NUMBER: No.46.

OUR REFERENCE: 1MREU/S.8/CE.46/AIR.

NAME OF SEARCH OFFICER AND NUMBER OF SECTION: S/Ldr. Foster & F/O. Lord No.4. Section.

TARGET: Caen.

AIRCRAFT TYPE AND SERIAL NUMBER: Lancaster NE 150.

DATE REPORTED MISSING: 7/8th June, 1944.

PLACE OF CRASH, WITH MAP REFERENCE: St. Jean De Daye. A.8/T.47.

PLACE OF BURIAL, WITH MAP REFERENCE: St. Jean De Daye, Parish Cemetery, A.8/T.47.

CREW:-	174942 Pilot Officer M.G.M. Warren,	- Captain.
	2220039 Sergeant F.L. Corner.	- Flight/Eng.
	140868 Flying Officer J. Dryllis.	- Navigator.
	A.418790 F/Sgt. N.C. Rokker. <i>Black</i>	- W/Op.
	1593975 Sergeant M.H. Wigham,	- Mid Upper Gunner.
	1853943 Sergeant R.L. Puckett,	- Rear Gunner.

RESULT OF INVESTIGATION AND FINDINGS:-

Following up data given in Casualty Enquiry No.46, we interviewed Monsieur. Desire Cardin and his son Bernard of St. Jean De Daye. For the purpose of this report the data received on P/O. Warren is given separately owing to necessity of explanation regarding our disagreement with information contained in letter received by P/O. Warren's father from the Mayor of St. Jean De Daye.

Re: F/Sgt. Black.

Mons. Desire Cardin and his son Bernard gave us similar details to those already given to S/Ldr. Le Bas with a few additional details.

Whilst under the care of Mons. Cardin and prior to transfer to care of the Mayor of Craignes and the American parachutists, Black wore civilian clothes over his battle dress - he possibly retained his uniform as some protection in a likely charge of espionage. These clothes were supplied by Mons. Cardin. On the day of the funeral of Corner - Rokker - Wigham and Puckett, Friday 9th June, in the Parish Cemetery, St. Jean De Daye - Black gave his identity photo to Mons. Bernard Cardin, as a souvenir. He (Black) told Mons. Cardin that P/O. Warren baled out first over Lison, 6-7, Kilometres from St. Jean De Daye. We visited the Genadarmerie at Lison and examined details of the only two crashes on record. One was for a British single engined fighter. The pilot was burned with the aircraft. He is buried at Le Molet - Littry. The other case was of an American aircraft (marked with the white star) which crashed on 9th June, 44. Five Americans baled out.

It will be noted that the crash of the American aircraft occurred two days after the Lancaster which is the basis of this enquiry. It fell at 19.30 hours. The fact that Black was wearing an American uniform is supported by the Mayor of Craignes (Manche) who is a close friend of Mons. Desire Cardin. He, the Mayor was well acquainted with Black who was in the district for four days with the Americans. The Mayor took food to Black each day, personally. Apart from 30 who escaped when the Germans attacked, the whole of the American parachutists were wiped out and their bodies were transported to MBSNLL-ANGOT, where they were burned. Owing to strong circumstantial evidence we are of the opinion that F/Sgt. Black died with the American parachutists.

140868 P/O. J. Drylis.

P/O. Drylis was looked after by Monsieur Michel of St. Fromond, 2 kms from St. Jean De Daye. He was hidden by Monsieur Michel for 42 days and subsequently arrived back in England. P/O. Drylis told Monsieur Michel (and Mons. Cardin) that P/O. Warren baled out first. Both Black and Drylis are credited with the same statement although they did not meet after the crash.

174942 Pilot Officer M.G.M. Warren.

Monsieur Cardin of St. Jean De Daye (Manche) searched for Warren for eight days without success. We persisted with one enquiries regarding Warren and spent several days on the enquiry. We are now able to explain how the letter from the Mayor of St. Jean de Daye to Warren's father came into being. During an interview with Mons. Cardin we disclosed that our further enquiry was based on this letter to P/O. Warren's father. He at once and without hesitation said that it had since been discovered that the airman referred to proved to be another. He told us that a short time after the Lancaster's crash on 7/8th June, 1944. Mons. le Cure of Arul was ill and was visited by the village doctor of St. Jean de Daye. During a conversation he the Cure told the doctor that "an airman had fallen by parachute into the Cure's yard. The local German Adjutant Otto took the airman away as his prisoner. The doctor informed the Mayor of St. Jean De Daye and the Mayor took it upon himself to send the details to Warren's father. This he did in good faith believing the story to be in relation to P/O. Warren.

Since this letter was written it has been discovered that an unfortunate mistake had been made. We are satisfied in face of the following data that the airman arrested by the German Adjutant Otto was not Warren. Our enquiries took us to Arul to see Monsieur. le Cure Bertol, but he had been transferred to Avaranches. We proceeded to Avaranches and saw Monsieur le Cure Bertot. He was a benevolent kindly old man who had been badly wounded in 1943, when one of our aircraft flying low dropped a bomb near him at Arul. He was most anxious to clear up the misunderstanding and gave us the following story. We were now hearing for the first time and also first hand just what occurred. He remembered then an airman had fallen in his yard at Arul. The German Adjutant Otto arrived with escort and took him (the airman) away. He, the Cure remembers that the airman had a grin on his face and was smoking a cigarette as Otto took him away. The important point in Monsieur. le Cure's evidence is that he Cure Bertot told us that the airman fell into his yard two days prior to the crash of Warren's Lancaster crashed at 0300 hours on the morning of the 8th June, 1944. Although we cannot say what happened to Warren after he baled out as reported by Black and Drylis we may come across some evidence during our final sweep of the Manche area. It is possible that he was fatally injured on landing or that he was killed as a parachutists and is buried as unknown. Any data to assist in identification such as a Dental Card, would be appreciated.

(Signed). J.E. Foster, S/Ldr.
A. Lord, P/O.

Signed..E.R. Emonds S/L.

(E.R. EMOND), Squadron Leader,
for Wing Commander, Commanding,
No. 1. Missing Research and Enquiry Unit,
Royal Air Force,
c/o British Army of the Rhine.