

**DECLASSIFIED**

Authority: NND 735001

By: NARA NARA Date: 1973

Leon, J. D.  
12326

WAR DEPARTMENT  
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES  
WASHINGTON

MISSING AIR CREW REPORT

IMPORTANT: This report will be compiled in triplicate by each Army Air Forces organization within 48 hours of the time an air crew member is officially reported missing.

1. ORGANIZATION: Location, by Name KINGS CLIFFE; Command or Air Force 8TH Group 20TH FIGHTER; Squadron 55TH FIGHTER; Detachment \_\_\_\_\_
2. SPECIFY: Place of Departure KINGS CLIFFE; Course 091 DEGREE; Target or Intended Destination DRESDEN; Type of Mission EXCORT
3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED: \_\_\_\_\_
4. TIME: (a) Day 11, Month FEB, Year 1945; Time 1324; and Location SONNENBERG, GERMANY of last known whereabouts of missing aircraft  
(b) Specify whether aircraft was last sighted ( ); Last contacted by radio ( ); Forced down ( ); Seen to Crash (X); or information not available ( )
5. AIRCRAFT WAS LOST, OR IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN LOST, AS A RESULT OF: (Check only one) Enemy Aircraft ( ); Enemy Anti-aircraft ( ); Other Circumstances as Follows: TRUCK THAT WAS BEING STRAFED EXPLODED CAUSING A/C TO CRASH.
6. AIRCRAFT: Type, Model and Series P-51D-10NA; AAF Serial Number 44-11310
7. NICKNAME OF AIRCRAFT, if Any \_\_\_\_\_
8. ENGINES: Type, Model and Series V-1650-7; AAF Serial Number (a) V-324899; (b) \_\_\_\_\_; (c) \_\_\_\_\_; (d) \_\_\_\_\_
9. INSTALLED WEAPONS (Furnish below Make, Type and Serial Number):  
(a) BROWN-LIPE-CHAPIN 1543687; (c) BROWN-LIPE-CHAPIN 1545566  
(d) " " " 1544005; (f) " " " 1543270  
(e) " " " 1543669; (i) " " " 1543840  
(j) \_\_\_\_\_; (k) \_\_\_\_\_; (l) \_\_\_\_\_  
(m) \_\_\_\_\_; (n) \_\_\_\_\_; (o) \_\_\_\_\_
10. THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW WERE REPORTED AS: (a) Battle Casualty YES  
or (b) Non battle Casualty \_\_\_\_\_
11. NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew 1; Passengers 0; Total 1  
(Starting with Pilot, furnish the following particulars: if more than 11 persons were aboard aircraft, list similar particulars on separate sheet and attach original to this form.)

Crew Position	Name in Full (Last Name First)	Rank	Serial Number	Current Status
1. Pilot	LEON, JACK DAVID	1ST LT.	0-1998608	MIA
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

12. IDENTIFY BELOW THOSE PERSONS WHO ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE LAST KNOWN OF AIRCRAFT, AND CHECK APPROPRIATE COLUMN TO INDICATE BASIS FOR SALE:  
Check Only One Column

Name in Full (Last Name First)	Rank	Serial Number	Contacted by Radio	Last Sighted	Saw	
					Crash	Forced Landing
1. GATTERDAM RICHARD E.	MAJ.	O-701298			X	
2. PETERBURS, JOSEPH A.	1ST LT.	O-830526			X	
3.						

13. IF PERSONNEL ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE SURVIVED, ANSWER YES TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS: (a) Parachutes were used \_\_\_\_\_; (b) Persons were seen walking away from scene of crash \_\_\_\_\_; or (c) Any other reason (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
14. ATTACH AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH, MAP, CHART, OR SKETCH, SHOWING APPROXIMATE LOCATION WHERE AIRCRAFT WAS LAST SEEN OR HEARD FROM.
15. ATTACH BYWITNESS DESCRIPTION OF CRASH, FORCED LANDING, OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES PERTAINING TO MISSING AIRCRAFT.
16. GIVE NAME, RANK AND SERIAL NUMBER OF OFFICER IN CHARGE OF SEARCH, IF ANY, INCLUDING DESCRIPTION AND EXTENT \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Report 15 FEBRUARY, 1945

Clifford W. Long  
(Signature of Preparing Officer)

17. REMARKS:

MAR 24 1945



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Missing Air Crew Report

3-2 SUMMARY OF EYE WITNESS ACCOUNT

20th Fighter Group

55th Fighter Squadron

DATE 14 FEBRUARY 1945 MISSION BOMBER ESCORT  
Pilot: LEON, JACK DAVID 1ST LT. 0-1998608  
(Name) (Rank) (ASN)  
Aircraft P-51D-10NA 44-14319 KI-M  
(Type) (Serial No.) (Markings)

1. Position of missing A/C when last sighted or contacted.
  - a. Polar Coordinates: 5022 - 1112 E
  - b. Altitude: ON THE GROUND
  - c. Last noted heading: NOT APPLICABLE
  - d. If out of formation, approximate distance from formation:  
100-200 FEET
2. Enemy opposition: flak, type, intensity; Enemy aircraft, type, number, method of attack etc., with particular reference to missing A/C.

NONE SEEN

3. Damage to Missing A/C: fires, explosions, where sustained, etc.  
LEADER AND WING MAN, AFTER PULLING UP FROM DIVE, SAW LARGE EXPLOSION ON GROUND.
4. If A/C was out of control, describe.  
NOT APPLICABLE
5. Not Applicable.
6. If pilot bailed out: Describe jump, including altitude of bailout, opening of chute, landing of pilot on ground.  
NOT SEEN TO BAIL OUT.

7. Other remarks, not covered above. If additional space is required, use back of form. FLIGHT HAD BEEN STRAFING. AS FLIGHT LEADER PULLED UP FROM ATTACK HE LOOKED BACK AND SAW A BIG EXPLOSION ON THE GROUND. THE FLIGHT LEADER HAD BEEN STRAFING A TRUCK, BUT THIS DID NOT EXPLODE. IT IS BELIEVED THAT LT. LEON HAD STRAFED SOME OBJECT THAT BLEW UP CAUSING HIS PLANE TO CRASH.

8. Date of Report: 15 FEBRUARY, 1945

<u>Eye Witnesses:</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>ASN</u>	<u>A/C No.</u>
1.	GATTERDAM, RICHARD P.	MAJOR	0-701298	KI-G
2.	PETERBURS, JOSEPH A.	1ST LT.	0-830526	KI-T
3.				
4.				
5.				

Interrogating Officer: Clifford W. Loney

1st Lt., Air Corps,  
Intelligence Officer,  
55th Fighter Squadron.