

**DECLASSIFIED**  
 Authority: NND 735001  
 By: NARA NARA Date: 1973

*BENCH* 5283  
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Classification changed to **RESTRICTED**  
 by E. A. BRADUNAS, Lt. Col., AO  
 by F. M. MUENCH, Capt., AO  
 Date MAR 15 1946

WAR DEPARTMENT  
 HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES  
 WASHINGTON  
 MESSAGE AIR FORCE REPORT

IMPORTANT: This report will be expiring for application by each Army Air Forces organization within 48 hours of the time an aircraft is officially reported missing.

1. ORGANIZATION: Location KINGSCLIFFE; Command or Air Force 8TH F.C.  
 Group 20th Fighter; Squadron 79th Fighter Squadron
2. SPECIFY: Point of Departure Kingscliffe; Course 170 degrees  
 Intended Destination Brussels; Type Mission Escort & Strfs.
3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF LOSS OR WHEN LAST CONTACTED:  
Clear on Deck
4. GIVE: (a) Date 25 May 44; Time 0930; and Location Zuid Beveland  
 of last known whereabouts of missing aircraft.  
 (b) Specify whether ( ) Lost Sighted; ( ) Last contacted by Radio; ( )  
 Forced Down; (x) Seen to Crash; or ( ) Information not available.
5. AIRCRAFT WAS LOST, OR IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN LOST, AS A RESULT OF: (Check  
 only one ( ) Enemy Aircraft; (x) Enemy Anti-Aircraft; ( ) Other Circumstances  
 as follows: \_\_\_\_\_ X

6. AIRCRAFT Type, Model and Series P38J-1016; A.M.N. Serial Number 42-68094
7. ENGINES: Type, Model and Series VI710-89 & 91; A.M.N. Serial Number A 645459  
 (b) A 044955; (c) \_\_\_\_\_; (d) \_\_\_\_\_
8. INSTALLED WEAPONS (Furnish below Name, Type and Serial Number)  
 (a) LR 929511 Sav; (b) LR 929741 Sav; (c) UL 929425 Sav; (d) UR 929779 Sav  
 (e) Cannon 124525 Int Harv.; (f) \_\_\_\_\_; (g) \_\_\_\_\_; (h) \_\_\_\_\_

9. THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW WERE REPORTED AS: (a) Battle Casualty X  
 or (b) Non-Battle Casualty \_\_\_\_\_
10. NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew 1; Passengers 0; Total 1  
 (Starting with pilot, furnish the following particulars: If more than 10 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
1. Pilot	<u>BENCH, MARION FRANKLIN, JR.</u>	<u>1st Lt.</u>	<u>0-74602L</u>
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____	_____
6. _____	_____	_____	_____
7. _____	_____	_____	_____
8. _____	_____	_____	_____
9. _____	_____	_____	_____
10. _____	_____	_____	_____

11. IDENTIFY BELOW THOSE PERSONS WHO ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE OF AIR-  
 CRAFT, AND CHECK APPROPRIATE COLUMNS TO INDICATE BASIS FOR SAME:  
 Check Only One Column: \_\_\_\_\_
- | Name in full<br>(Last Name First) | Rank           | Serial Number   | Contacted<br>by<br>Radio | Last<br>Sighted | Saw<br>Crash | Saw<br>Forced<br>Landing |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <u>BIBOUT, RUSSELL WILLIAM</u> | <u>1st Lt.</u> | <u>0-750517</u> |                          |                 | <u>X</u>     |                          |
| 2. _____                          | _____          | _____           |                          |                 |              |                          |

*PFC/42288*

*Inc 8*

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Missing Air Crew Report cont'd.

12. IF PERSONNEL WERE BELIEVED TO HAVE SURVIVED, LISTER THE NUMBER OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS: (a) Parachutes were used \_\_\_\_\_ (b) Persons were seen walking away from scene of crash \_\_\_\_\_ (c) Any other reason (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_
13. ATTACH AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH, MAP, CHART, OR SKETCH SHOWING LOCATION WHERE AIRCRAFT WAS LAST SEEN.
14. ATTACH EYEWITNESS DESCRIPTION OF CRASH, FORCED LANDING, OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES PERTAINING TO MISSING AIRCRAFT.
15. ATTACH A DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTENT OF SEARCH, THE DATE, AND THE NAME, RANK AND SERIAL NUMBER OF OFFICER IN CHARGE. None

Date of Report: 27 May 1944

*Charles F. Salter*  
(Signature of Preferring Officer)

CHARLES F. SALTER,  
Major, Air Corps,  
Adjutant.

Reproduced at Hq VIII FC  
C-D-2 26 June 1943

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S-T-A-T-E-M-E-N-T

At about 0930 25 May 1944, Yellow Flight led by 1st Lt. Marion F. Banch went to the deck at Bergen Op Zoom to strafe railroads and highways. Lt. Banch followed a railroad up Zuid Beveland Island and strafed a railroad bridge and the protecting gun emplacements. It appeared to me that a 20 mm shell hit and exploded in his cockpit. He pulled up about 150 feet, split eased and crashed on his back. His plane burst into flame as it crashed.

*Russell W. Ercout*  
RUSSELL W. ERCOUT  
1st Lt. Air Corps

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