CAPTAIN CHARLES H. COLE JR  O-725682

A. Combat.
B. 14 January 1945.
C. 77th Fighter Squadron, 20th Fighter Group.
D. 1240.
E. Vicinity of Perlberg, Germany.
F. CAVU.
H. One (1) Me-109 destroyed.
I. "I was flying Red Leader on January 14, 1945 in 77th
Squadron when controls were called in ahead at approximately 1230 in vicinity
S of Ludwigst. Soon after Red Leader called me and told me to cover the
bomber box while he went ahead to investigate combat. Approximately five
minutes later I looked up and saw the box ahead being attacked by o/a. I
called flight to drop tanks and to try to break up attack on bombers.
I saw one 109 make pass through bombers and pull out
underneath the bomber box. As he started climbing turn to right I cut inside
his turn. He must have seen me as he made left turn immediately and I re-
versed mine. At 700 yards with 25° deflection I fired a short burst, no results
observed. I slid in behind 109 and closed rapidly. At 500 yards I fired
again, one short burst, and saw strikes on right wing. I fired again and
blackish smoke started to pour from o/a.
I followed him closing slowly and saw him jettison
canopy after I fired another short burst. He didn't bail so I fired again
and o/a dumped its nose and enemy pilot bailed over right side."

Claim: One (1) Me-109 destroyed.

Captain CHARLES H. COLE JR 44-11324 LC-U 320 rds 50 Caliber.

DECLASSIFIED
DOD Dir. 52009, Sept. 27, 1958
NCWN by __________date________

DECLASSIFIED
DOD Dir. 52009, Sept. 27, 1958
NCWN by __________date________

(Confirmation Over)
STATEMENT

"I was flying Red 4 position on January 14, 1945. At about 1230 in the vicinity S of Ludwigslust a flight was seen to commence about five miles ahead of us. A few seconds later contrails were seen heading our way. The enemy leader dropped his tanks and went to investigate. At about 1235 the box of bombers in front of us was bounced and Red Leader called to drop tanks and to break up attack. He picked up a 109 as it passed through bombers. After the e/a made a few slight turns I saw strikes on his right wing and gray smoke coming from right side of engine. Red Leader continued to close and fire. The pilot of e/a jettisoned his canopy, stuck the nose of his aircraft down and bailed out, chute was not seen to open.

I confirm one (1) Me-109 destroyed by Captain Cole."

[Signature]

FREDERICK LARSEN,
1st Lt., Air Corps.
ENCOUNTER REPORT
CAPT. CHARLES H. COLE JR.

A. COMBAT
B. 25 FEBRUARY, 1945
C. 55TH FIGHTER SQUADRON
D. 1010 HOURS
E. STENDAL AREA.
F. 0/C AT 10,000 FEET - CLEAR BELOW
G. TWO (2) FW 190'S
H. TWO (2) FW 190'S DESTROYED
I.

CAPTAIN COLE WAS LEADING WHITE FLIGHT, AT 200 FEET, FLYING EAST LOOKING FOR TARGETS TO STRAFE, WHEN HE OBSERVED FOUR (4) FW 190'S TAKING OFF LINE ABREAST WITH ONE (1) FW 190 OUT IN FRONT. WE TURNED ONTO THEIR TAILS AND PULLED UP FOR ALTITUDE. CAPT. COLE OPENED FIRE ON THE LEAD E/A, WHICH BURST INTO FLAMES AND CRASHED. SWINGING AROUND HE ATTACKED ANOTHER E/A THAT HAD BROKEN OFF FROM THE OTHERS. OPENED FIRE AND GOT STRIKES ON CANOPY AND RIGHT WING WITH PIECES FLYING OFF. THIS E/A WENT DOWN, HIT THE GROUND AND SLID A CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE. NEITHER PILOTS WERE OBSERVED TO HAVE LEFT THE E/A'S. AT THIS TIME, ANOTHER E/A HAD PULLED IN BEHIND CAPT. COLE AND WAS GETTING STRIKES ON HIS CANOPY. HE DISENGAGED AND STARTED WITHDRAWING, STREAMING COOLANT. CAPT. COLE LATER BELIEVED HIS PLANE IN ENEMY TERRITORY AND AS N.I.A. THESE CLAIMS ARE BEING MADE FOR HIM THROUGH HIS WING MAN, MAJOR CRISTADORO, WHO OBSERVED THE ENTIRE COMBAT.

CAPTAIN COLE CLAIMS TWO (2) FW 190'S DESTROYED.

J. SER. NO. OF A/C: 44-72160
A/C MARKINGS: KI-K
AMMO. EXPENDED: UNKNOWN

SIGNED:
RICHARD H. BLACK
1ST LT., AIR CORPS INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

"THIS IS A TRUE COPY"
CLIFFORD W. LONG
CAPTAIN, AIR CORPS INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

FOR CAPT. CHARLES H. COLE JR. (MIA) 0-725662
/S/ MAURICE A. CRISTADORO JR.
/T/ MAURICE A. CRISTADORO JR.
MAJOR, AIR CORPS
0-4296512
SUBJECT: COMBAT CLAIMS OF CAPTAIN CHARLES H. COLE, JR.

TO: WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

1. ON MISSION OF 25 FEBRUARY, 1945, CAPTAIN CHARLES H. COLE, JR., O-725682, FAILED TO RETURN. HIS WINGMAN, MAJOR MAURICE A. CRISTADORO, JR., O-429612, ENTERED A CLAIM FOR TWO FW 190'S DESTROYED FOR CAPT. COLE. THESE CLAIMS WERE CONFIRMED BY VICTORY CREDITS BOARD REPORT NO. 4.

2. AFTER BEING LIBERATED FROM A GERMAN P/W CAMP, CAPTAIN COLE SENT HIS UNIT, THE 55TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, A CLAIM FOR FOUR (4) FW 190'S DESTROYED. A TRUE COPY OF HIS WRITTEN ENCOUNTER REPORT IS ENCLOSED.

CLIFFORD W. LONIS
CAPTAIN, A.C.
INTELLIGENCE OFFICER
ENCOUNTER REPORT

CAPTAIN CHARLES H. COLE

A. COMBAT
B. 25 FEBRUARY, 1945
C. 55TH FIGHTER SQUADRON
D. 1010 HOURS
E. STENDAL AREA AND MAGDEBURG AREA
F. O/C AT 10,000 FEET - CLEAR BELOW
G. FOUR F.W. 190'S AND TWO LOCOMOTIVES
H. FOUR F.W. 190'S AND TWO LOCOMOTIVES DESTROYED

I WAS LEADING SAILOR SQUADRON ON FEBRUARY 25, 1945 ON A STRAFFING MISSION IN THE AREA NORTH OF MAGDEBURG. ON THE WAY TO THE AREA MY YELLOW FLIGHT LOST ME IN SOME CLOUDS AND JOINED UP WITH THE OTHER SQUADRONS IN THE GROUP. UPON REACHING THE AREA I CALLED MY RED SECTION LEADER AND TOLD HIM TO KEEP HIS SECTION UP HIGH AS TOP COVER, AND I PROCEEDED TO DROP DOWN TO THE DECK. VERY SHORTLY I SPOTTED TWO TRAINS IN A MARSHALING YARD. I CALLED MY FLIGHT TO ATTACK. I DESTROYED THE TWO LOCOMOTIVES AND MY FLIGHT SHOT UP THE REST OF THE TRAIN. DURING THIS ENCOUNTER, MY RED SECTION LEADER LOST SIGHT OF ME. I PROCEEDED WITH MY FLIGHT TO LOOK FOR ANOTHER TARGET. I FLEW ALMOST DIRECTLY OVER AN ENEMY AIRDROME AND OBSERVED FOUR F.W. 190'S TAKING OFF AND A NUMBER OF OTHER F.W. 190'S IN TAKE OFF POSITION. I IMMEDIATELY CALLED THEM IN TO MY FLIGHT AND INITIATED AN ATTACK ON THE LEADER. I SUCCEEDED IN CLOSING ON HIS TAIL TO ABOUT 150 YARDS AND OBSERVED HITS ON THE COCKPIT. HE FLewed UP AND CHASHED. I THEN SAW ANOTHER 190 APPARENTLY TRYING TO BELLY IN. I DROVE ON HIM, OPENING FIRE AT APPROX. 1000 YDS. MY FIRST SHOTS WERE BEHIND HIM AS I SAW THEM HIT THE GROUND, I RAISED MY SIGHTS AND OBSERVED MANY HITS AROUND THE COCKPIT AND ENGINE AND HE IMMEDIATELY BLEW UP AND BURNED. AS I PULLED UP TO REGAIN ALTITUDE, ANOTHER 190 BROKE DIRECTLY INTO MY SIGHTS. I FIRED A SHORT BURST AND HE TRIED BREAKING RIGHT. I OBSERVED NO HITS BUT HE SNAPPED ROLLED AND SPUN INTO THE GROUND. I THEN CALLED MY FLIGHT AND TOLD THEM TO PULL OUT FOR HOME AS THERE WERE TOO MANY E/A FOR US TO HANDLE.

AS I WAS LEAVING THE AREA, I SAW ANOTHER F.W. 190 WITH HIS GEAR DOWN, APPARENTLY GOING IN TO LAND. I WAS ALMOST IN A FIRING POSITION SO I PROCEEDED TO CLOSE UP TO FIRING RANGE. HE SAW ME AND BROKE RIGHT. I CLOSED TO ABOUT 100 YARDS AND OPENED FIRE AT ABOUT A 20° DEFLECTION SHOT. I OBSERVED STRIKES ON HIS LEFT WING AND THEN STRIKES ON HIS COCKPIT. HE IMMEDIATELY EXPLODED AND CRASHED. AS I WAS WITHDRAWING FROM THE AREA, MY SHIP WAS HIT BY 20 MM FLAK. IT DESTROYED MY INSTRUMENTS AND HIT MY COOLANT. I FLEW FOR ABOUT 10 MINUTES BEFORE MY ENGINE QUIT. I THEN BELLIED THE SHIP IN.

DURING THE FIGHT I DID NOT SEE MY WING MAN. ANY OTHER MEMBER OF MY FLIGHT. AFTER I WAS HIT, MY WING MAN SUDDENLY APPEARED AND STAYED WITH ME UNTIL AFTER I HAD CRASH LANDED.

I CLAIM TWO LOCOMOTIVES DESTROYED AND FOUR F.W. 190'S DESTROYED.

"A TRUE COPY"

S/CHARLES H. COLE JR.
CLIFFORD W. LONG
CAPTAIN, A.C.
0-725682

CAPTAIN, A.C.
INTELLIGENCE OFFICER
AFFIDAVIT

ON 25 FEBRUARY, 1945, I WAS FLYING CAPTAIN COLE'S WING ON A MISSION IN THE STENDAL AREA. IN THIS AREA WE SIGHTED SEVERAL FW 190'S. I SAW CAPTAIN COLE DESTROY 2 FW 190'S AND PUT IN A CLAIM FOR HIM AS HE HAD BEEN SHOT DOWN. AT THE BEGINNING OF THE COMBAT I BECAME ENGAGED WITH A FW 190 AND DID NOT SEE CAPTAIN COLE'S ENCOUNTER WITH THE TWO FW 190'S HE NOW CLAIMS.

FOR THIS REASON I CLAIMED ONLY TWO FW 190'S FOR CAPTAIN COLE.

MAURICE A. CRISTADORO, JR.
MAJOR, AIR CORPS
COMMANDING