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Authority: NND 735001

By: NARA NARA Date: 1973

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WAR DEPARTMENT
HEADQUARTERS ARMY AIR FORCES
WASHINGTON

MISSING AIR CREW REPORT

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

1. ORGANIZATION: Location AAF STA 408 Command of Air Force IX TAC
Group 365 FIGHTER-BOMBERS Squadron 386 FIGHTER Detachment ---
2. SPECIFY: Point of Departure AAF STATION 408 Course 300°
Intended Destination BRUSSELS Type of Mission RAMROD
3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED Scattered strato-cumulus clouds high cirrus overcast
4. GIVE: (a) Date 24 April 1944 Time 1715 and Location Bertangles, France
of last known whereabouts of missing airplane.
(b) Specify whether () last sighted; (X) Last contacted by Radio;
() Perched down; () Seen to crash; or () Information not available.
5. AIRCRAFT WAS LOST, OR IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN LOST, AS RESULT OF:
(Check only one) () Enemy Airplane; () Enemy Anti-Aircraft; ()
Other circumstances as follows: NO KNOWLEDGE AS TO CAUSE
6. AIRPLANE: Type, Model and Series P-47D-15; A.A.F. Serial No. 42-75620
7. ENGINES: Type, Model and Series R-2800-63; A.A.F. Serial No. (a) 42-126538
(b) _____ (c) _____ (d) _____
8. INSTALLED WEAPONS (Furnish below Make, Type and Serial No.) BROWNING CAL. .50
(a) 1079242 (b) 1078863 (c) 1078891 (d) 1083038
(e) 1079256 (f) 1078913 (g) 1083007 (h) 639322
9. THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW WERE REPORTED AS: (a) Battle Casualty MIA
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 airplane, 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	SOWARD, MILTON E.,	1st Lt.	0-680939
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				

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Eye-witness description by 2nd Lt. VALMORE J. BEAUDRAULT, O-680839, of circumstances in which 1st Lt. MATTHEW E. SOWARD, O-672698, was last seen or contacted.

On 24 April 1944 at about 1715 hours we saw an HE-111K on the ground at an airdrome which I believe to be the one at Bertangles, France. Lt. Soward was white No. 1 in my flight; I was white No. 4. Lt. Soward dived down onto the E/A. White No. 2 and No. 3 were low on gasoline and did not go down, so I followed him. However, he was already out of sight when I made my pass.

Major DONALD E. HILLMAN, O-418131, flying blue No. 1 then also made a pass at the E/A. None of us saw Lt. Soward's A/C after that. About three minutes later Lt. Soward called over the radio that he was on the deck on a course of 300 degrees. The Group Leader called and instructed planes on the deck to pull up as we were using too much gas on the deck. I climbed to 8,000 feet and called Lt. Soward three (3) times as I continued climbing. However, I heard no reply. I have no idea what happened to Lt. Soward or his A/C. I was not shot at in that area.

/s/ Valmore J. Beaudrault
VALMORE J. BEAUDRAULT
2nd Lt., Air Corps,
386th Fighter Squadron

THIS IS A TRUE COPY:

Malcolm G. Pfunder
MALCOLM G. PFUNDER
1st Lt., Air Corps.

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by E. A. BRADUNAS, Lt. Col., AC
by F. M. MUENCH, Capt., AC
Date MAR 15 1946

HEADQUARTERS 365TH FIGHTER GROUP
Office of the Operations Officer
APO 595, US Army

by E. A. BRADUNAS, Lt. Col., AC
by F. M. MUENCH, Capt., AC
Date OCT 15 1945

25 April 1944

SUBJECT: Missing Air Crew Report.

TO : Commanding General, Ninth Air Force, APO 646, US Army.

1. In compliance with Ninth Air Force Memo 35-6, Appendix IA, dated 15 February 1944, the following report is submitted:

- 1 AAF Station 408, Ninth Air Force, IX Air Support Command, 84th Fighter Wing, 365th Fighter Group, 386th Fighter Squadron.
- 2 Point of Departure: AAF Station 408. Aircraft was on an Operational Mission (withdrawal support for Ramrod) per Operations Order No. 179, HQ., IX Fighter Command, returning home on course of 300° from vicinity of an airdrome believed to be Bertangles (Amiens Area).
- 3 Weather - Scattered strato-cumulus clouds, high cirrus overcast, fair to good visibility.
- 4 24 April 1944, approximately 1715 hours, vicinity of an airdrome believed to be Bertangles (coordinates 4957N-0218E). Last seen over the airdrome, last contacted by radio "on deck" on course 300°.
- 5 No knowledge as to cause.
- 6 Aircraft: P-47D-16, AAF No. 42-75620 (Squadron letters D 5 S painted on fuselage).
- 7 Engine: R-2800-63, 42-126538
- 8 Installed weapons: Eight (8) Browning Cal. 50 machine guns: 1079242, 1078863, 1078891, 1083038, 1079256, 1078913, 1083007, 639322.
- 9 The person listed below was reported as a battle casualty (Missing in action).
- 10 Number of persons aboard aircraft: Crew (1); total - one (1). Pilot, ~~Soward, Milton E.~~, 1st Lt., ASN 0-680839.
- 11 Persons who are believed to have last knowledge of aircraft and basis for same:
 - a. Beaudrault, Valmore J., 2nd Lt., ASN 0-680839, last to see missing a/c and last to contact by radio.
- 12 No knowledge as to whether or not pilot survived. Three of our a/c dived on an enemy a/c on ground on an airdrome believed to be Bertangles. Lt. Soward became separated from the remainder of his flight but called on the R/T and said that he was "on the deck" on course of 300°. Group Leader and Lt. Beaudrault called Lt. Soward several times shortly after that but received no reply.

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