

1 In late June 2018, the following information was made available to the Darrtown.com website through  
2 the combined efforts of Mr. Ralph Snape and Mr. Kim Johnson.

3  
4 Mr. Snape is associated with the Air Crew Remembered website; see: <http://aircrewremembered.com/>

5  
6 =====

7  
8 **Operation: Braunschweig-Waggum, Germany**  
9 *Date: 5th August 1944 (Saturday)*  
10 *Unit: 789th Bomber Squadron (467th Bombardment Group (H))*  
11 *Type: B-24H Liberator*  
12 *Serial No: 41-29363*  
13 *Code: 6A-B*  
14 *Location: Eichholz near Hohenhausen, Germany*  
15 *Base: Rackheath, Norfolk, England*

16  
17 *Pilot: 2nd.Lt. Willard A. Langenfeld O-702293 USAAF Age 23. PoW (1)*  
18 *Co-Pilot: 2nd.Lt. Charles E. Whitacre O-761779 USAAF Age 31. PoW (2)*  
19 *Navigator: 2nd.Lt. Robert E. Delavan O-7033961 USAAF Age 22. (3)*  
20 *Bombardier: 2nd.Lt. Louis Earl Younkin O-716804 USAAF Age 21. (3)*  
21 *Radio/Op: S/Sgt. Norman E. Schneider 36745005 USAAF Age 33. (3)*  
22 *Engineer: S/Sgt. Stanley J. Kalinejko 36638265 USAAF Age 21. (3) (4)*  
23 *Nose: Position not allocated.*  
24 *Top Turret: (5)*  
25 *Ball Turret: S/Sgt. John A. Vititoe 35874059 USAAF Age 19. PoW (5)*  
26 *Right Waist: S/Sgt. Sherwood L. Kells 32740090 USAAF Age 20. (3)*  
27 *Left Waist: S/Sgt. Robert F. Kowalski 36643616 USAAF Age 20. (3)*  
28 *Tail: S/Sgt. Donald Trew McVicker 15118711 USAAF Age 22. (3)*

29  
30 *The B-24 had 12 crew positions. Crew complements evolved during the war and generally comprised 9*  
31 *personnel who were typically, but not always, Pilot, Co-Pilot, Bombardier, Navigator, Flight Engineer/Top*  
32 *Turret Gunner, Radio Operator/Waist Gunner, Nose Gunner, Ball Turret Gunner, Waist Gunner, Tail*  
33 *Gunner.*

34  
35 **REASON FOR LOSS:**  
36 *B-24H Liberator 41-29363 took off from Rackheath on the morning of 5th August 1944 at 0832 hours to*  
37 *take part in a 24 aircraft mission to bomb the MIAG aircraft components factory on the airfield at*  
38 *Braunschweig-Waggum in Germany.*

39  
40 *The aircraft was reported to have been hit by flak and heavily damaged after leaving the target area. A*  
41 *German report records that the aircraft crashed at about 1515 hours to the west of Eichholz which is*  
42 *located SW of the village of Echternhagen in the municipality of Kalletal.*

43  
44 *Nine of the ten crew members successfully bailed out the aircraft. The tenth unidentified member of the*  
45 *crew perished in the crash and another, also unidentified, perished because of a parachute failure. The*  
46 *remaining eight airmen survived the bailout.*

47

48 (1) After landing uninjured 2nd.Lt. Langenfeld left the area but was captured a short time later in the  
49 town of Vlotho about 4 miles NW of the crashed aircraft and handed over to Luftwaffe personnel from  
50 the nearby Detmold airfield. He was held as a PoW until liberated but there are no further details of  
51 where he was held or when he was liberated.

52

53 (2) 2nd.Lt. Whitacre landed uninjured on the outskirts of a small village to the south of the aircraft crash  
54 site. He was captured immediately on landing and was handed over to the Luftwaffe personnel that had  
55 been detailed to search the aircraft wreckage. He accompanied them to the crash site where he  
56 observed them searching the wreckage. The searchers gave no indication of finding anyone in the  
57 aircraft wreckage. After leaving the crash site he witnessed that, when they stopped at a farmhouse  
58 about ½ mile from the downed aircraft, a number of complete sets of American flying gear, flight suits,  
59 flying boots and GI shoes being loaded onto the truck in which he was being transported. From there  
60 they travelled to Detmold some 19 miles distance. He was eventually held as a PoW at Stalag Luft III,  
61 Sagan in Lower Silesia now Żagań, Poland.

62

63 (3) After 2nd.Lt. Langenfeld and 2nd.Lt. Whitacre were liberated they reported their suspicions that their  
64 dead comrades were killed by German civilians. An investigation was conducted which led to a General  
65 Military Government Court being convened at Dachau in Germany from the 24th to the 29th January  
66 1947. Four German nationals were charged with the unlawful killing of five unknown PoWs who were  
67 members of the United States Army in or near Hohenhausen on the 5th August 1944.

68

69 The four accused were a Gustav Stork who was a Gendarmeriemeister (Master Sergeant) in the  
70 Gendarmerie (District rural police), a Gustav Deppe who was an Oberwachtmeister (Sergeant) in the  
71 Gendarmerie, a Franz Dürschke who was a Chimney sweep, and a Heinrich Jürgens who was the  
72 Gendarmerie Kreisführer (District police chief) with the rank of SS Hauptsturmführer (Captain) but his  
73 name was removed from the charge sheet because he was not before the court or in custody.

74

75 The court heard how five American airmen were assembled at a house commandeered by Stork at about  
76 1500 hours on the day in question. An hour or so later Stork and Deppe took two of the airmen from the  
77 house to a nearby woods where the accused each shot and killed one of the airmen. They immediately  
78 returned to the house and along with Dürschke took out the remaining three airmen to a nearby  
79 meadow where the accused each shot and killed one of the airmen. Later that day at around 2000 hours  
80 Luftwaffe personnel arrived and removed all traces of identity from the dead airmen. Stork and Deppe  
81 then transported them to the local cemetery in Hohenhausen where the five murdered airmen along with  
82 the two airmen that died as a result of the crash and parachute failure, were buried in a rudimentary  
83 mass grave in the upper west corner of the old cemetery at around midnight on the 6th August 1944.

84

85 Stork, Deppe and Dürschke confessed to the shooting of the five airmen but claimed that they were  
86 under orders from Jürgens not to take any prisoners. The court found the accused guilty of murdering  
87 the five American airmen and they were each sentenced to death by hanging. After the sentences were  
88 confirmed they were executed on the 20th June 1947.

89

90 Jürgens was held for some time in Staumühle, a British Internment Camp. Whether the reason was  
91 "automatic arrest" due to his position and SS rank, or whether it had to do with Denazification  
92 Proceedings is still being researched. There is no evidence that he was ever prosecuted for his part in the  
93 Hohenhausen murders.

94

95 Although the trial documentation does not identify any of the victims by name, researchers have been  
96 able to deduce that 2nd.Lt. Robert E. Delavan and 2nd.Lt. Louis Earl Younkin were two of the murdered  
97 airmen. However, it has not been possible to determine who from the remaining five victims were  
98 murdered or died as a result of the crash or parachute failure or which of the three accused murdered  
99 whom.

100  
101 (4) S/Sgt. Kalinejko was also the Top Turret gunner.

102  
103 (5) S/Sgt. Vititoe sustained injuries from the parachute landing. His injuries were serious enough for him  
104 to be admitted to the Branch Hospital (Technikum) in Lage-Lippe. He was eventually held as a PoW at  
105 Stalag IXc probably in the branch camp at Muhlhausen, Bad Sulza which was 15 miles NE of Weimar.

106  
107 **Burial details:**

108 2nd.Lt. Robert E. Delavan. Reinterred at the Netherlands American Cemetery. Plot J, Row 3, Grave 1.  
109 Born in 1922. Son to Mrs. Elsie M. Delavan of Watertown, New York, USA.

110  
111 2nd.Lt. Louis Earl Younkin. Reinterred at the Netherlands American Cemetery. Plot N, Row 15, Grave 17.  
112 Born on 28 Feb 1925. Son to George P. and Helen L. Younkin of Rockwood, Pennsylvania, USA.

113  
114 S/Sgt. Norman E. Schneider. Reinterred at the Evergreen Cemetery in Chicago.  
115 Born on the 18th July 1911. Son to Siegmon and Martha Schneider of Chicago, Illinois, USA.

116  
117 S/Sgt. Stanley J. Kalinejko. Reinterred at the Netherlands American Cemetery. Plot P, Row 19, Grave 10.  
118 Born on the 21st December 1922. Son to Kenneth and Helen Kalinejko and husband to Shirley nee Cox  
119 Kalinejko of Chicago, Illinois, USA.

120  
121 S/Sgt. Robert F. Kowalski. Repatriated and reinterred on the 22nd June 1949 at the Camp Butler National  
122 Cemetery, Springfield, Illinois, Plot C, Grave 102. Born on the 8th January 1924. Son to Mrs. Lillian M.  
123 Kowalski of Chicago, Illinois, USA.

124  
125 S/Sgt. Sherwood L. Kells. No records of his remains being repatriated or reinterred have been found  
126 other than his and his fellow aircrew's initial interment at the Hohenhausen Cemetery. He is also not  
127 listed in the 'Unaccounted-For' database promulgated by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency.  
128 Born in 1924. Son to Edgar M. and Viloa Kells of Hudson, New York, USA.

129  
130 S/Sgt. Donald Trew McVicker. Reinterred at the Netherlands American Cemetery. Plot M, Row 10, Grave  
131 15. Born on 26th April 1922. Son to Luther S. and Opal (Trew) McVicker of Oxford, Ohio, USA.

132  
133 =====

134 Researched by Ralph Snape for Aircrew Remembered and dedicated to the relatives of this crew with  
135 thanks to Traugott Vitz for his work on the database. Thanks also to Andy Wilkinson from the 467th  
136 BG(H) Association for his assistance and special thanks to the family of Donald Trew McVicker for their  
137 assistance and permission for the images of S/Sgt. Donald Trew McVicker.